

INTERNAL ADVISORY GROUP MEETING WASHINGTON, DC

30 November 2018

Attending: Specialty Group, Network, and Committee Chairs; *JAIC*, *AIC News*, and Web Editors, AIC Board Members, AIC and FAIC Staff

Call to Order & Introductions

AIC President Margaret Holben Ellis called the meeting to order at 9:02 a.m. All attendees were thanked for their participation and their service to AIC. Ellis then introduced AIC and FAIC Executive Director Eryl Wentworth, who spoke about the importance of partnerships, outreach, and member initiatives. Wentworth highlighted the new contemporary art network within AIC, CAN!, as well as collaborations with organizations including the Association for Preservation Technology, the International Institute for Conservation, the International Council on Monuments and Sites, and the Climate Heritage Network.

Attendees were asked to introduce themselves and state their goals for their position in AIC's volunteer leadership. The goals touched on many topics, particularly outreach, and included:

- Increasing outreach through collaborative activities with allied organizations
- Improving awareness of resources and programming across AIC and FAIC
- Identifying and meeting membership needs for training, outreach, publications, recognition, designations, and programming
- Facilitating member initiatives, internal and external communications, and amplifying member voices

Ellis and Wentworth discussed two major projects that have come out of the Comprehensive Organizational Health Initiative (COHI), a grant from The Mellon Foundation. FAIC received the \$900,000 COHI grant in December 2017. The first initiative is to build a substantial reserve fund to ensure the financial stability of FAIC, and by extension AIC. The second aspect will be to develop a clear and recognizable message for both organizations to express and achieve the goals of AIC and FAIC.

In the past year, FAIC has utilized the services of two different consulting firms to assist in this work. Mekanik, a small, DC-based firm, was selected to help evaluate public perceptions of both AIC and FAIC. Their research, which included their participation in the 2017 Annual Meeting, showed that there is a strong need for AIC and FAIC to clarify and strengthen their brand. Many possible directions have been considered, including changing the names of the organizations and the visual brand identity, in addition to creating new messaging to convey AIC and FAIC's mission. This work will also aid in introducing the organizations to new audiences, especially prospective donors. Graham-Pelton, an international fundraising firm, was hired to help advise FAIC on developing a capital campaign, which will take place over the next five years.

Annual Meeting Themes & Planning

Suzanne Davis, AIC Vice President, discussed some highlights of the upcoming 2019 Annual Meeting, including the four concurrent general sessions, the new TED Talks-style opening general session, a "mistakes" session, and a closing session with Untold Stories. Davis also expressed her appreciation for all who worked toward creating the Annual Meeting programming. Attendees were asked to express their interest in some suggested future Annual Meeting themes and to suggest new themes.

Many of the suggested themes and feedback from attendees showed a strong interest in multidisciplinary and collaborative programming. Davis acknowledged this interest but noted the significant amount of existing programming and encouraged groups to consider how best to balance their typical programming with cross-specialty programming. The 2019 Angels Project was discussed, which is being planned at the New London Maritime Society and will focus on a storage reorganization project with Storage Techniques for Art, Science and History (STASH). There was also discussion about attendee conduct, introducing alternate presentation lengths, and increased moderator resources.

Meetings and Advocacy Director Ruth Seyler provided context for AIC's bidding process for Annual Meeting locations. Due to high attendance numbers in Chicago and Montreal, AIC is now more competitive for bids, however, it is an increasing challenge to keep the meeting affordable for attendees and the organization. Many factors play into making a decision about a meeting location, including food and beverage costs, off-site locations for events, room rates, and travel costs. In order to provide attendees with the best experience at the best cost possible, AIC strives to explore all possibilities, including taking advantage of market irregularities in cities where AIC may not otherwise receive a competitive bid.

Two cities under consideration for the 2021 Annual Meeting both fall under this category. Jacksonville, Florida, and Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, have both put forward compelling bids for the meeting in that specific year. Attendees were invited to discuss the opportunities, also bearing in mind that 2022 will be the 50th Annual Meeting. Additional factors that were considered included the geographic diversity of meeting locations, the importance of having the meeting in an "iconic" city, and possible impacts on the room block in larger cities. Some of the cities discussed for the 2022 meeting included Boston, Los Angeles, Oakland, Cleveland, and Kansas City.

Membership Designations Working Group (MDWG) Update

Working Group co-chairs Deborah Trupin and Nancy Pollak provided an update on the activities of the group. This included discussion of the wide scope of the group's work and the diversity of opinions represented in the survey released earlier this year. The survey also revealed misconceptions and misinformation about existing peer review processes, which the MDWG has worked to correct.

In order to better address the different aspects of the charge, the MDWG members have identified and focused on the following four topics: assessing Professional Associate requirements, assessing Fellow requirements, assessing designations for non-conservators, and assessing peer-review structures in other organizations, including certification.

Trupin and Pollak engaged attendees with two different activities to gauge interest in different aspects of peer-review and possible areas of expansion, including continuing education requirements. The feedback from attendees will be used to help direct MDWG members' further research and future member surveys. The one year extension of the MDWG's charge until May of 2020 was also announced. Trupin and Pollak encouraged members to contact the MDWG via email at membership@conservation-us.org.

AIC and FAIC Financial Summary

Sarah Barack, AIC and FAIC Treasurer, discussed the current financial position of both organizations as well as the 2019 budget. General trends were explained, including poor performance in investments due to market volatility. The primary drivers of the AIC budget are dues and meetings income, which are also reflected in expenses. They reflect a member service organization. The balance shows that AIC's activities are mission-driven and support member activities.

FAIC's budget also demonstrates the balance between income and activities, with the largest income drivers being grants, donations, and investment income, with expenses tied to programmatic activities. It is also important to consider Generally Accepted Accounting Procedures (GAAP), which dictate that income be booked in the year received, regardless of when expenses occur. This means that FAIC's projected net loss is covered by previously booked grant income. Attendees were also asked to bear in mind that operating costs are rising much more quickly than revenues – which is an issue for many organizations. The Mellon COHI grant activities will help provide FAIC with the necessary unrestricted funds to support essential programmatic needs not fully covered by grants.

Achieving Member Communication Goals, A Panel Discussion

Building on discussion of member communication tools at the [2017 IAG Meeting](#), Board Director for Communications Brenda Bernier led a panel of volunteer leadership and staff in communications roles for AIC. Bernier encouraged attendees to consider the different platforms and initiatives used by AIC and to critically evaluate current activities. The panel members provided updates on their role in communications and activities over the prior year.

Communications & Membership Director Bonnie Naugle spoke about new tools to facilitate communication within membership, including AIC's Member Community and all communities on the Higher Logic platform. She also encouraged members to read AIC News for essential updates on membership and to reach out with questions about the organization and activities. Membership Manager Ryan Winfield provided insights about AIC as an organization, including its similarities and dissimilarities to other professional organizations. He also acknowledged the over 450 volunteer leaders who give their time to the organization, enriching and increasing AIC's capacity. AIC News Editor Lisa Goldberg announced that comprehensive AIC News archives are now available. The online Courses, Conferences, and Seminars section was also highlighted. JAIC Editor-in-Chief Julio del Hoyo-Meléndez spoke about the redesign of the Journal's cover, upcoming special issues, improvements in turn-around time for articles, resources for prospective authors, abstract translations, and an overall increase in quantity and quality of submissions. AIC E-editor Rachael Arenstein encouraged members to contact her with ideas about improving AIC's many online platforms, including the blog, which has recently moved to the Online Community. She also highlighted participation in the January Wiki Edit-a-thon and noted ongoing work on Wiki content. FAIC Outreach Coordinator Katelin Lee asked members to contact her about projects that could be shared on social media to promote public awareness of conservation. She will be developing an outreach team to help feature existing resources and produce new opportunities for members to engage with the public.

Bernier facilitated questions from attendees about topics, including searching the ConsDistList, highlighting video content on YouTube, analyzing use of resources and platforms, tracking membership data, and improving understanding of ConservationOnline (CoOL) as a resource.

The Foundation

FAIC Institutional Advancement Director Eric Pourchot introduced the FAIC staff members to engage attendees with an interactive game, providing attendees with the opportunity to display their knowledge of FAIC programs, dispel misconceptions about activities, and acknowledge their participation in FAIC programming.

The presentation addressed the following topics:

- Attendees named FAIC programs and resources and events sponsored by FAIC, including Alliance for Response (AFR), the Collections Assessment for Preservation (CAP) Program,

Connecting to Collections Care (C2C Care), STASH, CoOL, scholarships, grants, Tech Focus, National Heritage Responders (NHR), and Regional Angels Projects.

- FAIC is not solely grant funded. In addition to grants, there are other types of income, including in-kind donations of space and time, donations, sales, and contracts.
- Communities on the online community that benefit non-members, including the Emerging Conservation Professionals Community and the Connecting to Collections Care Community.
- Two FAIC programs helped cultural heritage organizations following hurricanes Irma and Maria, the NHR and CAP. The NHR deployed to Puerto Rico following Hurricane Maria and NHR members assisted in recovery efforts in Florida after Hurricane Irma. The CAP Program provided emergency assessments to help museums in Puerto Rico and other parts of the United States affected by federally declared disasters.
- Attendees named organizations that FAIC partners with, including the Association for Preservation Technology (APT), the American Industrial Hygiene Association (AIHA), the National Center for Preservation Technology and Training (NCPTT), the Association of Registrars and Collection Specialists (ARCS), Texas Collections Emergency Response Alliance (TX-CERA), American Alliance of Museums (AAM), Association of Tribal Archives, Libraries, and Museums (ATALM), American Association for State and Local History (AASLH), and Society for Preservation of Natural History Collections (SPNHC).
- Attendees were asked to note who among them had participated in, hosted, or instructed a course for FAIC. Answers included over 30 different courses, multiple webinar instructors, and workshop instructors. Almost every attendee had benefited from a FAIC course! Members are encouraged to use the new online portal to submit topics for workshops, offer to be an instructor, or host a workshop!

Equity and Inclusion Committee Update

Jennifer Hain Teper, Equity & Inclusion Committee Chair, discussed the progress made by the committee since its creation this summer. The committee members were selected with diversity in mind, including different specialties and positions within the field, and to help ensure continuity between the working group and the committee. The committee will be presenting a pre-session at the 2019 Annual Meeting, building on the success of the session at the 2018 meeting. The programming will include accepted abstracts and invited speakers, with an emphasis on including Native American communities. The committee also made recommendations to increase equity and inclusion in the meeting, including stickers members can use to provide their preferred pronouns, advocating for gender neutral bathrooms at the meeting, and suggesting renaming the Angels Project, due to the connotations of the term "Angel."

Looking at the working group's report, the committee evaluated immediate next steps to pursue. This includes creating liaison positions in groups within AIC, including the Education and Training Committee (ETC), Emerging Conservation Professionals Network (ECPN), and MDWG, as well as with allied professionals. Teper encouraged attendees to consider opportunities for collaboration with the committee and to approach the committee with ideas. Committee members will be reaching out to allied organizations including AAM, the Committee on Archives, Libraries, and Museums (CALM), AASLH, and the American Library Association (ALA) to continue communications and develop programming for a future annual meeting. The committee was also asked to submit an abstract for the Institute of Conservation (ICON) Triennial in Belfast. Teper emphasized that communication and outreach is a first essential effort, prompting the development of an online community to engage the membership on topics of equity and inclusion, including soliciting feedback on the working group's report.

Other immediate steps include capturing stories of success and failure of initiatives and participation in the field, creating a resource with diversity training opportunities, and publishing in AIC News and JAIC.

Salary Disclosure and Job Posting Recommendations

Board Director, Specialty Groups, Sarah Melching spoke about recent discussions of salary disclosure. She acknowledged the letter-writing campaign within the Museum Education Network, which sought to promote pay equity and diversity among emerging museum professionals. AIC is seeking to find ways to improve standards of professionalism and quality of life, particularly through efforts from ETC and the E&I Committee, but it is important to come to a collaborative consensus on this issue. Melching discussed research and data sources that provide information on these topics, noting that including salary ranges in position postings does not necessarily correlate with increasing pay equity. The successful use of pay audits has been proven to improve gender disparity and encourage responsibility among employers. She added that, in AIC's role as a professional organization, the board had suggested AIC promote salary ranges to be included in position postings whenever possible.

Melching emphasized that providing resources for self-advocacy was essential for members, citing the need for better negotiation skills to improve salaries and other compensation package elements. She encouraged members to internally advocate for inclusion of salary ranges at their organizations to improve hiring efficiency and increase transparency. There were also questions raised regarding whether it was staff or board responsibility to evaluate position postings before sharing them on the Online Community or social media. The board concluded that, in the interest of being an open resource for all professionals within the cultural heritage community, there would not be restrictions placed on position postings.

There was additional discussion of the need for a unified position on any requirements for position postings. It was noted that including language in support of salary ranges had, in some cases, led to the addition of that information in a posting. Several groups were interested in participating in creating resources for career advancement and development and will be discussing this further to unify efforts.

Friends of Conservation

Katelin Lee, FAIC Outreach Coordinator, spoke about the upcoming launch of the Friends of Conservation program, which will aim to increase understanding and appreciation of conservation within the public. Friends will receive information about topics in conservation through a quarterly newsletter, encouraging an ongoing interest in the many aspects of the field. Membership in the program will also raise unrestricted funds to help to continue to provide essential FAIC programs. Lee asked attendees to provide feedback about ways that members could be supported in promoting the program to family and friends. Attendees discussed ways they would be interested in reaching out to prospective Friends, including fliers, email communications, promotional items, and social media posts.

Wrap Up

Ellis spoke about the importance of the role the Internal Advisory Group plays within AIC and the value of their counsel. She thanked all attendees for their participation and work on behalf of AIC. The meeting was adjourned at 4:03 p.m.