

Activity Programme for the Institute of Art History, Czech Academy of Sciences, for the period 2023–2027

The Institute of Art History, Czech Academy of Sciences (IAH CAS) is a public research institute which makes a significant contribution to knowledge about and protection of European cultural values. The main focus of its work is systematic research into the history and theory of the visual arts, including architecture, urban design, art criticism, the historiography of these research fields, aesthetics, and heritage conservation, and also the history and theory of music and the provision of art-historical topographical research. The basic research in particular, but also the applied research, covers a broad time range, from the medieval period down to the present day, deals with both Czech and world art, and is based on cooperation with other institutes of the Czech Academy of Sciences, universities, and other institutions in the Czech Republic and other countries. The IAH CAS also endeavours to help build up a Czech infrastructure for this research field.

The IAH CAS is a founder member of RIHA (the International Association of Research Institutes in the History of Art). The results achieved by the IAH CAS, the quality of which is of a European standard, not only raise the level of knowledge and scholarship, but also have an indispensable role in practice.

Main tasks:

- Maintaining high-level quality in research and results
- Developing international cooperation
- Resolving the issue of salary policy
- Resolving the issue of insufficient premises

The research priorities of the IAH CAS

The research priorities of the IAH CAS determine the main directions in which the Institute carries out research. The aim of our institute is that the results it achieves will not only expand the horizons of our present knowledge, but also have a direct impact on society. (This occurs, for example, in art-historical topography or research into the history and theory of heritage conservation.) In this regard, particularly in today's world, the cultural heritage plays an important role in forming national, social, and other types of identity, which influence the sense of belonging within various types of communities. The IAH CAS also uses the critical potential of the fields of art history and musicology to uncover and interpret social mechanisms based on various types of ideological constructions, hierarchies, and inequalities. These emphases are present in some way in all the following research priorities:

1/ Works of art and their material substance

The research aims at examining the material nature of works of art. The focus is on several areas, whose relevance arises out of practice in the field. Use is made of modern precise analytical methods in primary and applied research in the fields of art history, heritage conservation, and restoration, and new methods of technological investigation and presentation are developed. The topographical research of the Institute serves as a basis for this research for specialists, the state administration, and the broadest possible public. We also examine from the point of view of material the role of reproduction in the processes of creating, distributing, documenting, protecting, and preserving works of art. We also deal with related themes such as the material nature of textual accompaniment to artworks, including the development of epigraphy as an auxiliary discipline for art history, and the material nature of music notation and sound recordings as the basis for our critical editions of musical compositions.

2/ Visual-art and music culture in a socio-historical context

The aim of the research is the interpretation of visual-art and music culture in the broader context of social relationships in their historical situation. The focus is on investigating the creation and transformation of specific functions of works of art, such as cult objects, memorial sites, means of social representation, propaganda, didactic aids, aesthetic stimuli, investments, and so on. Interest is also focused on the network of relationships in which artworks are to be found, and which link the various interested protagonists: creators, those commissioning the works, interpreters, recipients, viewers, users, critics, collectors, and dealers. The emphasis is on the dynamic character of visual-art and music culture, manifested especially in the constant transformation of ideas, themes, solutions, works, and protagonists. The specific research themes of this priority include collecting and patronage, provenance research, marginalised and neglected aspects of visual-art and music culture, gender-oriented issues, and the relationship between art and the media.

3/ Criticism and art theory

The research concentrates on the criticism and reception of artistic and musical works, art exhibitions, and concerts and musical performances, all of which are part of the communication process within which the meaning of a work takes shape. Criticism is examined against the background of changing community, national, and transnational narratives, and in connection with the viewpoint of recipients at the time the work was created. At the same time, we reflect on it within the framework of a more comprehensive consideration of the genesis and process of formation of art history and musicology as modern disciplines of art scholarship. In our research into the history and theory of both fields, we explore their relationship to the knowledge base and approaches of other branches of the humanities and social sciences (such as history, philosophy, etc.), to the historical social, political, and intellectual contexts of Central Europe, and to the purely present-day issues and phenomena of today's world. We republish interpretations of art which are considered important in the Czech historiographical field, and publish and comment on thought-provoking theoretical and methodological texts.

4/ Networks, infrastructure, and institutions

The digital age has brought a change of paradigm and new forms of infrastructure. We are interested in the methods and application of digital humanities tools in research, documentation, and popularisation, and endeavour to expand our cooperation with technical disciplines. Among the aspects we consider to be particularly important are the presentation of art in the virtual space, including the output of data in presentational forms (plans, maps, and interactive 3D models of individual features, entireties, and contexts), advanced forms of connection with the database sources of Czech and international institutions (International Image Interoperability Framework, Getty Union List of Artist Names), and the use of data for qualitative and quantitative analyses, etc. (e.g. inventariarudolphina.com, Matrix of Photomechanical Reproductions). The construction of new networks also requires reflection on networks in these fields in the past. We therefore also take an interest in reflections on art as part of a network of relations and interactions between actors in local, national, and transnational contexts (e.g. by producing corpuses of correspondence by significant historical figures). We consider institutions and other protagonists in art operations (institutes of the CAS and universities, galleries and concert halls, exhibitions and music festivals) to be the points of intersection in such networks, and we examine their history from this perspective.

International cooperation

International cooperation is of key importance for the IAH CAS, and it is therefore developed on several levels. The Institute participates regularly in RIHA meetings and is involved in editing and publishing the *RIHA Journal*. It makes use of an International Advisory Board, consisting of seven leading representatives of the research field, as an advisory body to the Director. The most common examples of international cooperation are research projects carried out together with researchers from institutions in other countries. It is important to support this type of cooperation, but at the same time it is necessary to try to find new long-term projects organised on the basis of international cooperation with institutions in other countries.

It is necessary to continue cooperating with international researchers in organising lectures, international conferences, workshops, and summer schools. The Institute will also develop international cooperation through the Josef Dobrovský Fellowship, the Programme of Support for Promising Human Resources (Salary Support for Post-Doctoral Researchers in the Czech Academy of Sciences), and its own human resources policy.

Strategy AV 21

The Strategy AV 21 programmes, with the motto “Top research in the public interest”, are an effective instrument of support for the organisation of interdisciplinary projects and making high-quality research results accessible to a broader public. In 2023, the IAH CAS will participate in three of these programmes: Anatomy of European Society, Resilient Society for the 21st Century, and The City as a Laboratory of Change. In the medium term, staff of the Institute will endeavour to become involved in further programmes, and at the same time to submit a new programme, dealing with modern analytical methods in the primary and applied

research of the humanities and social sciences. One of the more general goals is intended to be closer cooperation with sciences dealing with living and non-living nature.

Editing and publishing activity

The IAH CAS intends to maintain the same level of publishing activity as at present. The priority remains the periodicals: the quarterlies *Umění/Art* and *Hudební věda*, the yearly *Studia Rudolphina*, and cooperation on the publication of the journals *Convivium* and *RIHA Journal*. The publishing house Artefactum's publishing plan for books will remain within the competence of its international editorial board, and will mainly reflect the publication activity of employees of the IAH CAS. The publication series of the IAH CAS will continue to include *Fontes historiae artium*, *Epigraphica et Sepulcralia*, *Monumenta Bohemiae et Moraviae*, and *Academus Edition*. Distribution of Artefactum publications is provided by Czech distribution networks, an e-shop, and an Amazon account. Online publishing takes place in an open-access regime. So far as distribution in other countries is concerned, cooperation with the Karolinum publishing house has proved to be effective, and this will continue.

Making accessible the documentary and information sources and library holdings

The main tasks of the IAH Library and the IAH Musicology Library are services for the public and acquisition activity supporting research projects. The initial goal of the IAH Library for 2023 is to complete the retrospective conversion of the card catalogue for monographs and serials. The electronic catalogue is the basis for further activities of the Library within the framework of public information services in the format of collections of catalogues and databases. One of the priorities for the following period is participation in the National Programme for Protection of Library Fonds. The IAH Library will prepare a plan for the protection of its existing holdings and will join shared electronic databases. The IAH Musicology Library, in addition to its normal activities, will process the materials it acquired in 2022 as a gift from the heirs of Prof. Manfred Hermann Schmid from his private library, and, if its application for support is successful, it will continue with the re-cataloguing of its gramophone records.

The bibliographers of the IAH Library and the IAH Musicology Library will continue to provide information and support to researchers, and will also continue to record the research activity of the Institute in the ASEP and RIV databases. The bibliographical service of the IAH Library will provide technical and information support for the assignment of persistent identifiers. In the following period, its activity will focus on the creation and development of an analytical bibliography for the research field, which is lacking for art history in the Czech Republic so far. In the future, the database should absorb the data from the IAH bibliographical card catalogue. The main task for the bibliographer of the IAH Musicology Library, in addition to supporting the operation of the Library, will continue to be the collection of all current Czech musicological output, its analytical processing for the

musicological bibliographical database and the ANL database of Czech articles, and also its processing into the form of printed annual bibliographical lists, published in the musicological periodical *Hudební věda*.

Both libraries and their bibliographers will endeavour to achieve sustainability and cooperation with other specialist libraries in their fields, memorial institutions, and professional organisations.

In the future, the IAH CAS will continue to store, process, and make available for standard research purposes its collections of pictorial documentation, works of art, and archive fonds, which are of European significance and exceptionally large in comparison with other institutes of the Czech Academy of Sciences. In the period 2023–2027, it will expand its existing online presentation of its collections in the form of publicly accessible databases, recording aids, and structured digitised materials from selected parts of the fonds, for which it will use specific grant programmes offered by the Czech Academy of Sciences and other agencies. In 2023, the Documentation Department will start the process of registering selected collections of materials in the Central Registry of Collections of a Museum Character maintained by the Czech Ministry of Culture. Although the IAH CAS is not an institution which creates collections, it will continue to add to its collections to a limited extent, primarily by accepting items bequeathed to it by prominent figures in the art history field, and by accepting gifts of other relevant materials. The Conservation Studio will be used for the basic care of the collections of the IAH CAS, and it will also endeavour to develop methodological and educational activities.

In the next few years, the Photo Library and Photo Studio will concentrate on the digitisation of collections that are liable to deteriorate, especially slides. The Photo Library will endeavour to obtain grants and subsidies for this activity and also to make available online as much of its collections as possible. At the same time, it will continue to collect, administer, and preserve photographs of works of art and architecture, and to provide a specialist and administrative service for researchers. It is planned to make use of an increased number of volunteers and interns, especially for the processing and recording of so far unprocessed collections and for adding items to the database.

The Photo Studio will devote itself to digitising the collections of the IAH CAS, and at the same time will document works of art and architecture in situ. It will aim at continuous technological development in order to guarantee the highest possible professional quality of its entire output.

The IAH CAS will endeavour to operate, develop, and sustain publicly accessible online databases presenting the results of various research projects.

Lecturing and conference activities

The lectures and conferences organised by the IAH CAS will continue to be key activities in the presentation of the scholarly results of current research. The IAH CAS plans to continue with its regular lecture cycles: Collegium historiae artium, The Middle Ages on the Move, and Dialogo della Musica, once again with the active involvement of researchers from other countries. The IAH CAS will organise and co-host Czech and international conferences and workshops, both one-off and regularly recurring events (such as the meetings on issues relating to sepulchral monuments, the Plzeň symposia on 19th-century issues, and the conferences on the Vienna School of Art History). So far as its financial resources allow, the IAH CAS will support its employees in presenting papers at conferences in the Czech Republic and in other countries.

Education and cooperation with universities

The involvement of IAH CAS in university-level education is of key importance. The Institute is involved in two joint doctoral study programmes which focus on the theory and history of the visual arts (with the Institute of Art History, Faculty of Arts, Charles University, and the Department of Art History, Faculty of Arts, Palacký University in Olomouc). The IAH CAS will endeavour to expand this type of cooperation. In addition, its researchers will continue to be involved in educational activities in the form of regular lectures and the supervision of theses and dissertations in study programmes at bachelor, master, and doctoral level at various universities. In cooperation with the Czech Association of Art Historians, the IAH CAS will be involved in the administration and awarding of the Dr. Alfred Bader Scholarship, intended for students on doctoral study programmes (thanks to the generous support of Bader Philanthropies, Inc.). It will also endeavour to recruit successful and high-quality postdocs in the Programme of Support for Promising Human Resources at Institutes of the Czech Academy of Sciences, and continue with activities in the Open Science programme and with organising volunteer internships for students of art history.

Popularisation and contacts with the general public

We believe it is important to popularise research work and to find effective forms for presenting research results to the general public. It is therefore necessary to maintain a PR position and to work closely with the External Relations Division of the Centre of Administration and Operations, Czech Academy of Sciences, and the media communication section of the Head Office, Czech Academy of Sciences. The Institute will continue to participate in regular events such as Veletrh vědy (Science Fair), Týden vědy (Week of the Czech Academy of Sciences), Svět knihy (Book World), and Art Book Fair. In order to popularise its research results, the Institute will use its website, Facebook, Instagram, Window Gallery, and lectures for the general public.

Sources of finance and their use

The main source of funding for the IAH CAS will be institutional support from its founding state authority. As in the past, an important component of the Institute's financing will be

funds allocated to specific projects. It will therefore be necessary to continue to motivate employees to apply for grants, both those awarded by Czech agencies (such as the Czech Science Foundation, the Ministry of Culture of the Czech Republic, and the Technology Agency of the Czech Republic) and those provided by foundations in other countries (ERC, Getty Trust, George Soros's foundations, the Mellon Foundation, I Tatti – The Harvard University Center for Italian Renaissance Studies, the Warburg Institute, the Lund Centre for the History of Knowledge, the Botstiber Institute, etc.).

An additional, less significant, source of funding for the IAH CAS will continue to be its own income from the sale of publications and the provision of services (such as reproduction photography), and any donations or sponsorship funding it may receive. Should a crisis economic situation arise as the result of external circumstances, the financial policy of the IAH CAS should endeavour to ensure the functioning of at least priority research and publishing projects, and the operation of the libraries, bibliography, Photo Library and Conservation Studio, providing services for researchers.

Human resources policy and salaries

The IAH CAS has constructed its human resources policy in accordance with its medium- and long-term tasks, which require specific specialists. The Institute complies with the generally valid regulations to be found in the European Charter for Researchers, the Code of Conduct for the Recruitment of Researchers, and the Statutes and Career Development Rules of the Czech Academy of Sciences. The Institute ensures that its employees are not discriminated against on the basis of their sex, age, ethnic, national, or social origin, religion or belief, sexual orientation, language, disability, political opinions, or social and economic conditions. The Institute endeavours to achieve a gender balance in all staff positions, helped by the Gender Equality Plan it has drawn up for 2023–2027, which it will implement continuously. The IAH CAS also takes care of the protection of intellectual property rights which come into existence in the institute. So far as salaries are concerned, the aim is to increase them so that the Institute will attain the academic average in the medium term. The success of this strategy will naturally depend on the state budget and the amount of funding allocated to the Czech Academy of Sciences budget heading and the budget headings of grant providers.

The question of premises

The IAH CAS is joint owner of the building situated between Husova and Jilská streets, with a one-third share. The capacity of the part of the building used by the IAH CAS is currently insufficient to meet the needs of the Institute, which means, among other things, that the Musicology Library and the Department of Musicology are located elsewhere, in premises rented from the Institute of Ethnology, Czech Academy of Sciences. The limited space available restricts, in particular, the operation of the Documentation Department, with its collection and archive holdings and its conservation studio. The IAH CAS has drawn up a strategic plan which defines the nature and size of the premises which need to be acquired for the Documentation Department, the Conservation Studio, the Photo Library, and the Photo Studio. (In order to function properly and work together, these units must be located together

in a single building.) The Institute will continue, in cooperation with its founding state authority, to take steps leading to the acquisition of the necessary premises.

This concept for the activities of the Institute of Art History, Czech Academy of Sciences, for the period 2023–2027 was discussed by the Board of the IAH CAS on 24 March 2023 and by the International Advisory Board on 15. July 2023.