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The ICOM Curricula Guidelines for Museum Professional Development and the extension of ICOM's official role into the Living Intangible Heritage

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INTERNATIONAL COUNCIL OF MUSEUMS
CONSEIL INTERNATIONAL DES MUSEES



International Committee for the Training of Personnel
Comité International pour la Formation du Personnel

Welcome to the Web site of ICOM's International Committee for all interested in the professional or technical training, education or personal development in museums, galleries and the heritage

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**"The ICOM Curricula Guidelines
for Museum Professional
Development and the extension of
ICOM's official role into the Living
Intangible Heritage"**

ICOM AND TRAINING - I

- 1947: ICOM established an international specialist Committee for Personnel & Administration. Including advising on museum training, subsequently dissolved about 10 years later.

ICOM AND TRAINING - II

- However ICOM adopted many recommendations on training issues, and particularly the need for professional recognition and training, 1947 – 1967
- see especially several ICOM Triennial General Conference Resolutions on ICOM website: <http://icom.museum/> – in French and English

ICOM-ICTOP - I

- 1968: The International Committee for the Training of Personnel (ICTOP) was established on the initiative of the ICOM Executive Council: chaired by Raymond Singleton of Leicester University, England, with Jan Jelinek of the Moravian Museum & University of Brno, Czechoslovakia as Secretary.
- As with all ICOM Committees the membership was by invitation and was limited to 25 members, not more than two from any country

ICOM-ICTOP - II

- ICTOP began its programme of annual meetings (held every year since 1968 except 1975)
- and its programme of research and development of models and techniques for training of museum professionals, especially curators
- also the active promotion of the need for professional training for museum work

ICOM ICTOP - III

- ICTOP's first major project was a survey of the current state of museum training around the world
- With the new ICOM Training Unit (Georges-Henri Rivière and Yvonne Oddon) ICTOP collected and analysed a wide range of models and curricula

ICOM ICTOP - IV

- In 1970 ICOM co-published (with Barker, London) a substantial book: “Museum Professional Training” prepared by Raymond Singleton and Jan Jelinek from this research by ICTOP and the ICOM Training Unit
- as well as papers by several experts, this included about 30 examples of curricula in use by museum training programmes – mainly university postgraduate professional diplomas or Master’s degrees

THE ICOM “SYLLABUS” - I

- 1971: ICOM received a contract from UNESCO to review programmes of the international bilingual museum training centre at Jos, Nigeria, ICTOP
- with considerable input from ICTOP, the Training Unit published, initially as a UNESCO Report, the first recommended UNESCO-ICOM detailed curriculum for museum professional training, based on the ICTOP surveys and analysis of “best practice”

THE ICOM “SYLLABUS” - II

- The original UNESCO-ICOM recommendations were presented in the original French as a “Programme Type” (probably best translated into English as “model programme”),
- however, this title was soon being mistranslated as “Basic Syllabus” and the title “UNESCO-ICOM Basic Syllabus (Syllabus du Base in French) was quickly adopted

THE ICOM “SYLLABUS” - III

- The original text mainly constituted a very detailed and complex list of themes and topics that should be included in a museum training programme, with little indication of their relative weight or importance
- Nevertheless the “Syllabus” was very widely used by training programmes of all kinds, especially postgraduate university courses in museology or museum studies for future curators

THE ICOM “SYLLABUS” - IV

- The UNESCO-ICOM “Syllabus” was formally recognised, adopted and recommended by ICOM, and was revised at intervals by ICTOP in the light of changes in the museum world; updates being formally approved and adopted by either an ICOM General Conference or by the Executive Council
- However, as this was becoming out of date in concept ICTOP began a complete revision in 1996

THE ICOM “SYLLABUS” - V

- The revision was led by Nancy Fuller of the Smithsonian, working with a small number by wide range of ICTOP members and other experts
- It was soon agreed that though the 1971 structure had served the profession and ICOM very well for a quarter of a century a basic change of concept was now required,

A completely new approach - I

- Nancy Fuller and her group soon agreed that:
- 1st: a new document should not be aimed solely or mainly at the initial professional education and training of future curators and other professionals
- 2nd: instead it should also be a guide for the very necessary continuing professional development and updating throughout the working life, that ICOM sees as essential in both practical and ethical terms

A completely new approach - II

- 3rd: the replacement for the “Basic Syllabus” should focus much less on detailed lists of factual information that should be taught and learned, but on the learning outcomes of professional training and continuing professional development

A completely new approach - III

- The recommendation was that the underlying question in the assessment or examination at the end of any training, whether initial or updating, should not be “what has this student learned and remembered?” (though factual knowledge is of course necessary on some points), but “what is this this future or actual museum professional competent to do?”

A completely new approach - III

- Consequently, the final outcome of the revision, adopted by ICTOP in 1998 and by the Executive Council in 2000, is based on the two key concepts of:
 - continuing professional development through lifelong learning
 - The acquiring (and the assessment where required) of competences relating to both the specifics of museum work and the professional's own specialisations and to general skills

A completely new approach - III

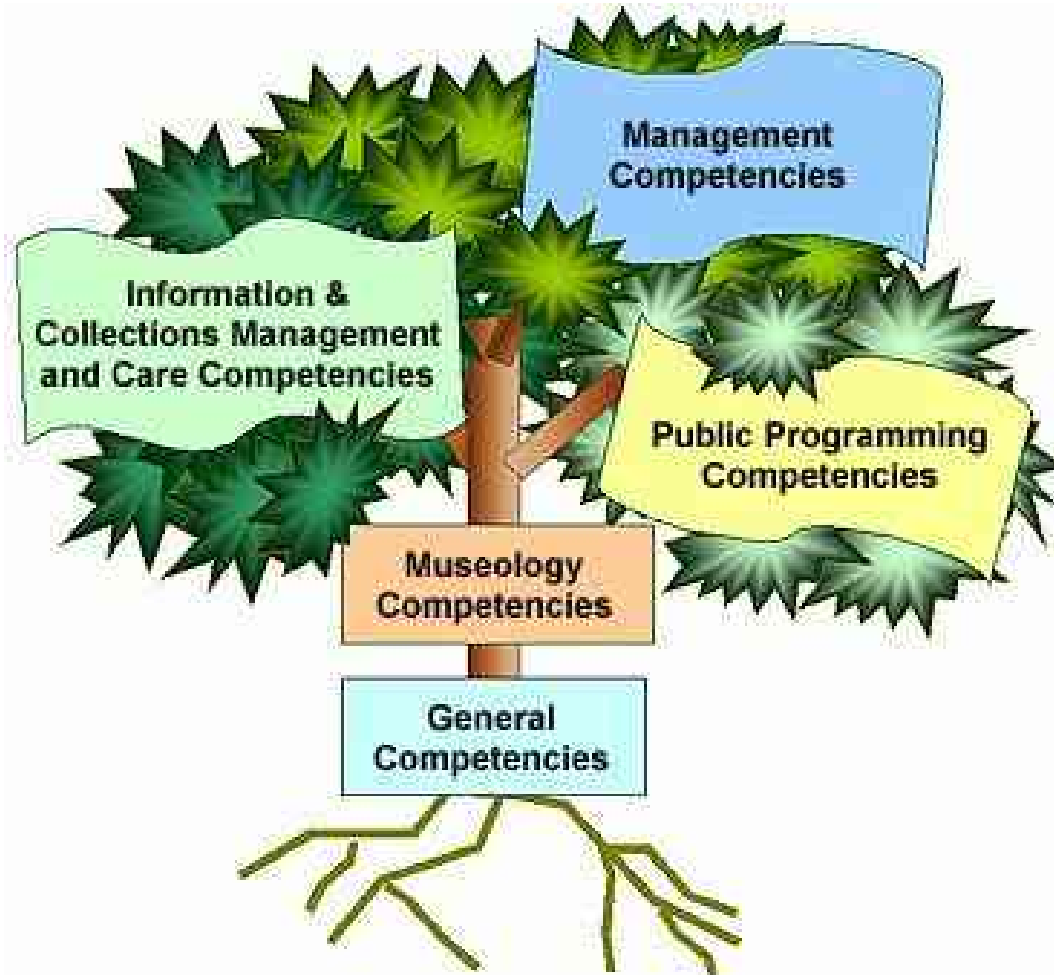
This completely new approach required a new title:
**The ICOM Curricula Guidelines for Museum
Professional Development**

This is hosted and maintained online by the
Smithsonian at:

<http://museumstudies.si.edu/ICOM-ICTOP/index.htm>

there are also links from the ICTOP website at:
<http://ictop.icom.museum>

The ICOM Curricula Guidelines for Professional Museum Development



The Curricula Guidelines and the Intangible Heritage

- The team who developed the current Curricula Guidelines were already at least partly aware of the rapidly growing importance for museums of the living intangible heritage
- these therefore include under “Museology Competences” a section on “Community Museology“ and a relevant reference under “Types of Collections”

Community Museology in the Curricula Guidelines

The elements of competence identified were:

- Assessing / understanding community needs
- Exhibition techniques as tools for mobilizing community members for the use of their common resources
- Interactions between communities, their heritage and economic development
- Processes which originate from community efforts

Kinds of collections in the Curricula Guidelines include:

- Ancillary collections including audiovisuals, slides, negatives

Built environment including sites, landscapes, structures

- Cultural heritage including oral history, folklife, language
- Documents, manuscripts, archives [...]

Updating the Curricula Guidelines to recognise the Intangible Heritage - I

However, the 2001 changes in the official ICOM definition of a museum, and the likely new potential role for the museum sector in relation to the 2003 UNESCO Convention on The Protection of the Intangible Heritage, means that changes in the ICOM Curricula Guidelines are now needed to refer more explicitly to the need for professional training and career development programmes and qualifications to recognise the significance of the intangible heritage.

Updating the Curricula Guidelines to recognise the Intangible Heritage - I

ICTOP is therefore proposing to the Resolutions Committee and through this to the General Assembly:

- That all museum training and professional development programmes are recommended to include an understanding of the importance and museum potential of the intangible heritage in their curricula and professional qualifications.

AND.....

Updating the Curricula Guidelines to recognise the Intangible Heritage - II

- That ICTOP be asked to submit the necessary amendments to the ICOM Curricula Guidelines for Museum Professional Development to the Executive Council for approval within one year

Will you help with this?

**Please let the new ICTOP Board
have your views on what you think
is needed!**



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