

Evaluation Report of the *Catalan Institute of Classical Archaeology (ICAC)*

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Members of the Evaluation Commission (EC)

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The present evaluation report is based on the fulfilment of the mission of ***Catalan Institute of Classical Archaeology – Institut Català d’Arqueologia Clàssica*** (hereafter **ICAC**) in the last four years (2015-2018). The **mission** of ICAC is to undertake research of excellence, advanced training and dissemination in the field of Classical Archaeology in the widest sense of the term, both from a geographical perspective in the Mediterranean region, where the classical cultures developed, and chronologically, embracing the Greek and Roman civilisations and other cultures directly related to them.

Discussion, conclusions and recommendations,

After the presentation of Dr Josep M. Palet, Director of ICAC, the EC discussed the main issues regarding the fulfilment of the mission such as scientific production and productivity, knowledge transfer activities, outreach and dissemination activities, and management of the Centre.

All agreements on conclusions and recommendations have been achieved by consensus.

The main **conclusions** and **recommendations** are the following:

1. Scientific production and productivity

Conclusion 1: A significant part of the scientific production of ICAC is published in international and indexed journals. However, there is still a fraction of papers which are not published in top journals.

Recommendation 1: The EC encourages ICAC to continue increasing the number of papers in international and indexed journals. Currently ICAC has an excellent track in conference proceedings, and these should be used as the basis for subsequent publications on the given topics in venues reaching an international audience. This action should be implemented without neglecting the scientific production in books and collections, which is also very relevant in the ICAC's scientific field.

Recommendation 2: ICAC should reinforce its internationalisation strategy on all fronts: scientific outputs, recruitment, branding, dissemination, etc. **Recommendation 3:** In this connection, ICAC via its association with University Rovira I Virgili, should try to engage in some European staff exchange programmes, such as the Erasmus+, which supports the reciprocal mobility of staff for short stays.

Recommendation 4: At the same time, researchers in ICAC should continue making efforts to be awarded ERC grants and new ICREA positions.

Recommendation 5: ICAC should try to increase its participation in European collaborative projects H2020, which could become a stable source of competitive funding for the Institute, as well as a potential instrument for networking and partnership with other institutions.

Recommendation 6: The EC strongly recommends ICAC to introduce changes in the operation of the Scientific Advisory Board (SAB). The SAB should provide advice to the Institute in a permanent way. The members of the SAB should physically meet at least on a biennial basis. In each of the meetings, a written report should be produced and delivered to the Board of Trustees (BoT) and to the director of ICAC. The report should include the results of the SAB periodic evaluation of the research groups in ICAC.

Conclusion 2: ICAC undertakes research in an intricate balance between covering a wide range of research topics and being at the same time a small institute. **Recommendation 7:** The EC believes that more discussion is needed in ICAC on trying to focus the main projects in some specific research areas. At this point, the SAB should play a main role and help to define the identity of the Institute in some specific fields in which ICAC already shows expertise and strength.

Recommendation 8: ICAC should develop a strategy to face challenges in the Data Management area.

Recommendation 9: The EC also recommends to intensify internal seminars in ICAC, to facilitate that different research groups share results, knowledge and techniques.

2. Knowledge transfer activities

Recommendation 10: ICAC needs a clear and detailed strategy (including a business plan) for exploring new markets and opportunities. This strategy should be implemented through an action plan, in partnerships with other institutions.

3. Outreach and dissemination activities

Conclusion 3: ICAC has a good track of scientific dissemination. **Recommendation 11:** The Institute should try to be even stronger in this field; it should aim at becoming the main point of reference for dissemination and expertise on archaeological heritage in the area of Tarragona.

4. Management of ICAC

Recommendation 11: In order to improve its internationalisation profile, any new recruitment in ICAC should be open and international, following the action plan of the Human Resources Strategy for Researchers (HRS4R). If ICAC identifies good candidates, they may be invited to visit the Institute, in a job talk, as a way of analysing the matching between the research performed by the candidates and the research lines in ICAC.

Conclusion 4: New positions for the institute are mainly based in the retirement of current researchers. This recruitment strategy seems to be very limited.

Recommendation 12: In order to make ICAC more visible and attractive internationally, its website should be all translated into English (not only the homepage).

Conclusion 5: ICAC has a funding scheme with 70% of structural core funding (provided by the Trustees) and 30% of income coming from competitive projects. **Recommendation 13:** ICAC must grow in competitive funding, trying to reach a balanced ratio of approximately 50%.

Conclusion 6: ICAC performance in the area of open access is compliant with the recommended international standards. **Recommendation 14:** On this point, the EC recommends to make all these open publications known worldwide, increasing ICAC's visibility abroad.

Recommendation 15: As regards of the University master in Archaeology, the EC encourages ICAC and the Universitat Rovira i Virgili to innovate the master approach attracting the attention of a major number of students.

5. Overall qualification¹

The members of the EC recognises the consolidated scientific track shown by ICAC during the evaluation period (2015-2018), though it seems clear that the Institute is suffering a certain transition phase. The EC believes that the Institute has potential to improve its performance in the coming years if it follows the recommendations made in this report.

On this basis, the EC awarded the **qualification of B to ICAC**.

¹ This overall qualification ranks as follow:

A: Outstanding performance, placing the centre among the top international performing institutions on its field.

B: Very Good, with excellent results at national level although some pending issues to be addressed at the international scenario.

C: Fair. Good performance at national level although focus on some strategic issues is required to allow the centre have a feasible performance in the next years.

D: Clear need for Improvement. The centre should be re-oriented or transformed since the current structure and/or performance does not provide guarantees for the board of trustees.