

PROPOSAL

to form a new ICOM International Committee

WORKLABS

Labour, work and social history in the industrial period

Dear colleague,

We are writing to ask if you would support an application to ICOM to set up a new committee of museums dealing with labour, work and social history in the period of industrialization.

Since 1997 we have been meeting as **WORKLAB – the International Association of Labour Museums** (www.worklab.dk). This has developed as a small mainly European based network of museums of labour history with bi-yearly meetings. Our most successful project was *Migration, work and identity* 2000-2004, a partnership of eight member museums which delivered conferences, publications, some national exhibitions and a joint touring exhibition, funded by EU Culture 2000. A number of other institutions have been involved in WORKLAB activities – especially our international conferences.

In particular we have noticed a growing trend from other museums who are interested in elements of our core story. Some industrial and scientific museums want to pursue the social, political and cultural lives of the workers who operated the machines and other objects of their technical collections. Historical and city museums are also interested in covering working lives of their inhabitants. In addition our core members have been approached by a number of fledging museums of working class life. Many regional museums deal with subjects of industrial culture.

We believe the time is appropriate to gather all museum professionals worldwide who deal with labour history in all its forms, with history of workers and the history of work from the beginning of the industrial period. We feel that ICOM is the most appropriate body to host this international forum and network for meetings and exchange of information and that existing ICOM committees (e.g. CAMOC Museums of Cities, CIMUSET Science & Technology, ICR Regional Museums, DEMHIST Historic House Museums, ICMAH Archaeology & History) would be complemented by **WORKLABS - Labour, work and social history in the industrial period**.

We need 50 signatures from existing ICOM members for this proposal to be considered

- by the Standing Committee of International Committees,
- by the Advisory Committee and
- by the Executive Council of ICOM.

We would be very pleased if you could sign and send the attached note to Udo Wiesinger at the address overleaf. Please let us know if you have any queries.

Yours sincerely

Peter Ludvigsen
Worklab Chair
Director
Arbejdermuseet
The Workers' Museum
Kopenhagen, Denmark

Nick Mansfield
Worklab Secretary
Director
People's History Museum
Manchester, UK

Udo Wiesinger
Worklab Coordinator
Director
Museum Arbeitswelt
Steyr, Austria

DECLARATION OF SUPPORT

Yes I would like to support the proposal to ask ICOM to set up the

INTERNATIONAL COMMITTEE

WORKLABS

Labour, work and social history in the industrial period

Name:

Museum:

Address:

.....

.....

ICOM – Membership Category:

Individual

Institutional

Membership – Number:

Signature:

Please send to:

Mag. Udo B. Wiesinger
Museum Arbeitswelt Steyr
Wehrgrabengasse 7
A4400 Steyr / Austria
udo.wiesinger@museum-steyr.at
www.museum-steyr.at
phone +43 7252 77351 23
fax +43 7252 77351 11