

## **ICOMOS World Heritage Advisers – Answers to Frequently Asked Questions**

### **1. Do I need to be a member of ICOMOS to become a World Heritage Advisor?**

No. All cultural heritage professionals will be considered so long as they fulfil the necessary requirements. If you are not an ICOMOS member yet we strongly advise you to become one. Members of ICOMOS join via their ICOMOS National Committee, and are issued with a membership card by the ICOMOS International Secretariat each year.

If you wish to join ICOMOS, or are uncertain about your ICOMOS membership status, you can contact the [ICOMOS National Committee](#) in your country. If you experience any difficulties with communication, or if there is no National Committee of ICOMOS in your country, please contact ICOMOS International Secretariat (secretariat[at]icomos.org) who will assist you with the process.

### **2. Why are language requirements limited to English and French?**

Competence in English and/or French is required for work in the World Heritage programme as these are the working languages of the World Heritage Convention. The highest levels of language abilities – especially writing and speaking - are needed to work as an Adviser, and competencies in other languages are often an advantage.

### **3. Do World Heritage Advisers only work with the evaluation of nominations?**

No. The current call for Expressions of Interests is limited to ICOMOS' work on the evaluation of nominations to the World Heritage List. However, World Heritage Advisers may also be offered the possibility to work on State of conservation reporting. In this regard, Advisers review reports received from States Parties and mission experts, and assist ICOMOS in finalising an institutional response. These Advisers generally work via email for the ICOMOS International Secretariat, although some of them attend meetings with the World Heritage Centre, and the annual sessions of the World Heritage Committee in order to assist the decision-making processes.

### **4. What is the timetable for the work of World Heritage Advisers?**

ICOMOS receives Nomination dossiers from the World Heritage Centre in March. Each dossier is allocated to an Advisor between mid-June and early July. The Advisor then spends some weeks reviewing the dossier in depth, preparing initial requests for additional information from the State Party where required, and also preparing specific questions for desk reviewers and for the mission expert who visit the site. Once the additional information (if requested), the desk reviews and the mission report have been received, the Advisor prepares the draft evaluation text. He/she is also requested to present a summary of factual information on the nomination dossier to the ICOMOS World Heritage Panel at its November meeting, and participate to the discussion with State Party representatives on issues raised by the ICOMOS World Heritage Panel during the first part of the Panel meeting. After the November Panel Meeting, the Advisor prepares a draft interim report on the progress of the nomination that is delivered to the nominating States Parties and the World Heritage Centre by end of January at the latest. The replies to the interim report are received in late February, and are incorporated into the second draft evaluation report that is presented and discussed during the March meeting of the ICOMOS World Heritage Panel. Following the ICOMOS World Heritage Panel's decisions, the Advisor completes the evaluation report in time for it to be peer reviewed and translated before being sent to the World Heritage Centre in May.

## 5. How can I improve my experience in World Heritage processes?

The role of ICOMOS World Heritage Adviser (Nominations) is the most demanding and skilled role within the ICOMOS World Heritage programme. It is therefore not the first step for professionals wanting to build their professional expertise in this area.

While the opportunities vary throughout the world, we can suggest the following ways to gain further experience:

- *Join an ICOMOS International Scientific Committee (ISC)* in your area of expertise and interest. The ICOMOS ISCs support the World Heritage programme in a variety of ways, and can provide opportunities to get involved.
- *Ask your ICOMOS National Committee* about opportunities to be involved in World Heritage activities. These vary, but can include the preparation and/or review of reports related to nomination documents, discussions with national and local authorities about the research and management requirements of the Convention, monitoring the condition of World Heritage properties in your country or meeting with ICOMOS missions visiting your country.
- *Conduct a desk review for ICOMOS.* Sometimes members feel less attracted to this task because it does not include a visit to a World Heritage property. However, many Advisors and mission experts have taken this first step in developing their skills and demonstrating their abilities. Often the ISCs or the ICOMOS International Secretariat will be seeking a range of experts to be involved in this part of the process.
- *Increase your international professional experience.* Opportunities vary, but where possible, it is desirable to take professional opportunities to work outside your own country.
- *Take part in a separate but connected activity of ICOMOS:* if possible, take part in field missions of ICOMOS (evaluation, or reactive monitoring activity related to World Heritage properties), or in your own country helping/accompanying the mission-expert, or fulfil this task in another State Party, at the request of ICOMOS Secretariat.
- *Study ICOMOS's previous recommendations* to the UNESCO World Heritage Committee thoroughly.
- *Stay up-to-date with international dialogue on concepts and approaches to best practice.* Regularly consult the materials available on-line from the ICOMOS [Documentation Centre](#) and the [World Heritage Centre](#).

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