

ANALYSIS of 2006 Survey of WG Members, Board Members, and Members

The following information was taken from a survey, a series of email discussions, and discussions of the Working Group for Strategic Planning that have taken place at the 2004 and 2005 Conferences. The information is not ranked. A minimal amount of editing took place to minimize duplications, to insert a word for clarity, and to correct grammar.

SURVEY

Questions sent to Members:

1. In your own words, please write a mission statement for UMAC (not to exceed 75 words).
2. In your own words, please write a vision statement for UMAC (not to exceed 10 words).
3. List the five most important goals for UMAC (remember, these are qualitative changes such as an increase in new knowledge, not programs or activities).
4. List the five most important objectives for UMAC (remember, these are quantitative activities such as programs).
5. List the five most important resources or strengths of UMAC.
6. List the five greatest weaknesses of UMAC.
7. List the five most important activities of UMAC.
8. List the five greatest concerns you have for UMAC.
9. List the five most important external influences on UMAC

RESULTS

Mission (draft)

1. University collections are globally important resources for research, learning, outreach and enjoyment. UMAC is the leading international forum for these collections - promoting their use and development, and supporting their staff and host institutions. UMAC provides opportunities for sharing knowledge, initiating partnerships and networking worldwide, including through conferences, publications and the UMAC website.
2. UMAC is the premier international forum for museums and collections of universities and kindred organizations. It provides opportunities for sharing professional knowledge, initiating partnerships and networking worldwide. UMAC strongly advocates protection of the knowledge inherent in university collections whatever their present state, status or use. UMAC's website and various publications provide data, policies, procedures, definitions and details of current research. UMAC willingly provides information to its parent body ICOM and other relevant organizations (upon request).

Vision (draft)

1. Promoting and supporting university museums and collections worldwide.

2. UMAC is (should be?) the international hub for university museums and collections.

Goals

1. Promote the sharing of best practice, networking, research, partnerships and exchanges of staff and objects.
2. Create sound and sustainable management and membership for UMAC.
3. Be a national and international advocate for the use and value of university museums and collections, particularly among our colleagues in other sectors of the museum profession.
4. Raise the profile of university museums and collections within universities and the academic communities.
5. Provide services relevant to the needs of university museums and collections and their senior managers.
6. Promote research, partnerships and exchanges of experience, staff and objects.
7. Attract active members and engage them in the provision of services to our communities and to monitor succession planning.

Objectives

1. Prepare, maintain and disseminate advocacy resources to target audiences, and assess their effectiveness.
2. Maintain a resource centre (on the web) of advocacy resources we have each prepared, so that others can draw on them as needed.
3. Develop a dynamic strategy for UMAC activities and communications, including regularly publishing a newsletter highlighting new developments, best practice, current issues and general news; promoting contact between members; maintaining a lively website; developing new methods to encourage networking; organising and promoting an annual conference on a strategic theme in collaboration with local hosts, and publishing the proceedings.
4. Find ways to significantly increase the membership.
5. Actively seek student involvement in UMAC.
6. Strive for financial independence and sustainable management.
7. Organize the Annual Conferences in collaboration with the appropriate local hosts, national committees, and in conjunction with ICOM during triennial meetings. Joint meetings with other ICOM committees or appropriate organizations are possible.
8. Annually publish the proceedings of the conferences.
9. Learn more about university museums and collections.

10. Disseminate information about university museums and collections.
11. Provide resources and advice for those collections that are endangered, and to promote the ways in which danger of closing or loss of staff may be reduced.
12. Strive for financial independence through membership, grants and all available avenues including assistance in kind.
13. Create a broad international sustained campaign to raise awareness among high-level university officers (vice-chancellors, presidents, CEOs, rectors) via international higher education agencies.
14. Create a broad long-term sustained campaign to raise awareness among local or regional political stakeholders
15. Provide individual directors and curators with arguments and strategies enabling them to act autonomously.
16. Lobbying, publishing, and providing training.
17. Disseminate this information, make sure that it reaches the relevant stakeholders (first and second
18. Participate in stake-holder's meetings, present information about UMAC.
19. Sign conventions, protocols with main stakeholders
20. Increase access to information -improve the possibilities for the use of UMAC's website as a resource
21. Publish UMAC Guidelines for University Museums and Collections (in development, WG Ethics) –
22. Publish UMAC Policy on University Collections (in development, WG Ethics) –
23. Publish a Compilation of Good Practices provide training and knowledge share: -facilitate national UMAC workshops (e.g. the ones planned for France & Iberia) –include
24. Special sessions on the exchange of experiences and learning at the Annual Meetings- create a mailing list dedicated to these topics-foster cooperation and collaboration projects among u-museums staff

Strengths

1. Membership representing diverse, international community of professionals and museums and collections.
2. Collaboration with academic community.
3. Shared opportunities and common threats.
4. Membership with innovative ideas.

5. Official Recognition by and assistance from ICOM.
6. Large potential customer base internationally.
7. Young and flexible committee.

Resources (capital): we have

1. People – serious, top-quality, engaged people. In its members, UMAC has a network of people in the field attentive to signs of danger or threat or, on the contrary, attentive to good practices and examples of success.
2. A database of university museums and collections (on-going), meaning that we beginning to know what exists and where
3. A set of standards from the museum world (ICOM's, registration standards from museums' association worldwide) and from the university world (specific guidelines for university museums and collections have for example been developed by Macquarie and others).
4. Publications & conferences, where case-studies have been presented;
5. A website with a huge potential for growth;
6. A substantial bibliography on university museums and collections – including Arnold-Foster's and Kelly's surveys, among others – and a massive bibliography on higher education & research policies, surveys, polls, etc.;
7. ICOM (and UNESCO) – these are our partners and have the responsibility to stand by UMAC and university museums in general;
8. National associations of university museums (Australia, USA, UK, Scotland, Spain, etc) and regional groups like Universeum (Europe) – they have gathered valuable information about its members and should also join efforts with UMAC.

Weaknesses

1. Few members actively participating in the activities of UMAC.
2. Regular attendance at annual conference difficult to justify [cost/relevance to community at times of competing priorities].
3. Focus of UMAC may be unclear – it does not appear to be as relevant to subject specialisms, more to museum management and generalists – is this incorrect or unjustified?
4. Running museums is rarely part of the core activities of our host institutions.
5. Most people, including other sectors of museum profession, fail to recognize the size, importance or value of university collections.
6. Few members actively participating in the work of UMAC; succession planning weak.

7. Annual conference dependent on local conditions and politics; conference publication not resolved
8. Insufficient publicity, funds and status to attract or contribute in a major way to national university reviews.
9. Young Committee lacks gravitas.
10. Other sectors of museum profession fail to recognize

Information Needed: surveys and studies

1. About our collections and special collections and “treasures”
2. About our best practices
3. About our most dramatic situations
4. About our real impact on the university, and on our stakeholders.

Best Activities

1. Newsletter [the only bit that gets to everyone’s desktop and regularly reminds people we exist]
2. Website
3. Conference
4. Proceedings
5. Networking [in as far as it goes]
6. Part of ICOM
7. Working Groups

Concerns

1. Low recognition of the role of university museums by universities, the public, politicians and their servants.
2. Changing needs of universities from their collections (an opportunity and a threat).
3. Membership growing only slowly, mostly through contact with the conferences.
4. Insufficient nominations and zeal to work for UMAC.
5. Difficult to approach the critical mass of people working in or with university Museums.

External Influences

1. Changing needs of universities from their collections.
2. Funding priorities within Higher Education funding bodies and within institutions
3. Lack of understanding of the long-term value of university collections by senior management of universities, governments and politicians.
4. Difficulty of acceptance of museum research as research by university colleagues; challenges of engaging teaching colleagues with the collections.
5. Most museum professionals are stretched by the duties in their job, sometimes unwilling or unable to find time to give to UMAC
6. Most university museum curators and students lack the financial means to participate in UMAC conferences.
7. Lack of understanding of the long term value of university collections by senior management of universities.
8. Lack of interest of the value of University museums, by governments and politicians.

How much proactive international advocacy is required, rather than within our own countries, apart from in support of threatened collections? Some, but I suspect the balance lies with a need within the home country. Advocacy needs to be active in promotion of the use of collections, as well as in response to emergencies such as collections at risk.]