

Dear colleagues,

First of all let us thank you very much for the initiative and organization of the meeting, which helps to make the process inclusive and fruitful. The updating of the museum definition is very important for ICOM Ukraine as well as for all National Committees and museum communities around the world. ICOM Ukraine will be as active as it can to make its contribution in common discussion.

Last year our inner discussions on the topic were unsystematic so this year newly elected ICOM Ukraine Board has restarted with the discussion of possible updates on the museum definition to gather the wider spectrum of views from the museum community of Ukraine – not only ICOM members but also museum activists and professional which are not ICOM members yet, representatives of the high school (including students on museology), authorities and some other important stakeholders and decision makers. Dr. Anastasiia Cherednychenko will be a coordinator of the process. We will keep you informed on the results.

On behalf of the ICOM Ukraine Board we would like to underline next points for now:

- The basic functions / characteristics of the museum in current definition - ...***non-profit, permanent institution in the service of society and its development, open to the public, which acquires, conserves, researches, communicates and exhibits the tangible and intangible heritage of humanity and its environment*** ...- are cornerstone for Ukrainian museums and let us to protect them. So other characteristics could be added for its development but nothing of underlined could be excluded;
- It is important that in case of any updates the museum definition also has to let us to divide clearly museums and other type of institutions, which use the word “museum” in their title but their activities do not correspond with the museum definition and Code of Ethics. Such cases as new “museums” based on private archaeological or paleontological and other collections without provenance or presentation of such kind of private collections in the state museums, as well as a stereotype that museums are just storages for “valuable objects” but are not the centers of knowledge or critical thinking force us to take into account also the heritage protection aspects in the discussion on updated definition;
- Taking into account the experience of totalitarian and post-totalitarian past of our country, we should warn that only formal compliance with functional criteria does not prevent museums from being transformed into the propaganda’s instrument of totalitarian and anti-human regimes. That is why it is important to provide a definition not only with a basic core, but also with a layer, in addition to the functional signs, that would express the essential landmarks and the values for which a museum should serves in a free and democratic society.

We will be grateful also for any information about the results of the meeting and access to the presentations of other National Committees.

Thank you very much for your attention and cooperation,

With best wishes,

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