



Art Museum Image Consortium  
[www.amico.net](http://www.amico.net)

## Frequently Asked Questions

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## Founding Members

Albright-Knox Art Gallery, Buffalo, NY  
Art Gallery of Ontario, Toronto, Ontario  
Art Institute of Chicago, Chicago, IL  
Asia Society Gallery, New York, NY  
Center for Creative Photography, Tucson, AZ  
Cleveland Museum of Art, Cleveland, OH  
Davis Museum and Cultural Center, Wellesley, MA  
Fine Arts Museum of San Francisco, San Francisco, CA  
George Eastman House, Rochester, NY  
J. Paul Getty Museum, Los Angeles, CA  
Los Angeles County Museum of Art, Los Angeles, CA  
The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, NY  
Minneapolis Institute of Arts, Minneapolis, MN  
Museum of Contemporary Art, San Diego, CA  
Montreal Museum of Fine Arts, Montréal, Quebec  
Musée d'art contemporain de Montréal, Montréal, Quebec  
Museum of Fine Arts, Boston, MA  
National Gallery of Canada, Ottawa, Ontario  
National Museum of American Art, Washington, DC  
Philadelphia Museum of Art, Philadelphia, PA  
San Francisco Museum of Modern Art, San Francisco, CA  
San Jose Museum of Art, San Jose, CA  
Walker Art Center, Minneapolis MN

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## Board of Directors

AMICO's Board of Directors is comprised of the Directors of its member institutions.

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# Art Museum Image Consortium (AMICO) Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ)

## General Information

### *What is AMICO?*

AMICO (Italian for "friend", and pronounced the same way) is the Art Museum Image Consortium, an alliance of art collecting institutions around the world that have joined together to enable educational use of the digital multimedia documentation of their collections.

### *Who are AMICO's members?*

AMICO's founding members are 23 art museums in North America. AMICO members pay an annual fee to AMICO and participate in AMICO's programs, committees and governance. In return, AMICO members have free access to the entire AMICO Library and receive advice and information on issues of image and data digitization and distribution.

### *What are the benefits of membership?*

As a benefit of membership AMICO Members receive: increased educational use of their collections without having to establish their own infrastructure and support systems; a complementary Museum License to use the AMICO Library in a wide range of their own educational programs; and access to technical services and expertise offered by AMICO staff, contractors and other members. In addition, AMICO members may collaborate on solving a range of common information technology and rights related problems confronting museums. They may also choose to launch joint funding applications to benefit their collaborative work.

### *Can my institution join AMICO?*

AMICO membership is open to any not-for-profit institution with a collection of works of art or information about works of art which are significant for educational users. Examples of potential AMICO members

include art museums, libraries, universities, natural history museums, and history museums with significant art collections, artist's foundations, and institutions which own or maintain collections of research materials useful for art historical research. AMICO membership is not open to individual artists, commercial galleries, or profit-making companies. Members who wish to contribute works to the AMICO Library must be able to meet basic AMICO specifications for image and data submissions.

### *If we join AMICO can we use our digital documentation in other ways?*

Yes. Members' licenses to AMICO are non-exclusive. Most AMICO members maintain web sites where they publish some of the information about works in their collection that they have contributed to AMICO. Many AMICO members also license digital images of works in their collections in other ways. AMICO members make their own choices about what programs of an educational or commercial nature they wish to pursue, without any restriction.

## Governance

### *How is AMICO governed?*

AMICO is governed by a Board of Directors consisting of the directors of its member institutions. The Board has authorized a number of AMICO Committees, consisting of AMICO Board members and staff members of AMICO member institutions, to conduct business and make decisions in specific areas. Current AMICO Committees include the Executive Committee of the Board, the Membership Committee of the Board, and Working Committees on Rights, Technical Operations, and Users and Uses.

### *What is the relationship between AMICO and AAMD?*

Early in 1997, the AAMD (the Association of Art Museum Directors) invited its members to send representatives to an organizational meeting to discuss collaboration. After a series of ad hoc meetings, AMICO was officially organized in October 1997, as a program of the Association of Art Museum Directors Educational Foundation, Inc., and the AMICO Board was constituted. In 1998, AMICO was separately incorporated as an independent non-profit corporation, ending its direct connection to the AAMD.

### *Who manages AMICO?*

When AMICO was formed in the fall of 1997, the AMICO Executive Committee decided that rather than hiring a staff immediately, it would contract management of the Consortium to Archives & Museum Informatics ([www.archimuse.com](http://www.archimuse.com)), which had led the planning process. Early in 1998, AMICO hired Michael Shapiro, previously General Counsel of the NEH, to serve as its General Counsel and establish AMICO as an independent non-profit. In the second half of 1998, the Board plans to hire an Executive Director, Coordinators for Member Services and Client Services, and support staff. Archives & Museum Informatics will reduce its role as staff are brought into full-time positions.

## **AMICO Library**

### *What is the AMICO Library?*

The AMICO Library is the compilation of digital multimedia documentation of works of art contributed by AMICO members. All full members of AMICO contribute documentation of at least 500 works from their collections annually (associate members may contribute fewer works). AMICO

then adds value to the compilation in ways that include standardization and indexing.

### *What will be in the AMICO Library?*

The AMICO Library consists of multimedia documentation of works of art. It includes digital images of art works from members' collections together with collection data, curatorial records, original scholarly research, and other educational material related to those works, much of it not published in other forms. This documentation minimally includes a descriptive cataloging record, an image, and metadata documenting that image.

### *How good, in lay terms, will the images be?*

The apparent quality of any image depends on many factors, but in general the AMICO images are being delivered at more than twice the resolution of most images on the Web sites of museums today. The general specification is 1024 x 768 pixels in 24 bit color, at 72 dpt (dots per inch) which is the maximum screen resolution of most 17" monitors. At this resolution over 1 million pixels (picture elements) are captured in full color. The perceived quality of this image varies with the size of the original work of art, though. For small objects, it could be a magnification over the unassisted eye; for very large objects it could be quite poor.

Some AMICO images are available in resolutions up to twenty times the minimum, allowing for considerable "zooming". However, there are some images in the Library that are not quite this large, either because existing digital images were captured at a lower resolution, or because the over-magnification of some objects at this resolution, such as ancient coins or miniatures, creates a distorting effect.

### *Will the Library grow over time?*

Yes. Members have committed to adding a minimum number of new works to the Library each year, in addition to adding to the documentation of works already contributed. Over time, AMICO members hope to add documentation from internal museum files, from museum education programs, from public exhibitions and from published scholarly studies. In addition, the Library is expected to grow through "exchanges" with similar non-profit or governmental initiatives in other countries. Other possible avenues for growth of the AMICO Library are being explored by the Board.

### *When the AMICO Library is updated each year, will the old Library be archived for future reference?*

The archival record of the works of art and their documentation is maintained by the museums as part of their mission to preserve the works in their collections. The AMICO Library is a continually updated reference tool.

### *What proportion of the collections of the museums is represented?*

Some member institutions (albeit small) will have the entirety of their collections represented in the AMICO Library when it is first released. Others will add works each year, possibly over decades, until their collections are significantly represented.

### *Will the museums manage to keep up with the AMICO work load?*

AMICO members have set contribution targets that they believe they can meet. It is expected that over time the works contributed to the Library will be those whose documentation is created or updated as part of the regular workload of the mu-

seum, through new acquisitions, items going on loan or exhibit, items being studied or published, and items whose commercial rights have been requested.

### *Who determines what images the AMICO Library contains and how?*

Each member determines what they will contribute to AMICO each year. If it is recognized that there are major areas of scholarship that are not represented in the AMICO Library, and shown to be desired by users, AMICO may seek funding for special projects to allow members to create this documentation.

### *Will users be able to influence what works the AMICO Library contains?*

It is expected that users will have considerable influence over what is included in the Library. In the aggregate, what content is being used will be reported back to the museums. Users will also be surveyed to request input on areas not represented. In addition, users with close relationships with members holding works which they are studying or teaching will doubtless advocate contribution of particular works directly with museum staff. Where specific needs are identified AMICO Members have discussed the possibility of joint projects to address lacunae in the Library.

### *Can we contribute to the AMICO Library?*

To contribute to the AMICO Library, you must be an AMICO Member.

## Access to the AMICO Library

### *Is AMICO developing a network of museums?*

No. AMICO is using existing telecommunications distribution systems to reach educational licensees. But members of AMICO are themselves a network that shares information and expertise.

### *Is AMICO using special technology?*

No. The AMICO Library conforms to existing data and technical standards. The works of art are documented in well known and widely supported file formats for text, images and multimedia.

### *How do I find out about AMICO's Technical Specifications?*

The AMICO *Data Dictionary* and the *Technical Specification* for contributing to the AMICO Library, can be found on the AMICO Web Site <[www.amico.net](http://www.amico.net)>.

### *Who will distribute the AMICO Library?*

AMICO has decided that existing non-profit distributors will provide the best services to their educational clients. Therefore, the AMICO Library is available to non-profit distributors willing to provide access under terms of the AMICO License. (Each distributor may have access for a period of up to one year prior to offering the service, in order to develop software appropriate to accessing the Library.) This provides consumers with options of where to access the Library and hopefully will result in a variety of services with different strengths for different communities. The first AMICO Distributor is the Research Libraries Group (RLG) <[www.rlg.org](http://www.rlg.org)> which is also distributing the AMICO Library during the University Testbed.

### *Do I have to be a Member of RLG to get access to the AMICO Library though them?*

No. RLG offers its databases to non-members over the World Wide Web under a variety of subscription plans.

### *How do AMICO Members get access?*

Each AMICO Member receives free access to the Library through one of AMICO's distributors. When more than one distributor is available, they may choose which they wish to use.

### *When will the AMICO Library be available for distribution?*

A beta-version of the AMICO Library is being tested by about twenty university campuses and all AMICO members in the University Testbed Project during 1998/99. In the fall of 1999 subscriptions to the Library will become available to educational institutions including universities, K-12 schools and public libraries.

### *Could we mount the AMICO database on our campus or at our museum?*

Yes. Any licensee may mount any part of the AMICO Library (including the whole) on local servers. But it is a large amount of data, and we expect this strategy will, over time, be most useful for establishing "reserve readings" and class laboratory facilities, or for applications that require extremely high quality images which will not transmit easily over the Internet. It is also expected that some institutions will opt to mount the Library in order to exploit local software functionality. Individual universities may elect to become "distributors" to other AMICO licensed institutions or to other categories of institutions, such as regional K-12 schools or public libraries.

### *How do we become an AMICO Distributor?*

If you are interested in distributing the AMICO Library, please contact us, at [info@amico.net](mailto:info@amico.net).

## Fees

### *Will we have to pay for using the Library?*

AMICO charges a subscription fee to cover the cost of collating and enhancing the documentation provided by the members. Distributors are entitled to add to this a service fee for providing access and support.

### *What will the subscription levels be?*

There are no "levels" of subscription. Subscribers have unlimited use of the resource.

### *What will the AMICO subscription (license) fee be?*

AMICO hasn't set final fees for the first public offering of the Library, in the Fall of 1999. Our current thinking is that the AMICO "license" or subscription fee will be approximately 25¢ US per year per capita for institutions of higher education, 10¢ per year per capita for K-12 schools, and 1¢ per library card holder per year for public libraries. These fees reflect the presumed intensity of use by users in these different educational settings. Fees will be charged in "tiers", reflecting small, medium and large institutions. As an example, for the University Testbed, these are \$2,500 US for <10,000 users; \$4,000 for 10,000 - 20,000 users; and \$5,000 for >20,000 users. AMICO does not offer consortial pricing at this time.

### *How is the license fee calculated?*

License fees are calculated to recover the costs AMICO incurs in building the Library and delivering it to distributors. Based on projected rates of subscription, the fees that have been established allow AMICO to recover its costs after five years of deficit expenditure.

### *Will there be any other charges?*

No. The only fees for using the AMICO Library are the AMICO license fee and the Distributors' access fee.

### *Are the museums making money from this?*

No. Members of AMICO pay dues in addition to contributing documentation of works of art that meets the AMICO technical specification. Member dues are approximately equal to the subscription fees paid by universities. In addition, the costs to AMICO members of documenting their collections and making digital surrogates are not reimbursed by AMICO. Finally, AMICO members bear the full costs of researching rights to works, and some AMICO members are also paying licensing fees to contemporary artists and artists estates in order to include contemporary works in the AMICO Library. Members see participation in AMICO as part of their educational mission, and gain other benefits from their collaboration.

### *Why do we have to keep paying, year after year?*

The Library is growing annually, and works in the Library are being enhanced regularly. This results in annual costs to AMICO which must be covered if the Library is to continue to be available for educational use.

## License Terms

### *How are AMICO Licenses developed?*

AMICO licenses are developed in conjunction with users from each educational community that will use the AMICO Library. The first license, with universities, illustrates the process. Beginning with a basic principle that the Library is to be used for educational, non-commercial, purposes, representatives of universities and AMICO members (building on work of the Museum Educational Site Licensing Project (MESL) <[www.gii.getty.edu/mesl/](http://www.gii.getty.edu/mesl/)> established who in the university community may be and may not be a “designated user” and what “uses” they were permitted or prohibited from making under this license. AMICO Members also defined the terms of the Museum License in this way. Licenses for K-12 institutions and for public libraries will be developed in a similar manner.

### *What are the terms of the license?*

AMICO offers separate licenses for Universities and Museums (and soon Public Libraries and Kindergarten through Grade 12 schools). Each license has a term of one year, during which “designated users” may make unlimited “permitted uses” wherever they are. The licenses are not restricted to a physical site and copies of AMICO works may be made by any designated user. Redistribution of any part of the Library and publication of works are prohibited without specific authorization from the rights holder(s).

### *What about Fair Use?*

Nothing in any AMICO License limits “Fair Use” as defined in the US. Copyright Act.

### *Who can use the materials?*

Each license permits the licensing institution to define its “designated users” within the classes of users allowed. For Universities and Museums, these are all staff, students, researchers and visitors to the institution. They do not include people who pay only for access to information services or from whom the institution is soliciting contributions (such as alumni of a university or ‘friends’ of the museum).

### *Can I use the materials in the way that I want to?*

Each license establishes explicitly what can and cannot be done with AMICO works. No further permission is required to do all that is permitted; excluded uses will require additional permissions from the rights holders. Generally the uses established allow for use in all ways that are part of the educational practices and missions of the licensing institutions, including teaching, research, on-line reserves, testing, distance education, incorporation into student projects, and retention in portfolios.

### *Will the AMICO license allow for use of images in scholarly publications?*

Republication and redistribution of works in the AMICO Library, including scholarly publication and posting materials on public access World Wide Web sites is not permitted. AMICO cannot grant these rights, because it does not have authority to relicense works contributed by the museums. AMICO hopes to implement a convenient mechanism for scholars to request such rights of the rights holders represented in the AMICO Library.

### *What about sponsored research?*

Sponsored research is explicitly included, and the subjects of such research are included within the definitions of “designated

users” in the university license. AMICO hopes that the results of such work will be shared with the broader community.

### *Will I be able to teach my course with only digital images?*

It is unlikely that the AMICO Library will contain adequate content for teaching very many courses entirely from the Library for many years. In some areas there may be adequate depth and breadth in the Library to base a course solely on AMICO content from the first. Over time, it is hoped that the AMICO Library will constitute the largest and most important digital resource for art scholarship. But even then it will not replace other sources; scholars will always want to use primary and secondary sources, publications, books and articles, for their teaching and research.

### *Can AMICO material be used with other digital information available on my campus?*

Yes, definitely. The AMICO Library Technical Specification conforms to many information systems standards which are specifically designed to assist in such integration. The AMICO License explicitly allows for the integration of AMICO cataloging data in OPACs, (including providing access to a limited subset of data beyond the university to users who are not among the “designated users” of AMICO), and for the incorporation of AMICO works into faculty teaching materials and student projects.

### *Will I be allowed to modify and adapt images in the AMICO Library?*

This is a very sensitive issue, as any creative artist knows. Some AMICO Licenses permit the modification of works within the Library for educational purposes. It must be remembered, though, that the “moral rights” of artists should be respected. Moral

rights include the right of attribution, and the right of integrity. in the USA, “The right of attribution gives the visual artist the right to be named as author of a work; the right to prevent use of his or her name as author of a work he or she did not create; and the right to prevent the use of his or her name if the work has been distorted, mutilated or modified in a manner that would be prejudicial to the artist’s honor or reputation. ... The right of integrity allows the artist to prevent intentional distortion or modification of the work that would be prejudicial to the artist’s honor or reputation, and to prevent destruction of a work of recognized stature.” [17 U.S.C. 106A(a) (1990), see the US Copyright Office <[www.loc.gov/copyright/](http://www.loc.gov/copyright/)>]. AMICO’s licenses aim to respect the moral rights of artists while serving the educational interests of its licensees (to teach about design and color, to provide iconography for study and imitation, and to support studio art courses as well as historical study). To maintain this balance modifications for educational purposes are permitted as long as the original is cited (linked). Modified works of art may not be substituted in place of the originals. Respect for the moral rights of creators is considered an essential responsibility of end users and education in moral rights is an obligation of the licensing institutions.

### *Can I get a copy of the AMICO licenses?*

AMICO makes the full text of all its licenses available on its website <[www.amico.net](http://www.amico.net)>. You can download the texts from there. Please send your comments to [info@amico.net](mailto:info@amico.net).

## University Testbed Project

### *What is the University Testbed Project?*

AMICO believes that greater knowledge of who uses art documentation, for what purposes and under what conditions, could contribute to improving the AMICO Library and its distribution over time. Therefore in the fall of 1997, AMICO invited universities willing to conduct research into users and uses to subscribe to the AMICO Library for one year prior to its public release in 1999. About twenty campuses selected by the AMICO User and Uses Committee will use the Library in 1998/99. In return for contributing the results of their research to the improvement of the Library, universities participating in the testbed will receive a discount on future license fees equivalent to two years free subscription to the AMICO Library.

### *When will it run?*

The University Testbed takes place in the 1998/99 academic year. Each university is "running" their own research projects. They are communicating with each other and AMICO members through a series of electronic discussions. It is hoped that researchers in these projects will have an opportunity to report preliminary results to each other and AMICO members during the project year. AMICO plans a report on the project in mid 1999.

### *Who is participating?*

In addition to all AMICO Members, the following universities are participants in the AMICO University Testbed, during 1998/99:

Boston College, Chestnut Hill, MA  
California State Universities, CA (San Jose State, San Jose, CA and Long Beach, Long Beach, CA)  
Carnegie Mellon University, Pittsburgh, PA  
Columbia University, New York, NY  
Harvard University, Cambridge, MA  
Herron School of Art, Indianapolis, IN and  
Indiana University - Purdue University Indianapolis, IN  
Princeton University, Princeton, NJ  
Rochester Institute of Technology, Rochester, NY  
University of Alberta, Edmonton, Alberta, Canada  
University of Illinois (University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, Urbana, IL and University of Illinois at Chicago, Chicago, IL)  
University of Leiden, Leiden, The Netherlands  
University of Texas, Austin, TX  
University of Toronto, Toronto, Ontario, Canada (University of Toronto at Mississauga, Ontario, and University of Toronto at Scarborough, Ontario)  
Washington University, St. Louis, MO  
Wellesley College, Wellesley, MA  
Western Michigan University, Kalamazoo, MI

### *How will the AMICO Library be distributed to universities involved in the "Testbed"?*

The Research Libraries Group Inc. (RLG) has agreed to make the AMICO Library available to participants in the testbed. The Library will be offered within the context of experimental services being developed by RLG.

## Other Activities

### *Does AMICO have any projects in schools or public libraries?*

AMICO is planning to make the Library available to K-12 schools and to public libraries in 1999. In preparation for the general public educational release of the Library, AMICO has established two collaborative projects to develop appropriate licensing and distribution models for these institutions. As these projects develop, AMICO will make further announcements and publish drafts of documents for comment.

## Further Information

### *How can I find out more about AMICO?*

Full details of AMICO's membership and activities, including the texts of license agreements, are available on the AMICO web site <[www.amico.net](http://www.amico.net)>. You can also contact:

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