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COMPLETE

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Page 1: Annual Report to ICA

Q1

Name of division/interest group:

Visual Communication Studies Division

Q2

Names/affiliations of current elected leadership (do not include "incoming" officers)

Chair:	Mary Angela Bock
Vice Chair:	Saumava Mitra
Secretary:	Kyser Lough
Student and Early Career Representative:	Hanna E. Morris
International Liaison:	T.J. Thomson

Q3

(if applicable) Names of individuals filling appointed/non-officer leadership roles (for example social media manager, immediate past chair, etc.):

Name/role:	Allison Kwesell, PreConference Associate Planner
Name/role:	Jelle Mast, immediate past chair

Q4

Number of candidates per position in the last ICA election (enter "0" if the position was not due for election)

(Vice Chair) Number of Candidates:	0
(Secretary) Number of Candidates:	1
(SEC Representative) Number of Candidates:	1
(International Liaison) Number of Candidates:	1

Q5

Final voter turnout (percentage % - round to nearest whole #) in the last ICA election for your division/interest group

14

Q6

Comments on ICA election process

Seamless because of staff assistance.

Q7

Bylaws

Our division/interest group has formally established bylaws

Page 2: About our division/interest group bylaws

Q8

Our bylaws are accessible online to our members

Yes

Q9

Our bylaws were adopted:(NOTE: new bylaws must submitted and formally approved by your members via the ICA Election process):

Adoption date: **16/10/2022**

Q10

Our bylaws were last revised (NOTE: revisions must submitted and formally approved by your members via the ICA Election process):

Date of last revision: **01/09/2021**

Q11

Upload a copy of your current bylaws

VICSD ByLaws Approved Oct 2021.docx (17.6KB)

Page 3: Membership & Budget

Q12

Number of division/interest group members as of this past 1 August (annual census)

198

Q13

(\$USD) Amount of current year's budget

3625.12

Page 4: Annual Conference

Q14

Conference allocations

Number of research session slots allocated: **11**
 Number of poster slots allocated: **6**
 Number of co-sponsored sessions: **0**

Q15

(if applicable) division(s)/interest group(s) with which you held co-sponsored session(s):

We are hosting a pre-conference with the Popular Media and Culture Division, and Computational Methods Division

Q16

Paper submissions

Number of papers submitted: **76**
 Number of papers accepted: **39**
 Paper acceptance rate (% - round to nearest whole #): **51**

Q17

Panel submissions

Number of panels submitted: **9**
 Number of panels accepted: **5**
 Panel acceptance rate (% - round to nearest whole #): **55**

Q18

Abstract submissions

Number of abstracts submitted: **30**
 Number of abstracts accepted: **12**
 Abstract acceptance rate (% - round to nearest whole #): **40**

Q19

Other submission formats (Please specify type):

Proposals submitted (type & number):	Posters 5
Proposals accepted (type & number):	Poster 1
Proposals acceptance rate (type and % - round to nearest whole #):	20
Other conference sessions (e.g. Invited speaker, workshop, etc.):	N/A

Q20

Review process

Number of reviewers: **147**
 Average # of submissions per 2 reviewer:

Q21

Did graduate students review?

Yes

Q22

Comments on review process

Hard to assign them fast enough in competition with other divisions. Some folks sign up for so many other divisions and then are not actually available unless I wish to overload them -- which I do not.

Q23

(if applicable) Pre/Post conferences

Topic/theme:	Visualizing What's Social: Research and Methodological Approaches
Number of proposals submitted:	13
Number of proposals accepted:	13
Number of attendees/participants:	20 (submitters plus mentors & leaders)

Page 5: Awards

Q24

Faculty paper awards

Award title(s):	Top Faculty Paper 1 2 and 3
Winner(s):	3
Prize(s):	conference waivers, \$100 for top faculty

Q25

Student paper awards

Award title(s):	Top Student Paper
Winner(s):	1
Prize(s):	\$100 plus conference waiver

Q26

Respondent skipped this question

Top paper awards (if not divided between faculty/students)

Q27

Other awards (e.g. top book/poster/dissertation, etc)

Award title(s):	dissertation
Winner(s):	1
Prize(s):	\$100

Q28

What is your conference waiver criteria & process - how do you determine how to allocate these? (e.g. some give to award winners, others for special speakers or those requesting funds from Tier B/C countries)

top paper winners plus a B/C or student who is attending. We have no B/C members whose work was accepted. We will discuss ways to fix this during our meeting in May.

Q29

(if applicable) Travel awards

Criteria:	none yet but we're setting up a fund.
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Q30

Reflect on the past year's goals

Our previous goals included:

Membership Growth and Maintenance

We gained more than 50 members in the past two years, from 141 in August 2019 to 198 at the same time in 2021. This good news is likely the result of concerted social media and internationalization efforts. (Enthusiasm for Paris likely helped as well.)

To foster division identity, the executive committee has made a concerted effort to stay active on social media. International Liaison T.J. Thomson established a "Spotlight" series for members to publicize their work on across Instagram, Facebook and Twitter (platforms on which we have a combined follower count in excess of 1,000). The division sends out a monthly newsletter as well as essential messages regarding the conference, reviewing, and other essentials.

The division has improved its website in order to provide more relevant information and resources for members. The newly ratified bylaws are there, as is a "members bookshelf" page that publicizes recent books by division members.

The VCSD voting rate went down, unfortunately. This may be, in part, because there were no contested elections for executive positions. Division leaders used Twitter, Facebook and multiple e-mail messages in order to encourage the membership to vote; however, only fourteen percent of the division's members voted in the past year's election.

Finally, to promote new and creative engagement with our members research, the division established a drawing for anyone who creates a 30-second TikTok/Reel-style video about their presentation in advance of the conference. Members were encouraged to submit a link to their video and then spread it through social media using ICA's hashtag on Twitter is (#ICA22), and the division's #ICA_VIS.

Ratify Bylaws

Yet, while voter participation was low, the election did bring excellent news: VCSD finally has a set of official bylaws ratified by the membership. These bylaws clarify the division's scholarly focus; describe the roles of elected positions, and establish the protocol for the division's annual business meeting. Former chairs Catherine Preston and Jelle Mast worked tirelessly to write the bylaws in coordination with ICA executive leadership and deserve credit for bringing the division into compliance.

Improving Internationalization Efforts

The VCSD International Liaison, T. J. Thomson, formed and chaired our Division's Internationalization Task Force, and helped to organize two events designed to enhance the division's relationships with scholars from global majority countries. In April 2021, VCSD and Daystar University in Nairobi, Kenya, co-sponsored a mentoring session for African (Communication) Graduate Students that involved scholars across the ICA and addressed topics such as establishing a writing routine and research agenda; communicating your research to non-academic audiences; making the most of conferences and scholarly associations as a graduate student or early-career scholar; and publishing tips and strategies. The event attracted more than 185 graduate students from 18 institutions across the continent.

VCSD also partnered with Daystar University in September 2021, to host a session on Visual Research Ethics moderated by Dr Kyser Lough (Division secretary) and featuring members Profs Pat Aufderheide and Lyombe Eko.

The task force continues to meet at least once per year and to suggest action items to the executive that can increase the value and relevance of VCS Division membership and improve the Division's functioning. For example, our members bookshelf feature, our "Why Join the VCS Division" one-page flyer, adding the VCS Division to the ICA's 'Donate' page (<https://www.icahdq.org/donations/>), proposing an additional officer role (a "Partnership and Engagement" officer), proposing a reviewer best practices guide, and our weekly members spotlight all arose through the task force's meetings and discussion.

Division or Interest Group Report

Financial constraints, vaccine availability and uptake, and time zone challenges continue to pose significant barrier to full participation for scholars in global majority nations. To that end, the division has taken the first steps necessary to establish a travel/international development fund for students and Tier B/C nations. The fund will be named for the late Dr. Paul Messaris, an early pioneer in visual studies. The Annenberg School at the University of Pennsylvania and Carla Sarett, Dr. Messaris's widow, have each pledged a thousand dollars to start the fund. Members will have a chance to ratify this fund in October 2022. If ratified, the division should be able to distribute travel grants for the 2023 conference in Toronto or for other internationalization efforts as determined by the executive.

Ensuring the Quality of Reviews

As in 2021, the division assigned three reviewers to each paper, and was able to limit nearly all reviewers to three papers each. Not all reviewers were able to submit their scores, but each paper was scored at least twice, and anytime a paper had two reviews in disagreement, volunteers came through to help break the ties.

This year ICA accepted papers in languages other than English, and several VCSD reviewers put in extra time and effort to assist with those submissions.

The division will also edit its panel call for 2023, to require panel organizers to consider and justify the geographic diversity of panelists.

Finally, Division leaders are planning to create a more formal reviewers guide to promote fairness, internationalization efforts, and a supportive culture. Reviewers will be advised to avoid feedback on matters pertaining to nationality, political statements or geographic context. Reviewers will also be reminded that ALL reviews must include qualitative feedback.

Program Data:

Conference Competition: We received 112 abstracts and papers; 52 were accepted for a rate of 46%.

Of those, 54 submissions were from students, and 25 were accepted (29 declined.)

Our submitters were largely from Asia, North America and Europe. We received two submissions from Oceania but neither paper was accepted in 2022 based on reviewer scores.

We received support from 185 reviewers; 46 from Asia, 52 from Europe, 82 from North America, two from South America and one from Oceania.

Panels: We received nine panel submissions and accepted five. Of the participants, 15 were from Europe, 17 North America, (15 US + 2 Mexico), 4 Middle East (3 from Israel, one from Qatar), TWO from South America, ZERO from Asia, and ZERO from Oceania.

The accepted panels include 11 people from Europe, two people from Israel and 10 from the US.

Panel reviewers = 6 from Europe, 8 from North America (all U.S.), one from Africa (Egypt), one from Oceania, and one from Asia.

In terms of geographical diversity, the VCS Division continues to attract most submissions from a wide range of nations, mostly representing North America, Europe and Asia. The division is committed to increasing both submissions and acceptances from Africa, Oceania, and South America.

The prospect of a face-to-face conference in Paris may be one reason the number of submissions for VCSD jumped from 70 in 2020 (for the 2021 conference) to 112 in 2021 for the 2022 meeting.

Division or Interest Group Report

ICA's policy of putting all submitters into the reviewing pool (excepting students for divisions that do not allow students to review) has enhanced the overall reviewing process. Each paper and panel was assigned to three reviewers, and only one student was assigned to any submission. For the most part it was possible to limit the number of assignments to three per reviewer, though some volunteers exceeded that number. One of those reviewing superstars, was Giorgia Aiello of the University of Leeds, who was named the division's 2022 Rock Star Reviewer.

In 2022, the VCS Division granted a Top Faculty Paper award, a 2nd Place and 3rd Place faculty award, a top student paper award. Waivers were granted to the three top faculty paper award winners, the student who wrote the top student paper, and a Tier B/C nation student who wrote a full paper.

The division also hosted a dissertation competition with a \$100 cash award. The winner of the dissertation award will be honored during the division's hybrid business meeting at the annual conference.

Third, the VCS Division successfully continued the pre-conference initiative for the 2022, with an event focused on mentoring students and early career scholars. We hosted "Visualizing What's Social: Research and Methodological Solutions" with the Computational Methods and Popular Media and Culture divisions.

Q31

Future short term goals (to accomplish over this coming year):

- Approve the travel fund named for Paul Messaris and work with headquarters for its administration.
- Develop more relationships with scholars in global majority countries
- Sustain the quality of our reviewing and our program. Work to ensure conference participants have the best experience whether they attend in person or online.
- Continue to support student and early-career scholars with mentorship and awards.
- Continue to build the website and enhance its relevance to members. The website now serves as a central repository of key news and (archival) information about the division. Our bylaws are there, along with information about our current and past pre-conferences and other resources. Division leaders hope to continue to construct a site that is vibrant, supportive and useful to the membership.

Q32

Future long term goals

The division is committed to increased global engagement, the development of student and early career scholars, and research that is not only of the highest quality but reflects today's digital sphere.

Internationalization. Division leaders continue to work on initiatives for engagement with scholars in global majority countries. Members of the executive committee participated in two events with the Daystar Institute in Kenya in the past year, and we hope to coordinate more of this kind of engagement.

We hope to continue to build an increasingly international membership, especially extending our global reach to include currently under-represented regions such as South America, Africa, and Oceania. Our travel/international development fund must be approved by the membership this coming October, but we anticipate that this will be ratified and be in place for next year's submitters.

Another idea to be discussed with members during the May 2022 business meeting will be to establish a session in the regular program for new global voices – people who have never attended, never presented, with a preference for submitters from Tier B/C nations.

Our incoming internationalization liaison, Anat Leshnick of the University of Colorado, Boulder, will benefit from T. J. Thomson's leadership and should be able to continue the many efforts he started, such as partnerships with other entities within and outside ICA.

Scholarly Mentoring. The VCSD division has traditionally been a welcoming venue for students and early-career scholars, while also maintaining the highest standards for research quality. We encourage high-quality reviews with useful feedback, encourage students to participate as presenters and reviewers, and build our pre-conferences around the needs of early career scholars.

Our proposed travel grant should make it possible for more students and early-career scholars from global majority nations to be able to fully benefit from ICA's programming.

Digital Programming. Division leaders hope to continue to encourage creative, innovative and/ or interactive presentation formats beyond the traditional submission types. In some ways, the hybrid conference format has already ushered in new presentation formats.

Digital programming will assist the division with its global engagement efforts, as online meeting spaces make it possible to network without airfare. Going forward it will be important for VCSD's leaders and members to shape conference events that cultivate academic relationships by making the best use of available technologies while retaining the humanity that makes our division warm, welcoming, and encouraging.

Q33

Membership Initiatives

Internationalization efforts:

The VCSD International Liaison, T. J. Thomson, formed and chaired our Division's Internationalization Task Force, and helped to organize two events designed to enhance the division's relationships with scholars from global majority countries. In April 2021, VCSD and Daystar University in Nairobi, Kenya, co-sponsored a mentoring session for African (Communication) Graduate Students that involved scholars across the ICA and addressed topics such as establishing a writing routine and research agenda; communicating your research to non-academic audiences; making the most of conferences and scholarly associations as a graduate student or early-career scholar; and publishing tips and strategies. The event attracted more than 185 graduate students from 18 institutions across the continent. VCSD also partnered with Daystar University in September 2021, to host a session on Visual Research Ethics moderated by Dr Kyser Lough (Division secretary) and featuring members Profs Pat Aufderheide and Lyombe Eko. The task force continues to meet at least once per year and to suggest action items to the executive that can increase the value and relevance of VCS Division membership and improve the Division's functioning. For example, our members bookshelf feature, our "Why Join the VCS Division" one-page flyer, adding the VCS Division to the ICA's 'Donate' page (<https://www.icahdq.org/donations/>), proposing an additional officer role (a "Partnership and Engagement" officer), proposing a reviewer best practices guide, and our weekly members spotlight all arose through the task force's meetings and discussion. Financial constraints, vaccine availability and uptake, and time zone challenges continue to pose significant barrier to full participation for scholars in global majority nations. To that end, the division has taken the first steps necessary to establish a travel/international development fund for students and Tier B/C nations. The fund will be named for the late Dr. Paul Messaris, an early pioneer in visual studies. The Annenberg School at the University of Pennsylvania and Carla Sarett, Dr. Messaris's widow, have each pledged a thousand dollars to start the fund. Members will have a chance to ratify this fund in October 2022. If ratified, the division should be able to distribute travel grants for the 2023 conference in Toronto or for other internationalization efforts as determined by the executive.

Division or Interest Group Report

Student/early career efforts:

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Other membership efforts:

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Concerns or Challenges to be shared with ICA Board of Directors/Executive Committee

VCSD continues to look for ways to increase inclusiveness and diversity. Money continues to be a significant barrier to scholars from Tier B/C nations.
