

Election of ICFA Board: List of Candidates

Published January 5, 2026

This is the list of 12 ICFA members who have stood up to serve on the Board from 2026 to 2028.

The election of new ICFA Board members will take place online only, via the online voting platform Balotio, from 9 am on Monday, January 12, to 5 pm on Sunday, January 18, 2026 (Paris time). The ballot counting will be conducted as a Zoom meeting at 2 pm on January 19.

A personal link will be sent to the electorate 24 hours before the start of voting.

Please note: only active Individual members who were up to date with their 2025 ICOM dues and have been ICFA members are authorized to vote. Institutional members have only one vote. This means that not all the mail news recipients are eligible to vote, and if you do not receive the link, you are not registered as a voter.

*In order of submission

#1: Kanae Aoki (born in 1978)

Doctor in Fine Arts; Curator, The Museum of Modern Art, Wakayama, Japan

I am an art curator and educator based in Wakayama, Japan. I have been a member of ICOM since 2012, and from 2015 onward I have increasingly deepened my involvement in its activities. My first significant encounter with the organization was as a delegate at the ICOM ITC 2015 (Fall). Later, as part of the preparatory team for ICOM Kyoto 2019, I joined ICFA and was entrusted with the role of affiliated board member.

For the 2019–2022 term, I had the honor of serving ICFA as the first Asian board member in its long and distinguished history. This was followed by my appointment as Chair for the 2022–2025 term. Throughout this period, our committee has engaged in ongoing discussions about how ICFA can open itself to broader cultural and geographical perspectives. Central to these discussions is the belief that the definition of “fine art” requires continuous reexamination.

Historically and traditionally, the concept of fine art has been closely tied to Western cultural frameworks. Yet in the twenty-first century, we have a responsibility to

understand how fine art is conceived, practiced, and valued in different cultural contexts. This is not only a matter of inclusion but also a necessary step toward decolonizing our field. As fine art specialists, we must listen carefully to the diverse viewpoints that shape global artistic expression. I believe that ICFA is uniquely positioned to cultivate this mutual understanding—where we learn from one another’s ways of seeing.

Our efforts toward this goal are still ongoing, and there is much more work to be done. With this in mind, I would like to continue serving as ICFA Chair, contributing to the future of fine art in the world and supporting the emergence of new and more inclusive perspectives on what fine art can be.

Responsibilities currently or previously exercised within ICOM

- Member of ICOM Kyoto Steering Committee (2016–2019), the contact person for ICFA
- Ordinary Board member of ICFA (2019–2022)
- Chair of ICFA (2022–2025)
- Ordinary Board member of ICOM Japan (2023–)

#2: Kanika Gupta (born in 1987)

Senior Research Fellow, India International Centre, Delhi, India

With a Ph.D. in fine arts, I am committed to building a community at ICFA that nurtures an inclusive approach to the field, particularly by encouraging diverse voices and perspectives. As a board member, I advocate for stronger documentation and publication efforts within the committee’s conferences to highlight exceptional work and high-quality research. These efforts should address pressing contemporary issues—such as anti-war voices, climate change, extreme environmental degradation, and the urgent need for decolonization—while encouraging ethical practices and conversations around ethics in art.

It is important to recognize that, although we are known as a fine arts committee, the term "fine art" may carry different meanings across communities—or may not exist at all in many cultures. By acknowledging this diversity, we can foster greater inclusivity and amplify diverse voices. This requires a comprehensive re-evaluation of established art historical narratives, moving beyond Eurocentric frameworks to embrace a global multiplicity of aesthetic practices.

If fine art and its voices are viewed through this lens, it becomes imperative that we prioritize diverse languages and scripts in our conferences and publications, including necessary translations. This is one way I aim to promote a more inclusive culture within

ICFA as a board member. Additionally, emphasizing inclusion of diverse linguistic and cultural expressions within our archival and dissemination efforts will ensure a broader reach and deeper engagement within the diversity we currently hold within our committee. This is shall wholeheartedly profess within my tenure.

Responsibilities currently or previously exercised within ICOM

- Member of ICOM India
- I have been a member of ICOM since 2015 and have been involves in several conferences and have contributed through presentations.

#3: Gudlaug D Gunnarsdottir (born in 1979)

Independent scholar/researcher in museum studies, artist, based in Iceland

After participating in ICFA conference in India this year, I was pleasantly surprised at the outcome. There were so many questions and revelations. Most importantly, in my opinion, was the realization at how much western pressure and influence on eastern identities is strong and prominent. Former oppressed colonized cultures are still very much working on and fighting foreign narratives regarding their own identity. I find these problematics fascinating and would very much like to continue to follow up and support discussions in any way possible.

Responsibilities currently or previously exercised within ICOM

- Good relations with ICOM Iceland. Lecture on site at ICFA conference in Jaipur 2025.

#4: Mona Ahyad Shaban (born in 1979)

Dr., Director of (Seif and Adham Wanly) museum, Fine Arts Sector- Ministry of culture, Egypt.

I currently serve as a Museum Director within the Ministry of Culture and hold a PhD in Museum and Exhibition Management, with a research focus on the role of graphic design in the organization and management of museums and exhibitions. This combination of academic and professional experience has provided me with a comprehensive understanding of fine art museums and the challenges they face in diverse cultural and institutional contexts.

My professional responsibilities include managing daily museum operations, planning and implementing exhibitions, coordinating multidisciplinary teams, and developing visual communication strategies that enhance both the institution's

mission and the visitor experience. Academically, my research explores how graphic design can function as a strategic and organizational tool within museums, supporting clarity, accessibility, and institutional identity beyond purely aesthetic considerations.

I am motivated to apply for the ICFA Board by a commitment to contributing to the Committee's collaborative work and promoting professional exchange among colleagues in fine art museums internationally. I strongly believe that incorporating experiences from the Arab world and other underrepresented regions can broaden perspectives on fine art practices, narratives, and management approaches, enriching the global dialogue on museum work.

If selected, I hope to support initiatives that connect research and practice, encourage constructive professional collaboration, and create opportunities for wider participation, particularly for emerging professionals. I aim to contribute to the development of programs that strengthen institutional capacities, foster innovative approaches, and promote inclusive discourse on museum practices.

This candidacy reflects my dedication to voluntary work within ICOM and my readiness to serve responsibly, cooperatively, and actively in pursuit of ICFA's mission. I am committed to supporting the Committee's objectives and collaborating with colleagues to advance the professional development of fine art museums worldwide while highlighting the value of diverse cultural perspectives.

Responsibilities currently or previously exercised within ICOM

- (no submission)

#5: Aarti Tank (born in 1992)

Curator, Citibank N.A., Mumbai, India

As a curator based in India, I am eager to express my strong motivation to join the International Committee of Museums and Collections of Fine Arts (ICFA) as a board member. Over the past year, I have had the privilege of working closely with ICFA, which has deepened my commitment to our shared goal of redefining fine art. This alignment fuels my passion to contribute in a more substantial leadership capacity.

My unique background, combining South Asia's rich cultural tapestry with the institutional rigour of Europe, allows me to bring diverse perspectives that challenge conventional definitions of fine art. I believe that true artistry transcends geographical boundaries, and my experiences have instilled in me a profound appreciation for varied artistic expressions. I am committed to advocating for

inclusivity, encouraging emerging voices, and fostering innovative dialogues within the arts community.

In my curatorial practice, I strive to create environments where new ideas flourish. My "can-do" attitude empowers me to approach challenges with enthusiasm and resilience. I firmly believe that collaboration drives progress, and I am excited about the potential to engage with fellow members to explore fresh ideas and initiatives that will benefit ICFA and its mission.

Joining the ICFA board represents both a tremendous opportunity and a responsibility I would cherish. I am dedicated to furthering our collective vision and ensuring that the voices of artists and curators from diverse backgrounds are amplified and celebrated. Together, we can redefine the landscape of fine art and inspire future generations.

Thank you for considering my application. I am eager to contribute my passion, insights, and energy to this esteemed committee and to the vibrant world of art.

Responsibilities currently or previously exercised within ICOM

- Supported in the organisation of the ICFA Jaipur 2025 meeting.

#6: Josephine Nielsen-Bergqvist (born in 1987)

Full-time Art Curator, Vardemuseerne, Denmark

My name is Josephine Nielsen-Bergqvist, and I am standing for election to the board of the ICFA as I strongly value international collaboration, professional exchange, and ethical standards within the fine arts museum community.

I am a Danish art historian, educated at the University of Copenhagen, with over ten years of professional experience in museums and collections. I have previously worked at Ny Carlsberg Glyptotek (2010–2014) and Ribe Art Museum (2015–2023), and I am currently responsible for a fine arts collection of approximately 10,000 objects at Vardemuseerne in Denmark. These roles have given me solid experience in collection management, registration, and exhibitions, in both large, internationally oriented institutions and smaller national museums.

In addition to my museum work, I am Treasurer of the ICOM Denmark board (since 2021, board member since 2019) and a substitute member of the ICOM Nord board (since 2022). These roles have provided me with valuable insight into professional networks and international collaboration, and I deeply appreciate ICOM's work in fostering dialogue, ethical awareness, and exchange across the museum field.

If elected to the ICFA board, I would bring a structured, committed, and solution-oriented approach. I am particularly interested in strengthening communication with members through digital platforms and social media, using short thematic features, member presentations, and professional insights to increase visibility, knowledge sharing, and engagement.

I also believe it is more important than ever that museums stand united around ICOM's Code of Ethics. ICFA has a crucial role in promoting ethical standards, professional integrity, and collaboration. I would be honored to contribute to this work and to the continued development of the ICFA network.

Responsibilities currently or previously exercised within ICOM

- A member of the ICOM Denmark board since 2019, treasurer since 2021
- Substitute in the ICOM Nord board since 2022.

#7: Nataliia Tolstaia (born in 1969)

Chief Executive Officer, Far Eastern Art Museum, Khabarovsk, Russia

Art historian, curator. From 1991 to 2012, worked at the State Tretyakov Gallery (The Tretyakov Gallery is the largest museum of Russian national art in Moscow.)

From 2016 to 2023 - Director of the Research Institute of the Russian Academy of Arts.

Since 2023 - General Director of the Far Eastern Art Museum in Khabarovsk. The museum's collection includes European and Russian art, an ethnographic collection of applied art from the peoples of the Far East, contemporary art. Currently, a new museum building has been designed, and construction has begun, with completion expected in 2028.

Member of ICOM since 2008 and a member of the Presidium of ICOM Russia from 2013 to 2019, 2022 to 2025, and from 2026 to 2029.

Member of the Association for the Automation of Museum and Information Technologies (ADIT) since 2004, served as President of ADIT from 2011 to 2022.

Member of the AVICOM staff from 2014 to 2019 and organized the FIAMP festival in Moscow in 2014.

In 2025, at the ICOM General Conference in Dubai, she joined ICFA. Additionally, the museum she leads is a member of ICOM, and the ICFA committee is fundamental for our art museum.

Fine arts and their presentation in museums have always been the focus of my scholarly interest and the subject of my publications. It is very important for me to have the opportunity to exchange views with colleagues from other countries and to learn from their experiences. This is especially relevant now, as I am preparing a new exhibition in which I aim to develop a concept based on a new principle of exhibition design. I wish to convey the idea of the unity of culture, moving beyond the traditional separation of Russian art from the global context that is common in Russian museums.

Responsibilities currently or previously exercised within ICOM

- Currently and previously - Member of the Presidium of the Russian National Committee
- AVICOM board member 2014–2019

#8: Annette Welkamp (born in 1958)

Ordinary Board Member, Culture Counsel, Dubai, United Arab Emirates

I have valued my ICOM membership since graduating in Museum Studies in Melbourne, Australia. It has both informed my professional practice and inspired my ambitions.

I am a museum, art, and heritage specialist with international experience, including in the United Arab Emirates, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, Australia, Hong Kong, and the Netherlands. This has been undertaken both inside museums on staff (Director, Curator, Registrar, Project Manager), as well through my consultancies. In recent years this has been as the Director of Culture Counsel, based in Dubai.

My work in the UAE has recently been acknowledged with the honour of a long-term United Arab Emirates Creative Golden Visa in recognition of my sustained and ongoing contribution to the arts in the Federation.

My focus is on the strategic development of institutions, projects, events, exhibitions, cultural tourism, and collections. I am committed to enhancing access to the arts, design and heritage through cultural exchange, creativity, and preservation.

Museums are important vehicles for our understanding of ourselves and of others, and I am a firm believer in their enduring value and power.

The ICOM Code of Ethics has been a valuable touchstone that has guided my entire professional life; a foundation for which I continue to be grateful. Its members are eternally inspiring.

Responsibilities currently or previously exercised within ICOM

- Chair of the Judging panel for the ICOM Australia Award for International Relations,
- International Council of Museums, Australian Executive Council
- Committee Member, International Council of Museums, Australian Executive Council

#9: Christoph Lind (born in 1964)

Director, Reiss-Engelhorn Museum

My long-time engagement in ICFA shows my interest and enhance a world-wide accepted meaning of Fine Art. Therefore I would like to apply again as a board member and treasurer.

Responsibilities currently or previously exercised within ICOM

- ICEE board member
- ICFA Chair, Secretary, Provisional Treasurer

#10: Tina Fortič Jakopič (born in 1989)

Curator, National Museum of Contemporary History of Slovenia (till the end of 2025), Muza (Slovenian Banking Museum and Art Gallery) from 2026 on

I am a curator at the National Museum of Contemporary History of Slovenia and, as of the new year, curator at MUZA – the Slovenian Banking Museum and Art Gallery. I see myself as an active member of the museum community and enjoy being involved, collaborating, and contributing to shared work. Over the years, I have regularly attended international ICOM and ICFA meetings, which has strengthened my interest in becoming more actively involved. I would like to contribute to ICFA in a practical and supportive way, particularly through organizational and administrative work. Drawing on my experience within ICON Slovenia, my sense of responsibility, and my interest in clear and transparent processes, I would be glad to take on some role and support the work of the ICFA Board.

Responsibilities currently or previously exercised within ICOM

- I have been an active ICOM member since 2020 and am actively involved in ICOM Slovenia.
- A member of the Ethics Committee from 2020 to 2022
- A member of the Executive Board of ICOM Slovenia from 2022 to 2025

- A member of the Ethics Committee (2025–).

#11: Annette Loeseke (born in 1971)

Professor of Art History and New Museum Studies, Braunschweig University of Art, Germany

I'm a Professor of Art History and New Museum Studies at Braunschweig University of Art, where I lead the 'OpenArtMuseum' research project in partnership with the Art Museum Wolfsburg. I have published widely at the intersection of museum studies, memory studies, and visitor and stakeholder engagement in super-diverse, hyper-connected societies. I hold a PhD in art history from the University of Bonn and studied art history at the University of Munich and Sorbonne University of Paris and cultural management at City St. George's University of London, specialising in visitor studies and audience development. Prior to joining Braunschweig, I served as Lecturer and Programme Director for Cultural and Creative Industries at the University of Sheffield, and taught at NYU Berlin and the Reinwardt Academy at Amsterdam University of the Arts. I have conducted visitor studies on transcultural and postcolonial exhibitions in Berlin, Amsterdam, London and Shanghai, and have organised conferences and conference sections in Europe and Asia with international partners. Since 2017, I have been a member of ICOM Germany and ICOM UK, presenting at the 23rd General Conference in Rio de Janeiro (COMCOL section) and the 27th General Conference in Dubai (ICFA section). I fully support ICOM's new museum definition and seek to contribute more actively to the ICOM community by applying for board membership with ICFA. With 15 years of experience collaborating with the museum sector, I aim to help shape ICFA's international profile and reconsider the role of art museums in a global context. In light of current geopolitical changes, I'm eager to engage with ICFA colleagues worldwide to discuss the evolving roles of art museums in international cultural relations and cultural diplomacy.

Responsibilities currently or previously exercised within ICOM

- Member of INTERCOM and ICOM COMMS

#12: Anna Grigorieva (born in 1983)

Art historian; Head of the museum, university professor, Mikhail Schepkin Institute, Moscow, Russia

I've been working in art museums for all my professional life which is over 25 years. The world is changing rapidly, museum functions are increasing as well as the role of

museums in society. Together with museums the ICOM role is increasing as it is a bridge providing communication of museum professionals from all the continents.

Out of all the committees ICFA is the most numerous and we should do our best to reveal its huge potential via attracting our members to our activities. I am ready to invest my time and knowledge to organize ICFA annual meeting in 2026 and online seminars. During my previous term as an ICFA Board member I tried hard to be a part of every meeting, to be reliable and useful. I hope I will have an opportunity to continue my work in the Board in the upcoming term.

Responsibilities currently or previously exercised within ICOM

- ICFA Board Member 2022 – 2025
- ICOM Russia Board Member 2009 – 2012