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**FAIC Collaborates with the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation to Train International
Photograph Conservators at the Hermitage Museum**

WASHINGTON, D.C. — The Foundation of the American Institute for Conservation of Historic and Artistic Works (FAIC) is administering a four-year initiative to establish a photograph conservation department at the State Hermitage Museum in St. Petersburg, Russia. This initiative represents a significant chapter in the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation's longstanding commitment to develop the field of photograph conservation—a field that did not exist in Russia—by providing new education and research opportunities and by establishing photograph conservation professionals at the State Hermitage Museum. Based on a comprehensive survey of the Hermitage's photograph collections, a bilingual computerized inventory was created for forty-four repositories holding over 472,000 photographs. Due to the cultural value and vulnerability of these collections, the Hermitage allocated several staff positions for a centralized department of photograph conservation based in a state-of-the-art storage and curatorial facility currently in the final phases of construction.

FAIC will facilitate the creation of a Russian- and English-language library of essential photograph conservation and collection management texts to be made available on FAIC's online resource, Conservation OnLine (CoOL). Documentation of the initiative on CoOL will serve as an example for best practices in photograph conservation, cataloguing, and digital imaging, and will provide a lasting resource for the preservation community. The website can be found at <http://cool.conservation-us.org/photo-ru>.

Led by an international advisory committee composed of experts in the fields of photograph and preventive conservation, conservation education, documentation, cataloguing, and digital imaging, this initiative trains skilled conservation, collection management, and curatorial staff. One mission of this initiative is building a highly functional team to supervise the cataloguing, care, and preservation of the Hermitage photograph collections. The newly formed department of photograph conservation at the Hermitage will be a global model for best practices in photograph conservation, cataloguing, and digital imaging, elevating practices throughout the museum world. This department is unique in Russia and establishes the discipline of photograph conservation in this nation.

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About FAIC

FAIC, the Foundation of the American Institute for Conservation of Historic & Artistic Works, supports conservation education, research, and outreach activities that increase understanding of our global cultural heritage.

www.conservation-us.org/foundation