

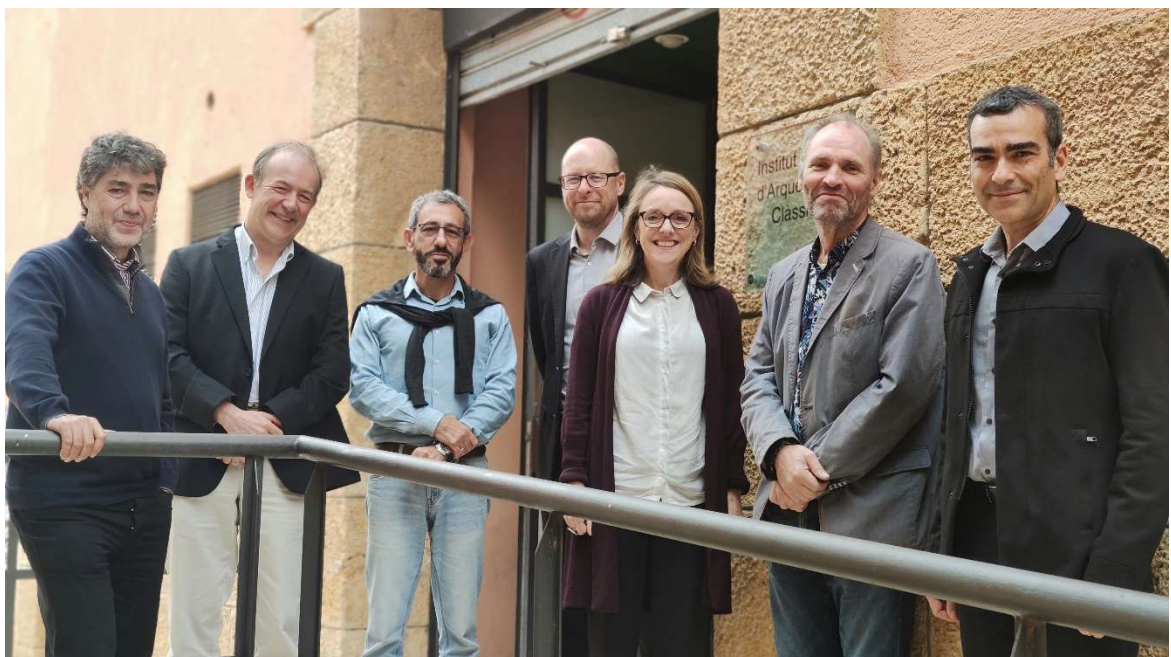
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Evaluation Report of the *Catalan Institute of Classical Archaeology (ICAC)*

November 18th, 2022

Members of the Evaluation Commission (EC)

- Michael Eisenberg, Zinman Institute of Archaeology - University of Haifa, Israel
- Ian Haynes, School of History, Classics and Archaeology - Newcastle University, UK (*Chair*)
- Anne-Sofie Laegran, Edinburgh Research Office - The University of Edinburgh, UK
- Dominic Perring, Institute of Archaeology - University College London, UK
- Cameron A. Petrie, Trinity College - University of Cambridge, UK
- Lluís Rovira, CERCA, Catalonia (*Rapporteur*)
- David Fernández, General Directorate for Research, Catalonia (*Secretary*)



Members of the Evaluation Commission of ICAC. From left to right: Dr. Lluís Rovira, Prof. Ian Haynes, Dr. Michael Eisenberg, Prof. Cameron A. Petrie, Dr. Anne-Sofie Laegran, Prof. Dominic Perring and Dr. David Fernández.

The present evaluation report is based on the fulfilment of the mission of the *Catalan Institute of Classical Archaeology* (hereafter **ICAC**) during the last four years (2018-2021). 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 Maria Palet, Director of ICAC, the EC discussed the main issues regarding the fulfilment of the mission related to scientific production and productivity, knowledge and technology transfer, and management of the Institute.

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

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

As a preliminary comment, the EC would like to highlight that a clear progress in the main indicators of ICAC is observed since the last evaluation, as well as a high degree of implementation of the recommendations that were made then.

1. Scientific production and productivity

Conclusion 1: During the period of evaluation, ICAC has produced outstanding scientific outputs and the international reputation of the Institute is growing year after year.

Recommendation 1: ICAC should expand on its efforts to increase its international connections.

Conclusion 2: The EC observes a clear increase in the number of postdocs in ICAC, which is seen as a very positive milestone for the Institute.

Recommendation 2: ICAC should provide the maximum possible support and encouragement to the best candidates to apply for ERC grants. Ideally, these candidates should not be concentrated in one single research group; it is very important to extend the culture of pursuing ERC grants broadly among all the research groups in ICAC.

Recommendation 3: ICAC should play a leading role in the area of scientific research in Tarragona, in partnership with other institutions. A strategy should be designed to reach this goal in the next years, taking into account that what is perceived as *regional* in Tarragona has actually an international relevance in the field of Classical archaeology.

Recommendation 4: Related to the previous point, ICAC should organise international events and conferences annually in Tarragona. These events have the potential to increase the reputation of the Institute and would be helpful in attracting international talent.

Conclusion 3: The EC observes a certain lack of critical mass in ICAC, and this requires an active analysis from the point of view of the Institute directorate and the trustees.

2. Knowledge and technology transfer

Conclusion 4: The EC believes that the use of technologies in computational sciences such as advanced UAV survey and deep learning algorithms represent real opportunities with great scientific as well as commercial potential for the Institute, also ensuring society benefits from these innovations.

Recommendation 5: There is a clear path to expand the activity of the Institute in these areas, and opportunities to do so should be kept under active review, but the panel see the challenges with commercialisation strategies and does not seek to add pressure to adopt them.

Conclusion 5: The EC would like to highlight as a very good achievement the engagement in the Mons Observans site in Montornès del Vallès (Barcelona), in partnership with other institutions and stakeholders.

Conclusion 6: ICAC has done a tremendous job in dissemination actions: activities for schools, radio programmes, actions related to Marie Curie grantees, etc.

Recommendation 6: ICAC should evaluate its dissemination activities in order to learn what is most impactful and thereby ensure resources are used to best effect.

3. Management of ICAC

Conclusion 7: The EC observes a good level of internal communication among the research groups of ICAC.

Recommendation 7: As ICAC is growing from a small institute to a middle-size institution, the communication processes should be formalised, to achieve a high degree of internal cohesion and understanding of what every research group is undertaking.

Recommendation 8: The Institute needs to increase the capacity to retain the scientific and administration staff to avoid risks in the future.

Conclusion 8: The atmosphere between the scientific and the administrative staff seems to be very good and this is considered an asset of the Institute.

Recommendation 9: The EC believes that there is a need for a programme of mentorship for the different levels of young scientific staff.

Recommendation 10: ICAC should take advantage from the substitution of the general administrator of the Institute in order to implement improvements whenever is possible, to achieve an even more dynamic approach in research management.

Conclusion 9: Bureaucracy is a real threat for the Institute and ICAC has limited options to change it.

Recommendation 11: The Board of Trustees of ICAC should be alerted to the impact of increased bureaucracy on the Institute, and asked to support the ICAC on this.

Recommendation 12: For the next evaluation, ICAC should improve the documentation provided to the EC in order to better evaluate what actions ICAC is implementing in the field of Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) Strategies.

Conclusion 10: The EC would like to highlight that the activity in data management and open access that ICAC is performing is really pioneering.

Conclusion 11: Up to date, ICAC has not yet been able to obtain income from philanthropy.

Recommendation 13: The Institute should develop a strategy to attract potential donors and obtain some income from philanthropy.

Recommendation 14: ICAC should submit this evaluation report to the Scientific Advisory Board (SAB) for discussion of which actions should be prioritised and how.

Conclusion 12: The EC would like to note the Institute was able to maintain an excellent level of performance during the Covid pandemics.

Recommendation 15: ICAC should explore how to make the most of its alumni community. One action to be done could be delivering a periodic newsletter to this community.

Conclusion 13: The new headquarters for the Institute in the old landmark Tobacco Factory building “Space Tabacalera” (a new public space that the city has recovered to become the largest cultural complex in Tarragona), is a great opportunity for ICAC.

Recommendation 16: The Institute should plan space distribution in the new ‘Space Tabacalera’ in a rational way considering attracting future talent, and take into account the possible increase in the overall costs for the Institute.

4. Overall qualification¹

After a brief discussion about the assessment qualification to be awarded to ICAC, all members of the EC agree that the Institute has shown an upward trend during the last years and deserves an excellent qualification, though there are still a few pending issues to reach the highest standards at international level.

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 few top influential and international performing institutions on its particular field by originality, rigor and significance.

B: Excellent, with results that are closed to the highest standards at international level by originality, rigor and significance.

C: Very good performance, beginning to be recognised at international level, although focus on some strategic issues is required to reach higher originality, rigor and significance.

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.