

The Institute of Conservation

for all those concerned with the care of cultural heritage

A summary of the key facts
for future members

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Introduction



I welcome the moves that are being made to create a single body to speak for the whole conservation community and I look forward to its launch as soon as possible.

Rt Hon Tessa Jowell MP
Secretary of State for Culture,
Media and Sport

This booklet has been written in the first instance for the members of the five NCCR¹ Vanguard² organisations, who are being invited to vote on whether to dissolve their organisations and establish a new body, the Institute of Conservation. The aim is to provide you with the key information that you need to inform your vote. The booklet will also inform individual members of other organisations who may wish to join the new Institute at a later stage.

It has taken more than two years of analysis, discussion and – most important – consultation to reach this point. We are grateful to all those who have been involved and particularly to those members who responded to the Convergence Consultation Document and in other ways conveyed their views. All their comments have been taken into account.

The Business Plan for the new Institute, which underpins this document, is based on thorough study of the activities and financial accounts of all five organisations, which have made their annual reports freely available. The Business Plan and additional detailed information relating to convergence are available from the NCCR website and other sources listed on page 15.

¹ The National Council for Conservation-Restoration (NCCR) is made up of twelve separate bodies. More information on NCCR and its member bodies and on convergence can be found on NCCR's website at www.nccr.org.uk.

² The five Vanguard organisations, which constitute over two-thirds of NCCR's total individual membership, are:

- Care of Collections Forum (CCF)
- Institute of Paper Conservation (IPC)
- Photographic Materials Conservation Group (PhMCG)
- Scottish Society for Conservation and Restoration (SSCR)
- United Kingdom Institute for Conservation (UKIC)

The Institute of Conservation

In summary, the Institute of Conservation will:

- be a wholly new inclusive body
- have around 3,000 members
- have an annual income of approximately £370,000
- employ the equivalent of five full-time staff
- be a registered charity and a company limited by guarantee
- be the leading membership body for the conservation community
- be the lead voice for conservation.

What is meant by ‘the conservation community’?

The term ‘conservation community’ includes conservators and conservation and collection care specialists, for example, managers, educators, technicians, volunteers, craftspeople and scientists, who work in many spheres: the decorative arts and antiques world, museums, libraries, archives, historic buildings and monuments and archaeological sites.

The term ‘conservation’

‘Conservation’ is intended throughout this booklet to be synonymous with the preservation, protection, care and restoration of our cultural heritage.

Why the name ‘Institute of Conservation’?

Among the many suggestions made, this simple solution has gained the widest acceptability within the conservation community.



For the first time ever in our history we are on the verge of having, at last, a unified profession that embraces all our aspirations, is open to all who share our aims and values and provides the services the public and our heritage deserve. If we miss this opportunity, we have lost it for at least a generation to come. It's the responsibility of each and every one of us to make sure that convergence happens now.

Carole Milner
Chair, NCCR

Why converge?



In recent years the importance of preservation and the care of our heritage has become sidelined. As a profession we are fragmented and thought by many to be a hindrance rather than a help. We need a single body to unite our profession, a professional organisation to represent our members and a powerful voice to communicate with all our stakeholders.

Andrew Calver
Head of Conservation
and Collection Care, Museum
of London. Founder member, CCF

What I look for in the new organisation is a single voice which will represent the views and ethics of the whole conservation community.

Fiona Butterfield
Paper conservator, private practice

Our small conservation community is currently spread across many separate groups and organisations. Working together has been severely frustrated by this fragmentation.

The decision-making process is rendered cumbersome by the long lines of communication with members through each governing body to their constituent committees and specialist groups.

Time, money and human resources are wasted by these laborious communications as well as by running a federative organisation. All this makes for clumsy working, for a lumbering body incapable of speedy response.

There is considerable duplication of effort and expenditure. For instance, within the Vanguard organisations, five incompatible databases are run by five separate people. We all pay for staff, premises, accountants, auditors, printers, designers and other services, operate separate bank accounts, and recruit voluntary officers and committee members to run our separate organisations.

This duplication puts an excessive burden on everyone's time and energy, when many members are already hard pressed at work and in business. It also takes time away from the things individual members would rather concentrate on, such as their specialist groups.

There is also duplication of membership. Many are obliged to pay several subscriptions, for example, SSCR members are likely to belong to at least one other professional organisation, while most PhMCG members belong to IPC and some CCF members are also members of IPC or UKIC. Some individual members belong to up to six separate organisations.

We have been repeatedly told by government, other agencies, funding bodies and even our sister organisations, with whom we work, that they find it difficult dealing with our conservation community through so many different organisations.

Fragmentation is thus undermining the very credibility that we are seeking with policy makers, opinion formers and potential funders. It is clear that a single entity would go far to ensuring that our profession is taken seriously.

Our conservation community is divided and relatively weak. It will be stronger united and more able to look to the future with confidence.



With a greater national awareness developing on the wider benefits of conserving our heritage, it is particularly gratifying to see professional cohesion emerging through the convergence initiative, and in the creation of the new Institute.

Ingval Maxwell

*Director, Technical Conservation,
Research and Education, Historic
Scotland*

While I am not in favour of historically successful organisations losing their identity, I do feel that we need a strong professional body to represent the entire conservation sector on a national and international level.

Richard Pelter

*Director, International Fine Art
Conservation Studios Ltd*

How will the new Institute be better?

2004 could well be the historic year in which the UK conservation professional bodies unite to form a strong, positive, single organisation at last. I believe that the new body will carry all the strengths of the old ones but further enhanced by their combination – we will be greater than the sum of our parts.

Chris Woods
Chair, UKIC

The success and potential benefits of convergence must be seen as crucial to the future of our students and trainees whose support for and support from their profession provides them with the confidence and opportunity to enable them to develop as professionals and individuals.

Corinne Hillman and Mark Sandy
Camberwell College of Arts

Two fundamental principles have informed all consideration of convergence. The first is that members of all the organisations will continue to have the benefits they currently enjoy, such as publications, meetings and the exchange of technical know-how. Not everything will be the same but no-one should feel worse off.

The second is that the new Institute will be more than merely the sum of its founding organisations and that everyone will therefore feel better served. There are clear advantages to working as a single organisation.

The Institute of Conservation will:

- have a critical mass which will bring economies of scale and greater cost-effectiveness, hence a better use of members' subscriptions.
- provide enhanced and extended services to members, both at home and overseas, in line with their wishes and needs.
- bring a shared clarity of purpose, functions and working.
- provide a strong, credible and cohesive voice that will enable us to advocate widely, to the advantage of both public and private sector members, and the public who benefit from our work.
- raise more charitable and other funds (e.g. Lottery and Government grants) and key into European Community and other international funding.
- facilitate broader European and international co-operation.

What will the Institute do?

The new Institute aims to unite the conservation profession and the wider conservation community, be a strong, independent body able to serve the needs of its members now and into the future and be widely recognised both externally and within the profession as holding the leadership role for conservation.

In practical terms, the Institute will:

- provide a range of services that is based on and responsive to its members' needs.
- raise public, professional and political awareness of the importance of caring for our cultural heritage, for instance through the Conservation Awards scheme.
- set, monitor and promote high standards in conservation ethics, practice, education, training and research, for instance through professional accreditation programmes.
- respond effectively to the needs of the general public, private and public clients and other stakeholders, for instance by providing access to high-quality services via The Conservation Register.
- provide sector-wide information as a basis for policy research and development, for instance on workforce issues such as job status and pay levels.
- represent, in all things, members from both the public and private sectors, all conservation specialisms and all three domains.



Whatever our specialisms or circumstances, we have infinitely more in common than we have to divide us. A new Institute will give us a home for this unity of purpose, while accommodating our diversity. We will have a position of strength from which to support and inspire all who are like-minded, in our common task of preserving the heritage in all its wondrous forms.

Ylva Player-Dahnsjö
President, European Confederation of Conservator-Restorers' Organisations (ECCO)

How will the new Institute work?

Photo Valerie Bennett



I'm championing the need for architects to work more closely with all the skills necessary to put projects together, from major urban planning to intricate repair - in the conservation field, we should be working closer together with you. Convergence of institutes and associations will certainly strengthen our combined voice and help to ensure that conservation is not just considered as important, but as a vital and fully recognised educated skill.

George Ferguson
President, RIBA

The Board of Trustees will be elected from the membership with additional co-opted expertise. It will ensure that the organisation has a clear vision and strategic direction, be responsible for its performance and ensure that its governance is of the highest standard. A small number of committees will support the work of the Board. The aim is a slim and efficient organisation run by the members for the members.

Fundamental to the success of the Institute will be the groups who will continue to champion the specialist, national or regional interests of members.

Importantly, a Members' Forum will be established through which individuals and groups will be able to comment on and influence future directions and policies of the Institute. The Forum will also facilitate communication and collaboration between specialisms.

The five staff, including a part-time officer for Scotland, will translate policy into action, support the groups and listen to and provide services for members.

An informal body for working with other heritage professional and client groups will also be established. This may take the form of an advisory group.

What services will you receive?

The new Institute will:

- maintain an interactive website with facilities for use by the whole membership or by groups:
 - chat rooms and private and public messaging systems
 - urgent news, topical information and job vacancies
 - search facilities
- obtain and offer awards and grants
- run and assist groups in running conferences, meetings and other events
- run the PACR (accreditation) scheme and professional development and training programmes
- promote and support an internship programme
- operate The Conservation Register on-line and by telephone
- maintain a helpline for members on how to find out about:
 - accessing professional and legal services
 - insurance and employment issues
 - training and research opportunities
- provide access to meeting facilities
- arrange discounts on services, supplies and professional indemnity insurance
- provide publications.

The two peer-reviewed journals, The Paper Conservator and The Conservator, will continue to be produced separately to the same high standard but under a common house style. In addition, a shared bi-monthly magazine is the preferred option for current news and events. Individual groups will also be able to generate their own news mailings, journals and manuals.

The field of conservation is extremely diverse, but we share a great deal of common ground. Convergence is an opportunity for us to share our knowledge and experience, and improve opportunities for exchanging ideas.

Siobhan Watts
Editor, The Conservator

As editor of The Paper Conservator, I have found the depth and breadth of knowledge of book and paper conservators to be remarkable. And, as a conservator myself, I feel encouraged to take an interdisciplinary approach in my own work. Collaboration between disciplines will, I hope, be fostered by a single conservation body and I look forward to the opportunities this will bring.

Jane Eagan
Editor, The Paper Conservator

How will the groups function?

This is a unique opportunity for us as a profession to establish a unified body that will preserve our cultural heritage, promote conservation, our unique profession and its standards, and the needs and well-being of all its members.

Ian Moor
Chair, PhMCG

Conservation is concerned with the care of objects irrespective of materials and ownership. We are one profession and as such we are best served with one organisation representing all our interests.

Birthe Christensen
Head of Conservation, British Museum

It has always been the intention of NCCR and the Vanguard organisations that existing interest groups should be at the heart of the new organisation. Ongoing consultation has helped us to focus on how the specialist, national and regional groups should operate in the new body – providing unity of purpose without imposing a uniformity of structure or method of operation.

In achieving this, the following principles will be crucial:

- transparency – so that members can see how their subscriptions are used
- member-led activity – so that members are as active as they wish to be
- robust financial management
- the need for an appropriate degree of autonomy for the groups
- cost-effective use of resources.

Financing the groups

Financial models have been explored in detail. The selected model will enable members to pay one fee irrespective of the number of groups they join, yet ensure groups retain control of their budgets and are supported by a financial management system that will provide quarterly statements of income and expenditure and reserve levels.

The groups will:

- have their own committees to determine their activity and oversee their finances
- have existing designated and restricted reserves carried over to them
- make their own spending decisions, within the limits of their reserves and within the objects of the charity.

Our long, shared experience of running group committees indicates that each group is likely to need between £1,000 and £2,000 p.a. to cover the running costs of its committees and to function effectively.

If all the Vanguard groups agree to convergence, there are likely to be initially around fifteen specialist, national and regional groups. An estimated figure of £30,000 has been included in the Business Plan for the running costs of these groups.

Other activities run by the groups, such as training provision and conferences, are largely self-funding. Initial outlay would come out of the groups' reserves and would be recompensed through attendance fees.

Fuller details of these proposals are referred to on the next page.

I am very much in favour of convergence. It will demonstrate to all the spirit of co-operation and solidarity that exists between specialists in the many varied fields of heritage preservation.

Adrian Smith

President, BAFRA, and Chair,
Furniture and Wood Section, UKIC

I know from my work with the regional conservators' forum in the East of England that they believe convergence offers a unique opportunity for a single and powerful voice to champion conservation, to influence policy and decision makers, and to deliver more.

Nicolas Boyer

Regional Development Officer –
Museums, EEMLAC

How will the new Institute be funded?



We are part of one profession that shares the same aims and aspirations. As one organisation, we can raise the profile of conservation together.

Sophie Julien-Lees, David Howell, Kathryn Hallett and Kate Frame

Historic Royal Palaces

A detailed Business Plan has been produced, based on a careful investigation of existing levels of income and expenditure in the Vanguard organisations, analysis of the duplication across memberships and an estimate of any possible loss of members.

The Business Plan has had professional oversight and has been tested and shown to be viable, with a carry-over of reserves which will ensure the long-term continuance of the Institute. The plan is robust and achievable.

The Business Plan is available on the NCCR website and copies can be obtained from the NCCR Administrator and the Vanguard organisations. For quick reference, here is a summary of the three-year forecast:

| Description | Year 1 £ '000 | Year 2 £ '000 | Year 3 £ '000 |
|-------------------------------|------------------|------------------|------------------|
| Membership Income | 297 | 336 | 380 |
| Other Income | 76 | 76 | 76 |
| Total Income | 373 | 412 | 456 |
| Total Costs | 368 | 370 | 381 |
| Surplus/(Deficit) | 5 | 42 | 75 |
| Total Closing Reserves | 199 | 211 | 286 |

What will membership cost?

These subscription rates have been recommended in order to support the services and functions described above. The rates for international members will be the same as for UK members rather than being higher, as is generally the case, to cover postage.

| | |
|-------------------|-------|
| Accredited Member | £ 125 |
| Ordinary Member | £ 70 |
| Subscriber | £ 25 |
| Organisations | £ 150 |

Concessionary rates will be available for the above individual membership categories for those on low pay, students and the retired: £94 for Accredited Members and £53 for Ordinary Members, both for UK and overseas members.

A **discounted rate** of £53 will be offered to conservator members of the 'hybrid' bodies*. Reciprocal discounted membership rates for Institute members to join these organisations are being discussed. It is also hoped to negotiate reciprocal rates with overseas national bodies.

The **Subscriber rate** is for non-conservators and will entitle them to access to newsletters, events and website facilities. It will benefit non-conservator members of existing groups who do not wish to access the full range of services provided by the Institute.

MLA welcomes this move and applauds the efforts of all those involved in working towards it. All those working in conservation and those who use their services will benefit from the more efficient, effective and high profile body that will result from convergence.

Gina Lane
Director of Collections, Standards and Workforce Development, MLA

Our Association and its 1500 members, who represent the privately-owned built heritage in the UK, welcome this initiative to form the Institute of Conservation. It is vital for us to have a well-organised and effective conservation body to whom we can turn for the best advice and professional assistance, to help us preserve our historic houses for future generations.

James Hervey-Bathurst
President, Historic Houses Association

*The 'hybrid' bodies: three of the NCCR organisations, the British Horological Institute, the Natural Sciences Collections Association and the Society of Archivists, are organisations with mixed memberships and a majority of non-conservation professionals.

What happens next?

The potential of convergence is to have a consolidated voice for the great diversity within the conservation profession. In the words of a mind greater than mine, Franklin D. Roosevelt: "The only limit to our realisation of tomorrow will be our doubts of today; let us move forward with strong and active faith".

Paul McAuley
Chair, SSCR

The Pilgrim Trust, as a grant-giving organisation, often has need of advice on applications it receives. It would be easier, and the advice would have added authority, if an approach could be made to a single organisation representing the conservation profession within the UK.

Georgina Nayler
Director, The Pilgrim Trust

In readiness for convergence by members of the Vanguard bodies, a detailed implementation plan has been prepared that identifies the main tasks and their planned completion dates. The plan covers legal and financial matters, staffing, IT, committees, premises and corporate identity.

The likely order of some of the key events over the months from October 2004 to June 2005 is expected to be:

- company formed and charity registered
- search starts for new premises
- Chief Executive appointed
- other staff in post
- corporate identity and branding agreed*
- website and membership systems go live
- first election of Board of Trustees
- composition of advisory group agreed.

It has been agreed that the Institute will need a start-up phase of 12-24 months. Systems and organisational structures will need to be tried and tested before they become embedded. Members' input, at this early stage, will be essential to ensure that together we work towards the organisation that will best serve our needs.

*The Peter Moores Foundation, which has promised UKIC £35,000, has kindly agreed that this grant can be used towards developing the new Institute's corporate identity and communications system.

Further information

All the core facts on the background to convergence can be found summarised in the Convergence Factsheet, which, together with the four key documents listed below, can be found on NCCR's website www.nccr.org.uk.

- Business Plan
- Proposals on functioning and funding of groups
- Memorandum and Articles
- Implementation Plan

Copies can be obtained by requesting them from the relevant offices or from the NCCR Administrator:
T: 020 7326 0995 E: admin@nccr.org.uk

The NCCR website also contains a record of the discussions, meetings and consultations on convergence which have taken place over the last two and a half years. Should you have any questions that remain unanswered, please do not hesitate to contact one of the following Vanguard organisations:

CCF:

janet.berry@ucl.ac.uk

IPC:

tina@ipc.org.uk

PhMCG:

xfa59@dial.pipex.com

SSCR:

admin@sscr.demon.co.uk

UKIC:

ukic@ukic.org.uk



The move towards creating a single conservation body through convergence is a positive one which will give conservation a strong collective voice. Entering the profession at such a time of change is very exciting.

Erica Kotze

Intern, Book and Paper

Conservation Studio, University of Dundee

Winner, Student Conservator of the Year Award 2004

Why vote for the new Institute?

“

...a great pity if we failed for lack of unity...

...the time has come to join forces...

...belong to many specialist groups...

...weight of numbers, focused leadership, administrative support...

...a single voice.

”

We have so much to contribute to each other and to society - it would be a great pity if we failed for lack of unity. If our profession is to be taken seriously, we should not just think of our situation today. We have a responsibility to think of our younger colleagues and their future.

Kate Colleran
Chair, IPC

It can't be a coincidence that Conservator-Restorers in several European states have decided to converge their professional bodies at a national level at this particular time. It is a direct result of the times we live in. The time has come to join forces and prepare for the future. We wish you luck.

Janine van Reekum
President, Belangenvereniging Restauratoren, Netherlands (ECCO member)

I think it vital that one should be able to belong to as many specialist groups as one needs - it's one of the main reasons for convergence, to share and disseminate knowledge and information amongst ourselves.

Amy Junker
Conservation Student

I would encourage members of all the bodies concerned to vote for convergence. I know from long experience with different professional groups how important weight of numbers, focused leadership and administrative support are to developing professions.

John Fidler
Conservation Director, English Heritage

Conservation has suffered over the last 30 years and, in my view, one of the contributory factors to this has been the lack of a single, clear voice. I do hope this is the beginning of such a single voice.

Mark Taylor
Director, Museums Association

Acknowledgements

Many have contributed to the work on convergence on which this booklet is based.

From inside the organisations themselves: these include the Chairs, officers, staff and volunteers of NCCR and all its constituent member organisations, as well as NCCR's Activists, national and regional networks and Individual Members Feedback group. Beyond this, we have received invaluable professional support from a number of external advisors and independent consultants:

Finances

Yvonne Khong FCA, KC Partners, Chartered Accountants and Business Consultants, *pro bono* IPC Treasurer and advisor to the Vanguard organisations

Constitutional and charitable status

Keith Lawrey, Learned Societies Liaison Officer, The Foundation for Science and Technology

Legal aspects

Michael G Huskinson LLB, March & Edwards Solicitors

Communications

Wendy Griffiths, Communications Advisor

Anna Southall, ex-Chief Executive of Resource (now MLA)

IT and website

Bryan Alvey, ICT Consultant, Cultural Heritage Information Consultants

Graham Jones, BlueSpark Consulting

Adrian Tribe, NCCR Webmaster

Professional standards and accreditation

Dr Stan Lester, Stan Lester Developments

Management of membership organisations

Mary Shearer, formerly of Chartered Institute of Library and Information Professionals

Change management

Tim Ambrose, Director, Locum Destination Consulting

Peter Wilkins, Independent Consultant

Project management

Mike Caudrey, BlueSpark Consulting, has been the main consultant to the project.

