A SPOT ON THE HORIZON

LOOKING AHEAD

75

Key Findings from *A Spot on the Horizon*

Looking ahead
towards ICOMOS 75th anniversary

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A shared view of the challenges ahead

Looking ahead towards ICOMOS 75th anniversary, the *A Spot on the Horizon* initiative provides an opportunity to reflect on the future of the heritage field and the organisation's role over the next fifteen years. Based on 106 survey responses from members across all regions, complemented by a series of in-depth online conversations, the consultation highlights both the strengths of ICOMOS and the challenges that must be addressed to ensure its continued relevance and impact.

AN INCREASINGLY COMPLEX GLOBAL CONTEXT

Members identify **an increasingly complex global context** in which heritage is affected by political instability, armed conflicts, climate change, environmental degradation, and rapid social and technological change. These external pressures reinforce the need for ICOMOS to remain a trusted international authority while adapting its approaches to respond more effectively to emerging risks and evolving societal expectations.

The consultation also reveals a strong consensus on the need to **strengthen ICOMOS internally**. Members call for more transparent and efficient governance, greater organisational capacity, sustainable funding, and more equitable participation across the organisation. Particular emphasis is placed on improving representation and opportunities for members from the Global South, Indigenous communities, and early-career professionals by reducing financial, logistical, and language barriers to participation.

Renewal, relevance and the next stage

OPPORTUNITIES FOR RENEWAL

At the same time, members see significant **opportunities for renewal**. They highlighted the importance of expanding knowledge exchange, professional training, mentorship, and collaboration across National Committees, International Scientific Committees, and external partners. Digital technologies (including artificial intelligence, digital documentation, and innovative conservation tools) are recognised as valuable assets, provided they are implemented responsibly, ethically, and with equitable access. Sustainability, climate resilience, disaster preparedness, and post-crisis recovery are also identified as essential areas where ICOMOS can strengthen its leadership and global influence.

Throughout the consultation, members express strong appreciation for ICOMOS' contribution to international heritage standards, scientific expertise, professional networking, and policy development. However, they also call for greater visibility, stronger public engagement, and faster, more coordinated responses to global challenges. The future relevance of ICOMOS will depend not only on preserving its recognised expertise and ethical leadership, but also on embracing greater inclusivity, innovation, and collaboration while remaining responsive to the diverse needs of its global membership.

NEXT STAGE

Although only a portion of ICOMOS' membership participated, the quality and depth of the responses provide valuable insights into the organisation's priorities and aspirations. Building on these findings, the next stage will focus on fostering coordination across ongoing initiatives and supporting a shared strategic reflection on ICOMOS' future direction and role within the heritage field.