Initial Report for Professionalising Museum Work in Higher Education (P-MUS):
A Global Approach (P-MUS) Global Systematic Survey (GSS)

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Overview

Project P-MUS is a partnership between the ICOM Committee for University Museums and Collections (UMAC), the ICOM Committee for the Training of Personnel (ICTOP), the Association of Academic Museums and Galleries (AAMG, USA) and the European Academic Heritage Network (Universeum). The P-MUS team is comprised of the following members:
- UMAC: Marta C. Lourenço, PI (Portugal), Andrew Simpson (Australia), Barbara Rothermel (USA), Nathalie Nyst (Belgium)
- ICTOP: Darko Babic (Croatia), George Jacob (Canada), Phaedra Livingston (Canada), Ruth Linton (Barbados)
- AAMG: Jill Hartz (USA), Lana Burgess (USA), Nicolette Meister (USA), Pat Villeneuve (USA)
- UNIVERSEUM: Esther Boeles (Netherlands), Sébastien Soubiran (France)
- Jay Boda (USA), a student grant recipient, led project research and evaluation aided by Ana Delicado (Portugal) and Cristina Luis (Portugal).

The P-MUS team conducted the GSS from October 17 to November 15, 2017 (30 days); a pilot version of the survey was tested between September 23-27, 2017. The GSS was the first-ever attempt to survey an international population of higher education museum and/or collections professionals within all disciplines and job descriptions about their work, training, job satisfaction, and professional networks. The goal of the survey was to explore trends and differences among and between academic museum/collections professionals to help inform strategies to better train future museum professionals.

The survey consisted of 29 mandatory questions (21 quantitative, 8 qualitative) designed to survey four areas: Work, Background Training, Satisfaction and Expectations, and Professional Networks. There were two additional optional questions in a fifth section to capture training needs for future museum professionals and an opportunity for participants to volunteer for a future follow-up interview.

The P-MUS team conducted the GSS using the online survey and evaluation software, Qualtrics (hosted by Florida State University). Questions were written and validated in English, but participants had the option to change the survey language to Spanish (Castellano), French, or Portuguese. Off-line copies of survey questions (in each language) were available for participant review on the Project P-MUS GSS website (http://umac.icom.museum/activities/projects/icom-special-projects/p-mus-global-systematic-survey/).

Sample Description

A link to the survey was sent to a convenience sample (*N* = 5652) resulting from academic museum subscriber email distribution lists. These lists mainly included members from three groups: ICOM/UMAC (*n* = 2158), AAMG (*n* = 2536), and Universeum (*n* = 478). Smaller, regional academic museum distribution lists for groups based in Brazil, China, Iran, Italy, the Netherlands, Portugal, and the U.K. were also included. Email duplicates were eliminated. Responses were anonymized, however, participants could provide their name and eMail at the end of the survey if they volunteered for a future follow-up interview. The survey accepted responses between October 17 and November 15, 2017.

The initial response rate to the GSS was 11.21% (*n* = 634, participants who clicked the emailed link for the online survey; this number may include participants who later returned to the platform to respond). To begin the survey, participants had to acknowledge they qualified as a participant (someone working formally or informally in higher education museums or collections) and acknowledge the survey's confidentiality statement.

The qualifying participant response rate was 6.76% (*n* = 382) (see *Table 1*). Although this value may be considered low, the response rate for some countries provides interesting data for future analysis.

Number of recipients (*N*)	**5652**
Initial response rate (responded via email link)	**11.21%**
Number of qualified responses	**382**
Response rate	**6.76%**

Table 1. Summary of universe and sample.

Respondents were mainly from the U.S.A. (26.2%), Brazil (12.3%), the U.K. (8.6%), France (7.1%), and Portugal (5.8%). Total responses came from 42 countries. Respondents were mostly female (64.7%) between ages 35-54 (55.2%). Most reported having full time, permanent contracts (66.8%) The largest group of respondents reported working an average of 31-40 hours a week (38%). Salaries were fairly well distributed ranging from 10,000 to 75,000 USD. The top three job positions identified were: Administrator/Director/Deputy Director (27.5%), Collections Manager (25.7%), and Curator (22%) (see *Figure 1*).
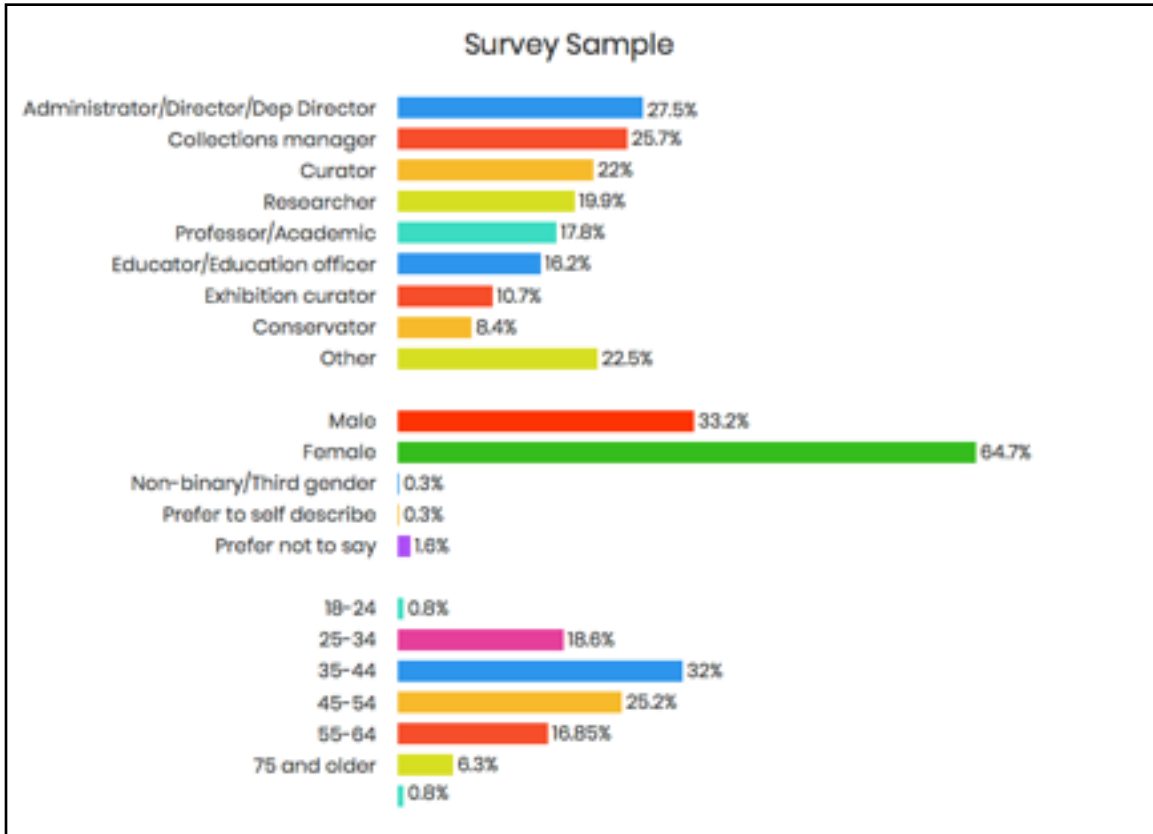
Figure 1. Survey sample description (*n* = 382; questions 1.1, 1.2, and 1.3)

Summary of Results

The following summarizes quantitative results. Qualitative data was also captured during this survey, but will not be described within this initial report. Appendix A contains a full description of all survey questions and tabulated quantitative results.

As is expected within multi-section surveys, the completion response rate dropped with each succeeding section:
- Section 1 (13 questions), 100% (*n* = 382)
- Section 2 (6 questions), 97.38% (*n* = 372)
- Section 3 (5 questions), 89.53% (*n* = 342)
- Section 4 (5 questions), 88.74% (*n* = 339)
- Section 5 (2 optional questions), 71.20% (*n* = 272).

Section 1 - Work

Collections and curatorial duties (70.5%), administration (64.2%), exhibitions planning and development (57.4%), research (52.3%), and education planning and development (50.4%) scored in the top half of respondents daily activities (see *Figure 2*). When asked if respondents felt more like a university employee or museum professional, a small majority skewed toward museum professional (56%).
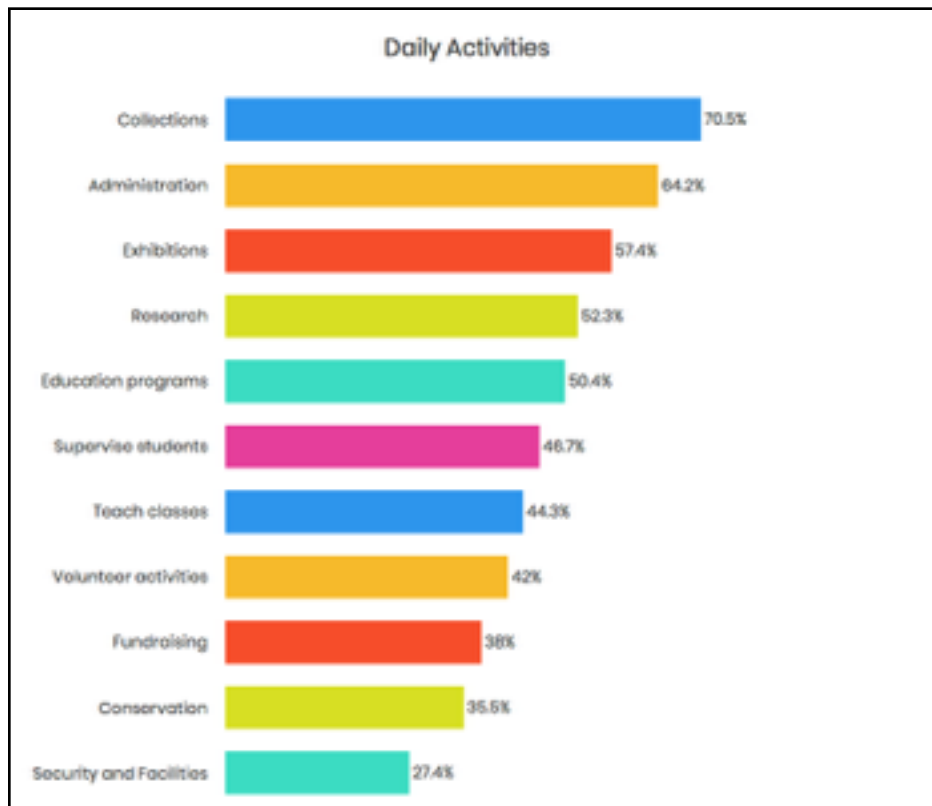

Figure 2. Daily Activities (*n* = 382; question 1.10)

Most respondents identified their institution type as "museum" (66.8%). Respondents described their collections as research (48.2%), teaching (45.3%), and historical (44.2%). The top three museum/collection subjects were: Art/Art History/Fine Arts (37.7%), Natural History/Natural Sciences (35.9%), and Science and Technology (28.3%) (see *Figure 3*).
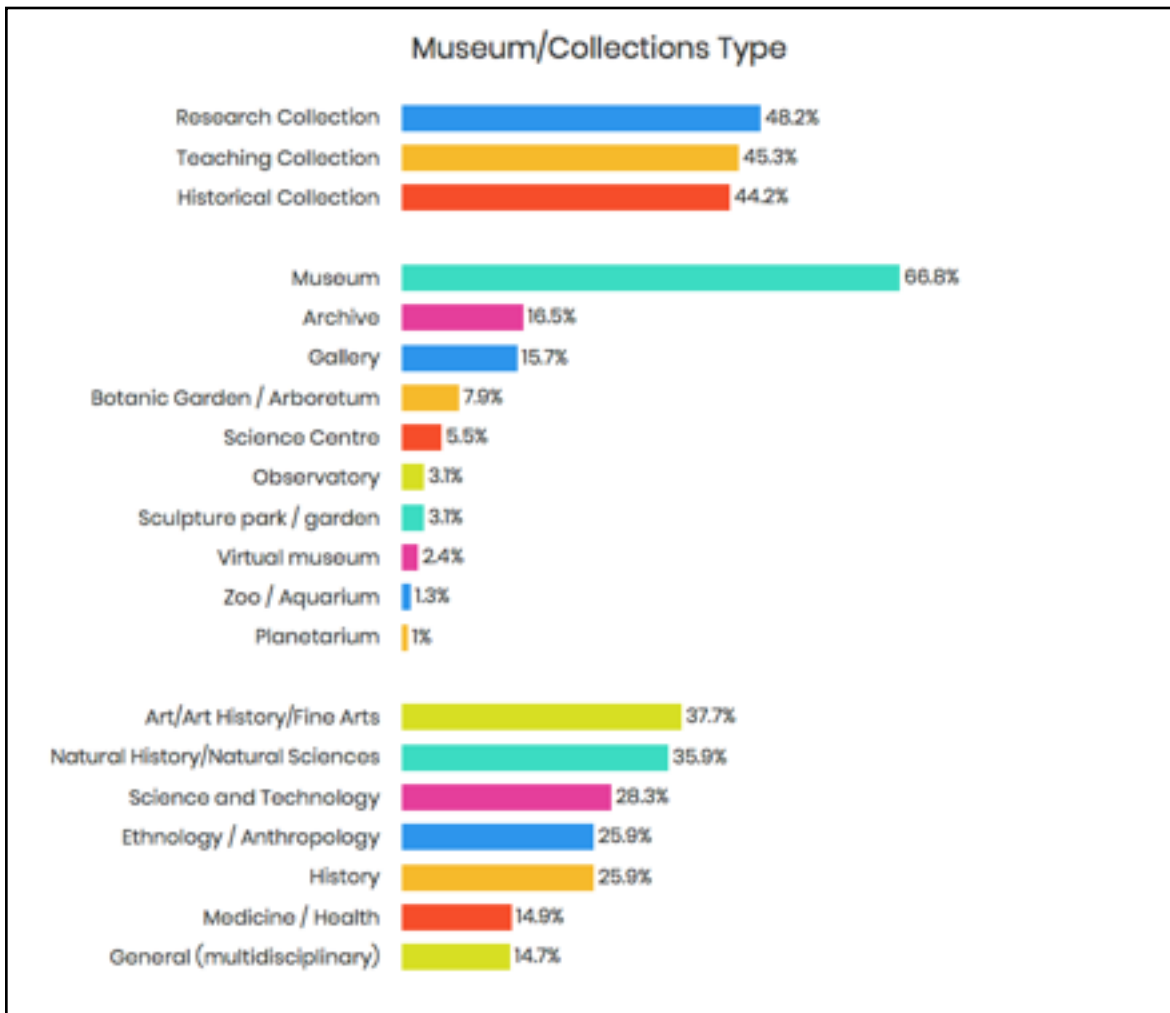

Figure 3. Museum/Collections Type and Subject (*n* = 382; questions 1.2 and 1.3)

Section 2 - Background Training

A majority of respondents reported they started their university museum/collection career between the years 2005 and 2017 (57.5%). Most reported a master's degree (44.1%) and doctoral degree (33.1%) as their highest level of education. On-the-job training (69.4%) and a master's degree (56.7%) ranked highest as component respondents thought were important for their academic training path (see *Figure 4*).
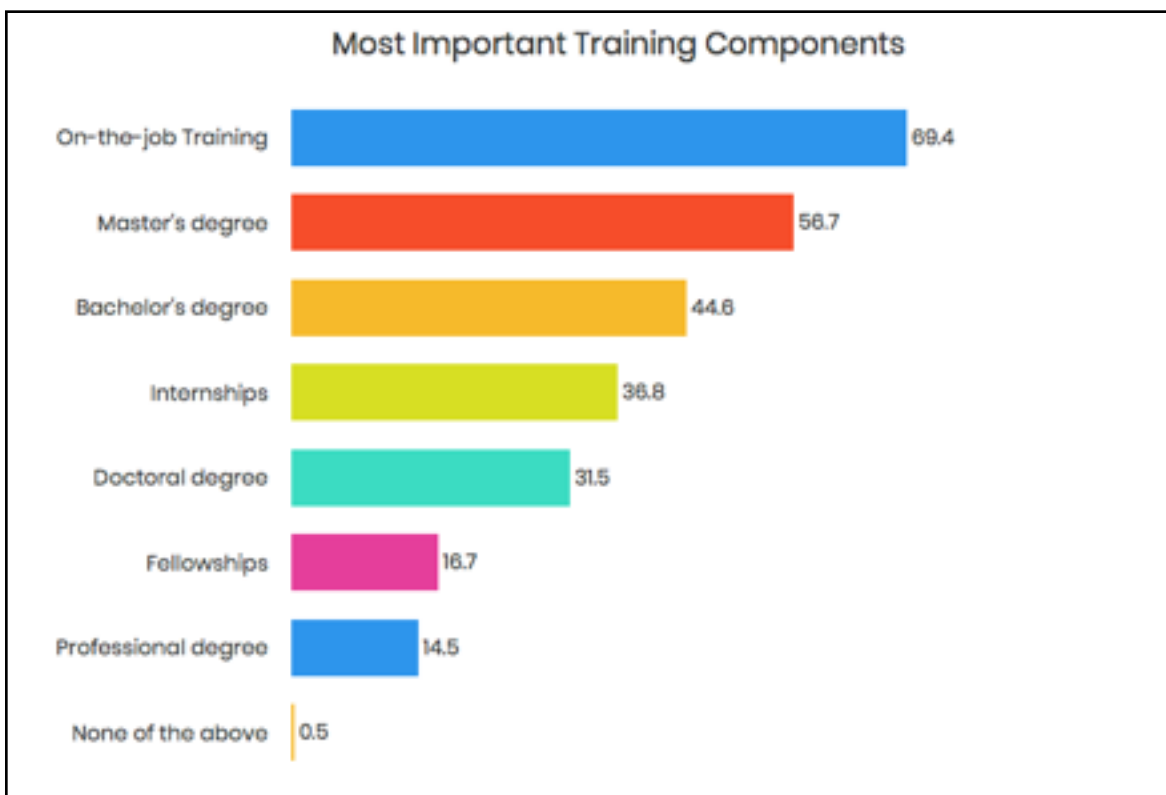
Figure 4. Important training components for current job (*n* = 372; question 2.4)

Just over half of respondents (54.8%) thought their academic training was sufficient to work in their museum/collection. One respondent's comment reflected a trend among those who said academic training was insufficient: It "does not cover leadership of organisation, fundraising, and strategic development areas necessary for senior museum management." Another representative comment from respondents: academic training was "far too theoretical without enough practical experience." Finally, several respondents proposed training specific to university museums with one saying, "I would like to receive formal training regarding the best way to maximize impact of a university museum for the learning communities."

Section 3 — Satisfaction and Expectations

When it came to their overall job satisfaction, a large majority of survey respondents (75.8%) reported being very satisfied or satisfied. The opportunity to work on interesting projects (80.7%), flexibility in working hours (79.9%), and job security (60.8%) were the top three contributing factors. Less than half of respondents reported satisfaction with university communication (vertical and horizontal, 46.5% and 36% respectively), their salary (45%), workload (41.2%), opportunity to advance (32.7%), available resources (31.6%), and recognition by the university (31.6%) (see *Figure 5*).

Figure 5. Job satisfaction (green) / dissatisfaction (red) (*n* = 342; question 3.4)

When asked to envision where respondents would like to be professionally in 10 years, most said they wanted to remain in the museum profession at the same or different university (58.8%). However, 9.1% of respondents said they wanted to remain in the museum profession, but not at a university/college. Of note, 10.5% of respondents answered they wanted to leave the museum/collection professional completely.

Section 4 — Professional Networks

Regarding academic museum professional networks, 17% of respondents said they were UMAC members, 23.6% answered AAMG, 12.4% answered Universeum, and 35% of respondents answered "None."

Of non-academic museum networks, 26.9% of respondents said they were members of ICOM and 17.7% were members of the American Alliance of Museums (AAM, USA). The

Southeastern Museum Conference (SEMC, USA) made up the next largest group (2.9%). Other museum network groups from around world numbered in the single digits and comprised less than 1% each.

Section 5 — Optional Questions

The final section asked respondents to suggest issues needing to be addressed to train future university museums/collections professionals.

The final question allowed participants to opt-in to be contacted for a future follow-up interview — 65.97% of respondents ($n = 252$) volunteered for a future interview.

Conclusion

This report represents a solid first step towards exploring the current state of international, higher education museum/collections professionals' training, backgrounds, work, and networks. As previously noted, qualitative data was collected (in four languages) during the GSS. This data still needs to be analyzed, cross-referenced, and compared with quantitative data to determine trends and make recommendations for training future museum professionals.

The P-MUS team hopes the ICOM/UMAC community sees the value and potential these initial results present and will continue mining this data as a means to develop global strategies to strengthen and professionalise the museum profession.

Appendix A

GSS Questions and Tabulated Responses

SECTION 1 –WORK: In this section, we would like to know more about you and your work with university museums/collections. (*n* = 382)

1.1 Job title (select all that apply)
- Administrator/Director/Deputy Director (27.5%)
- Collections Manager (25.7%)
- Curator (22%)
- Researcher (19.9%)
- Professor / Academic (17.8%)
- Educator/Education Officer (15.2%)
- Exhibition Curator (10.7%)
- Conservator (8.4%)
- *Other; please describe (22.5%)*
  - *Qualitative results*

1.2 Museum/Collection type
- Research Collection (48.2%)
- Teaching Collection (45.3%)
- Historical Collection (44.2%)

- Museum (66.8%)
- Archive (16.5%)
- Gallery (15.7%)
- Botanic garden / Arboretum (7.9%)
- Science centre (5.5%)
- Observatory (3.1%)
- Sculpture Park/Garden (3.1%)
- Virtual Museum (2.4%)
- Zoo / Aquarium (1.3%)
- Planetarium (1.0%)
- *Other; please describe (7.6%)*
  - *Qualitative results*

1.3 Museum/Collection Subject(s)
- Art/History of Art/Fine Arts (37.7%)
- Natural History/Natural Sciences (35.9%)
- Science and Technology (28.3%)
- Ethnology/Anthropology (25.9%)
- History (25.9%)

- Medicine/Health (14.7%)
- General (multidisciplinary) (14.9%)

1.4 Name of University/College
- *Qualitative results*

1.5 What person/department/division does your Museum/Collection report to?
- *Qualitative results*

1.6 Country/territory

Country/Territory	%
The United States of America	26.2
Brazil	12.3
United Kingdom	8.6
France	7.1
Portugal	5.8
Spain	3.7
Italy	3.4
Germany	3.1
The Netherlands	2.4
China	2.1
Norway	2.1
Canada	1.6
Philippines	1.3
Switzerland	1.3
Australia	1.0
Belgium	1.0
Greece	1.0
Serbia	1.0
Pakistan	0.8

Poland	0.8
South Africa	0.8
Denmark	0.5
Estonia	0.5
Finland	0.5
Iran	0.5
Ireland	0.5
Mexico	0.5
Peru	0.5
Armenia	0.3
Austria	0.3
Chile	0.3
Czechia	0.3
Guatemala	0.3
Hong Kong	0.3
India	0.3
Jamaica	0.3
Kenya	0.3
Lebanon	0.3
Romania	0.3
Russia	0.3
Sweden	0.3
Taiwan	0.3

Table 2. Country/Territory respondent representation ($n = 382$)

1.7 Type of contract
- Full time, permanent (66.8%)
- Full time, non-permanent (9.7%)
- Part-time, permanent (9.7%)
- Part-time, non-permanent (6.0%)
- *Other; please specify (7.9%)*
  - *Qualitative results*

1.8 Annual salary/remuneration
- 0 UDS (5.2%)
- Less than 10,000 USD (17.1%)
- 10,000-25,000 USD (18.7%)
- 25,001-35,000 USD (14.5%)
- 35,001-50,000 USD (14.0%)
- 50,001-75,000 USD (18.7%)
- More than 75,000 USD; please estimate (11.9%)
  - *Qualitative results*

1.9 Average number of hours, per week, working with your Museum/Collection:
- 10 or less (16.2%)
- 11-20 (12.3%)
- 21-30 (12.0%)
- 31-40 (38.0%)
- 41-50 (16.0%)
- More than 50 (6.0%)

1.10 Using the sliders, indicate the approximate average PERCENTAGE of your time spent on activities below: (because duties overlap, totals do not need to equal 100- percent)
- Collections (curatorial activities, collections management) (70.5%)
- Administration, management, finance, human resources (64.2%)
- Exhibitions (planning and development) (57.4%)
- Research (52.3%)
- Education programs (planning and development) (50.4%)
- Supervise students, novice researchers (46.7%)
- Teach classes (44.3%)
- Volunteer activities (management and development) (42.0%)
- Fundraising/Marketing (38.0%)
- Conservation activities (35.5%)
- Security and facilities care (27.4%)
- *Other(s); please specify 73.7%*
  - *Qualitative results*

1.11 Using the slider, indicate if you feel more you are more of an Academic/ University Employee or Museum Professional? (1 = Mostly Academic/University Employee; 10 = Mostly Museum Professional)
- Mean = 6.13
- SD=2.74; Var=7.53
  - 1 (7.3%)
  - 2 (6.0%)
  - 3 (6.3%)
  - 4 (7.9%)
  - 5 (16.5%)
  - 6 (6.8%)
  - 7 (9.7%)
  - 8 (15.4%)
  - 9 (12.3%)
  - 10 (11.8%)

1.12 Age
- 18-24 (0.8%)
- 25-34 (18.6%)
- 35-44 (32.0%)
- 45-54 (25.2%)
- 55-64 (16.85)
- 65-74 (6.3%)
- 75 and older (0.8%)

1.13 Gender
- Male (33.2%)
- Female (64.7%)
- Non-binary/third gender (0.3%)
- Prefer to self-describe; *please specify* (0.3%)
  - *Qualitative results*
- Prefer to not say (1.6%)

SECTION 2 – BACKGROUND TRAINING: In this section, we want to know more about your formal academic training. (*n* = 372)

2.1 What is the highest degree or level of education you have completed?
- No schooling completed
- Primary Education
- Secondary Education (1.3%)
- Trade/Technical/Vocational degree or diploma (0.3%)
- Bachelor's Degree (10.5%)
- Master's Degree (44.1%)

- Professional Degree (4.3%)
- Doctoral Degree/PhD, EdD (33.1%)
- *Other; please specify (6.5%)*
  - *Qualitative results*

2.2 Name of Degree / Program / Certificate MOST relevant to CURRENT position / career:
- *Qualitative results*

2.3 In what year did you start working in a university Museum/Collection?
- Before 1990 (12.1%)
- 1990-1999 (13.7%)
- 2000-2004 (16.7%)
- 2005-2009 (19.6%)
- 2010-2014 (23.4%)
- 2015-2017 (14.5%)

2.4 Identify the components of your formal academic training path that you think are important to leading to your current position: (select all that apply)
- On-the-job training (69.4%)
- Master's degree (56.7%)
- Bachelor's degree (44.6%)
- Internship(s) (36.8%)
- Doctoral degree/PhD/EdD (31.5%)
- Fellowship(s) (16.7%)
- Professional degree (14.5%)
- None of the above (0.5%)
- *Other; please specify (9.75)*
  - *Qualitative results*

2.5 Do you consider your ACADEMIC training sufficient for your work at the Museum/ Collection?
- Yes (54.8%)
- No (45.2%)
  - *Qualitative results*

2.6 If you took museum studies/museology courses, briefly describe HOW they may or may not have prepared you for your work at the Museum/Collection.
- *Qualitative results*

SECTION 3 – SATISFACTION AND EXPECTATIONS: In this section, we want to know more about what you like or don't like in your work with university museums/collections, as well as your professional expectations. (*n* = 342)

3.1 Describe briefly your most significant difficulty/problem/challenge at work (maximum 10 words).
- *Qualitative results*

3.2 Describe briefly what you like the most about your work (maximum 10 words).
- *Qualitative results*

3.3 Describe briefly what frustrates you most about your work (maximum 10 words).
- *Qualitative results*

3.4 Please indicate your level of satisfaction with each of the following items: (Very Satisfied—Satisfied — Neither Satisfied nor Dissatisfied — Dissatisfied — Very Dissatisfied)
- **Overall job satisfaction 75.8% / 7% (Very Satisfied+Satisfied / Dissatisfied+Very Dissatisfied)**
- Opportunity to work on interesting projects 80.7% / 11.1%
- Flexibility of working hours 79.9% / 9.3%
- Job security 60.8% / 19.9%
- Access to training 53.8% / 18.7%
- Ability to influence 50.6% / 24.6%
- Recognition by university colleagues (horizontal) 50% / 22.2%
- Communication with university units (horizontal) 46.5% / 23.1%
- Salary 45% / 30.7%
- Clear job description 43.7% / 23.3%
- Workload 41.2% / 33.6%
- Communication with university hierarchy (vertical) 36% / 33.3%
- Opportunity for advancement 32.7% / 38.6%
- Recognition by university hierarchy (vertical) 31.6% / 40.9%
- Available resources for your work 31.6% / 44.7%

3.5 Professionally, where would you like to be in 10 years?
- Same profession, same university/college (46.5%)
- Same profession, different university/college (12.3%)
- Same profession, not with a university/college (9.1%)
- Retired (8.8%)
- A different profession, with a university/college (6.4%)
- A different profession, not with a university/college (4.1%)
- *Other; please specify (12.8)*
  - *Qualitative results*

SECTION 4 – PROFESSIONAL NETWORKS: In this section, we want to know about your professional communities and networks. (*n* = 339)

4.1 Are you an ICOM Member?
- Yes (26.9%)

4.1.1 Which ICOM National Committee do you belong to?

Country	%
The United States of America	16.3
Brazil	15.2
Italy	5.4
United Kingdom	5.4
France	4.3
Belgium	3.3
Norway	3.3
South Africa	3.3
Switzerland	3.3
Argentina	2.2
Austria	2.2
Canada	2.2
China	2.2
Finland	2.2
Germany	2.2
Mexico	2.2
Peru	2.2
Portugal	2.2
Spain	2.2
Afghanistan	1.1
Armenia	1.1

Australia	1.1
Chile	1.1
Czechia	1.1
Denmark	1.1
Estonia	1.1
Greece	1.1
Iran	1.1
Ireland	1.1
Lebanon	1.1
The Netherlands	1.1
Pakistan	1.1
Philippines	1.1
Poland	1.1
Serbia	1.1
Taiwan	1.1

Table 3. ICOM National Committee representation (*n* = 339)

4.1.2 Which ICOM International Committee(s) do you belong to? (select all that apply)
- UMAC (63%)
- Do not know (13.0%)
- ICOFOM (8.7%)
- ICOM-CC (6.5%)
- None (6.5%)
- CECA (4.3%)
- ICMAH (4.3%)
- CIMUSET (3.3%)
- ICME (3.3%)
- NATHIST (3.3%)
- CAMOC (2.2%)
- CIPEG (2.2%)
- COMCOL (2.2%)
- ICFA (2.2%)

- ICTOP (2.2%)
- INTERCOM (2.2%)
- AVICOM (1.1%)
- CIDOC (1.1%)
- CIMCIM (1.1%)
- DEMHIST (1.1%)
- ICEE (1.1%)
- ICR (1.1%)
- COSTUME (0%)
- GLASS (0%)
- ICAMT (0%)
- ICDAD (0%)
- ICLCM (0%)
- ICMEMO (0%)
- ICMS (0%)
- ICOMAM (0%)
- ICOMON (0%)
- MPR (0%)
- *Other; please specify (2.2%)*
  - *Qualitative results*

4.2 To what national or regional UNIVERSITY Museums/Collections networks are you a formal or informal member? (select all that apply)
- None (35.1%)
- Association of Academic Museums and Galleries (AAMG, USA) (23.6%)
- Universeum, European Academic Heritage Network (12.4%)
- The University Museums Group (UMG, England/Wales/Northern Ireland) (5.3%)
- Brazilian Forum/Network of University Museums (5.0%)
- Association of University Collections in Germany (2.1%)
- University Museums in Scotland (UMIS) (2.1%)
- SAE - The Dutch Foundation for Academic Heritage (1.8%)
- National Educational Alliance of University and College Museums (NEAUCM, China) (1.2%)
- Council of Australian University Museums and Collections (CAUMAC) (0.9%)
- Colecciones y museos universitários México (0.6%)
- Grupo UMAC en Peru (0.6%)
- Polish Association of University Museums (0.6%)
- Flanders - Interuniversity Platform for Academic Heritage (0.3%)
- Greek University Museums and Collections Working Group (0.3%)
- Grupo UMAC en Chile (0.3%)
- Network of Finnish University Museums (0.3%)
- Korean Association of University Museums (KAUM) (0%)
- *Other; please specify (18.0%)*

  • *Qualitative results*

4.3 To what other networks/professional associations/scientific or academic societies are you a member?
  • *Qualitative results*

SECTION 5 – OPTIONAL QUESTIONS: In this last section, your responses are optional. (*n* = 272)

5.1 In general, what issues are most needed in training programs for future university museums/collections professionals?
  • *Qualitative results*

5.2 Would you agree to be contacted in the follow-up of this survey?
• Yes (66.0%)
  • *Qualitative results*
• No (34.0%)