

The Institute of Conservator-Restorers in Ireland (ICRI)

The Institute of Conservator-Restorers in Ireland (ICRI) promotes within Ireland the practice of conservation of historic and artistic material to internationally accepted standards; improves public awareness and understanding of the need for conservation and provides a forum for those professionally engaged in the preservation of Ireland's man-made heritage.

The Institute's members work in both the public and private sectors on objects as diverse as oil paintings, paper, furniture, ceramics, buildings and sculpture. ICRI provides professional advice and support to curators, architects and exhibition designers as well as private clients and local heritage groups requiring guidance as how to best look after their collections or artefacts. By the end of 2016, ICRI had 120 members over five categories; 36 accredited, 56 conservator-restorer, 11 students, 15 associate and 2 Institutional.

In 2016, the Board of Directors met eight times. A number of changes to the Institute's Memorandum and Articles of Association were required to ensure compliance with the new Companies Act 2014 and the Charities Regulatory Authority (CRA). These changes were made in consultation with solicitors and the new Constitution was approved by the members at the Institute's AGM in May. The Chair was delighted to attend ECCO's 25th anniversary meeting in Berlin (5-6 June) with founding member of the Institute, Maighread McParland. The Institute also launched its five-year Strategic Plan: 2016-2020 in September and tendered for a new website in October.

The Institute's main objective is to promote within Ireland the practice of conservation to internationally accepted standards through the provision of professional accreditation, training workshops and bursaries to support continued professional development (CPD).

In 2016, ICRI received funding from the Heritage Council which supported the professional accreditation of six conservator-restorers in four disciplines: Paper, Books & Paper, Furniture & wood conservation and Conservation Management. The grant enabled twelve conservator-restorers to attend professional training courses in Ireland and abroad. The events attended were highly specialised in disciplines including easel paintings, photographs, furniture, paper and collection care.

There are currently no formal training courses in Ireland for the conservation of objects. Consequently students have to travel abroad for specialised training. In 2016, five education bursaries were awarded to students enrolled in the full-time courses.

In 2016, the Institute held its Biennial Conference 'Conservation Activities in Ireland V' on 29 September, which was formally opened by Michael Starrett, Chief Executive of the Heritage Council. The conference was held at the National Library of Ireland and attended by over 60 conservators and museum professionals. ICRI's conference committee have started work on publishing the papers presented. The conference post prints for *Conservation Activities in Ireland 2012 & 2014* were brought together in one publication which was launched in April thanks to sponsorship from the Department of Arts Heritage and the Gaeltacht.

ICRI was commissioned to organise a one-day workshop on Collections Care (5 April) for Museums Standard Programme for Ireland participants. The Institute was also commissioned by the Council of National Cultural Institutions to organise two workshops: 'Risks and Priorities in Conservation and Collection Management in Libraries, Archive and Museums' (7 October) and 'Business Continuity' as part of emergency response (22 November) - the funding received enabled conservators and museum professionals to attend both free of charge.