
FAN Program of Work – a framework

The FAN meeting at AC2013 identified a range of activities and products that might be pursued in order to fulfil FAN’s role to “develop high level strategic responses to the contemporary challenges of managing archives”. This document attempts to categorise them into themes that might be used as a framework for the development of a FAN Program of Work. Additionally the program itemises the matters referred to FAN by PCOM and the ICA Executive Board.

At every stage FAN will work in a coordinated fashion within the broader ICA organisation. While it is expected that PCOM will have some role to play with every activity, other key ICA stakeholders have been highlighted in the program. This is not at the exclusion of other players and will evolve as the work program is fully developed.

1. Advocacy Charter

FAN must have a clear definition of its Advocacy role. The development of a Charter will serve to clarify the nature, scope and approaches we take in advocacy. The Charter should deal with the following key elements:

- It must centre advocacy around Archival values and principles as articulated in the Universal Declaration on Archives and as amended from time to time by the Executive Board.
- Advocacy must avoid “politicisation” that will disenfranchise ICA constituents, damage the reputation of ICA or diminish our professional standing.
- We need a clear statement defining those parties on whose behalf we will advocate – eg ICA Branches and Sections, but what about others?
- A broad target group for advocacy would be useful – do we intend to approach Governments, Parliaments, and International Organisations? We also have a role to shape the Vendor community, to ensure commercial products and services are available and suited to our needs.

Key ICA Stakeholders: Advocacy (or “Lobbying”) Expert Group, SPP, SIO

2. White Papers

Based on the Brussels meeting, it would seem there is a demand for a series of White Papers that analyse trends and issues around themes of importance to FAN members. White Papers are not final positions or statements of policy, however provide a comprehensive discussion on a theme upon which a FAN member may develop its own solution. Topics raised were:

- Copyright Law and Archives
- Authenticity of Digital Records
- Email – appraisal, preservation and access
- Legislating for Digital Records

Key ICA Stakeholders: WGIP

3. Standards

FAN members expressed an interest in the finalisation of international standards in the following areas:

- Digital Preservation
- Access
- Metadata

Key ICA Stakeholders: the relevant Expert Groups (eg Description, Standards, Digital Records) must be consulted prior to FAN advancing too far on this theme.

4. Procedures

There is a great potential for members to benefit through the sharing of contemporary Operating Procedures relevant to the management of Archives and Archival Services. This would be a relatively simple process whereby a member is in a position to publish a Procedure which has a general interest among members and is available for unrestricted use by members.

Caveats to protect intellectual property and commercial potential of the procedures would be implemented to encourage sharing and reuse among members without risk of inappropriate commercial exploitation by any parties.

Topics raised at Brussels were:

- Declassification of Sensitive Documents
- Implementation Guide to the ICA Principles of Access

5. Programs

The combined resources of the FAN would enable a number of programs to be conducted that would share expertise, assist in the development of strategic responses and shape the commercial environment to deliver improved products and services.

- Official visits by High Office Holders to advance Archival issues
- Professional exchange or secondment programs
- Vendor engagement program
- Expert connect program, using low cost, internet based real time connect technology to have regular meetings with experts within our community. The “virtual expert” supporting professional archivists (“VESPA”!).

Key ICA Stakeholders: SAE, SUV

6. Africa Strategy (PCOM Referral)

PCOM has identified a need to improve recordkeeping and the profile of archives, record keeping and records management professionals in Africa. At its meeting in April 2014 PCOM formally adopted the “Africa Strategy” as a priority for the next 4 to 6 years.

The goals of the strategy are:

- a. To develop and implement a plan to strengthen archives and records management practice in Africa
- b. To advocate the importance of archives and records management and the role they play in ensuring democracy, transparency and accountability as well as individual and societal identity and heritage
- c. To enable African archives and records professionals, and other stakeholders, to represent and contribute in the international archives arena of ICA
- d. To ensure sustainability is at the heart of any project or programme which forms part of this strategy and ensuing plan.

Key ICA Stakeholders: The strategy will ultimately involve many sections, branches and expert groups of the ICA, however FAN has been asked to set up a task force to develop a high level plan to advance the strategy.

7. AtoM (Executive Board Referral)

The EB, at its April 2014 meeting, discussed the history of the development of AtoM and its present status. The EB requested that FAN undertake some investigation into:

- a. The opportunities for ICA to influence the further development of the product, drawing on the expertise of ICA
- b. Possibilities for ICA to contribute to the development of training and implementation products and services
- c. Possible partnerships with commercial providers that could enable the achievement of the objectives
- d. Possible benefits, in terms of revenue or otherwise, that ICA could realise through its activities related to the above objectives.

8. ICA Website Redevelopment (PCOM Referral)

The PCOM, at its April 2014 meeting, requested that the FAN look into the possible redevelopment of the ICA Website (ICA.org). No firm terms of reference were determined by the meeting, however in general it is felt that the website is in need of an overhaul to ensure that it: delivers content that is relevant and useful to the membership of ICA, provides an accessible and easy to use workspace to support Branches, Sections and Expert Groups, and to maintain the currency and accuracy of information held. And of course, this represents an opportunity to consider our own digital record keeping and archiving policy.