

Notes from ICA VCS Division's Internationalization Task Force Meeting (20211207)

1) **VCS Donation link.** ICA has a donations page (<https://www.icahdq.org/donations/>) but VCS isn't on it. We asked Division Chair, Mary Bock, to check with the ICA headquarters team about having our Division listed. Other Divisions have travel award donation links so we could do that, for consistency, or Fla suggested trying to gather some funds for a Division research/grant funding opportunity. If we wanted some flexibility with how the funds are used (travel or research funds, for example), maybe we could call it the 'Visual Communication Studies Division Development Fund' with the following one-sentence description?

The Visual Communication Studies Division aims to foster understanding of the visual in all its forms, from aspects of visibility and human vision to all sorts of visual objects and representations. Its Development Fund advances its internationalization mission to be an inclusive, border-spanning, and vibrant community of scholars from all corners of the globe.

If/once we get a link on ICA's donations page, Fla smartly recommends we also publicise that news in our newsletter and other communication channels.

2) **We had talked last year about creating a new position for a 'Partnership & Engagement Officer' focused on cultivating external relationships with organisations or businesses.**

This is something we discussed again this year. That person could seek to form relationships with corporations or professional associations with the intent of creating fellowships, soliciting donations, or eliciting EOIs for research that the company/organisation would like done. This is probably more work than any of us on the existing officer team can take on, which is why we thought a new role might be suited to focus specifically on these efforts?

Task force member Alli Kwezell suggested:

A new role sounds great. I don't know but if we create new roles we could also possibly think about including partnerships through internships. I work with students from Mount Holyoke College and their school offers them pay for an unpaid internship - other universities might have something similar and we could reach out to those with visual programs (for me U. of Montana maybe, for your U. of Missouri, right? - and any others....). Something like this could be great. We offer internships to have students help with some workload, and at the same time bridge relationships with different institutions. I don't know - just putting an idea out there. But this could be a cool way of adding people with new ideas and hours to complete certain tasks.

3) One of the task force members suggested we don't know each other in the Division as much as we could. There's probably many ways to tackle this one but one task force member suggested a weekly member spotlight that highlights a different Division member, and their research interests/expertise areas, each week. T.J. said he is happy to take a version of this on as part of his forthcoming secretary duties. He asked Division chair Mary Bock and secretary

Kyser Lough for a spreadsheet of member names/email addresses that he could contact and ask them to provide a 1- to 3-sentence overview of their research areas/expertise areas, along with a photo. Task force members thought it would be nice to have this spreadsheet viewable by Division members (possibly by putting it behind a password-protected page on our website or on The Link?) so folks can identify others with similar research interests they might like to collaborate with.

4) On the topic of communication, a task force member noted that we can't necessarily rely on organic traffic/visibility due to how algorithms work these days and so suggested trying to use paid/sponsored posts to appear in people's news feeds and ensure our messaging is being seen. (For example, one of the task force members said she wasn't aware that ICA this year accepted submissions in languages other than English. That definitely could have been its own social media campaign, for example). She also recommends our Division get an Instagram account, which TJ said he was happy to set up as part of his secretary role next year.

5) Following on from the idea of the 'research collaboratory'/research escalator idea that we explored during the Blue Sky Workshop that we co-convened during the conference in May, we're keen to identify ways that ICA can be a place to develop works in progress and not just a place to show off polished research products. Is it worth having a conversation about whether we can have a separate process for something like this during a future conference? Or a buddy system or pairings where emeritus professors, for example, would be able to provide constructive feedback to developing scholars on their works-in-progress? The pre-conference accomplishes some of these goals but the tricky part is that it's limited to a specific and sometimes narrow theme which can exclude folks who are keen to participate/receive feedback but whose work at that moment might not perfectly fit that year's theme.

6) Lastly, the task force members wanted to voice our support for continuing hybrid ICA conferences (with a cheaper attendance option for those who attend online) regardless of if/when the pandemic ends.