

Royal Netherlands Historical Society

Answers to the questions of the board of CISH/ICHS
regarding the future

1. What, from the perspective of your organization, are the most important functions of a global association of historians?

- We expect an international organization to inform its members about (global) developments that affect or change the discipline. This can be scholarly developments (open access, open science, artificial intelligence, developments in scholarly publishing etc.) as well as developments in current affairs that affect the scholarly community of historians.
- We would like the organization to be a vibrant (online) community we can turn to for issues we would like to discuss, and best practices to learn from etc.
- Perhaps the most important advice we can give in general is to invest in *community building* so the member organizations can find each other easily and discuss potential items for an international agenda. It would be very useful to have a more accessible and engaged community of historians worldwide and CISH could play a crucial role in this respect. We realize that this is not easy, but we feel this is the first *raison d'être* of a world organization of historians.

2. How can we best aid colleagues in countries with very limited resources?

Online general meetings of CISH, conferences, library collections, open access publications etc could be discussed, but it seems to us that this question should be answered by colleagues in countries with very limited resources in the first place.

The question raises some new questions as well:

- do you speak about members only or also about all countries with limited resources?
- What is your definition of very limited resources?

3. In what ways could CISH serve and attract younger colleagues and students?

How to serve young historians is a matter that should be discussed with young historians themselves in the first place.

- Our own experience teaches us that it helps in attracting young historians:
 - To give young historians a seat on the board (in our case of the national association, in case of CISH the international board)
 - To use a different and less formal tone of voice in communications);
 - To be actively present on social media;
 - To have a welcoming atmosphere in general and actively invite young historians to attend or participate in particular conferences/activities;

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- To allocate financial resources so they can attend in person conferences or events because many young historians are in a precarious position and cannot afford to travel far and abroad.

4. How can we best expand (or develop?) the public profile of CISH?

- In our opinion CISH needs formulate a (new) mission, vision and strategy (in other words a (new) policy plan for the organisation) before we would be able to advise you about actions to expand or develop a public profile. So our advise would be to draft a policy plan for the next 3-5 years in which you address these issues and in which you can also address the other questions you ask us.
- To address and to strengthen the link with history teachers (secondary education). History education is under stress in a number of countries worldwide. Sharing experiences and strategies can help the profession as well as the education system. By connecting with these professionals CISH can exert influence because pupils are (potentially) the historians of the future.
- CISH should help to promote the urgency of learning history in secondary education and universities, as well as of including the historical layer in the major discourses of today, especially the ones where we face crises (political, climate, human rights, inequality, housing etc.). A shared resource could help to exchange inspiring best practices, e.g. in changing teaching curricula or forms of outreach

5. Do you have any suggestions as to how the 100th anniversary of CISH could be celebrated and how individual national committees and commissions might participate (possibly locally)?

We advise CISH to look also forward to the future with this celebration, instead of just celebrating the past. What CISH wants to do, depends on what will be decided in the new policy plan we advise to draft. Involving the member organizations in this process is wise so it will be supported by the international community but it will alleviate the board of CISH as well in this task.

6. In what ways could CISH promote a shared international agenda of topics for discussion and research?

We would welcome a resource center where we can find relevant information and have informed discussions about relevant topics.

We would welcome an effort in strengthening the link with history teachers (see question no. 4)

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7. Do you have any suggestions for the future and structure of the Research Forum and the possible establishment of a Young Historians' Forum?

Since we were not present in Poznan, we cannot advise in the question of the Research Forum. With regard to the question of the Young Historians' Forum we refer you to question 3.