UMAC Strategic Plan 2026–2028

UMAC was created in 2001 and played a crucial role in enhancing the visibility of university museums and collections among both higher education and research institutions but also museums community at large. Under the leadership of successive boards of directors, it has become a network that, on the one hand, provides a forum for all those who work in or are associated with museums, galleries, and university collections and, on the other hand, develops tools and collective projects that serve the sustainability of our community.

In these polarized times the role of university museums and collections is paramount. Most University museums all over the world have claimed a responsibility in knocking down the walls between the broader public and universities, between local communities and academics, developing tools for creating and supporting dialogue, engagement and participation of the wider community and to make scientific knowledge accessible and intelligible.

By echoing the breadth of its representants, cultural diversity from all over the world, UMAC can constitute a forum that supports collective reflection and actions on a sustainable society, bringing together research actors, political and economic representatives and the territory's inhabitants in all their diversity and their specific knowledge.

In order to achieve that our strategic plan will be articulated around three main directions. These directions echoed the ICOM 2022-2028 Strategic plan.

First direction: Consolidate UMAC's visibility and sustainability

It is important to commit to digital access and better communication for all members.

UMAC has many online tools that were developed during preceding mandates and are good tools to communicate what our community is and is doing for example on UMAC YouTube channel our "Imaginations" series on which is focused on early career professionals and "Zoom in" series that presents new initiatives that can inspire our community. The board will continue to support these initiatives.

- UMAC Awards are getting more and more visibility, receiving increasing nominations worldwide. The objective is now to attract as wide a pool of deserving applicants as possible for this award and also increase its visibility across ICOM and museum professional at large.
- UMAC- the Journal is a very important tool to enhance our visibility among the professional and academic community. In order to reflect regional and area priorities and concerns, we will assure UMAC-J Board is representative of the diversity of our members and to seek proposals from under-represented areas on topics that are of local interest.
- We will also strengthen our connection with ICOM executive board in order to bring our research and professional expertise to the major issues under debate.

Second Direction: Enhance UMAC's inclusiveness and connections to better benefit our community at large

- In order to have the heritage community benefit more from the expertise and richness of its members we will encourage a more decentralized approach through working groups at local or regional level, using their own language. A specific example of this is The UMAC "Building Bridges / Construyendo Puentes" initiative, a bilingual platform that seeks to build a network of university museums and collections in the Spanish-speaking world. Similar projects will be supported in areas where currently there is little UMAC presence but potentially a number of important university museum collections.
- Special attention will be dedicated to encouraging and supporting the participation of students and younger emerging professionals in UMAC activities, particularly from regions with low UMAC participation.
- UMAC digital presence is considered as a priority to include more accessible online participation for annual conferences, and further support for the UMAC/UNIVERSEUM successful "Teaching with Objects" platform

Third direction: Highlight our commitment to important issues by identifying where we can best contribute

There are many subjects in which UMAC has already been involved whereas with specific projects funds by SAREC and various partners or UMAC-J publications.

The following topics will be considered as priority during the next three years and drive our collaborations with other committees, partners as well as poten5al applications for SAREC funds.

Decolonisation: strengthen our collabora5on with researchers working on decolonisa5on issues by identifying and participating in active work within the organisation, especially on repatriation.

Human remains in U-medical collections: the issue of human remains in university medical collections still needs to be addressed in the context of ethics, display and research.

Science and society dialogue: UMAC should echo the effort of universities to fight against the growing suspicion towards science, in this era of 'Fake News' and of populism.

Sustainability, climate and social justice: University museums are the best place to constitute a forum that supports collective reflec5on and actions on a sustainable society, bringing together researchers, political and economic representatives and the territory's inhabitants in all their diversity and their specific knowledge.

Surveillance and support: with the rise of military conflicts, political and economic crises all over the world UMAC should work closely with ICOM on heritage protection: raising the alarm and getting support to endangered U-museums and collections.

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