IAI Institute of Archaeologists of Ireland

Three-Year Plan (2015-2018)

Introduction

The Institute of Archaeologists of Ireland was established in August 2001. As of February 2015 it had 309 members, including associate and graduate members. Its registered offices are located at 63 Merrion Square, Dublin 2 and are currently staffed by an administrator on a part-time basis. Successive Boards of Directors (hereafter the Board) of the Institute have steered a strategic path through difficult economic times for the profession in both jurisdictions on the island of Ireland, in a period that witnessed an eighty percent reduction in the number of archaeologists employed in the profession. The Board has drafted, and is seeking adoption of, a three-year strategic plan, the objectives of which are outlined below:

Defining archaeology: a profession and a cultural practice

At the outset, we need to remind ourselves of who we are and what we are about. Archaeology exists in a variety of guises, ranging from theories of knowledge and legislative protection to scientific excavation and amateur research. It is widely recognised as a key cultural resource which, along with history, entertains, sustains and binds individuals, communities and societies through appreciation of cultural identity. In order to maximise the value of the archaeological resource for society, it is acknowledged that a cadre of trained professionals are required to research, protect, manage and promote the physical traces of the past. The Institute seeks to fulfil this role for professional archaeologists on the island of Ireland.

Core principles and values

The Institute of Archaeologists of Ireland was established to enhance and coordinate the work of archaeologists on the island of Ireland, and in so doing, to help promote and protect the archaeological resource. Its core principle is to provide a forum and voice for archaeologists to promote thinking and debate on anything relating to the practice of archaeology. In order to relate these principles to practice, the work of the Institute is governed by a constitution i.e. its Memorandum and Articles of Association, and by directions given to the elected Board of Directors and resolutions passed by its Full Members at General Meetings. A key element of this is the Executive Board which facilitates the adoption of standards and policies that embody current best-practice. The Board seeks regular mandates from its members to engage in a range of activities - lobbying, educating, promoting, publicising, publishing, facilitating, funding – that seek to uphold these principles and values.

Strategies

In order to ground these principles and values in the practical realm, the Institute has identified key spheres of activity that need attention over the next three-years:

1. *Membership of the Institute*
2. *Funding of the Institute*
3. *Institute Communications: internal and external*
4. *Professional Development and Core Competencies for Institute Members*
5. *Publications of the Institute*
6. *Meetings of the Institute*

For each sphere of activity, objectives have been identified which are detailed below under the headings: Aims, Actions, Resource Needs and Timelines.

Objectives 2015-2018

1. *Membership of the Institute*

    Aim(s):   Sustain and expand the membership base of the Institute;
                      Establish an active policy of recruitment of members in Northern Ireland;

	Establish a committee to assess the viability of introducing a graduated scale of membership subscription fees based upon salary banding;
	Promote membership amongst all archaeologists in the public service and third level sectors;
	Promote corporate membership;
	Actively promote existing membership benefits package.
Actions:	Ongoing review of criteria for membership in the light of current employment trends in the profession;
	Review incentives for corporate membership;
	Identify and deliver additional incentives for membership (e.g. JSTOR scheme);
	Formulate a policy to be implemented for re-activating lapsed membership;
	Formulate a policy to be implemented for ending membership.
Resource Needs:	Creation of a secure and flexible database of members and ensure that in collecting and using such information the IAI fulfils its responsibilities under the Data Protection Acts;
	Continue to employ an administrator to maintain files and assist with membership issues;
Timelines:	Completion of membership criteria review by end of 2017;
	Report on the viability of introducing a graduated scale of membership subscription fees by mid-2016
	Undertake regular membership promotional drives during the term of the Plan.

2. *Funding of the Institute*

Aim(s):	Maintain and renew existing sources of funding and seek out new sources.
Actions:	Identify research and/or review projects on professional practice and development, and make applications for funding;
	Seek out co-partners and sponsorship, nationally and internationally, for relevant projects similar to the DISCO project;
	Establish a funding committee that reports at the AGM on progress made in terms of identifying, applying for and securing projects during the course of the year.
Resource Needs:	Continue to employ an administrator to facilitate the above.
Timelines:	Two major projects (research/ policy/ training) to be identified or created, applied for and secured during the term of the Plan.

3. *Institute Communications: internal and external*

Aim(s):	To re-affirm the Institute's role in the promotion of public interest in archaeological heritage;
	Strengthen communications between the Board and the Membership;
	Maintain and strengthen the broad range of communications skills and formats to deliver the message of the Institute to as broad a constituency as possible;
	Explore the feasibility of establishing sub-committees that are representative of the different sectors within the profession to enable dialogue about relevant issues that impact upon practitioners;
	Develop contacts with kindred professional organisations in Ireland and other EU countries.
Actions - internal:	Maintenance and development of the permanent office for the Institute;
	Continued maintenance and delivery of the *IAI Newsletter* with clearly defined publication dates;
	Delivery of a policy of transparency and inclusiveness through circulation of the work of the Board;
	Regular posting of information to Members via the Institute's website, e-mails and social media platforms;
	Develop and promote contacts and relationships with the media.
Actions -external:	Development and expansion of the Institute's website;
	Continued development and expansion of the Institute's profile on suitable electronic social media platforms i.e. Facebook, Twitter and LinkedIn;
	Development of skill sets for the Board members for successful interventions with the media;
	Development of contacts with relevant government departments and public sector bodies on the island of Ireland;
	Ensure continued engagement with kindred organisations at home and abroad.
Resource Needs:	internal: Continued employment an administrator to facilitate the above;
	Maintain sufficient ongoing funding for the Institute's office;
	Updating and maintenance of equipment in the Institute's office.
	external: Continued employment of an administrator to facilitate the above;
	Development of PRO role and responsibilities;
	Training on roles and responsibilities for all new Board members;
	Training in media skills for relevant Board members and the Administrator.
Timelines:	Website revision to be completed by mid-2016;
	Continue the practice of the appointment of an editor for IAI News on a three-year rotation;
	Provision of ongoing CPD sessions on media-skills on a regular basis;
	Securing of at least one bi-lateral agreement with a kindred organisation abroad.

4. *Standards & Codes of Practice*

Aim(s):	Uphold the fair and equitable enforcement of current standards and codes of conduct;
	Initiate a programme of periodic reviews of existing standards of practice and codes of professional conduct within and beyond the Institute;
	Produce a 'Handbook of Archaeological Practice' that shall amalgamate all existing IAI codes of conduct, guidelines and additionally address issues of employment rights.
Actions:	Set up a working group to produce a 'Handbook of Archaeological Practice' including new topics such as professional standards for employers/ sole traders and training, treatment and remuneration of volunteers, students and staff.
Resource Needs:	Recruit members of working groups to produce a 'Handbook of Archaeological Practice' and adequately support their work by providing them with meeting venue and meeting facilitators, if required;
	Convening of one or more special seminars on Action topic.
Timelines:	Completion of research by Working Group by end of 2015;
	Adoption of new Handbook by AGM 2016.

5. *Professional Development and Core Competencies for Institute Members*

Aim(s):	Continue and expand the provision of life-long-learning and professional development education programmes for Members;
	Better engage with the membership, and the profession generally, on the 'needs' and 'wants' of ongoing professional development;
	Publish a synopsis of each CPD event on the Institute's website;
	Explore the feasibility of delivering CPD via distance-learning and utilizing secure online CPD recording mechanisms;
	Explore the potential of providing CPD to other professional bodies in Ireland;
	Formulate additional policies to further promote CPD amongst Members and to identify and advertise seminars, conferences, and training events, etc. that will assist them in undertaking and demonstrating their commitment to on-going CPD.
Actions:	Delivery of the current CPD programme for 2015;
	A CPD record to be maintained by the Administrator.
Resource Needs:	Continued employment of CPD coordinator to develop and deliver the CPD programmes;
	Secure sponsorship and/or benefit-in-kind, *e.g.* free venues, for CPD programmes;
	Purchase of recording equipment for presentations enabling editing and upload on website.
Timelines:	Report on feasibility of CPD via distance-learning by end of 2015;
	Report on the professions 'needs and wants' in terms of professional development by mid-2016;
	Policies to further promote CPD amongst Members that will assist them in undertaking and demonstrating their commitment to on-going CPD by early 2017.

6. *Publications of the Institute*

Aim(s):	Maintain and develop the *Journal of Irish Archaeology (JIA)* as the flagship publication of the Institute;
	Maintain and develop the *IAI Newsletter* as the in-house newssheet of the Institute;
	Identify and develop new platforms and formats for disseminating the proceedings of the Institute's conferences and the research work of its Members.
Actions:	Continue the system of rotation of the editorship of the JIA every two volumes;
	Review cover design of *JIA* and develop a marketing plan for same;
	Develop the Institute website as a portal for online publication;
	Provide CPD training for members to encourage submission of papers to JIA and other journals;
	Initiate a project to publish CPD course content as peer-reviewed publications.
Resource Needs:	Continue search for sources of financial sponsorship for the *JIA*;
	Maintain the position of the *JIA* Liaison Officer on the Board to assist the editor of JIA;
	Funding for the publication of CPD course content.
Timelines:	Prepare for review in 2015 of contract for publication and dissemination of JIA;
	Completion of marketing plan for JIA by end of 2015 and implementation by end of 2016.

7. *Meetings of the Institute*

Aim(s):	Continue recently adopted policy of one major meeting to be held every year to coincide with the AGM of the Institute;
	Hold special 'open-to-all' events and meetings on topical and/or thematic issues as demand dictates.
Actions:	Ensure that timely notice is given of dates of meetings and conferences;
	Appoint a local assistant from the membership for each meeting to assist the Meetings Organiser.
Resource Needs:	Support the key position of Meetings Organiser on the Board through fair

recompense for any expenses incurred;

Reaffirm and apply the principal that all meetings of the Institute should be cost neutral.

Timelines: Review of policy of holding two major meetings by end of 2016;

Continuously review policy of holding one major meeting during the lifetime of this Strategic Plan by engaging with the membership on this topic.