

## 2017 IIC STUDENT & EMERGING CONSERVATOR CONFERENCE

### HEAD, HANDS and HEART – Transcript 2 of 3

#### Session 2, Friday 13<sup>th</sup> October

Hands – Conservation / Restoration in Practice

Moderator: Sarah Staniforth

Speakers: Rupert Featherstone, Christoph Waller, Anja Romanowski

#### *Opening remarks*

**Kamilla Ødegård:** Good morning everyone. I am Kamilla from the organisation team and I hope everyone enjoyed the coffee and is now ready and awake for our second session of the first [day] today which is Hands – “Conservation-Restoration in Practice.” I also say hello to our online [audience]. When we discuss later, [those of you] who are watching online, I hope you have a lot of questions today. I also want to give a short input. When we are discussing everyone please say your name before speaking – just a short reminder. So, the session today will be moderated by Sarah Staniforth who is the president of IIC. During her career she has focused on preventive conservation. She has introduced sustainable approaches to the care of historic houses in the UK. Sarah Staniforth has worked for the National Trust in different functions such as Historic Properties Director, Museums and Collection Director and Head Conservator. She has written and lectured on preventive conservation in museums and historic houses and is very engaged as a trustee in different heritage trusts. So, now I will hand over the microphone to Sarah Staniforth.

**Sarah Staniforth:** Thank you Kamilla, and good morning everyone, good morning to our audience online. Actually, yesterday we count I think there were up to 30 people, or not necessarily 30 people – it could be more than 30 people – however, 30 computers clicked onto us and there may have been groups of students watching online. So again, as Kamilla said, please when we come to the discussion, we’d really like to receive your questions by Twitter and the blog and the other ways that you can get in touch with us. This morning, as Kamilla just said, we are dealing with hands bit of the Pestalozzi trio, and we’ll be talking about conservation and restoration in practice. Our three speakers have very varied careers and I think one of the things that’s very noticeable, if you ask all the people in this room who are working, we all have slightly different jobs. So there are numerous directions in which you can go once you have graduated from your courses. The point about today is about the inspiration for our three panelists that will set us off on this discussion. Please feel free to ask them any questions about the careers and any other options that might be available to you. So, we’re going to start with Rupert Featherstone. Rupert is a real renaissance man, having gained an MA in natural sciences and art history at Morden College Cambridge, and he’s still working at Cambridge. In fact, he started his postgraduate diploma in the conservation of easel paintings at the Hamilton Kerr Institute, in the early 80s. He’s now the director of the Hamilton Kerr Institute and also

assistant director of the Fitzwilliam Museum which is the Cambridge University of art and he has the overall responsibility of conservation there. He's got another hat on this week – he's the secretary of ENCoRE which is the European Network for Conservation-Restoration Education, which published the ENCoRE on Practice in Conservation-Restoration Education in 2014 which is in your bags and you've probably all had a chance to have a glance of it. He's also worked at the British Royal Collection, and in Calcutta, between 1985 and 2008. I had the pleasure to go out to assist one season on the preventive conservation which, I have to say really, put preventive conservation in context for me when you saw the sort of things museums in India are facing up to – that was a fascinating experience. So, the question that Rupert is going to address is to what extent is the balance between theoretical and practical education, of the higher education institutes, applicable in the job. Rupert, 15 minutes.

*To what extent is the balance between theoretical and practical knowledge attained from higher education institutions applicable in the job?*

**Rupert Featherstone:** Right, can everyone hear me? Good, thank you Sarah for that very kind introduction, thank you to the committee, it's lovely to be here. I'm very glad to be able to speak here for a little bit on this subject, which is actually rather difficult to pin down – it's quite a wide question. So I'm going to talk a little bit about my own personal experience, and also a little bit about my thoughts as an educator, as a director of an institute which educates people now people now, about how the best way to give students – emerging conservators – insights into what it's actually like when you start work and what are the sort of problems that maybe your course doesn't prepare you for, or can't prepare you for, in the time available. So that's my brief and I know in the discussion a lot more probably will come out about this. Ever since the conservation field emerged as a profession, there has been this dichotomy, this slight conflict between obtaining practical skills and getting a lot of experience in some of the manual skills for the interventive conservation work, if you're going to do that, but also the academic side – the theoretical knowledge, the ethics, the philosophy, the history – and that has grown. Last session there was a remark from one of you I think about how much there was to learn now. When I was a student there was so much less to learn. I'm not saying that's bad or good, there just wasn't. We didn't have FTIR, we saw an x-ray once in a blue moon, infrareds were little things on a vidicon. It wasn't easier necessarily, but we did have more time to concentrate on, possibly, the basics, and we spent time in the studio. Nowadays there is a fantastic amount of material out there for students to absorb. I must say, my experience of students, seeing the ones who train with us, or other students to come to us from other institutions, the quality of their education and their skills and knowledge is immensely high now after three, four, five years of a bachelor-masters. Very, very skilled people potentially, but sometimes they haven't had the opportunity to work on the objects, the paintings, or the works of art, as much as we did in the past. That's always going to be a problem, how do you balance that? So with my ENCoRE hat on, that's why we made the practice document. The philosophy behind that was to try and work out, or try and get a way of measuring practice is taught in the higher education schools and how you can balance that with the academic work, theory

what is the ideal balance. Every school is different, so it's quite difficult to quantify it, to come up with a general rule, or recommendation, which is what we tried to do. The idea of course is that the schools should all conform to some wonderful ideal balance where every student leaves knowing everything. That's not going to happen, sadly, and it's so important the first few years after you learn after you've finished your master's [degree] or whatever training, is how you gain the experience which in the old days you probably would have done as a sort of apprentice. You worked in the studio, you would have been taking the word of your mentor, your teacher, your employer, which wasn't necessarily a good thing. If they've got something wrong, you might be following the wrong way. But it allowed you to build up a large skillset, as it were, and I know that in some countries, maybe less now, the pre-programme internships do allow that sort of pre-training before you start the academic theoretical higher education, but it's not that common any longer. It certainly never existed in Great Britain in that way, or very very rarely, and it's not necessarily a realistic way for people to be trained.

So, with my other hat on, as the head of the Hamilton Kerr Institute, I should talk a little bit about how we like to train our students. We're in a strange situation; we only teach easel painting. We are a very small unit, we have almost a one to one teacher student ratio, never more than about 10 students. That does allow a luxury of working in studio together with our students as well as training them academically, so they do get an apprenticeship, as it were, and they learn the skills – we obviously do workshops, we do other things. We actually do spend a lot of time working on paintings together, or supervising them very closely. As they progress through the master's which is a three year master's – 15 week terms, three terms – it's 45 weeks a year. It's quite heavy going and they have to do academic and theoretical elements as well. They do treat real museum objects which we're very lucky to have access to from our own museum, and from other collections in the UK, and they are learning equally in the studios practically from the very beginning. Obviously, in the very beginning they are writing reports and inspecting things they're not doing the more difficult treatments, but we feel that that is a very useful way to train people, if you can. But most schools cannot afford that teacher-student ratio, I quite understand. So, what is an important thing, and we do this, and I think it would be something that should be supported, are the post-program internships, because they are something we offer to all to a certain number of easel paintings conservators as soon as they've come out of their master's, or a year or so afterwards, one or two years work where they have effectively an early career post. We have bursaries and they spend 45 weeks a year, as if you're on the job, but they are working in the studio, they have the chance to do research, which is good, they have the chance to publish, as do our students. But the idea is to show them how a studio works and the way the Hamilton Kerr works is that we have a commercial wing, as it were. We are self-funded to a large extent through commercial work. So we work for big institutions like The National Trust, The Royal Collection, country house collections, smaller museums, private collectors, churches, a lot of cathedrals, mostly in the UK. That allows the students to see first-hand exactly what goes on in the studio – the deadlines, how do you estimate time, how do you manage different projects at the same time. We don't give them the budgets but we ask them to calculate the hours that they are going to spend and see if they get that right, you know,

all the pressures you would have whether you're working in a museum, or whether you're working in a freelance capacity. They get museum experience in the Fitzwilliam because we ask them to do preventive conservation projects, loan preparation, exhibition checking, this sort of thing. They also have to meet clients, they have to deal with clients, and they have to deal with difficult clients sometimes – clients who don't want them necessarily to do what they think they should do. These are the issues that we want to give our students at least some experience of, and our interns, and the real world will bring up these deadlines that don't necessarily conform to the time you would have had as a student. I think students are in a very privileged position, if you have enough time to do a treatment, fully document it, it's fantastic, it doesn't always work in the world. Estimating hours, as I said, managing your resources, do you always have the resources you need to achieve something? The legal issues, even, of being in a job, and especially the client relations and explaining to the curator, the client, not just what the treatment is and how it should be, in your belief, the discussions, the toing-and-froing, and of course what happens to that object when it goes back, if it is going back into an uncontrolled environment, all that has to be thought about this part of your treatment plan. Of course, a lot of schools teach this, I'm not saying that this is a totally novel thing for students. It's when you're actually doing it you realise quite what sort of management skills you have to bring to bear, and the inconvenient facts of time, money resources, uncontrolled environments will impinge on what you would ideally want to do – and project management.

So, from my experience, when I was just graduated from the Hamilton Kerr, and I do have this two-sided [perspective] – I was student there and I'm now coming back as director, many years have passed and it's quite a different thing, but I can see it from both sides. My first internship I got was at The Royal Collection and that was what really helped me, in at the deep end. A very small team, a large collection, uncontrolled environments, for the most part, about 8,000 oil paintings spread across the whole of the UK, 10 or 11 locations, we had to go to those locations, do condition checks, on-site treatments etc. We had to prepare exhibition loans, we had to undertake full treatments, we were doing the framing, we were doing the packing, everything – about three or four people for 8,000 paintings – there was a whole year of that and it was so useful for me. If I hadn't done that, if I'd just gone into working practice in a small studio, or perhaps if I had set up my own business, I think I'd have been severely handicapped compared with the experience I got. A few years later when I went to India, the project management, the things I've learnt in the Royal Collection about dealing with these locations, knowing that you can't always do a full treatment, you can't always do what you feel would be the right thing, but you don't want to do the wrong thing, you mustn't compromise. But then, sometimes you have to compromise – so how do you do that? And in India, particularly, a large collection of oil paintings, mostly uncontrolled environment and since the 1920s they've been subjected to the monsoon, 90% humidity and the winter conditions, loads of bugs, great big cockroaches which I think Sarah remembers. So that was another step change for me, to learn on the job effectively, how you deal with that. We had wonderful colleagues, we had a team of people coming out from Europe, we had Indian colleagues who knew the environment, knew the situation. Working together, we had to deal with these issues, but I couldn't possibly have that training and there's no way a training

course could have prepared me for that immediately. So the idea of these internships, particularly, is really important. The apprentice thing can be a dirty word, in effect, you don't want an apprenticeship or an internship to be cheap labour, for people just to receive, to just understand, "Oh that's the way you do it, this is the mixture" or "This is the filler and that's the consolidant." I think you need to do it once you've done your training – you've got critical thinking, you've got all the problem-solving skills, you can analyse, you can ask the right questions, you can say, "Is that really the way we should do this?" and have a debate with the people who are your mentors, or your employers, or the people running studio where you're doing the internship. That seems to me very important, as opposed to the old way of doing it, where you just learnt the way of the studio. So that is the caveat for all these internships if they are part of the program then you're training institution has to have due diligence as to where the students are going. If it's post-programme [internship] even then I think it behoves the institution where you've been trained, to make sure that the student, or the emerging conservator goes to a studio where standards are the highest and they can expect to learn the skills and consolidate the skills that they've already learnt on the course in a real world environment and of course you are never going to cover even in one year or two years' internship all the problems that you might meet in future. I mean I only talk about oil paintings, it applies to most conservation fields where there's any interventive treatments, so that the variety of techniques, the variety of behaviours of even English painting which is a strange world with Stubbs and Reynolds and all sorts of people who don't paint properly, or who use bizarre materials. Until you've treated waxy Stubbs you don't know what a waxy Stubbs is like, so you can't necessarily train that, but you can prepare people and you can give them those insights. Early in their career, particularly through internships which I think should be expanded – I know they cost money – we have to find ways of funding them and sometimes it's quite a, not an imposition on a studio, but it is a bit of a burden, you know, to supervise the intern, to have to spend time with them when they might be doing other things, but I think the interns often contribute hugely. We've found that the interns we have at Hamilton Kerr who've come from other programs, across the world usually, contribute a lot of their experience, different ways of doing things from where they were trained, and we have a dialogue. We're not teaching them, solely, they're teaching us. I think that's always something one needs to remember about emerging conservators. They have a big contribution to make to the overall quality of our continual professional development, as it were. That's really what I wanted to say in essence. I was trained at the Hamilton Kerr and I do know some of the other schools but I've come back to the same place. There's always a who is a risk there that we carry on with the same methods, and new blood is always good, so hence the importance, I think, that we get interns from Dresden or Amsterdam or Antwerp or Madrid, or wherever we get them from, to give us an insight into what goes on in other parts of Europe or other parts of the world. I just worry if we can keep up these kinds of internships into the future, how do we make sure that they are on offer enough of them for the all the people who graduate? I mean that's always a problem, very many skilled conservators emerging from the schools, there aren't always enough places for all of them. That is an issue and I think it should be addressed, particularly by the government, but some of the big museums are also offering internships, it's not just places like us which are an educational institution. So I think probably I'll stop there, I don't know how long I've been going on

for, but hopefully not too long? Is that alright? Oh no, should I say more or is that enough? I think I'll probably wrap up here because I know the debate will be toing-and-froing and I'm very happy to answer any questions about the things we do. We're a bit of a special case, I know, and I don't want to say that we're better than anyone else in the fact that we do it this way, but that's the way forward, I think, for people to move from the nurturing environment of being in a good master's course into the real world which can be hard, it can be difficult, sometimes you have to really say, "I really want to do that but there's no way we can achieve that, so what we do instead." How do we not compromise our professional standards, how do we keep to the ECCO guidelines and all the things that we are trained to do in difficult situations? I think that's something I'm sure the two other speakers also might talk about, so I'll wrap up now.

**Sarah Staniforth:** Thank you Rupert, I'm going to ask you an immediate question. You said you had 10 students – is that 10 per year or 10 over three years, and how many interns?

**Rupert Featherstone:** The student ratio – we never have more than four or five on the master's course which is three years, and sometimes it's only two a year, or maybe three a year – sometimes we have a gap between intakes – then up to six post programme interns, sometimes over two years, so I mean, 10 students in total. It's really not big, so, again, a slightly special case. But, to be honest, my predecessor Ian McClure, who was in charge, took the decision to limit student numbers partly because he felt the job market would not support larger numbers of people being trained in the UK. That's debatable; the other training institutions in the UK are the Courtauld who train, in terms of painting conservation – I'm not talking about other conservation at the moment – they train about five people every year so that gives us six or seven if you add ours on and there's also Northumbria who train larger numbers but on a slightly shorter course. His decision was to limit student numbers but to increase the number of internships as that seemed to be something we could really offer that wasn't on offer otherwise.

**Sarah Staniforth:** Brilliant, Rupert, thank you very much indeed. So now we go on to Christoph Waller who obtained a degree in art conservation in 1985 from the university Paris 1 Pantheon-Sorbonne. During 15 years he's been working in museums in Germany and the Netherlands and he is the owner and founder of the company Long Life for Art which sells products for conservation. It supports museums and collectors in preventive conservation and, additionally, Christoph gives lectures on preventive conservation at the University of Applied art Vienna and the HAWK University of Hildesheim.

**Christoph Waller:** To correct, I did, I'm not lecturing any longer.

**Sarah Staniforth:** Ok, well it's great to hear about preventive conservation because, although Christoph wasn't able to be with us yesterday, I have to say that preventive conservation didn't come up very much yesterday, so it's really good that we can give it an airing this morning. Christoph.

*Apart from becoming a specialist or a generalist, are there other professions emerging conservators would be qualified for and why?*

**Christoph:** Hello, I'm very pleased to be allowed to speak to you this morning. Normally I have given up teaching and lecturing, but for this time, I thought I should make an exception. In a way, I've been asked to present to you, young graduated conservator, ways to leave your profession. In other words, to show you some kind of emergency exit to other activities in case you're unhappy with being a conservator, or maybe unsuccessful. Let me first start with my own story. You already heard that I studied in Paris and worked in Amsterdam. In 1989 I became a conservator for arts and crafts in Freiburg where I worked for 14 years. In 1990 I participated at a conference about glass disease. You might have heard of the so-called weeping glasses which develop alkaline droplets on their surface, then start drizzling more and more, until they finally fall apart. The reason for glass disease is the wrong composition of the glass and cannot be cured, but decay can be slowed down, first of all by eliminating pollutants, and secondly by climate control. At the time, scientists proposed relative humidity between 30 and 40 percent to be ideal to preserve these special glasses. Well, nowadays there are different opinions about which relative humidity would be best, anyhow at the time, the target was between 30 and 40 percent. The only remaining question was how to obtain this special microclimate within showcases. To cut a long story short, I had a bit of an idea how to do this, by combining a saturated salt solution with a silica gel sheet which I had to get from Japan – the so-called Adsorb-sheets – maybe you know [about them]. I enquired in Japan for about 200 sheets of Adsorb, and they told me, well, it's going to cost you 6,000 dollars, but it's only 3,000 if you take over distribution of these sheets in Germany. Well, you might guess what I did. But just when I had these sheets piled up in my garage someone bought my idea, so all I had left to do was to sell my pile of adsorb sheets. So, I printed leaflets, well, I photocopied leaflets and distributed them to colleagues, and at conferences and in workshops. Bit by bit I sold all of them, but when I had sold all of them, all of a sudden people asked for more, and also for Adsorb [bits] and cassettes. So, I re-ordered [the sheets] from Japan, refilled my garage, printed more leaflets and started to run a part-time business next to my museum work. As business grew, I started adding other products like hygrometers – you also need them in the showcases – and desiccant bags, and quite soon started to have distributors in other countries like France and Italy. Well, sending around information leaflets by fax or by letter was cumbersome and expensive, so I was happy when the Internet came out where I could post all my information. So, I was relatively early with my own website. At the same time the first data loggers became popular in museums, so I put some data loggers on my website as well. And as many people still didn't know what data loggers were and what difference there was between the different products, I added an introduction explaining a bit about data loggers. The success of this one single web page was enormous. I sold quite a lot, and when I once googled 'data loggers' in German, of course, my page was number one in the Google ranking. Incredible. I had top producers like Testo and Rotronic. From that moment on I decided to extend the data logger business. I employed physicists and engineers and became Germany's leading online shop for data loggers which now is called Datenlogger store in German. Well, but also museum business extended. University of Applied

Art in Vienna hired me for lectures in preventive conservation. As I liked the internet, I uploaded my lectures on my website. This wasn't a good idea for my university career. The university soon stopped employing me. They knew what you what I was going to tell and everybody could find it on the internet. But, on the other hand, these web pages on preventive conservation became popular among students and young professionals, so I got many clicks, the Google ranking went up and we sold more and more, not only to museums, but also to the industry. In 2003 we replaced Adsorb by Prosorb, our own product. After ten years with Adsorb, there were some things, I thought, we could do better than the Japanese. This was an important step for us. Prosorb offered better adsorption, better packing and we could do all the conditioning in-house. Nowadays we sell about ten thousand, or more than ten thousand, kilos a year all over the world from Australia to Canada. At the moment we're eight people working, with a total of almost 3 million euros. We're doing fine. We are happy.

Well, in the second part I will give a short overview about where trained conservators can be found, in which areas of activity, which other job opportunities for conservators there are. In the third part I will give you some personal comments about what to do, and not to do, if you think about starting a business. Well, as far as I could find out, graduated conservators often find work in business areas related to art and conservation such as auction houses, research laboratories, specialized magazines and editing houses, government agencies, care of monuments, even the police, and in shipping and handling companies. But most jobs for conservators can be found in commerce of technical equipment for conservators. There are several companies in Germany like Belo, Climate Control, Konservierungspartner, Themart, [...] and Fritz, Kleindorfer, you might know some of them. It's quite special in Germany that museum suppliers employ conservators. As far as I know in other countries it's exclusively salespeople who are developing and marketing products for museums. You might think that maybe it's a better idea to have real professionals in place to develop products for museums. I think there could be much more employment for conservators in companies such as shipping companies, showcase manufacturers and exhibition planning. I think that it would be a good thing for many exhibitions. But as commercial activities might be the most accessible for conservators, I will insist on this, as it is my personal experience as well, and give you some hints, some lessons I've learned or might give to you.

First of all, starting a business next to a part-time employment is a perfect plan. The part-time employment pays your rent and your insurance, and you can use your first profits to grow. You might not need a lot of investment. In my case, for example, it was just us three thousand dollars. Secondly, business is not a shark's basin, especially not in the museum branch. Don't be too afraid to share your knowledge with others, even with possible competitors. Most successful companies are so busy they won't steal your ideas, but they might help you developing your ideas and sometimes your talks with them will end up in some kind of cooperation. We had plenty of positive experiences like this. Third point: co-operation is better than competition, that's another credo of mine. Once we had a competitor who had copied our data logger web shop, and we were battling each other on Google adverts. It can be very costly, Google adverts.

Finally we made an excellent deal. He concentrated on a small part of the business, and nowadays he's one of our best suppliers. Great. Fourth point: listen to your customers. They will tell you in which direction to develop your business, and try to offer services no one else has. I'll give you an example. When we started ProSORB in 2003, we needed aluminium pouches, in a special size. As we had to buy a whole lot of them, we put them on our website. Then a customer called and asked, "I need just such aluminium bags, but a little bit smaller, or a little bit bigger, and I only need 500 bags" – too little to launch a production. But we said okay. We had 2,000 bags produced, sold 500 to the customer, and put the remaining 1,500 on our website. Today, we sell aluminium pouches in 60 sizes with a yearly turnover of 400,000 euros. So listen to your customer. That's all have to say. We don't have a minimum order, we produce many things to measure, we offer a lot of equipment for rent, things that most companies don't [offer]. That's maybe one part of our little success story. Point five: keep it simple. We concentrated on the internet. No expensive catalogues, no expensive fair stands or marketing campaigns. Good service will be your best marketing, good advice, even when you redirect your customers to other companies that are maybe better for their problem. I've seen two companies dying who wanted too much in little time. Often you're more profitable when you stay small. Think about it. And don't be too greedy. When working at the museum I often tried to order directly from producers, to bypass distributors. I thought it would be cheaper, but that's wrong. Producers will never give you discounts, because they have to protect their distributors. But the distributors, they will give you discounts and as a distributor, if you're not too greedy, you might be the lucky one getting the order. And one very important point. Beware of bureaucracy. In all the 25 years that I'm in business, I've not seen one single year without new bureaucratic regulations, some of them extremely costly and time consuming. Machine directives, packaging, ordinance, confirmation of arrival, electrical old equipment regulation, very expensive, if you do it right, interest declaration, minimum wage law, etc. And if you start a business, no official will tell you which regulations will apply to your business. They will never inform you about changes in the regulations. Sometimes the tax advisor will inform you, okay, but the officials – they will get you, if you do anything wrong. So you have to be extremely careful about what you do. You have to be informed about all regulations and to know all traps in advance. Starting a business without deep knowledge of regulations can be risky, and from a certain point on, you might need help from an economically skilled person. Conclusion. If you start a business, you should not think you will be your own boss. You will have other bosses – politicians and officials. If you enjoy struggling like David against Goliath, you will love it. You will have some liberties, indeed. You can choose your team yourself. You can buy whatever you need without application forms. And, sometimes, you can do things the way you want. Yes, it still can be fun to run a company. Up to you. Thank you for your attention.

**Sarah Staniforth:** Christoph, thank you very much indeed, that's introduced a very interesting and different slant on career possibilities, so thank you for that. Our final speaker this morning is Anja Romanowski who is a self-employed to wall paintings conservator-restorer in Germany. She studied conservation-restoration of wall paintings and architectural polychromy at the Academy of Fine Arts in

Dresden from 1999 to 2004. Anja is also wearing another hat here, and that is the ECCO hat, she is the ECCO delegate of the German Association of Conservator-Restorers – the VDR – and she's also the general secretary of ECCO, and actually, this evening we're going to meet some of your colleagues, I think at the reception, so we're very much looking forward to that. It's marvellous that you're having your meeting at the same time, and in the same place as us. For ECCO she's the delegate for Europa Nostra and the European Heritage Alliance, and in 2016 Anja wrote about the need for protecting the professional title in Europe. The article was published in the member's magazine of the Bundesverband der freien Berufe. So, Anja, you have 15 minutes and the question that you're going to address is how to make yourself known as a specialist and to build up a network outside your own discipline.

*How to make yourself known as a specialist and build up a network outside your own discipline?*

**Anja Romanowski:** Yes, thank you very much for the invitation to speak about my self-employment. It made me reflect about the time [which has passed], my experiences and the learning outcomes during this time, and to make it worthwhile for you, to have a something to take out from this very individual experience. Many things happened by coincidence. To get a direction, I just tried to structure it a little bit. First of all, the decision to get self-employed was not a conscious decision, it was just as a wall painting conservator there is a huge lack of employment. There are not the jobs to get. Nevertheless, I started knowing from the internships about the practical work in teams and in projects. I just wanted to be a team player of it, and thinking about soon, maybe, I will have my own project, to be self-responsible finally – to be an adult in the profession of conservation-restoration. So for the structure, I just tried to split it into three main topics, like networks – that's the main question which was asked – but also how to get along with the self-employment. I enlarged it a little bit for soft skills, so the social competences you need to be self-employed, which might be deferred a little bit if you are employed, and also the hard skills, which means also the specialist knowledge about business management and these things you should know; legal issues, administrative bureaucracy, all these things. I won't get too deep into it, because it's very different in the different states, so just to know about what you need to be informed of before you get self-employed.

So for the network in general – and my case is from Germany – we had these [preparatory] internships before the studies, when I started in the 90s, they asked for three years, then it was two years and now it's optional, one year only. During this time, I got a huge experience of practice and also of different people, conservator-restorers, and it was directly the start of building a network, working together day by day, you know what it means on the working site. To know how to build up the network, the question was outside of your own discipline, but finally, the most important network I have is still the colleagues around with whom I worked. If I have problems, if I have no job for the moment, I can always ask them, it's a huge solidarity within the colleagues. Very often there are also projects you cannot do yourself; you need people you can trust, you know how they're working, and they're working all together. So still as a conservator-

restorer, you will have to have a look outside of course, as well, to get work. For my field, in wall painting conservation, it's more the monument preservation authority, also on different levels, depending on the on the responsibility of the object, sometimes. The project planners are mostly architects, the parish, so you have the whole community of the church also responsible for the restoration project, local authority if it's public, and also foundations, sometimes they also guide projects. These are the players with whom you will get in contact with. You might get offers to tender on it together if they want to realise a project. Here it's still the same – even if you have a wonderful website and a huge portfolio you still have to go to meet them face to face. It's always the way you will be kept in mind, the personal contact is the most important [thing] you can do. It's the moment to know how to address your service, what you want to provide, and also to know what they need. So the different players, sometimes with different professions, you should start to learn what are their challenges, what are their problems, and how you can be a helpful player in the team, to get [the job]. For these things you should also learn to speak their language. It's not only the vocabulary but what they need, what they expect from you, that you are there. For instance, if you have a private owner who is so very overwhelmed about all this conservation, the old historical monument, what to do with it. If at the beginning, I would be honest to say, “For the moment I don't know anything, because I just need more money for some analysis,” he will be desperate. So maybe a sentence, like, “We will manage it, just give us the time,” or “Maybe it will take some time,” and then you can start to discuss a little bit. Of course, if you're in a research project just saying, “Yeah, we will manage it,” you're not very trustworthy for this. But for private owners to know what people need from you, that's really important. Also for the architects – even in the in the planning, if you are really structured for everything, you always have to improvise. Because it's not realistic that the timeframe will be kept like you do, and just be prepared, take a lot of magnesium, it's good for your nerves, and just go with it, leave it like it is.

For this moment I want to get back to the soft skills like I said, for what you need, you have the social competences, which means, I will read, “Skills for cooperation in the group, with the intention to maintain the values and operational objectives, and also, the social intelligence, which combines skills to understand others, and to behave towards them appropriate to the situation, and wisely.” I just took some [specific] soft skills which are important for entrepreneurial qualities as, not a specialist conservator-restorer, but you will find yourself, I think, with a list of these qualities: “discipline, ability to concentrate, accuracy, resilience, sense of planning, willingness to work hard, team-minded, flexible, inventive, curious, self-solicitousness” – this is very important, to care about yourself if you are self-employed, not only for the others and for the object, but for yourself, that's really important – “reliability and sense of responsibility.” Even if you are employed, you will find also these qualities, but there are several which are really quite important in being self-employed.

Furthermore, I want to tell something about what is meant by professionalism, in the sense of soft skills. A professional attitude means also a reduction of one's own feelings, to deal neutrally with a stressful situation. Crying or screaming are considered as unprofessional behaviours. Nevertheless, to tell a little bit

about my experience, many times in my career, I screamed on the sites. I'm not really proud, but it was necessary because some workers wanted to destroy works of art, especially wall paintings, very fragile ones. One special situation was quite hard because I stopped the work for [structural re-enforcement] because the medieval wall painting was in flakes on the plaster. With the movements, they would have maybe fallen down, so a loss of wall painting, medieval ones, and I said, "No, you have to stop it, I first have to make a consolidation, emergency consolidation." The construction manager arrived, and he was really yelling at me saying it will cost, I don't know how much it was, several thousand euros per day, if I stop the work, knowing that for the emergency consolidation I need at least seven days, maybe more. It was a huge amount I really couldn't afford. Nevertheless, I screamed back. It was a natural reaction, and I just said, "Yeah, but you will destroy cultural heritage, if you do it." [The construction manager replied,] "Yeah, but it was uncovered for the for the moment." [I said,] "Yeah, but I know that it's there, and I know that I have to tell you that you are not allowed to risk the loss of this." It's a legal issue, and he didn't want to take care of it and it was a day when I just happened to be there, I didn't have a real bag with me, no paper, and I just was looking at what was enveloped anywhere – a dirty little sheet of paper – and I wrote down that I was there and I have seen it and instructed not to do it, otherwise it would have been lost, and he had to sign that he got this. This was the moment he said, "How long do you need for the emergency consolidation?" And to tell this, it was not really brave soft skills there, it was the passion of course, to have the reflex, but at the same time it was also the knowledge to know I'm responsible not only for future generations, but also for myself, because if it was clear I was there at that moment and I didn't intervene to avoid the destruction, it would have been [my fault]. So it's quite important to know where you stand legally in these things.

So, I wanted to come further from the so-called soft skills to the hard skills, what's more or less the knowledge about business management. It's necessary to [have] the basics of business administration, business economics, business management. You can have those introductions in seminars, official ones, if you just want to make a start-up, but I know that since years the German Association of Conservator-Restorers have been offering seminars for start-ups in conservation-restoration, to know the different rules, for several days. I don't know if any other national associations offer this one. It's quite good to have it on a national level, because there are so many different legal issues, what is needed for tendering for the procurement, what you need to know, it so sometimes also very boring to read it, but it's just so necessary. Sometimes, you will read one evening legal advice about some paragraphs, but you just need it to go the next day on-site again, and to know your rights, your duties about the legal issue. Just as you need to know also a chemical formula, so just do it. And also, it is very important to learn the calculation, I was very glad that in your internship learn it, I know that there are several courses in schools and the universities, sometimes, to do it, but maybe you can start also in your career, even if you have to no time frame to do it, but just to know how much time you need to do it. If you start your business, you really have to do it, to make the calculation and to reflect the time you have needed for it. Also the so-called immaterial work like phoning people, writing emails – it's all this, you have a whole calculation for

it. If you're working something like one 130 hours, and you're earning only for 99, because the others you need for the insurance, for the materials, for all these things, so it's quite an exercise you might train from the beginning if you start a start-up. Sometimes it's also good for the fifth year or so, if you've finished your master, to make a kind of scholarship anywhere you can get, because scholarships are not [available] everywhere. If you have finished your education just to go anywhere to learn more about it before you'll jump into your own start-up. Work always with an experienced conservator-restorer at the beginning, in general they're very solidary, and they try to help you with these issues to get your business started, if you have problems, it's a kind of voluntary mentorship. Never hesitate, just always ask the experienced conservator-restorers. And, finally, you will fall, hopefully not too hard, but you stand up and adjust your crown, and just continue. That said, I wish you all the best success for your future career.

**Sarah Staniforth:** Anja, thank you very much, indeed. Some very useful lessons there about people who are interested in starting their own businesses and indeed, we had some very good dos and don'ts from Christoph. So you know the format now, it's the same as yesterday afternoon. We have about just over three quarters of an hour for discussion, and then I shall invite each of the panellists to have a final word for a couple of minutes. We'll start off by taking any questions or comments from our audience, both in this room and online, if anyone would like to start, and we have a roving microphone. Don't forget to say your name.

**Eva von Reumont:** Yes, my name is Eva, I am from the HKB. I have a comment for the first speaker. I was very impressed about when you said that teachers work together with students on the objects. Because from my experience not every school actually understands why that is helpful for the students. I have finished my education and I did experience it shortly, but not really that intensely, and I did not realize that in other schools it's much more intense. What the students actually profit from it is that they are able to become aware of their own abilities because, very often, we don't know what we know, or if we are good at something or not because if we were alone with the objects, then it's just us and we don't know. But if we are together with teachers actually really doing retouchings together or something like that, and seeing how they hold the instruments, what is their approach, it actually helps us to reflect on our own abilities and gives us more self-confidence. Because when I saw the students leaving school, I was so sad that they didn't have the self-confidence to say, "I'm capable," and we all know that they're capable. In Copenhagen everyone was saying you education is wonderful, just think big and go out there, but if you don't feel stable then you're not going to apply for good [positions]. So thank you for that input and I think it's important for teachers to just be aware that students don't, you know, they don't have to do it all alone. That's why we're at school, for the practical part, at least.

**Rupert Featherstone:** Yes, I totally agree. I mean, there has to be a balance because obviously you want the students to be self-reliant, that they can take, they mustn't just follow what the teachers doing. So is this balance of allowing them freedom, possibly even to not make a mistake but go down the wrong route

and then discover why, which is one way of training, I mean, some places let students really make it their own way, and if it's the wrong way, and the student has to work out why. But I think you're right in terms of skill development. Once the student has developed critical thinking and all that, to work with someone who's very much more experienced on, say, the retouching, or whatever it happens to be, we find it very useful. It is unusual because our teachers do work on objects and I know in some schools that's less likely to happen, at least in the studios. It does make it more difficult for our teachers to do their academic work, so they are really working hard if they want to do research as well, but it seems to work for us and I thank you for that.

**Sarah Staniforth:** I'm glad that you brought up that point because I think one of the inspirations for this subject was the Jonathan Ashley-Smith paper that he presented at the ICOM conference in Birmingham last year, in which he really drew attention to this issue that, as Rupert said, there is so much on the syllabus for training courses, conservation training courses, now, that there is less and less time for developing the practical skills. And that has the potential for causing an issue for the training of conservators in the future.

**Helen Hughes:** Yes, Anja, a lot of the points you were making had a lot of resonance for me because I'm probably different from an emerging student. My name's Helen Hughes, I used to work for English Heritage and I was made redundant about ten years ago and had to set up my own consultancy. So all the points you were making about setting up your business has a resonance with me and I took them all to heart, what you were saying. Also Christoph's points about it. And sometimes I say to young conservators while they're still in college. They're no harm in setting up a little business, even if your aim is to work in a museum. If you set up a business while you're at college, you know, it takes a lot of time to get your logo, to get familiar with the website, get all that social media going up and running, but it's very useful if you're confident in taking small bits of work, passing it through, doing tax, gets an accountant, and get it all set up. Because people come to me and they want to do internships with me. Now, I'm a sole trader. It'd be very complicated for me to take on an employee because I'd have to have a different way of working and my accountant says, "Oh, too risky," and also I want to be free to do other things. But if somebody comes to me and they have their own company and say, "I'm doing a big bit of work and what I really need is a fit energetic person to help me on the site," I can't employ them, but if they've got their own company I could work with them, and we could share the profits. So I say to students to think about that because while you're training you can do all [those] things, to set up your own company, and there are courses. I went on a wonderful two-day course on how to set up your own business, and the tip that I was given was get your accountant and make the accountant your god. And I've followed that. And I asked an experienced conservator, "Who is your consultant?" she said, "So-and-so," I went to this accountant and as you say, you get favours. The accountant knew I was kind of business illiterate, she sorted me all out for the AT-insurance and then when I submitted my first accounts, she waived her fees as a gesture of goodwill to my company. So, you know.

**Anja Romanowski:** Thank you very much, it's very wonderful. I also have an accountant who also has a lot of experience with conservator-restorers. It's a very good thing and yes to [define] it more, starting your own business, it's not that you're immediately responsible for your own project, for your own object. It might be, but sometimes, having your own business, working as a freelancer in a team with other people. My intention was at the beginning like this but it happened that immediately after my master work, my diploma in Dresden, they wanted me to do it and it was a huge thing from zero to eight people working for me, eight freelancers, and I had just to jump in and I didn't even have the time to be informed about this entrepreneurial business management, what do I need legally, etc. It was just jumping in and I survived. It was cool.

**Anastasia Kyriopoulou:** Hello, I am Anastasia, I'm an architect and I study building restoration at the Karlsruhe Institute of Technology. Thank you very much for your speeches, it's very, very interesting. I have a question specifically for you, Anja Romanowski. I would like to know [from] your experience which is the biggest problem that you, the conservators or restorers, have with architects and if you have any advice in order to calm down this conflict – conflict management – that we usually have with restorers, or the problems that we have with restorers to deal with and define good solutions. Because we both share a very big passion for our studies and our field but we have to cope sometimes, especially for our cultural heritage, and to find the best solution. So I would like to know what is the biggest problem you have with architects and [a word of] advice from you. Thank you.

**Anja Romanowski:** Oh, it depends always on the persons, of course. Generally, it might be, one problem is the description for the procurement and the tenders. If the architects have done them on their own without the help of a conservator-restorer, there [may be misunderstandings] and legally you are [bound to] this, it's a contract. So you cannot negotiate in this moment, to say it's wrong what you have written here. You go for it or you don't go for it. Also the legal issue that we are a liberal profession and normally it's in this construction contract modus, so this is also a problem – the preparation of the project, the description of it. The next thing is, of course, the time because you have timeframes which are planned without being consulted by a conservator-restorer. For instance, we have to make the investigation and start directly to [begin with] the intervention, but we need the analysis and it takes time to get the results. It's not only the money, it's of course the money as well because if you have the first result you need, okay, I still don't know where it's [going], so we just need to have a larger timeframe. This I know, it's not easy for the architects to handle because they have their timeframe, as well, but the advice I want to [give] is in the first step. In Germany you have for the architects seven steps till the end and I know they want to discuss, to start from step zero and have an eighth one, as well. To start at the first step is, before you start planning, that you plan the planning. That's more or less the thing, and if you have a monument or cultural heritage, you never know what happens. To have from the beginning a larger time scale and possibilities of unpredictable works to put on, and always having a consultant, an expert, in this case I would say conservator-restorers, of course.

**Christoph Waller:** May I just add some comments from my point of view about architects. Well, we often don't deal with architects because architects are often designing large exhibitions and very often they don't think about preventative conservation. They only start thinking about preventative conservation at the very last moment, maybe one week before the exhibition starts. Yes – it's when everything is set up, all the showcases are built and it's really difficult to save some basic issues of preventative conservation. And that's why I said earlier, it would be a good idea to have more conservator-restorers in exhibition planning teams.

**Jonas Roters:** My name is Jonas Roters from Dresden. I wanted to ask something about networking and the question is directed to all of you, because more or less every one of you has, beneath freelancing or other jobs, you have work to do in official councils or organisations. I think this is a good possibility to build up a network and it's important for our profession, the work you do – thank you – and I want to ask what do you think, how important is it for you beneath the official councils and when it's the best time to start [entering] these organizations? Thanks.

**Sarah Staniforth:** That's a really good question. I'm going to ask Rupert first and then Christoph and Anja.

**Rupert Featherstone:** Yes, networking obviously starts when you're a student, with your fellow students, this is why we're doing this sort of thing. In England there is the Gerry Hedley, which is again mostly paintings, some paper. But in England, for example, there is a professional association called the British Association of Picture Restorers, the APCR for conservator-restorers, which is quite an old organization. Some of our students, while they were still students or soon after, joined the editorial board for the journal, they publish and networked that way. They were doing that when they were students and I think that's very useful because you get to know all the people in the freelance world through that. It's less for museums, it's more of a freelance organization. I'm not sure, there may well be equivalents elsewhere. It's not the same as ICOM in Britain, which is the other professional association. But I think the conferences, I think obviously publishing, you get your name out there, that's always good, I think. We try to give our students opportunities while they're still studying. We take study trips to other countries, so we begin to network internationally. And this is again where our internships are helpful because if we get an intern from another country we've got a nice little network there, maybe. There is not a lot of time for us, as the teachers, to do that, but we want to encourage our students to do that. Joining a professional organization, if you can afford it, and usually their studio student rates, is a really useful thing to do. And attend the conferences if you can.

**Christoph Waller:** I think working within a professional organization is much easier if you've got a full-time job in a museum. If you are self-employed, it's your time and you don't owe [them] anything, so it's a little bit more difficult. I decided not to have a function within a professional organization, not to give

papers at conferences etc., because there's just too much at stake, it takes such a lot of time. But what we still do is that we encourage students and young professionals to give lectures. We give them all the material we can give them. So we are supporting them this way, supporting master's students wherever we can. That's our a part of participating in the network.

**Anja Romanowski:** Yes, I'm freelance, I'm self-employed and the general secretary of ECCO and it takes a lot of time, that's for sure. Sometimes I'm missing having a further look for good projects and writing emails on the same day back to the customer because there is an important issue for the organization to do within the deadline. Nevertheless, it's also a very good opportunity for networking. It opens your mind. It's not only networking, it's very meaningful work to do to have this professional politics in mind because it's all about the future of the profession. Especially for you, I can only recommend it, just do it. Because for me, I don't know how new changes will really have an impact, but for you, it will. So it's quite important that you're aware of it and the best is to be active in the network, of course. With ECCO it's international, the network, and it's not that I had very good jobs with international projects, this was not the intention [in doing] this voluntary work. But in fact, in Germany, it's that many people and the so-called very important people are calling me and asking, "I need European advice," and so we discuss, and for the moment I haven't done it, but maybe some day, if I have problems to find to a good job to earn my money, I will ask, "Oh, by the way, do you have anything for me?" I don't know. But for several customers, when they read that I'm general secretary of ECCO, they are quite impressed and I have the impression that they feel that I'm much more competent than without. So it might be a good impression for the customers.

**Sarah Staniforth:** Thank you all. Actually, I'd like to add to that by saying that when I was a student at the Courtauld Institution of Art, we were absolutely encouraged as students to join both IIC and what was then in the UK group of IIC, it's now ICOM. I've been a member of both organizations from being a student to this day. So I do encourage all of you to join the IIC, I repeat what Velson said yesterday, and I'm sure Graham Voce, who's here, can help with that. Helen has just said "Volunteer to work on committees," and this point about becoming editors, helping with editing, organizing conferences, they're really good ways of both building your experience and meeting new people. I was really interested in the list that you gave us, Anja, of people in other professions, including architects, and the parishes for churches. I've always been very conscious of reaching out to other museum professionals, to the curators, to the people who are involved in education in museums, and visitor services. And I'm also a member of the Museums Association in the UK. So don't just think about networking within conservation, think about the wider museum and heritage fields, because those connections are absolutely invaluable to seeing things from other people's point of view. It's very easy to become sort of isolated in just seeing things from the conservation point of view and you sort of have to understand the priorities for our fellow professionals. And networking with them is a very good idea of building those relationships right from the start of your career.

**Salomé García Bacallao:** I'm Salomé from Cuba and I also have a comment first. I became a student member of the IIC last year and I think that it's been very good for me to be part of a network that I am sure I'll be able to use even more in the future. And I was also trying to help my university to become a part of the IIC. I would like to thank you publicly because we got the opportunities fund grant to become a member and I think that will be very good, especially for other students, because I'm now graduating. Because this is a very European conference, from the speakers to the attendants, I would like to ask you your opinion, your experience about conservation for example in the United States, where they have a very different formation of conservators who are trained especially in the master's program. They don't have a bachelor's degree in conservation specifically, so it is very different, it is very important there to have internships. So I would like to know your experience with the other conservators from the United States. And also if you have any suggestions for people who are not European to find opportunities for internships here in Europe.

**Sarah Staniforth:** Shall I kick off on that and then I might ask Rupert to say what his experience is. I've been doing quite a lot of work with North American post-graduate conservation courses and all of the courses in North America are post-graduate. It's a very different system to the European system and the UK is somewhere between the two, because some of us were trained as post-graduates but there are also Bachelor's courses which lead to master's at some of the universities. So the UK is intermediate, but in the United States, they are three-year post-graduate courses and the students typically will have done natural sciences and probably some art history as bachelor students. There is absolutely the challenge of these competing priorities for learning the theory and learning the practical work. I've been working with them on their preventive conservation training because that's another thing that has really increased in the syllabus in the last ten years. The consequence of that is exactly what Jonathan Ashley-Smith is drawing attention to, that there is less and less time for the practical during the master's courses, which increases the need for internships. You will see in the conservation journals, I mean whether it's the [Conservation] DistList, or it's the IIC websites, or for the UK its ICOM or VDR in Germany, internships listed and those international ones are usually open to students from anywhere in the world. So there are a huge number of European students doing internships in the United States and I don't know if any of the students from previous years in Bern have done internships in the United States. Is that the case? But anyway, we can maybe take comments on that from the floor afterwards. Similarly, there are lots of American students and South Americans and Australians and New Zealand and Chinese, a lot of Chinese students, in the UK now and I imagine in the rest of Europe as well. So I think that the possibility for international internships is good, whether they're paid or not, some may be, some maybe not. And that really does affect the ability of people to take them up. Rupert maybe you could comment on that?

**Rupert Featherstone:** Yes, In terms of the course of doing a master's and not a bachelor's, one of the reasons ICOM was set up was to try, under the Bologna Agreement, to see whether there was going to be a congruency across Europe of courses. Some courses have adapted themselves over the last twenty years to

the three-year's bachelor, two years master, but a lot of them haven't, I know that. So I don't think you'll ever get a situation where everyone in the world is training to the same pattern and you can just move from one to the other if you wanted. That said, certainly the courses we try to run are very intensive, they're long, we're trying to squeeze into those three years a huge amount, it's hard work. When our courses were originally set up there was a mandatory fourth year internship, which no longer exists, but we encourage people to do that, because we feel even though people come to us with a good knowledge of art history or even fine art or the natural sciences, with their bachelor's, it's still a big ask to catch up with what people here may be spending five or six years doing, solely doing conservation. But as you said, Sarah, there are some bachelor's courses, so sometimes we do get a student coming to our master's who has done a bachelor's in conservation from somewhere else. So that does happen also in England. In terms of internships, I can speak for ours. Ours are open internationally and we run them in the Fitzwilliam Museum, I forgot to mention that, in other fields of conservation, so archaeological conservation, object conservation, preventive conservation internships. Some of those are funded by ICOM, they do have funding for that. We try not to have unfunded ones. We don't think that's fair on people, to come and work in a museum, to contribute a lot, and not to be looked after, at least their expenses and the living costs. So that that's something we always try to do. But one of the problems we've had in the UK, to be honest, is visa requirements, unfortunately. If we've got an intern coming from South Korea or India or Australia, wherever there are some rules in the UK, which may be different in Europe, we have a system for visiting scholars. So we have to say that they're visiting scholars and then we can get a year's [visa], if they don't already have dual nationality somewhere in Europe or something. But you can usually overcome those. So we open our internships internationally, and it's a level playing field, and we try and found them. We want to get people from all over the world. We had links with India, we try to re-encourage that to happen again, get Indian interns to come and work with us. All I can say is that I think there should be more of that and I would encourage museums, particularly university museums, I think, have a real duty – we feel that in Cambridge – we're an educational institution, our own museum is part of the university, that we should be supporting internships across the board and we try and do that, so that's what I'd like to say.

**Anja Romanowski:** Just a just a little comment on the degrees. It's just to mention the kind of “continental Europe” way of the education. It is in general the conservative master. It differs from a four-year to five-year [programme]. So you have the bachelor in conservation-restoration and the master. It's a political decision out of the states and the ministries, because they said we are paying for the education, the university, and you deliver the competent persons and we don't want to have accreditation system anymore. And so it was defined like this, so that you have the conservative master, and that's Europe wide. For the internships I just wanted to add that colleagues of mine are offering different [preparatory] internships, to have with the museums together with freelancers, in different specialities. In the first year the interns can jump from one special field to another to [reach] a decision in which field they want [to work in] whether it's wall painting, wooden sculpture, or in the museum – canvas painting. While there, they try to create each year an international summer academy. They are in contact with other people,

preparing international summer academies. It's an internship for students during the summertime. They wanted to get in contact with ENCoRE, to spread it more in the universities, but it's still very European. I think it's not closed for over-sea students, but it's still in the process that it's even working in Europe. But thank you for your comment. I will try to open their minds, to have a broader look. Thank you.

**Mariana Escamilla Martínez:** I am Mariana, from Cologne University of Applied Sciences. Thank you very much again for your comments and presentations. Well, there are unfortunately not that many paid internships for post-graduate students and I would just like to ask what do you think needs to be done to push or encourage institutions or museums to get more of these paid internships? Or shall we just expect not to get paid the first years?

**Sarah Staniforth:** That is a very good question, that is not the first time that that question has come up in the student conferences. I do think it's a huge issue for inclusivity in our profession because it does mean that if there are unpaid internships it self-selects the students who can afford them. So does anyone have any suggestions for a solution?

**Anja Romanowski:** Maybe it's not a solution but it's the way to go. Just be active politically and convince people. It's always about money. There is a kind of system for grants. It's just how to how to get them – it's very complicated to know in each country how to get a grant. So that is the point, that you're able to survive. I like very much the comment of Sarah, to say it's exclusive, so it's not about diversity, which is meant in conservation-restoration – who can afford it. We just have to fight for the good thing, that it's necessary to have the competent people to get the experience that is paid, to survive. It's another question we will hear later on this afternoon about being paid. [The question] is open and we want to hear your voice. We in the community, we know what it is, but you have to get your voice outside of your community, to the decision-makers. That's it.

**Christoph Waller:** Maybe one comment from my side about paid internships. If you consider maybe going into business, it might be a good idea to do an internship in a business company, like our company, like Deffner & Johann, or Kremer or whatever. Companies are busy in the conservation area. I would suppose most of these internships will be paid and there you could learn a lot about how to do business. You could get some more ideas for maybe starting a business yourself because, for example, we've got plenty of ideas we can't put into practice due to lack of time, you know. And of course you can do some networking as well from an internship in a company.

**Rupert Featherstone:** I was just going to add another thing about unpaid internships. Of course, is that if they became common, it would undermine the profession for the people who are out there running a business because the temptation for museums will say, “Well, let's have some unpaid interns and we can sort out this store, or get this condition check done,” or whatever it happens to be. So it is a form of

exploitation, I think, for students who are qualified, who are skilled, who have value, and it's a problem because obviously also students want to get experience. And you might say, "Well, I really need to know more," and that's the problem with internships that are unpaid. There's a temptation for someone, if you could afford to do it, to take up such position. But I think for the profession it is not a good idea and I think it will be political lobbying in some way. In the UK, the museum sector is under pressure financially. The Cambridge Fitzwilliam Museum, you might imagine Cambridge University, they've got pots of money and all that, but the university museum is having cuts now and we're going to lose possibly some, not necessarily conservation posts, but some posts. So you might say, "Well, if that's going to happen, where will the money come from for internships?" But I think there would be sources of money, I mean, as I say, ICOM does offer some. I think we need political action to say that the budget that goes to the museum from the government should include a training component, so you can actually say we have a regular stream of income to offer internships in our conservation departments, on a regular basis. And I think it does need convincing some people. The Royal Collection, where I used to work, has only just started to offer internships. The Royal Collection is quite wealthy, they sell huge numbers of T-shirts with the queen's crowns on it and things in the shop, and the Buckingham Palace opening makes them a lot of money. It's only now that they're beginning to finance internships in their conservation studios. In the past they've had them but they've been funded from outside. So really, you need to convince other people, where they may have the money, that they can take this on and it's a real public service for the general good of cultural heritage as well as for the interns who get that particular position.

**Sarah Staniforth:** Thank you all, I must say, I think I agree that the pressure needs to be put on the museums and heritage organizations. It is not up to the students to find grants for their internships. And actually, if students came together and refused to take on free internships, that would be a way of putting pressure on the museums. And you know, those of us who are involved professionally can also put pressure on. Certainly there has been some very bad publicity for my former employer, the National Trust, recently, about offering unpaid internships. Media pressure helps, as well.

**Meret Haudenschild:** We've had an online question before here on this topic. The question is, "Hello, I'm Elena from Bern and I wonder how we could ask for a minimum wage when you are doing an internship. Thank you." So now we've already had some answers, maybe.

**Sarah Staniforth:** Yes, and I think the minimum wage point is a good one, because certainly in the UK, the ICOM grants come from the Heritage Lottery Fund, and I'm not sure that they would meet the minimum wage. Anja, you mentioned the legislation around minimum wage, do you know what the situation is with minimum wage for interns?

**Anja Romanowski:** It's a legal issue depending on the university. If you are obliged, as a student, to have an internship, a practical experience outside of your university, you can be paid less than the minimum

[wage]. That's the point. To get a little hope here in this audience I want to say that if you make an internship as a freelance wall-painting conservator-restorer, you are paid. Not as much as a professional, but you will get money. So depending on which section you are in, it's kind of about negotiation. It's a topic I forgot [to mention]. I would like to talk about negotiation later on. You have to negotiate with the conservator-restorer, if it's a self-employed freelance conservator-restorer, but in general, you are paid.

**Sarah Staniforth:** Renate has got the microphone and then there was hand up, second row from the back.

**Renate Poggendorf:** I don't really know if I can give an answer to that question because these legal things and administrative things are quite complicated, and not always giving any security, or giving you the right answer. But as far as I'm informed, if it's an internship requested during the studies of up to three months, so it is defined by the studies – three months or six months within the studies before you get your degree – then you can be paid below minimum wages. But after your degree, it's not possible. And it is negotiating, it is fighting for it, and so on. We could talk about it this afternoon again. For the postgraduate internships, we just have also reached a little success, at least in Bavaria. Postgraduate internships, not only in conservation, they're generally paid at the level that the German museum association demands, which the counties didn't pay, or only some counties paid. But it needs fighting for it. It means asking for help, it means asking the director, it means asking the museum association, it means asking colleagues, and then you can have success. We had that success and that's the funny thing that internships in Bavaria, and now in many other counties in Germany in museums, are paid on the same level. Postgraduate internships are paid on the same level for conservators as for art historians or archaeologists or whatever, while then the permanent positions are not on the same level, and I'm going to talk about that this afternoon. You just climb up and climb up and then you have to go back down, it's crazy. And there's another topic that makes things complicated. What I found out last year about international internships is that we wanted to take a student who brought her grant money and I said, well, wonderful, then we have an additional person to work with us. And then we ran into a liability – an insurance problem. We solved it somehow and I have information now that we can solve it next year for the next student. But we were trying to find liability insurance for a Norwegian student to work in a museum. And how high is the liability? I mean, we have paintings that have such an incredibly high insurance value that no insurance company ever pays for it. So we are forced to make contracts. If a person is hired by the state, then it's under the state insurance. We cannot just take people who come in. And that has brought up questions, also with the cooperation with the university. It's really complicated, and I guess it is different from country to country.

**Sarah Staniforth:** Renate, thank you for that. I think the point that you were the highlight is the importance of understanding the legal aspects, as well, which Anja drew attention to. Hand up at the back, and then I am still conscious that we haven't come to Velson.

**Eleonore Bernard:** I am Eleonore from HKB. I would really like to raise awareness about the fact that once you are done with your studies as an emerging conservator, and a museum offers you an internship that is unpaid, that is not public service from the museum. That is just exploitation, I'm sorry. The museum is not giving us this internship to be nice to us. They need us, they need interns, they really need qualified people who work there. I think it's honestly unspeakable to talk about money issues. If you need to employ somebody in your company, you pay them, otherwise you don't employ them. If you need to work to be done, either you do it yourself, if you cannot do it yourself, you pay somebody to do it, and if you cannot pay somebody to do it, then the work is not done. It's not fair to think that because we are guilting students and telling them they don't have enough experience, now they're going to work for free when they're over twenty-five and already studied five or plus years, already being unpaid. I think, it's just completely unacceptable. And I really, really, encourage students to also refuse these internships and say, "I'm sorry, I would love to work for you, this is a great opportunity, but I don't work for free. I need to pay my bills." That's all.

**Sarah Staniforth:** I think we've got a consensus around that point. Velson, did you?

**Velson Horie:** Thank you, Velson Horie. We had a really good tour last night around the labs and the teaching areas here and I asked occasionally how many students you had and how many staff. It was about 20 to 30 students and around two to four staff. You said at Hamilton Kerr – Rupert, this is addressed to – it's one to one. As secretary of ENCoRE, what is the ENCoRE's position on the staff-student ratio. In other words, one of the real problems has been for people employing interns or conservators, is ensuring that they come with enough basic knowledge. The interns that come, very often, are not up to the standard of professional activity, therefore are not worth very much until they've been trained up by institution, which is one of the answers to the point that has just been made. So what is amount of staff-student ratio, what is the amount of practical experience you would expect someone to come out of a course and into the profession?

**Rupert Featherstone:** Thanks, yes, tricky question that one. Because we have been debating it in the board of ENCoRE and trying to garner opinion and see what the other courses are actually doing. We feel, obviously, that is a huge variety of staff-student ratio depending on what you're teaching. So when you're teaching the academic chemistry, you don't need a very high one. When you're doing the hands on stuff you really need, we think, so two, three, four to one, if you possibly can. But it's very difficult to quantify in an exact rule and say you've got to have "x". So we're doing a survey at the moment to try and find out from all the schools who are members of ENCoRE what levels of staff they have, how many part-time, and come to some ideas to what that equates to. But, I think, more important is to know that within the course structure or within the in the program, sometimes they have internships within them or whatever, that there will be periods where students get that very close supervision, working together. I think it's difficult, it's really difficult to quantify. Because I know in the past, there have been courses where people are taught in

large classrooms the techniques where you would you want to give individual attention, because every person will have a different approach or ability or innate ability or whatever it is. It's a very difficult thing. I agree totally that if you're going to offer internships, you obviously need to know that the student is at the level to take advantage of the internship without having to be taught anything maybe that they should have been taught earlier and conversely, that they will be able to contribute. So I think that that is a given in the internships. And as I've said, we've had students from all over Europe and elsewhere, and the ones we've selected have been extremely good, very competent, very rarely have we had to actually, as it were, bring them up to speed. But maybe we've been lucky and we do get a lot of applications and we are able to pick the people who we want. But I think in a teaching situation, where you're using real objects, it should be sort of three or four to one, no more. But it can go down and it should be higher towards the end of the masters, where the practical skills are really being developed. But during the bachelors it may well be less and if the schools are able to do that within their budgets, fantastic. The problem being, of course, the schools are under pressure – staffing costs, etc. So it's a terribly complicated question and ENCoRE tries to raise the bench mark, and hopefully other schools will follow and they can use our analysis to argue with their governments, with the departments, with their funding bodies, to say, “We need more staff,” or “We can't take that cut,” or “We can't take twenty more students just to fill the quotas, because we won't be able to maintain the staff-student ratios that we believe in.” But I can't really give you a straight answer at the moment, as to, “ENCoRE says you've got to have that,” because of all these variables, but I really think we are very lucky, one to one. It's not common. But I think one to two, one to three, one to four, probably all right in the studio situation. And it depends how often the teacher is there, of course. Is the teacher that the whole time? Or does he just wander in? Or do they have studio inspections and then leave the students to their own devices? All of this is, again, we're almost micro-managing these courses if we start dictating or saying that. But it's a good question.

**Velson Horie:** The medical field does this quite a bit, engineering does this quite a bit. I know the engineers and the architects go through a really quite rigorously defined amount of definition of what an intern looks like, what a trained architect, engineer comes out with. So are you moving towards that?

**Rupert Featherstone:** Well, the medical analogy is a good one. I didn't mention that in my talk, but obviously, the idea of teaching hospitals and when the junior doctors having qualified. We can look at that, we are comparing with other fields. But yes, other professions are ahead of us, I must admit that. So I think what will develop – ENCoRE is midway through this – we got the practice document ready. We're now looking at all the schools we can to try and glean the information we need to then say, “Well actually, this isn't good enough” or “This is.” And then, as you say, a model from another profession may well be very useful in that context. I know medical training has obviously developed over a long period and is now very securely defined and I think we can try to do that too. Thanks.

**Sarah Staniforth:** Okay, I'm just conscious of the time and that we should wind up. Are there any more questions online? I don't want to neglect them. No? In which case, I think it's going to have to be two minutes each for the panelists to sum up. Anja, you mentioned negotiation. It would be really great if you could just say a little bit more about whether it's possible to learn soft skills or in they're inherent in you.

*Closing words*

**Anja Romanowski:** Yes, I just forgot it, with the time, to talk about negotiation – negotiation not only about the work you have to do, not only about the timeframe, but also about money. And I realised that it's really very varied how people [relate] to money. As most of the audience are young women, I realised in several courses, that for young women it's really not an issue, that they had already done money negotiations. For many, often, maybe out of their education, it was kind of a moral thing while some young men think, "Oh, it's a sportive thing." So they are better in negotiations, they take it [sportively], and they [ignore] the moral issue. There's no indignation about asking for more money. Just keep calm and argue why you need it, and if you don't get the money, how much work you can do for it. Just keep calm and just do it, and please train it. There's a tiny little issue if you're very nervous for a negotiation about money with a customer who is not happy, who is really severe or something like that. Just imagine that you are your best friend and argue as you would to your best friend.

**Sarah Staniforth:** Okay, thank you. Christoph.

**Christoph Waller:** Just a small comment to what she said about getting angry, that "Shouting is not professional." Well, sometimes you need it. Sometimes you have to use it in the right way. I completely agree with her, but if you're conscious about what you're doing and why you're doing it then I think it's okay. And I just wanted to add that I gave you some comments about what not to do and about the dangers of starting a company, but I still want to encourage you to go into business. There is still a lot of wasteland you could work on, even in the large field of conservation. Just to give you some brief examples: the storage of photographs. It's a question no company is really good in, at least in Germany. Or, for example, no one is offering products for marking and labelling. It's just a very small area of activity, but worldwide, there's nothing. There are plenty more ideas you could develop.

**Sarah Staniforth:** Thank you, you're demonstrating that you're not in competition, since you've just given a lot of ideas to the audience! Rupert.

**Rupert Featherstone:** Thanks. I'll be very brief because I think we've said so much, it's been a very informative debate. And I just want to reiterate that I feel, as a member of ENCoRE, that the quality of the education now that most students receive is getting better. There have been great advances in the last 30 years in some of the ways people are trained. I know there's a huge amount to learn and one has to be

careful not to overindulge, maybe, and realise, “Yes, it's lovely to know how to use an FTIR, but maybe I'll leave that someone else in the future.” But you do need to work on those practical skills, as well. Or even as a vendor in conservation, you need to know what the practical skills are so you can see what's gone wrong possibly and advise. And I know it's a lot to ask of you, but my experience of the quality of the education, and the quality of the students now, is so much better than it used to be in the olden days when I was young. So I just wish you all the best and maybe I'll see some of you as internships at some point.

**Sarah Staniforth:** Great, thank you all, and thank you to you, our audience, for all of the really interesting points that you've made. I think probably the strongest takeaway that I have from this session is this point about internships and really ensuring that those are paid. I think that anything that you can do as students to facilitate that by not accepting unpaid internships, and anything we can do as the professional organisations and talking to the potential employers, we will also commit to do. And again, I repeat our offer for you to join professional organisations at an early stage in your career. So thank you all very much, thank you Anja, Christoph and Rupert for leading our discussion this morning and we look forward to the discussion on “Heart” this afternoon. Thank you.