

2021 Membership Survey Report Key Findings and Outcomes

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An Australia ICOMOS (AI) Members Survey was distributed to members by email in April and May 2021 and 226 responses were received, amounting to about a third of current members. This brief account reports on key findings of the survey and concludes with suggested actions. Word clouds have been derived from free text responses and are included to illustrate where responses recorded suggestions about strategic actions and directions.

The Executive Committee (EC) would like to thank all members who contributed to the survey and for providing much needed feedback on the evolving strategic directions of the organisation.

Who responded to the survey?

- Of the responses, the largest proportion of members were aged 60-69 years of age (28.13%) followed by 50-59 years of age (25.89%) and the smallest proportion of members were aged 80+ (2.23%) and 22-29 years of age (4.46%).
- **15% of respondents were under 40 years of age**
- **Only 1 respondent identified as First Nations, Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander.**
- The largest percentage of respondents live in New South Wales (34.82%).
- Most identified as female (57.78%), with a slightly smaller percentage identifying as male (41.33%) and a small percentage (0.89%) identifying as 'other'.
- **17.78% (n=40) of respondents considered themselves to be 'emerging professionals'.**
- Of respondents, just over half (58.48%) are involved with one or more national or international ICOMOS committees or working groups, **however just over half of the survey respondents (51.58%) recorded that they would like to be more involved with committees or working groups.**
- **21% (n=48) stated that they spoke a language other than English.** Languages identified by members included: Arabic, Bislama, Burushaski, Cantonese, Dutch, Fijian, French, German, Greek, Hindi, Italian, Japanese, Maori, Melanesian, Mandarin, Polish, Portuguese, Russian, Spanish, Shina, Sinhala, Turkish, Urdu.

Strategic Priorities

Strategic Priority 1 of the AI Strategic Plan is: Advance and promote national standards and best practice.

When asked to score the importance on the components of the AI strategic agenda, the highest scores were received by advancing the Burra Charter and promoting professional development in best practice.

benefits heritage Review heritage legislation Develop
Burra Charter Promote government best practice
heritage communities work ICOMOS levels professionals
heritage conservation

Strategic Priority 2 of the AI Strategic Plan is: Engage with contemporary issues in cultural heritage.

In this area promoting the Reconciliation Action Plan, developing responses to climate change and to intangible cultural heritage each scored equally highly as a key priority for AI.

promote RAP contemporary issue government Develop
understood heritage Engage community address
Sustainable Development

Strategic Priority 3 of the AI Strategic Plan is: Be an influential voice to government.

In this area the need to influence legislation and collaborate effectively with allied organisations to influence government scored equally highly as a priority for action.

Strategic Priority 4 of the AI Strategic Plan is: Enhance Recognition of Australia ICOMOS.

In this area promoting AI's resources and methodologies to diverse audiences and developing and delivering professional events and engagement activities scored equally highly as priorities.

Identify other priority areas?

66 respondents identified other areas that they believed should be strategic priorities for AI, but not yet covered in the existing Strategic Plan. Dominant themes in these responses include greater focus on emerging professionals, greater focus on advocacy and engagement with government, and greater engagement with Indigenous heritage issues.

opportunities Australia ICOMOS Indigenous Integrate Burra Charter events
 Charter articles heritage professional heritage impact assessments
 promote assessments ie NSW engage NSW LEPs DCPs
 members key heritage ie NSW LEPs ICOMOS
 impact assessments ie better articles heritage impact government

Anything you would like ICOMOS to do less of?

- 49 responded to this question. 18 said no – ie. that they are happy with the work of ICOMOS, while 31 suggested diverse improvements. Several comments suggested less focus on international matters, less focus on Burra Charter, less focus on administration and committees, less theory/more practice. Others asked for more openness, more focus on membership and on local matters.

Opinions about the enews

- The overwhelming majority of respondents (83%) answered that they always or usually read the weekly enews, and that they were very satisfied with its content. The highest proportion of respondents (60%) stated that they would like to receive the enews once a week, as per current practice. Some comments suggested that the newsletter was overly long and repetitive and that format could be improved.

Customize

conferences keeps date Relevant Easy information ICOMOS
 events member good news well jobs links Easy read
 format

Opinions about *Historic Environment*

- Responses about satisfaction with the journal indicated that most members value the journal. A minority number of negative comments suggested that a magazine style publication would be of more benefit to ICOMOS members; while other suggested a need for more articles about grass roots practice, more focus on technical conservation, on Australian practice and practitioner issues.

articles interest relevant High quality publication content
 rarely read academic high quality articles focuses
 journal heritage practice Interesting rarely time read
 topics researched articles Great informative issues Australian
 good usually practice

- When asked if they would like to receive a printed or digital copy of *Historic Environment*, responses were split almost evenly, with 52.41% of respondents indicating they would like a printed hard copy and 48.80% indicating they would prefer to receive a digital copy.

How satisfied are you with Australia ICOMOS events, workshops and conferences?

There was a 60% positive satisfaction rate with ICOMOS events and conferences. Open text comments reflect the importance of face to face events for the membership - there were also comments about need for more online activities/events, more focus on professional development and on emerging professionals.

interesting always well conferences
 events workshops conferences attend covid events
 ICOMOS event good engaging many love
 well organised networking relevant seem usually areas held
 ones

Conclusions

Overall members who responded to the survey were happy with the strategic agenda for AICOMOS's work, but would like AI to do more in several key areas

- Professional development;
- Advocacy and outreach, particularly to government;
- Greater focus on Indigenous heritage issues and members;
- More opportunities for member involvement generally; and

e) Greater focus on, and opportunities for, emerging professionals.

The enews was resoundingly supported as useful and relevant. In the coming months the EC will work to improve the delivery, structure and appearance of the enews and make it more user friendly.

Historic Environment was also endorsed as a worthwhile ICOMOS product, with half of members surveyed wishing to switch to digital only receipt of the journal. Dissatisfaction with the journal was only expressed by a small minority of members surveyed and this mostly related to the desire for more magazine style content, accessible to a broader audience. The EC and members could investigate providing more of this magazine-style content through the website, enews or other new outlet.

At its August meeting, the EC resolved to incorporate the findings of this survey into its next Strategic Planning cycle, and that from this year *Historic Environment* will only be supplied in hard copy to members who 'opt in' to continued receipt of the printed journal. Otherwise, members will receive a soft copy of the journal when it is published, while the journal continues to be available to all on the AI website.