

To ETHCOM [ethics@icom.museum](mailto:ethics@icom.museum)

IIC Nordic Group Sweden (Nordiska konservatorsförbundet Sverige, [NKF-S](#)) is an institutional member of ICOM (**membership no 73462**). NKF-S is a non-profit organisation for conservator-restorers working in Sweden. Our members work with conservation-restoration of art, cultural and natural history collections, as well as historical houses and heritage environments. We are a part of International Institute for Conservation of Historic and Artistic Works ([IIC](#)) and members of the European Confederation of Conservator-Restorers Organisations ([E.C.C.O.](#)).

**We are happy to give our comments and feedback (see [Appendix](#)) on the draft of the revised Code of Ethics for Museums.**

Please note that we have used the term “*conservation-restoration*” (*conservation*) to refer to:

- (1) “*conservation*” according to ICOM-CC Terminology for conservation ([2008](#)) (i.e. remedial conservation, preventive conservation, restoration),
- (2) “*preventive conservation*”, “*conservation-restoration*”, “*collection conservation*” according to ICOM Code of Ethics ([2004](#)),
- (3) All activities such as “*technical examination*”, “*preservation*”, and “*conservation-restoration*” according to ICOM-CC definition of the profession ([1984](#))

The term “*conservation-restoration*” was chosen to distinguish the above activities from the word “*conservation*” which, according to ICOM Dictionary of Museology ([2023](#)), refers to “*a process of knowledge*” as well as “*preservation*” in general. This was decided since a “*process of knowledge*” and “*preservation*” in general are different activities than “*conservation-restoration*” as mentioned above.

It is important for us, representing professional conservators/conservator-restorers, since the ICOM Code of Ethics ([2004](#)) and ICOM-CC ([2008](#)) states that “*conservation*”, “*collection conservation*” and “*conservation-restoration*” only should be performed by a qualified conservator-restorer, which is defined in the ICOM-CC definition of the profession ([1984](#)).

**Since a “*process of knowledge*” and “*preservation*” in general (*conservation*) and “*conservation-restoration*” (*conservation*) which is performed by conservator-restorers are very different it is important that these various meanings of “*conservation*” are distinguished from each other. This is so that the new code of ethics for museums can fulfil its mission of being an ethical code based on professional values widely recognized by the international museum community.**

Kind regards  
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## Appendix. IIC Nordic Group Sweden's review of the first draft of the revised Code of Ethics for Museums.

### Social Responsibility

Regarding no 5. since "*conservation*" (mentioned two times) can refer to a "*process of knowledge*" or "*preservation*" in general, as well as specifically for "*conservation-restoration*" (activities performed by a professional conservator-restorer), it should be specified.

Suggests both "*conservation*" is changed to "*conservation-restoration*". But, if ICOM with the term "*conservation*", in this context mean a "*process of knowledge*" or "*preservation*" in general, suggests that "*conservation-restoration*" should be added. However, since "*collection care*" and "*preservation*" are mentioned before, "*conservation*" should be changed to "*conservation-restoration*".

To respect cultural sensitivities reflected in heritage it is important that the term and activity "*conservation-restoration*" is included in this principle since "*conservation-restoration*" is an activity performed on the tangible cultural heritage and therefore may alter it. This needs to be done in respect with the cultural sensitivities reflected in the heritage and therefore it is crucial that this is clearly stated.

Very answer:

No. 5, change "*conservation*" to "*conservation-restoration*", two places.

### Professional Practice

No comments.

### Education, Programs and Exhibitions

No comments.

### Collection and Research

Since "*conservation*" is mentioned four times (in the principle itself, as well as no 1 and 2) and can be used in a broad definition (meaning "*preservation*" or a "*process of knowledge*"), as well as specifically for "*conservation-restoration*" (activities performed by a professional conservator-restorer), it should be specified.

Suggest changing, in the description of the principle itself, from "*restoration*" to "*conservation-restoration*"; since "*conservation*" is used afterwards, the paragraph should mean "*conservation-restoration*" and not "*restoration*". To be consistent, suggest changing "*They ensure the security, restoration, and conservation of the collections they hold*" to "*They ensure the security, preservation, and conservation-restoration of the collections they hold*".

No 1. Please specify the term "*physical maintenance*", or include it in the glossary. For example, do you mean museum facilities or mechanical heritage objects? Change "*conservation*" to

“conservation-restoration”. Since the term “preservation” is used before it could be “conservation-restoration” here.

No 2. Change “conservation” (two times) to “conservation-restoration”. Since the term “preservation” is used before/after it should be “conservation-restoration” instead of “conservation”.

No 3. Suggest adding “conservation-restoration” after “maintenance” (first sentence).

No 5 and 6. Suggests adding a last sentence (two places) “Make sure this is in line with policies (mentioned above in no 2)”.

Very short answer:

Change “conservation” to “conservation-restoration”, four places. Add “conservation-restoration” in no 3 (first sentence). Add no 5 and 6 (last sentences) “Make sure this is in line with policies (mentioned above in no 2)”. No 1 specify “physical maintenance”.

### Governance and Leadership

In the principle itself and no 3. change “human” to “professional” (two places).

No 2. Add “collections” to program, exhibitions, and educational activities.

No 2. If this paragraph is to ensure the museums autonomy, it should be more explicitly stated.

No 4. In the heading: add “as well as everyone working in the museum are professional, and” after “director”. In other words, suggests adding that all people working in a museum should be professional.

Very short answer:

Change “human” to “professional” (two times). No 3 please enhance that the museum should have autonomy. No 4 add that all people working in a museum should be professional.

Do you feel that the Revised Code of Ethics covers the full breadth of ethical issues that museums are facing in the first part of the 21st century?

In general, it is on the right way but needs some more work. Some parts feel like it is written by different people with different ways of using vocabulary. The vocabulary should be consistent, accurate and very clear so that the new code of ethics for museums can fulfil its mission of being an ethical code based on professional values widely recognized by the international museum community.

Please be more specific than just writing “conservation”. If your glossary will refer to a “process of knowledge” (as in ICOM Dictionary for Museology 2023), you should use “conservation-restoration” for “conservation-restoration”. If your glossary with “conservation” means “conservation” according to ICOM-CC Terminology for conservation (2008), ICOM Code of Ethics (2004) and ICOM-CC definition of the profession (1984) you could keep “conservation”. Important is that it is clearly distinguished since “a process of knowledge” and “conservation-restoration” is very different activities.