

IIC Ghent Congress 2026

Congresses

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#IICCongress

Ensembles: Conserving Interconnected Artworks, Artefacts and Collections

The International Institute for Conservation of Historic and Artistic Works (IIC) is thrilled to invite proposals for the 31st biennial IIC Congress 2026, 8-11 September 2026, set to take place both in-person and online from the vibrant city of Ghent, Belgium.

Building on the success and momentum of Congresses in Lima and Wellington, the 2026 Congress will once again embrace a hybrid format, fostering a more sustainable, accessible, and globally connected event. By blending in-person experiences with digital participation, we are ensuring that professionals from across the globe can take part in this inspiring gathering of conservation experts.

Join us in shaping the future of conservation—submit your proposal and be part of an extraordinary international exchange of ideas, innovation, and expertise!

The Congress theme is: Ensembles: Conserving Interconnected Artworks, Artefacts and Collections

A significant proportion of the world's cultural heritage comprises interconnected works or collections that gain increased value and significance when considered as a whole. These groupings, often referred to as ensembles, can be found in fine art, ethnographic or world collections, architectural complexes, archaeological sites, and many other forms of artistic and historical expression. The conservation of cultural heritage ensembles needs to consider not only the individual needs of each component, but also the relationship between multiple pieces and their historical significance. Approaching heritage ensembles in this holistic manner, important insights are gained on the depth of cultural narratives, the evolution of artistic traditions, and the broader historical and social connections that these works represent.

Ensembles manifest in various forms, including but not limited to:

- **Individual works of art composed of multiple components, from all periods of history, including traditional art forms such as polyptychs and retables, as well as contemporary practices including assemblage, mixed-media and installation art.**
- **Multiple works by a particular artist, or group of artists, that together capture the essence of their oeuvre, evolving over time and providing a holistic view of their artistic journey.**
- **Groups of artefacts made with similar materials or expressive forms, which showcase cohesion from commonalities in materials or modes of expression.**
- **Time-related ensembles, depicting specific periods of art/craft production, that create a narrative, reflecting the evolution and diversity of expression over time.**
- **Geographical ensembles, which connect collections or works from specific parts of the world and highlight shared cultural elements and provide insights into unique artistic expressions emerging from different regions.**
- **Site-related ensembles, collections or archives showing conservation problems.**
- **Partnerships utilising individual expertise, collaborative networks, and institutional resources to study, promote and safeguard artefacts and collections.**

[Please read the full submission guidelines here.](#)

Deadline for Paper & Poster Proposals: 27 June 2025

Ghent Congress

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