

**INTERNAL ADVISORY GROUP (IAG) MEETING**  
**WASHINGTON, DC**  
**NOVEMBER 14, 2016**  
**8:30 A.M. – 4:00 P.M.**

**Attendees**

Specialty Group, Network, and Committee Chairs or their designees; *JAIC*, *AIC News*, and Web Editors; AIC Board Members; AIC/FAIC Executive Director; AIC and FAIC Staff

**Call to Order and Introductions**

AIC and FAIC Board President Pamela Hatchfield called the meeting to order at 9:06 a.m. and invited attendees to introduce themselves, their role in AIC leadership, and their goals for the coming year. A wide range of ongoing and new goals were identified during the introductions, along with some concerns and needs in the field to be addressed.

Hatchfield wrapped up the introductions by noting that increased diversity on the FAIC board will lead to increased development and outreach, including additional funding and stability for our programs. She stated that concerns raised in the introductions regarding education and certification will be touched on in the discussion about the expanded role of the membership committee.

**Membership Committee Update**

[Note: During the August 2016 AIC board of directors meeting, the board approved two working groups to address timely and significant member topics in coordination with the existing membership committee. While the membership committee will continue to function as outlined in the AIC bylaws, the working groups will change as the needs of AIC evolve. The current structure includes membership designations and membership equity and inclusion working groups.]

Cathy Hawks, coordinating chair of the membership committee and membership working groups, reported that the initiative to assess AIC membership designations and how best to express professionalism in our field has begun. The working groups have been created to formally address issues affecting the field and membership. Hawks' role will be to facilitate communication among the groups, as the topics overlap, and to ensure that the board and members are kept informed and involved. Hawks is working closely with the chairs of the peer-review committee and the two working groups, as well as the board liaison, Sue Murphy.

**Equity & Inclusion Working Group**

Sarah Barack reported that the charge for the working group has been approved. Jennifer Hain Teper is chairing the working group, which currently has five members. Two open positions remain to be filled at the discretion of the chair. It was noted that conversations about equity and inclusion have been raised before within AIC, particularly in early discussions with the education and training committee and emerging conservation professionals network.

Educators had expressed concern about whether their communities are being reflected and their constituencies represented. Generational differences have arisen. Many older members felt as though the issue had already been discussed and to return to this work

must build on past efforts. By creating a board-approved AIC working group, the topic can be explored thoroughly and be guided by a carefully-crafted charge. Included in the charge is assessing work in diversity and inclusiveness that is already underway, both within conservation and in related fields. The working group is tasked to identify what diversity is for conservation and to provide a pathway to achieve identified goals.

The conversations will happen in multiple places, but having a shared platform is important, one that provides transparency and security. While MemberFuse has not been successful in attracting conversations, it is the member-wide platform currently in place. The working group is seeking platforms to facilitate conversations in ways that make people feel safe.

### **Membership Designation Working Group**

Stephanie Lussier, chair of the membership designation working group, reported that the board agreed to create the working group during its August 2016 meeting. The charge is being drafted and diverse representation from all constituent fields of AIC are being sought to serve as working group members.

The group will evaluate the needs of membership and address changes that have developed in recent decades in the profession. They will propose member designation pathways that represent the range of membership expertise and determine eligibility for peer-review status. A goal is to create more clarity on titles and positions occupied by conservators and allied professionals. The group will examine models for continuing education/professional development that are connected to member designations. Interactions with members will take place throughout the process.

The working group will also assess how any potential changes to member designation would affect the AIC mission statement. It is important to develop a vision of what AIC members want AIC to look like in 10 years, and to be sure that AIC can stand behind peer-review designations and the role they play in securing jobs and promoting the field and its members.

The question of implementing a certification program for conservators has been raised again, particularly by younger conservators. It would help distinguish conservators from conservation technicians. How is the distinction between conservators and others calling themselves conservators made to potential employers? Is apprentice training still considered a valid pathway to becoming a professional conservator, particularly when compared to the rigor of completing a graduate training program in conservation? How does this compare to training received internationally and how can these different pathways be judged fairly? Even within conservation specialties, different pathways exist, such as, for example, training to be a textile or wooden artifact conservator versus a paintings or paper conservator.

Training to become a collection manager is a separate pathway. While some collection managers call themselves conservators, the two roles are related but quite different. Collection managers do not normally do treatments, but, ideally, develop good relationships with conservators so that the different roles are understood. The goal should be to work together to preserve cultural heritage. Museum studies programs need to know that it is incumbent on them to convey the messages that a degree in museum studies is not a

conservation degree and that museums studies graduates must solicit appropriate help from conservators.

AIC will need to decide how its members support preservation management, how ethical standards apply, and what credentials are needed for a candidate to be awarded peer-reviewed status. Ethical standards apply within conservation as well, since conservators must know the limits of their expertise and should not work on materials with which they are unfamiliar.

It will be important to define the meaning of an AIC peer-reviewed designation versus a certification. How can it be articulated best to potential employers and the public? An employer needs to look beyond a peer-review status when hiring, but public perception is also a concern. Young conservators with a graduate training degree are competing for work against those with, what is felt by some to be, less rigorous training. Agreeing to abide by the AIC code of ethics does not address the level of expertise. What does the peer-review process mean to AIC members and to others?

The collections care network (CCN) is gathering information about the role people in collections care play. Two surveys have been completed and both address training and job responsibilities. The second survey has a focus on job titles. There are many different titles in collection management and skill sets that are not clearly defined. This leads to confusion in hiring. The analyzed data is being provided to the membership designation working group to help inform their work.

Some certification programs are run by an organization separate from the membership organization. While it was expressed that there can be issues with conservators judging conservators, there can also be issues with someone judging a conservator out of context, without being a conservator. Seeking buy-in for any certification program for conservators by allied professions would be helpful.

It was suggested that it is worth revisiting the history of past attempts by AIC to create a certification program, particularly the most recent attempt, and the reasons why it failed. Terry Drayman Weisser, Meg Craft, and others could speak to this. A great deal of time and energy was put into the last attempt, including hiring consultants and doing outreach.

It needs to be recognized how difficult it is to create an economically feasible program that will satisfy the majority of AIC members, particularly given the fact that conservation is a profession with a quite limited number of practitioners and these practitioners have a diverse range of specialties.

While a peer-review program that included continuing education requirements would be helpful as a way for AIC to stand behind its members, it is different than certification. Neither one will cure all the issues that have been raised regarding employment and recognition.

### **Internal and External Communications**

Bonnie Naugle, Communications & Membership Director, stated that internal communications included publications (JAIC and AIC News), e-blasts, MemberFuse, and specialty group subsites. E-blasts are being coordinated through Carmina Lamare,

communications associate, to provide useful, timely, and concise communications. Lamare also now manages production of the newsletter and some key components of the Journal. Templates have been created for the specialty group subsites, and staff will work with the specialty groups to populate and manage their own subsites.

External communications include the website, blog, CoOL (hosting sites, such as ANAGPIC), Distlist, STASH, wiki, C2C Care, physical and electronic store, and social media. Naugle noted that others will provide updates on these initiatives shortly, but first Sarah Reidell would report on the publications committee.

### **Publications Committee**

Sarah Reidell, publications committee chair, reported that the committee works closely with staff and, following a board recommendation, is reviewing the committee charge to better define the scope of the committee's work. It considers both analog and digital publications, for instance, and the use and flexibility of platforms used. Introspective discussion is a good model to assess what are we doing, who are we serving, and why.

The committee is creating a records management and digital preservation policy. It is assessing what information is available, how other organizations are managing these issues, and what transition strategies AIC should employ. The committee is working with the specialty groups to pool resources and provide access to publications that is consistently inclusive and transparent. A request was made for one, if not two, representatives from each specialty group and network to work with the publications committee.

### **AIC News**

Lisa Goldberg, AIC News editor, began by thanking Lamare for her work on the newsletter. Goldberg reported that last year a discussion was started about the readers of AIC News and their reading habits. This led to a survey seeking information from members about the newsletters. The results are preliminary, with only 300 responses so far. Responses about what components of the newsletter are most read were inconsistent, though there are some clear trends noted from other survey questions.

Many respondents stated that they missed the paper version of AIC News. There also seems to be some confusion about the PDF version versus the website version. The design will be assessed and the newsletter may be redesigned. When asked about frequency of issues versus splitting the newsletter into separate communications, responses seemed to support removing conferences/job information from the newsletter and receiving it more frequently.

Goldberg asked those who have not yet responded to the survey to do so and to encourage others to do so. A new three-year schedule for lead articles is being prepared. Conversations with CCN have begun to assist in getting richer and more varied news from allied organizations. A survey report will be included in one of the next newsletters, pending analysis of results.

### **Journal of the American Institute for Conservation (JAIC)**

JAIC Editor-in-Chief Julio del Hoyo-Meléndez noted that the in-person meeting in Montreal was productive and had been supplemented with conference calls in the fall and spring. The discussion included how to diversify and expand the JAIC board, especially with an international emphasis.

42% of submissions received were accepted from January-October. The goal is to increase the acceptance rate. An annual meeting pre-session is being planned to discuss what JAIC is looking for in article submissions, with the objective of increasing high quality submissions. JAIC is seeking original or innovative work. Case studies are acceptable, but there must be a new aspect to it to address why it is important for other conservators to hear about the treatment performed. It is the approach, the critical-thinking process, that is important. Anyone with questions should reach out to Hoyo-Meléndez or an editor of the Journal.

Some articles are solicited for submission, specifically to encourage those who present at the AIC Annual Meeting to submit their paper to the Journal. It was suggested that the associate editor best suited to a particular specialty be listed in that specialty group website to encourage communication between specialty group members and associate editors. Specialty group chairs could be asked to make recommendations of the best posters from their point of view. These authors could then be encouraged to create a submission. Efforts could also be expanded to encourage authors of posters to submit to the Journal.

Between 2014 and 2016, turnaround time from submission to press went from 143 days to 108 days. Work continues to improve response turnaround.

Hoyo-Meléndez reported on the importance of JAIC having an Impact Factor. Once we meet all the criteria, we will apply for it. To be eligible, JAIC needs to show a track record of publishing on time, have diversity on its board, translate abstracts, be cited in other journals, and have international submissions. Staff members of European institutions have a bias against submitting to a journal without an Impact Factor. At the same time, JAIC has a good international reputation, with articles from staff members of U.S. institutions conducting cutting-edge work. With an Impact Factor, JAIC can improve its standing and number of submissions.

### **AIC Electronic Resources**

Rachel Arenstein, AIC e-editor, began her update by stating that C2CC, STASH, the blog, and the wiki each has a different focus, audience, and structure. Learning how to work on the platforms can be a challenge, but there are people ready to help.

FAIC has been the administrator for Connecting to Collections Care (C2C Care) over the past two years, working in conjunction with AIC's Collection Care Network, and has just received a new grant from IMLS to fund it over the next three years. Last year, over 5,700 people from over 29 countries participated in a webinar. Note that the webinars are archived and accessible. The C2C Care site primarily serves small- to mid-sized cultural institutions that may have never had access to conservation or collections care professionals. Conservators are not the target audience for this site, but it is how the word can be spread about what conservators do and how conservators can help them.

Several allied professional groups have approached FAIC to collaborate with them on webinars. Susan Barger serves as the C2C Care moderator, and she works closely with two advisory groups, one for monthly webinars and the other for the online community. Participating conservators join with collection managers, ARCS, AAM, and others to ensure C2C Care is responding to the needs of collecting institutions. Arenstein asked for assistance in identifying topics that will provide needed information and support to allied professionals.

Another outward facing site administered by FAIC and AIC is STASH. Lisa Goldberg is the head of the editorial committee. The site encourages interaction between conservators and allied professionals to improve collection storage. Arenstein urged AIC members to share their storage solutions and to initiate discussions about visible storage, shipping containers, and other related topics. Another STASH pre-session will be held at the Annual Meeting, with the content being captured for posting on the website.

Blogs are meant to be a free-forum communication tool. Anyone can post on AIC's WordPress blog and there is an excellent tip sheet to walk users through the process. The most popular posts are usually AIC Annual Meeting recaps. The blog also feeds directly into AIC's Facebook account.

Arenstein requested feedback on how to more effectively organize blog posts on the Annual Meeting. Members have expressed interest in the blog posts on meeting sessions. It would be helpful to post more blogs in advance of the meeting and to have more volunteers to provide summaries of sessions. Arenstein would appreciate help, especially from the specialty groups, to identify valued content for blog posts.

The AIC wiki has grown tremendously since its beginning as a platform to present the specialty group catalogs. The AIC wiki now has content from all parts of AIC, and the content is managed by the originating specialty group, network, committee, or informal group. Training is available on how to use the wiki, but after that it is open for online collaboration. Important gaps in information are being presented. Some educators have students work on the wiki to help improve impact. An Australian group will be adopting the wiki as its model and adding content. The reach of the platforms is international, and AIC is being contacted because of its capacity.

Arenstein asked about the tools members need to help do their work. The goal is to improve transparency and make content accessible. Realistically, we should consider when using a paywall makes sense—to support experts and provide incentives. It is also important to ensure that whatever is presented is correct.

### **Social Media**

Katelin Lee reported that the focus recently has been on encouraging and assisting members to engage on social media. At the same time, the right platforms for conversations and different types of exchanges and sharing are being sought. Most AIC followers are not members; they are typically just people with an interest in conservation and the content AIC shares. AIC has 8,625 followers on twitter and, in the last year, had over two million likes or retweets. On Facebook, over 17,000 people liked AIC's page, meaning they see AIC content more frequently. Over 97,000 people saw AIC's post about the emergency plan being put into action at the Louvre. AIC is also on LinkedIn, Flickr, and YouTube.

Because many followers are not members, social media provides AIC with a way to explain what conservators do for a larger public. It is important to share stories with them. Lee urged AIC members to please reach out to AIC staff with links to member stories. Members can help AIC gather content and images to be better able to increase the visibility of conservation.

## **Annual Meeting Update**

Ruth Seyler, Meetings & Advocacy Director, reported that the abstract selection was excellent this year, and many workshops, tours, and talks are being organized. AIC is offering 5.5 days of programming from May 28 to June 1, with some additional morning tours on June 2. Seyler asked attendees to encourage colleagues to sign up for pre-sessions, come early, and stay late. The opening reception is at the Art Institute of Chicago, which has waived the normal \$50,000 rental fee.

The 2018 annual meeting is in Houston at the Marriott Marquis, which is reopening at the end of November 2016. The AIC opening reception will most likely take place at the Museum of Fine Arts, Houston.

The AIC annual meeting is always hard to book as a great deal of meeting space is needed, but not as many sleeping rooms as for other meetings of our size. The meeting has often been held in culturally rich, major cities, with many contracts negotiated during the recession. Montreal took eight years to book. Beyond 2018, there will be a shift to more restrictive contracts and attrition will become a bigger issue. Seyler asked IAG attendees to encourage their colleagues to stay at the host hotel. Some culture-rich “second tier” cities are now being assessed, but location does affect numbers. Although many members live in the northeast, it is one of the most expensive areas in which to meet.

The 2019 meeting will be held at the Mohegan Sun in Connecticut. It is a four-diamond hotel and casino. Only the Mohegan Sun and one other casino are members of Preferred Hotels and Resorts. The Mohegan Sun was the top hotel in Connecticut in 2016. It has over 100,000 square feet of meeting space. The meeting space is completely separate from the casino, and it is not necessary to walk through the casino to reach the meeting rooms, restaurants, or sleeping rooms. 95% of sleeping rooms are non-smoking, and all public areas are non-smoking. It is owned and operated by the Mohegan sovereign nation.

The sleeping room rate will be \$139 (excluding Friday night rate, which would be \$199), which includes a \$12 rebate which would cover most transportation needs. The student rate will be \$98. Complimentary WiFi will be offered in both sleeping and meeting rooms. Reasonable catering prices are offered, and there are over 25 restaurants in the hotel.

The location is particularly attractive in allowing for tours to New York and Boston, two cities that are too expensive for AIC meetings. It is 45 minutes from Hartford/New Haven, 50 minutes from Newport, 2 hours from New York, and 90 minutes from Boston. A block of hotel rooms in New Haven can be booked if workshops are held there. It is a very cost-effective venue for members, in addition to being easily accessible by car or train by many, while bus shuttles could be arranged from Boston and New York. Flights can be booked into Boston, New York, or Hartford, which is only 45 minutes away. It will be AIC's New England meeting.

## **Future Annual Meeting Themes**

Peggy Ellis, AIC board vice president, thanked the general session program committee and the specialty group program committees. She also noted that the Chicago meeting will be Ruth's 10<sup>th</sup>!

Using MemberFuse in 2015 to encourage suggestions for future annual meeting themes had mixed success. One suggestion was to have no themes, though this is not recommended

since it's difficult to market a theme-less meeting, especially to allied professionals. More than 1,000 people attended each of the past four meetings, which is a good trend.

Ellis asked for comments on the follow list of potential themes. The number of asterisks indicate popularity by those attending the IAG meeting.

- doing nothing or nothing doing: the real cost of preventive conservation\*
- when is digitization preservation
- big and supersized conservation\*\*
- conservation goes global\*\*
- materiality is the message: the impact of material studies on allied academic fields\*\*
- diverse cultures need diverse conservators\*
- computational conservation
- colors cultures and conservation
- the role of ownership and provenance in conservation
- whose cultural heritage whose conservators?
- looking and seeing: innovative imaging in conservation
- restoration, conservation, and preservation: what, when, and why\*\*\*
- the changing role of collections care\*

A list of past themes is also available online and a theme can be revisited. One suggestion was to revisit fakes, forgeries, and facsimiles, especially with the issues of 3D printing. Once ideas are gathered, a survey will be sent to the membership to determine what themes resonate with members.

Interest was also expressed in holding another annual meeting in collaboration with another organization. The AIC board and staff will pursue options.

### **Treasurer's Report**

Sarah Barack, AIC board treasurer, provided an overview of AIC and FAIC financials. The 2017 budgets for both organizations were approved by their respective boards during the board meetings that took place just prior to the IAG meeting.

Barack noted the following regarding AIC income:

- Investment revenues are dependent on market forces.
- Dues and the Annual Meetings are primary drivers of revenue, along with having the largest expenses
- FAIC overhead reflects FAIC's share of overhead expenses. As FAIC staff has grown, its share has grown.
- The projected net loss of \$88,000 is equal to AIC's gift to FAIC and the total projected deficit of the specialty groups. A specialty group deficit reflects reserves being spent down.
- A review of AIC new assets over time shows AIC to be financially stable.

FAIC income is primarily from grants, followed by in-kind donations, investments, and donations. In-kind donations are now being tracked in the financial reports to provide a more accurate view of the organization. Projected net losses are being assessed, along with the business model, with the assistance of the Nonprofit Financial Fund and the Mellon Foundation. FAIC's net assets have fluctuated more than AIC's, but have held steady in recent years.



The Collection Assessment for Preservation (CAP) program is a significant undertaking for FAIC. The Federal portion of revenue from the CAP cooperative agreement will be \$800,000 in 2017. The agreement includes a 1-to-1 match. The total project is \$3.4 million over a three-year period.

### **Foundation of the American Institute for Conservation (FAIC)**

Eric Pourchot, FAIC Institutional Advancement Director, noted FAIC's growth that incorporates new programs and staff. FAIC programming helps support AIC, just as AIC supports the Foundation. Following Pourchot's introduction, staff spoke about their programs and how they interact with AIC.

Emergency Programs Coordinator Jessica Unger noted that she previously worked on emergency programs at Heritage Preservation and how pleased she was by the smooth transition. Since the Florence Flood's devastation 50 years ago, there have been huge advances in salvage, treatment, and preparedness. Alliance for Response, alone, has two dozen networks across the U.S. preparing communities for emergencies and to work collaboratively with emergency managers. Unger also works with FAIC's National Heritage Responders, most of whom are AIC members, and the AIC Emergency Committee.

AIC and FAIC work together in cultural emergency preparedness and response efforts and serve as ambassadors to allied professionals. Unger has presented at conferences organized by the American Alliance of Museums (along with Lori Foley of FEMA/Smithsonian and Bev Perkins), Society of American Archivists, and the International Association of Emergency Managers. The last decade has really helped put cultural heritage on the map with emergency management professionals.

The Emergency Response and Salvage Wheel and the *Field Guide to Emergency Response* will be reprinted with FAIC branding and resources. Belfor has provided sponsorship for reproducing the Wheel, while sponsorship funds for the Field Guide are still being sought.

Tiffani Emig, CAP Coordinator, and Emily Conforto, CAP Assistant, spoke about the Collections Assessment for Preservation Program. Revisions were made to the Conservation Assessment Program administered by Heritage Preservation when a new cooperative agreement was awarded to FAIC by IMLS. The launch of the program was delayed while the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) reviewed application documents. AIC has been instrumental in the search for assessors and to provide training through webinars. IAG attendees were encouraged to consider serving as an assessor and to recommend CAP to small and mid-sized museums. Emig noted that a social media campaign is being developed and FAIC is ready for the launch of CAP and spreading the word.

FAIC's Connecting to Collections Care initiative was addressed above, but Pourchot expressed his thanks to all its AIC volunteers. This program has successfully opened doors to working more closely with allied professionals, including registrars.

CoOL is an FAIC project managed by Bonnie Naugle, AIC's Communications & Membership Director. A new DistList moderator will be hired shortly.

FAIC's Charting the Digital Landscape project, funded by the Mellon Foundation, is helping determine both AIC and FAIC's roles in the conservation digital landscape. Two

recommendations in the project report were to hire a development officer and a digital strategies advocate. Ezelle is now FAIC's development associate, and Matt Morgan serves as FAIC's digital strategies advocate. Morgan, who is helping FAIC navigate the technical aspects of transitioning our digital platforms like CoOL and the DistList, is also helping AIC and FAIC to be more strategic in addressing the digital landscape and to build our digital tool kit.

Education Associate Sarah Saetren provided an update on FAIC educational programs and grants and scholarships. Almost all are geared toward conservation professionals to help in providing professional development opportunities that might not otherwise be available. Work is underway to move all grant and scholarship applications online via OpenWater, streamlining the process for applicants and reviewers. FAIC is also helping specialty groups with their initiatives to provide scholarships to their members. These scholarship programs are being managed by FAIC.

Organizing FAIC education programs involves working with AIC members who participate in workshops, serve as instructors, and help identify host institutions. Saetren noted the number of educational offerings, including Annual Meeting workshops, that take place each year.

The Chemistry for Photographic Materials online course just launched and will be a five-year project. There are 10-20 units per module and three modules are already available. The content was created by chemist Scott Williams and presented as animated PowerPoint presentations with voiceover. This initiative was designed make the content easily accessible to the conservation profession and to archive the instructional materials.

Ideas for professional development programming can come from any member, but the Education & Training Committee provides ongoing input to help identify needs and provide advice about creating courses.

The Latin American and Caribbean Scholars program will be active in Chicago. 20 scholars have been selected, with six alternates identified. Final approval will be provided by the Getty Foundation.

Kress travel and publication fellowships are active, with thanks to all the reviewers and the Samuel H. Kress Foundation.

Despite grant support, fundraising is critical. \$245,000 must be raised this year through grants and giving to keep our programs going. Melissa Ezelle is FAIC's first full time development associate. Ezelle thanked donors and urged everyone to donate, but she also asked members to contact her with leads for potential donors and vendors. Ezelle thanked the specialty groups for their donations and grassroots fundraising. The Photograph Materials Group matching campaign was very successful.

Compelling stories are also needed to help spread the message of giving to a wider audience. Ezelle asked that members send her stories, photographs, and information about compelling projects. It is important to show, in the most compelling way possible, the impact of the work done by our members.

AIC Board President Pam Hatchfield adjourned the IAG meeting at 4:00 p.m.