

Report by the Treasurer 2017

IIC's international reach and involvement continues to expand, attracting funds internationally for its international activities.

Our 2014 Congress in Hong Kong keeps producing significant outcomes. The partnership agreement with the Palace Museum Beijing, creating the International Training Centre for Conservation, delivered the first (of three) annual training sessions in Beijing, in September 2015 for 20 participants from China and around the world. The Palace Museum provides financial support for the speakers and participants, while IIC provides international expertise drawn from the Fellows of IIC. Two supplements of SiC of papers developed from Congress presentations are being published and will be available on the IIC website. Because of the rising interest, a Chinese language IIC website is available as a link from the IIC home page. Considerable efforts have been put into engaging with the new Chinese members attending the Congress, but few have renewed their memberships, largely because of cultural and language barriers. These developments have been made possible by a Chinese secretariat hosted by the Leisure and Cultural Services Department (LCSD) of the Government of HKSAR and supported by generous funding from the Bei Shang Tang Foundation and the Getty Foundation, with a small amount of IIC transitional assistance.

Plans for the 2016 Los Angeles Congress are progressing, with grants received from many generous sponsors, primarily in the USA, which will be reported in the next annual report. Similar efforts are underway in preparation of the following 2018 Congress in Turin.

Organising a Student and Emerging Conservator Conference is a learning experience for the students involved, integrating the many skills required – managing teams and timetables, planning programmes for talks and social events, dealing with recruitment and travel arrangements, implementing the planned events, and ensuring a positive financial outcome. The Warsaw SECC in October 2015 was most successful with considerable financial support from the Academy of Fine Arts, though (not unusually) the catering costs shifted the balance into the negative.

The May meeting of Council in Doha was kindly hosted and funded by UCL and Qatar Foundation. Although formal meetings remain the same, the opportunity to meet local conservators, develop relationships and discuss different attitudes to conservation are the most valuable outcomes. As a UK charitable company, the majority of Council meetings are in the UK, but we aim to hold at least one meeting each year with conservators somewhere else around the world.

All charitable organisations are required to develop and constantly revise a risk register of potential threats to the organisation's health and survival. Unfortunately, one of these unwelcome risks occurred this year. A small scale fraud was spotted by one of our financial service providers. This was rapidly addressed by the Officers and the staff with the invaluable assistance of our solicitors, Slaughter and May, and accountants, Kingston Smith. The bookkeeping processes are therefore being examined and will be renewed in coming months.

Around the beginning of the financial year, Taylor and Francis bought Maney, the publisher of Studies in Conservation. The initial contractual arrangements remained the same though are now being adjusted to the advantage of both parties. Taylor and Francis is a major international academic publisher based in the UK, and is already increasing resources, insights and market opportunities available to IIC.

Membership categories and rates are being modified to reflect the changing state of the conservation profession. The first (only because it is the easiest to trial) is a reduced rate for retired conservators, which this year has enabled 44 members to continue with their involvement with IIC. Further changes are planned for next year's membership cycle.

IIC's financial position has become much healthier in the past couple of years as a result of changing how our publications are produced. All organisations, particularly those relying on membership, face long term challenges arising from major shifts in work, social and financial activities. Council now has resources to formulate and implement strategic changes in response. It therefore commissioned a study on how IIC is viewed in order to inform discussion and planning.

Throughout its history, the successes of IIC have been the result of consistent efforts of its members. Future successes will be created by current members imagining and implementing new responses to new challenges. The bulk of our activities - for Council, publications, congresses, website, social media etc - are carried out by dedicated volunteers who rarely receive expenses for their contributions. All of us welcome offers of additional help that will increase or improve what IIC can contribute to the preservation of our heritage.

Velson Horie, Treasurer