

ICCROM think-tank meeting evaluating the outcomes of heritage science

As a follow-up to the *Forum on Conservation Science* held by ICCROM in Rome in October 2013, a think tank meeting was convened by ICCROM on 9/10 July 2015 to look at one of the specific areas raised by the Forum – how to measure the impact of Heritage Science. The meeting brought together not only those in the field who are familiar with the challenges of prioritizing, directing and evaluating heritage science activity and its impact, but also experts whose main focus is the evaluation of research programmes outside the sector, for example in economics or business; each presented the approaches, methodologies and tools used in evaluating research in their field.

A notable first outcome of the meeting was the adoption of the term ‘Heritage Science’ rather than ‘Conservation Science’ to describe the research covered by future actions. Two overarching themes that emerged from the think tank:

1. What are the aims of the sector and how do we determine which areas are urgent or neglected that we should focus upon over the coming years?
2. How do we assess the success of heritage science activity – in general and in fulfilling these aims determined in point 1?

The discussions at the think tank provided a framework for future actions to determine the former and evaluate the latter.

Among the actions from the meeting were the development of: descriptive statistics to map the current heritage science sector; evaluation practices that help to improve efficiency and effectiveness; indicators; and case studies. It was felt that as an international organization ICCROM is well placed to take these forward (potentially in partnership with others – representatives of the Council of IIC were present at the think tank).

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