



**Foundation of the American Institute for  
Conservation Historic and Artistic Works  
(FAIC)**

***January 1, 2016 – December 31, 2018  
Strategic Plan***

**Approved by the FAIC Board of Directors  
12 November 2016**

## Introduction

The Foundation of the American Institute for Conservation Historic and Artistic Works (FAIC) was incorporated in 1973 as a tax-exempt organization under Section 501(c)(3) of the tax code. It was formed by, and is affiliated with, the American Institute for Conservation Historic and Artistic Works (AIC), a national membership organization representing the multi-faceted conservation profession.

Development of the current FAIC plan was assisted in large part by the work of the FAIC Board of Directors during strategic planning sessions undertaken on August 10 and 11, 2015, in part with the AIC Board of Directors and benefiting from the perspectives of the members of both boards, AIC and FAIC staff members, and strategic planning consultant Robert Berendt.

Overarching issues that were discussed by both boards included identifying key, emerging trends along with opportunities and challenges facing AIC, FAIC, and the conservation profession. Some of the comments centered on socio-economic issues and opportunities to reach diverse constituencies. One such issue is addressed here in terms of advocating for conservation professionals to assume leadership positions.

The FAIC board was asked to consider, primarily, three key topics: creating and advancing an expanded emergency preparedness and response program, digital resources in conservation, and funding strategies. The first is in response to a unique opportunity, the second to a critical need in the field, and the third as a way to ensure we have the capacity to accomplish our goals.

The FAIC Strategic Plan incorporates both existing FAIC programs and services and new initiatives. The board and staff confirmed the priorities that will serve as a guide in the coming years. These priorities are reflected in the FAIC 2016-2018 Strategic Plan that follows.

An annual status review of activities in relation to the strategic plan will be prepared by staff and presented to the board prior to the November board meeting.

## **Mission Statement** *(Approved 28 April 2016)*

To elevate the vital role of cultural heritage conservation by applying its expertise to urgent global preservation initiatives while empowering conservation professionals, motivating collecting institutions, and engaging the public.

## **Core Values** *(Approved 12 November 2015)*

### *Honoring Cultural Heritage*

FAIC promotes the preservation of cultural heritage as a means toward a deeper understanding of our shared humanity—the need to express ourselves through achievement in all disciplines. We honor these achievements by preserving them for current and future generations.

### *Advancement of the Field*

FAIC promotes advancement of expert knowledge of the materials and technologies of material culture and mastery of the strategies necessary for their conservation and preservation. We promote the understanding of the values and contexts of cultural heritage and stress informed decision-making in conservation. We are dedicated to service in the field, research, sharing knowledge, and continued education.

### *Building Operational Strength and Sustainability*

FAIC embraces sustained, strategic management of our organization, reflecting our responsibilities to conservators, allied professions, partners, the public, and our cultural heritage preservation mission. FAIC supports and enhances the goals of AIC, and in turn builds on the achievements of AIC and its members.

## Situation Analysis

The following observations, trends, developments, and indicators drawn from strategic planning discussions and recent events and activities serve to describe key considerations that are likely to influence AIC's direction and success over the next three years.

### THE ECONOMY AND SUPPORT FOR CONSERVATION

- Political and economic realities indicate little support for funding the arts and culture in future years. This along with the uneven economic recovery will continue to adversely affect conservation practice in all settings.
- Growing numbers of conservators and shifting opportunities in institutions have led to more conservators entering private practice, thus more training in business, administrative, and marketing skills will be needed.
- A limited universe of private foundations support conservation education, research, and practice, and they will continue to adjust their priorities and giving patterns based upon their individual areas of interest.

### NEED AND DEMAND FOR CONSERVATION SERVICES

- The need and demand for conservation services will continue to outstrip financial resources available to support the delivery of these services.
- The growing and changing impact of emerging technologies and expectations for instant access to information will continue to be an important consideration for conservators, their clients, the institutions they serve, and the public-at-large.
- University-based degree-granting programs in conservation continue to be in demand and are responsive to emerging disciplines.

### AWARENESS

- Awareness and appreciation of conservation, and its role in keeping collections accessible as core resources, is lacking among many leaders of art, science, and humanities institutions.
- A perception by the general public that conservation practice is limited to major art museums is only beginning to change.
- Public awareness of conservation is gradually expanding, in part due to increasingly informed coverage by the press and a greater use of technology and social media showing conservation activities in labs, public spaces, and archaeological sites.
- Major international and national political and military conflicts that have destroyed, and even specifically targeted, cultural heritage is increasing awareness of the fragility of cultural heritage and the need for protection and preservation.

### INTERNAL FACTORS

- Conservators in many specialty areas characterize the profession as having made many advances (principally as the result of the application of new and emerging technologies), but also claim that the profession suffers from a sense of disparity between institutional and private conservators and from a range of traditions and practices in conservation internationally.
- Conservation departments are being pressured by institutions focusing on public outreach to increase production, without a commensurate increase in staff levels, rather than to engage in research and study.
- There is a recognized need among conservators for a cross-disciplinary approach and recognition of the importance of expanding relationships with allied professionals.
- An awareness of the community-based and interdisciplinary nature of conservation today is increasing, along with the need to have buy-in from many different stakeholders.
- Climate change and concern over the loss of both national and cultural heritage highlights the need for collaborations with environmental conservation.
- While the Foundation has operated for more than forty years, its operations, purposes, and priorities are not particularly well understood in the conservation community, even within the ranks of AIC.

# 2016-2018 Goals and Strategies

All the goals below reflect agreed on priorities for FAIC, and the order in which they are listed in the strategic plan does not indicate a greater or lesser level of importance.

## Goal I

### **Advance the Profession**

*The Foundation's mission is to "undertake and underwrite programs and initiatives to advance the conservation profession nationally and internationally in all its facets and applies the expertise of the profession in addressing global artistic, historic, and cultural preservation priorities." The mission is reflected below and in each goal of the strategic plan.*

### **Strategies**

Support the creation, use, and management of information technology in the conservation profession through a Digital Strategies Initiative.

- Address the questions and recommendations raised in the 2015 Charting the Digital Landscape of the Conservation Profession report.
- Identify partners that can support the initiative financially and with expertise.
- Hire a Digital Strategies Advocate to advance both internal and field-wide priorities.
- Create a digital vision statement for the conservation community that can serve as a roadmap.
- Undertake outreach efforts to promote digital activities and information sharing.
- Convene and manage a Digital Competencies Task Force charged with developing a document on digital competencies for conservation, prioritization of needs, and recommendations of ways to meet the needs.
- Create a working group of librarians, archivists, and conservators to guide the initiative.
- Be a convener of like-minded organizations to encourage exchanges and education in the digital field.

Create and advance a new, expanded emergency program.

- Rebrand AIC-CERT (National Heritage Responders), within a new, expanded emergency program (Heritage Emergency Programs).
- Market the program to potential funders and users.
- Create collaborations/partnerships with other responding organizations and agencies.
- Seek new funding and funding partnerships.

Advocate for conservation professionals to assume leadership positions.

- Partner with the Smithsonian American Art Museum, Lunder Conservation Center to identify resources and create a broad plan of action.
- Identify and provide leadership training for career advancement and to strengthen our voice in the arts and humanities communities.
- Develop and begin to implement a plan to promote conservation and conservation professionals to leadership in cultural heritage institutions.

Support the Latin American and Caribbean Program.

- Host the program in Chicago in 2017, with funds from the Getty Foundation and, if possible, additional support for staffing and overhead.
- Manage the program and disseminate information about it and its successes.

Maintain quality scholarship and fellowship programs.

- Implement OpenWater for all scholarship and fellowship programs.
- Revise guidelines and processes to reflect changes and improve the program.
- Seek additional funding for these valued programs.

Support the Oral History Program in collaboration with Winterthur.

- Support transcriptions of interviews, creation of electronic versions of typed interviews, and annotations of these interviews.

## **Goal II**

### **Provide Information Resources**

*High quality FAIC print and electronic resources are critical to effectively serve the conservation community, allied professions, and the general public. FAIC will continue to improve its information resources through regular review and adherence to policies that provide consistency, assure quality, and maintain standards.*

### **Strategies**

Advance the Connecting to Collections Care (C2C Care) Online Community.

- Work closely with the Collection Care Network to provide webinars that increase the ability of collection care specialists to be better stewards of global cultural heritage.
- Continue to partner with the Collection Care Network to increase the lively exchange of information on the C2C Care discussion board.
- Provide additional and curate existing electronic resources for the broad community responsible for the care of collections.
- Create a plan to enhance the resources and networking opportunities available through the Connecting to Collection Care program.

Transform Conservation OnLine (CoOL).

- Continue to upgrade CoOL and the management of its resources, providing broader access and sustainability.
- Expand the CoOL Task Force and provide a new charge.
- As part of the Digital Strategies project, create a plan for the future of CoOL that includes both content and technology.
- Pursue potential partnerships to enhance and provide resources for CoOL.
- Identify specific strategies to advance the role of CoOL as a broad international education and outreach tool.

If funds are awarded, provide conservation and environmental assessments for collecting institutions.

- Administer the Conservation Assessment Program (CAP) funded by the Institute of Museum and Library Services.
- Complete a pilot program to test revisions to the program prior to full implementation.
- Provide additional assistance to collecting institutions following their formal assessment.
- Leverage existing resources, such as C2C Care and CoOL, to support the goals of CAP.

Increase literature in the field.

- Create and disseminate resources, harvesting what is available, on the creation, use, and management of information technology in the conservation profession.
- Continue to manage the Kress Conservation Publications Grant program and support development of manuscripts and articles.
- Support the publication of print and online conservation literature, including AIC Specialty Group publications.

## **Goal III**

### **Strengthen the Professional Educational Program**

*One of the core missions of FAIC is to develop, refine, and support continuing educational opportunities to serve conservation professionals throughout their careers. The FAIC Strategic Plan for Professional Development, updated regularly, provides additional guidance for this effort.*

### **Strategies**

Strengthen current programs.

- Continue to assess all FAIC educational programs to ensure relevance, focus, value, and need, building on past assessments.
- In conjunction with the Digital Strategies Initiative, promote digital competencies and resources to gain those competencies.
- Seek appropriate sponsorships and other funding for programs.

Expand online programming.

- Continue to revise and migrate existing online courses to new platform.
- Create additional online courses and webinars.
- Develop cost-effective online learning modules.

Provide additional opportunities for professional development grants and scholarships

- Increase number of scholarships to attend AIC annual meetings and other professional conferences. See Goal I.
- Continue to manage the Kress Conservation Fellowships for post-graduate training.

## **Goal IV**

### **Outreach Activities**

*As part of its mission, FAIC seeks to apply “the expertise of the profession in addressing global artistic, historic, and cultural preservation priorities.” The Foundation does this, in part, through outreach activities that are critical in increasing the awareness of allied professionals and the public of the importance of the preservation of cultural heritage for future generations. Pursuing this goal fully is dependent on securing sufficient funds to provide staff and resources.*

### **Strategies**

Maintain and expand allied professional education.

- Continue to promote C2C Care.
- Rebrand and promote the annual MayDay campaign.
- Continue to support online emergency preparedness resources.
- Promote CAP.
- Showcase digital activities.
- Continue to support and expand regional Angels Projects.

Promote public education.

- Work with AIC and partner organizations to leverage resources.
- Assist AIC in expanding K-12 outreach activities.
- Make use of digital technology to increase dissemination of conservation and preservation information to the public.

Cultivate initiatives that cross cultural heritage institutional boundaries

- Seek collaborations with organizations that can reach all types of collections, including libraries, museums, and historical societies.

Become a strong advocate for the field.

- Create position papers as needed; define a position and communicate it broadly.
- Continue in partnerships in Preservation Week and other national outreach initiatives.
- Broadly publicize FAIC initiatives to gain brand recognition and support, such as the Latin American/Caribbean Scholars program, scholarship projects, emergency programs, and Oral History program.
- Provide resources in support of AIC’s advocacy efforts, as appropriate.
- Continue to strengthen FAIC’s use of social media (Twitter, Facebook, LinkedIn, etc.).

## **Goal V**

### **Strengthen the Organization**

*With federal and state support decreasing with each year and revenue from investments remaining unsteady, it is critical that the Foundation increase its unrestricted income. Marketing and fundraising efforts will be increased to support current and planned activities.*

### **Strategies**

Continue to identify and recruit board members able to assist FAIC in reaching its goals.

Take advantage of the financial assessment undertaken by the Nonprofit Finance Fund.

- Respond to recommendations as appropriate.
- Pursue capacity-building funding opportunities with the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation.

Organize and convene a meeting with key funders.

- Discuss further collaboration and paths forward for the Digital Strategies Initiative.

Increase resources, particularly unrestricted income.

- Expand fundraising base with the assistance of contracted fundraising counsel and support.
- Increase sponsorship base with assistance of AIC.