



# IMPACT REPORT 2022-2023

for the year ending 31 March 2023





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## About Icon

Icon (the Institute of Conservation) is a **charitable company** working to safeguard cultural heritage. Icon is also the **professional membership body** for the conservation profession.

## Icon's Vision

**Icon's Vision** is to protect, preserve and promote our treasured cultural heritage through cultivating skilled conservation professionals, supporting meaningful collaboration across the cultural heritage sector, and delivering public benefit through engagement and advocacy.

## Icon's mission

**Icon's mission** is to represent and support the practice and profession of conservation by promoting the public value of caring for cultural heritage and upholding high standards and ethics in conservation practice. Icon ensures that the guardians and owners of objects, buildings and collections can access knowledgeable and passionate professionals who will help them safeguard the physical remains of our past for the future.





# STRATEGIC PRIORITIES

In 2022, Icon started work to deliver the new Icon Strategy, which focuses on two interlinked objectives: achieving wider recognition of the value that conservation brings to society and ensuring that the work of conservation professionals is recognised and respected because its relevance to society is understood.

Five overarching strategic aims support the delivery of these objectives:

- **Champion cultural heritage and the value of conservation**
- **Extend our reach within the UK and internationally**
- **Maintain high standards in conservation practice**
- **Develop conservation as an inclusive and rewarding career**
- **Strengthen our Institute**



# A MESSAGE FROM THE CHIEF EXECUTIVE



April 2022 marked the beginning of our work to deliver the new Icon Strategy.

Over the coming years, our annual Impact Report will showcase our achievements delivering the five overarching strategic aims. achievements that would not be possible without the tireless dedication and effort of our staff team, Board of Trustees and the many volunteers who contribute their time in a myriad of ways.

## **Iconnect**

Looking back over the last year it is heartening to see Icon's continuing transformation into a full-fledged professional body, and to note the increase in our public profile and sector standing. The relaunch of our member magazine (now called Iconnect) in January marked a key point in our organisational maturity and demonstrates our growing self-confidence.

It also highlights our desire to share our stories with a wider audience, reaching out to people who embrace our approach to caring for cultural heritage but who might not necessarily characterise themselves as conservators. Our ambition is for Icon to be the home of professional conservators and heritage scientists in the broadest sense, encompassing the full spectrum of specialisms from objects to museum collections to buildings, those working in private practice and those who work in our institutions.

Working to achieve greater accessibility and to be more inclusive has been an important element in two of the projects that we undertook during the year: the review of Icon's accreditation framework and the development of a new Skills Strategy.

## **Skills Strategy**

Ensuring that the skills to effectively care for objects, collections and built heritage exist within the conservation workforce relies on a fine balance between the number of


individuals undertaking training, the skills they are being taught, and the need to respond to demand from employers, clients and commissioners of conservation services. Our new Skills Strategy will enable us to focus our time and resources on the most pressing training issues within our sector as well as supporting the development of sustainable entry routes into the conservation profession and providing continuing professional development opportunities for conservators and heritage scientists throughout their careers.

## **All change!**

The end of the year also brought a key change in Icon's leadership as we bid farewell to outgoing Chair, James Grierson, and welcomed Emma Chaplin as Icon's new Chair. Emma's professional experience as a museum consultant and former CEO of the Association of Independent Museums stands her in good stead for the role, as she appreciates how to balance the needs of Icon as a professional body with the delivery of its charitable objectives. I also shared news of my departure for pastures new at the end of four years as Chief Executive. I leave with many fond memories and the hope that the organisation will continue to blossom and grow over the coming years.

*Sara Crofts, Chief Executive*





**Looking back over the last year, it is heartening to see Icon's continuing transformation into a fully-fledged professional body, and to note the increase in our public profile and sector standing.**

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## Business Skills Programme

Throughout the year, we were pleased to offer both members and non-members the opportunity to develop their business skills. Our Business Skills Foundation course featured four fantastic speakers whose workshops covered business confidence, finance, law, marketing plans, and going freelance.

We also held a 'Write a Business Plan' session led by Andrew Evans, and ran two Grant Writing workshops led by Icon's Chair, Emma Chaplin. Overall, 80 people attended these events and used it as an opportunity to further network and share advice.

## Conservation, People and Communities Briefing

There has been a growing recognition of the positive contribution that conservation and preservation of heritage makes to the lives of individuals and communities. The topic is benefitting from an expanding evidence-base, although more research is undoubtedly needed.

We republished our briefing on *Conservation, People and Communities*, which outlines the key topics within this subject and suggests areas for focus moving forward. You can read it [here](#).

## Icon at the Historic Buildings, Parks & Gardens Event

Icon was present with a stand at the Historic Buildings, Parks & Gardens Event 2022 talking to owners, guardians, volunteers and professionals involved with historic buildings about the Conservation Register and hiring accredited conservators. We also delivered a programme of conservation demonstrations with the help of Icon members.



Icon member Jacqueline Hyman ACR delivering an Icon demonstration at the Historic Buildings, Parks & Gardens Event



# OUR YEAR IN NUMBERS



**280+** new members



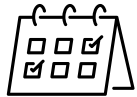
**110** including 110 new Student Members



**43** representing 43 different countries around the globe

## Membership

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**92** training and skills events delivered



**23** members achieved Icon Accreditation



**120** job vacancies advertised to Icon members

## Skills

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**582** people visiting the Icon website every day

**32** searches on the Conservation Register per day



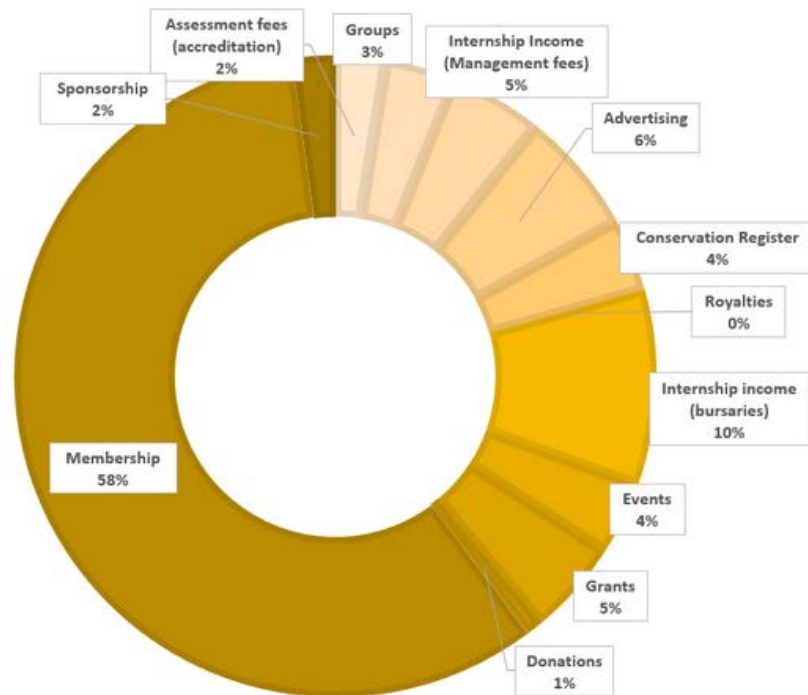
**76%** increase in LinkedIn followers since 2022

## Communications

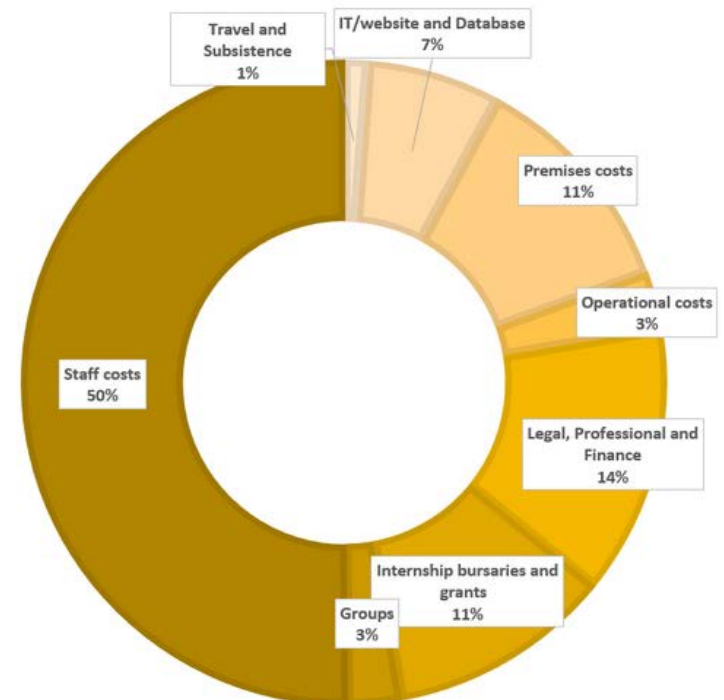
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# OUR YEAR IN NUMBERS

## INCOME



## EXPENDITURE





# SPOTLIGHT ON IMPACT

## REVAMPING OUR LONG- RUNNING MEMBER MAGAZINE

In 2022, we gave our long-running member magazine a revamp, following a Strategy Paper and a Creative Brief based on the results of a readership survey.

We wanted the updated magazine to engage everyone to celebrate the many ways cultural heritage conservation brings benefits to society.

While staying relevant to our members, we also wanted the magazine to increase the understanding of the value of conservation with the public, and attract non-member conservators, students, allied professionals and heritage enthusiasts to engage with us.

We realised that to do this, we needed our magazine to be the voice of the profession in a much stronger way than before. We produced a magazine which focuses on casting a spotlight on the professionals behind the projects and emphasises a sense of shared mission among our members and supporters.

**[Find out more about how we relaunched our member magazine.](#)**

Our new magazine spotlights the professionals behind the projects and the human dimensions of conservation practice





# SPOTLIGHT ON IMPACT

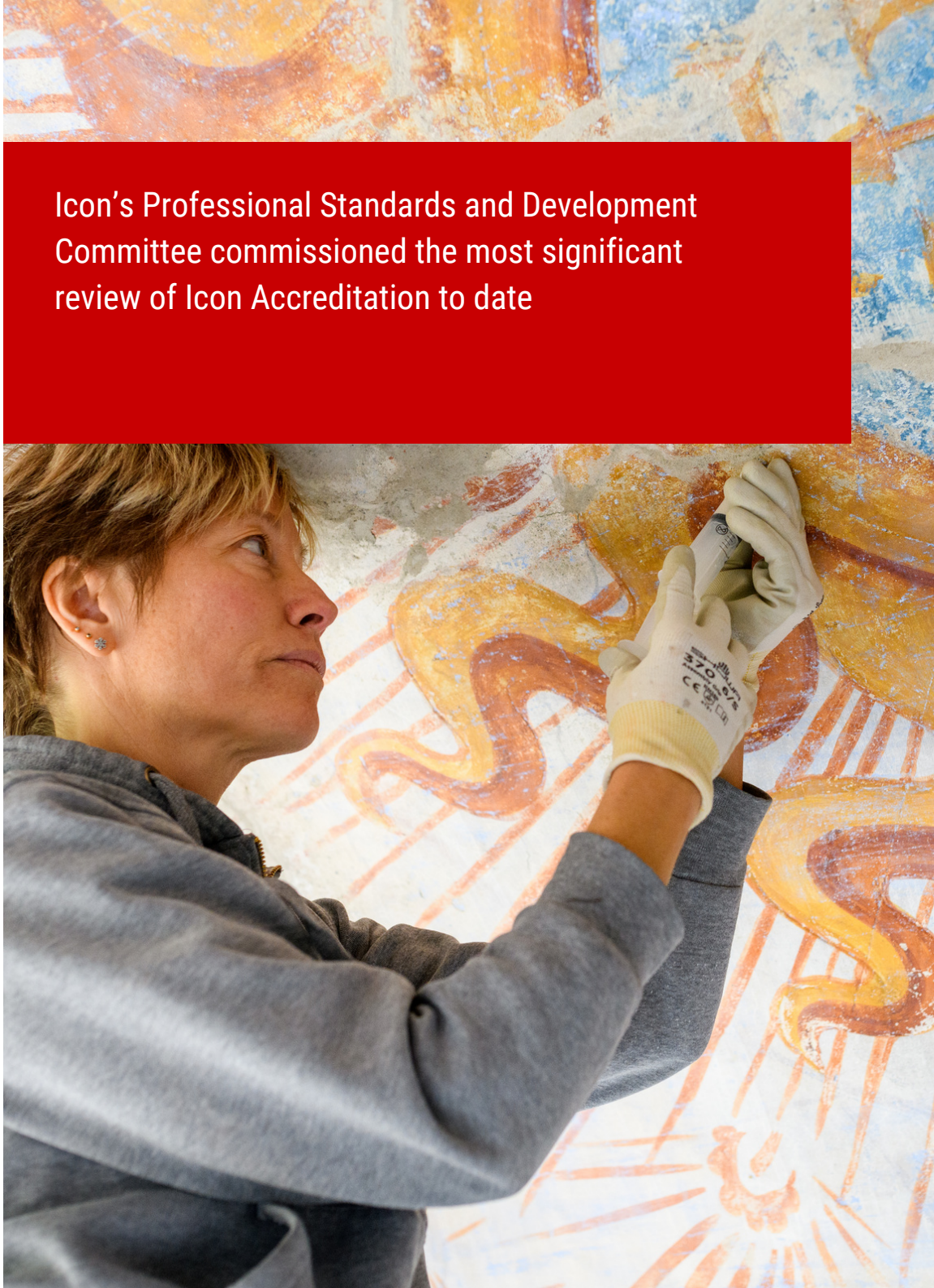
## MAKING ICON ACCREDITATION ACCESSIBLE TO ALL

Icon Accreditation has been periodically reviewed over the last 23 years to ensure that it remains fit for purpose and meets the needs of conservators and importantly employers, clients and commissioners of conservation-restoration services.

This year, Icon's Professional Standards and Development Committee commissioned the most significant review yet: a fundamental review of the actual process by which Icon accreditation is delivered to ensure that it remains fit for purpose, is accessible to all and is consistent in its approach, whilst also ensuring that the high standards of practice expected in the conservation profession are maintained and developed.

Icon members led this review to ensure that whatever was developed met the needs of professional conservators and the sector as a whole. A panel was formed that included assessors, accreditation committee members, mentors and pathway members.

**Find out more about the [results of the review](#).**



Icon's Professional Standards and Development Committee commissioned the most significant review of Icon Accreditation to date



# SPOTLIGHT ON IMPACT

## CONDUCTING RESEARCH ON CONSERVATION SALARIES

Icon recognises that to effectively advocate for fair pay and conditions for members of the conservation profession, our campaigns and consultation responses must be supported by accurate and reliable data. Data is also necessary to inform decision-making on areas of policy related to pay and reward.

As part of our ongoing work to capture labour market intelligence, we carried out a salary survey to gather real-world data from Icon members in 2022.

Following this research, we published salary benchmarks for early career, mid-career, and senior level positions reflecting the data gathered in the survey, and provided minimum salary recommendations.

**Find out more about our [salary benchmarking](#).**



We conducted a salary survey to gather real-world data from Icon members and published salary benchmarks



# SPOTLIGHT ON IMPACT

## INTRODUCING INTERNATIONAL AUDIENCES TO CONSERVATION

In May 2022, fashion conservation went viral when Kim Kardashian wore Marilyn Monroe's dress on the red carpet for the Metropolitan Museum of Art's annual gala.

Sarah Scaturro, former Head Conservator at the Costume Institute at the Metropolitan Museum of Art, was invited to present our Annual Lecture discussing the subject, capitalising on the global media coverage it had received.

We set out to reach the general public and aimed to promote the lecture more internationally to attract new supporters from overseas. We have used data insights to plan a social media campaign targetting people interested in conservation both within the UK and overseas.

A record number of 646 people booked tickets for the Annual Lecture 2022, out of which 223 (34.5%) were located outside the UK.

**Find out more about [how we used data to attract international audiences to our Annual Lecture.](#)**

Our 2022 Annual Lecture dwelled on the controversy surrounding Kim Kardashian wearing Marilyn Monroe's dress at the Met Gala, attracting a global audience



# SPOTLIGHT ON IMPACT

## FUNDING CONSERVATION PROJECTS OVERSEAS


Together with Tru Vue, Icon has been running the Tru Vue Conservation & Exhibition Grant Scheme to support conservation and care of collections teams to deliver projects that will address conservation and exhibition challenges.

This year, we opened up the applications internationally for the first time, extending our reach across the globe and forming relationships with new institutions.

We were able to award 7 grants consisting of cash and Tru Vue materials to the following institutions:

- Barbados Museum & Historical Society (Barbados)
- Hopetoun and District Historical Society (Australia)
- Kabarnet Museum (Kenya)
- National Historical Commission of the Philippines (the Philippines)
- People's History Museum (UK)
- Trowbridge Museum (UK)
- Geoffrey Bawa Art & Archival Collections (Sri Lanka)

**[Find out more about how we approached this international programme.](#)**



We opened up our Tru Vue Conservation & Exhibition Grant Scheme to international institutions for the first time





**SPOTLIGHT  
ON IMPACT** **READ ALL  
OUR IMPACT STORIES  
ONLINE**

- [Transforming careers in conservation with the Clare Hampson Fund](#)
- [Supporting members to bring conservation to the public at Heritage Open Days](#)
- Delivering a [Collections Salvage Planning](#) course by Icon Scotland
- [Developing a new Icon skills programme of events](#)
- [Running a Twitter engagement campaign for COP27](#) by the Icon Sustainability Network



# ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Icon is grateful for the contributions of all those who worked tirelessly on the projects mentioned in this report.

We would like to acknowledge the many members who choose to contribute their time to their professional body, including Group and Network committee members, participants in Icon's various working groups, trustees, event speakers, and critical friends.

We are also grateful to all our members who support the Icon Accreditation process including Accreditation Committee members, assessors, mentors and CPD readers.

We estimate that our members contribute more than £500k of in-kind support each year, calculated at a professional day-rate.

Lastly, we wish to express our appreciation to our sponsor Spencer & Fry, to all those who donated funds in memory of the late Nigel Williams and the late Frederick Bearman,, as well as those who made donations in support of our broader work.

**WE THANK YOU**  
FOR YOUR CONTINUED SUPPORT





The Institute of Conservation  
106-109 Saffron Hill  
London EC1N 8QS

[Contact us](#)

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THE INSTITUTE OF CONSERVATION