

# Notes from 1<sup>st</sup> ICON DG meeting

27-11-2013 14:30 Chelsea College of Arts

## **Present:**

- Caroline Babington
- Gabriella Barbieri
- Gillian Boal
- Marta Garcia Celma
- Martin Edwards
- Maria Jordan
- Jennifer Murray
- Anne-Marie Steel
- Thanasis Velios

## **Apologies:**

- Simon Fleury
- Jennifer Marchant
- Heather Ravenberg
- Joyce Townsend

## ***Introductions and scope of the group***

During the introductions the group agreed that there is value in investing effort in a number of areas of activity within the broader domain of conservation documentation. These are listed here:

1. Layered guidelines: the group agreed that there is little exchange among professionals on best practices for conservation documentation. The group also agreed that there is limited scope in strict standardisation given the variety of requirements. However, there is scope in developing guidelines on best practice. These can be developed to cover a range of different levels of detail, starting from the required minimum record and extending to more detailed (and therefore more time-consuming and more expensive) records. The group understands that adoption of any guidelines will be easier if major players in the field (such as national museums) get involved in the development. One of the group's primary tasks will be to compile a list of significant organisations and involve these in the group discussions.
2. Documentation education: the group agreed that documentation is one of the least well-covered subjects during conservation training. There is scope in improving the quality of training in this subject.
3. Visual glossaries: the group discussed visual resources documenting types of damage (such as the Archives Damage Atlas<sup>1</sup>) which have proved particularly useful in the past and considers the development of visual glossaries for the profession an important task that this group could oversee.
4. Documentation systems implementation: the group discussed a number of case studies of documentation systems used in various institutions and also an important project funded by the Mellon Foundation called: Conservation Space<sup>2</sup>. The group believes that there is scope in establishing links with software companies and other developers who are active in this market in order to influence product related decisions. One of the group's primary tasks will be to compile a list of such companies and maintain contact with them.
5. Copyright and licensing: the group agreed that there is little value in producing standardised documentation records if these are inaccessible. In general conservation records are not bound by

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1 [http://www.nationaalarchief.nl/sites/default/files/docs/nieuws/archives\\_damage\\_atlas.pdf](http://www.nationaalarchief.nl/sites/default/files/docs/nieuws/archives_damage_atlas.pdf)

2 <http://www.conservationsspace.org/Home.html>

strict copyright rules in the same way photographs are. The group will investigate issues of copyright in relation to conservation documentation.

6. Public outreach: the group agreed that there is scope in considering conservation documentation as a vehicle for public outreach in conservation which can impact the terminology used and the issues about accessibility and copyright.
7. Photography (and digitisation): the group agreed that photography (including analytical photography) is an essential part of conservation documentation and falls within its remit.
8. Surveying (including close range laser scanning): the group agreed that 3D capturing techniques are often used as part of conservation documentation and falls within its remit.
9. Analytical records (conservation science): the group agreed that the data produced by analysis during conservation treatment are significantly different than descriptions of treatment, damage or structure, but they form an essential part of conservation documentation.

### ***Group operation:***

At the moment there are no clear guidelines from ICON on how a new group can be designated but a document to describe this process is being prepared. The group shared some experience on members' involvement with other ICON groups. The group agreed to operate in this informal capacity and keep in contact with the ICON office to find out when the new guidelines will be published. Caroline Babington and Thanasis Velios will be attending the AGM on Monday the 2<sup>nd</sup> of December where there may be an opportunity to inform ICON on this first meeting of ICON DG.

The group identified a possible issue with the formation of the group in that it is an overarching group which applies to many other ICON groups and therefore emphasis should be given in collaborating with them.

A date for a next meeting was not set but the group members are requested to propose ideas for people and subjects to be presented in the form of a lecture alongside a meeting of the group.

The room in Chelsea College of Arts is bookable and Thanasis Velios can look into acquiring suitable equipment for teleconferencing.