

DELIVERABLE

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D6.2 Europeana Research Coordinators Group Plan

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Revision History

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Statement of originality:

This deliverable contains original unpublished work except where clearly indicated otherwise. Acknowledgement of previously published material and of the work of others has been made through appropriate citation, quotation or both.

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1. Introduction

Europeana Cloud (eCloud) is a Best Practice Network, coordinated by the Europeana Foundation. It will design, create and launch a cloud-based ecosystem for Europeana and its aggregators. Once complete, this new infrastructure will be used by the project to deliver fresh content and metadata to Europeana. Tools and services for researchers will also be developed by eCloud and supplied through the cloud, as will a new linked storage system.

Europeana Cloud, under Task 6.2, has sponsored the creation (in Month 1) of a Europeana Research Coordinators Group (ERCG) as a forum for communication, at a strategic level, between European Research Infrastructures. This document, *D6.2 European Research Coordinators Group Plan*, shows how the activities of the ERCG will be shaped in the first part of the eCloud project. It is based on activity that can be planned according to the current state of the ERCG and the eCloud project. It does not attempt to deal with specific communication around the deliverables of eCloud, since at this stage in the project they are imprecisely defined. Communication of eCloud outputs by the ERCG will therefore be addressed in an updated version of this Plan (see section 5.2).

After introductory text on the ERCG and its members (sections 2 and 3), the document continues by identifying the high-level areas of overlapping interest within the ERCG (section 4). Section 5 defines the tools and mechanisms with which the ERCG will function over the course of the eCloud project, and reflects on the post-project sustainability of the Group. Sections 4 and 5 were informed by a questionnaire that was sent out the ERCG members in June 2013, and subsequent analysis and discussion of the results by the ERCG. Section 6 offers a concluding summary.

2. About the ERCG

As part of WP6: Dissemination and Networking, Europeana Cloud established a Europeana Research Coordinators Group (ERCG), with representation from eight European Research Infrastructures. The purpose of the ERCG is to enable participants to share knowledge and experience, and to facilitate more efficient and effective strategic positioning among its members. The ERCG is conceived as a long-term forum for strategic partnership between European Research Infrastructures.

Specifically, the remit of the ERCG is to:

- Serve as a venue for the alignment of strategies between participating Research Infrastructures, with particular reference to Europeana
- Engage Research Infrastructures (and underlying communities) with tools and services developed as part of eCloud
- Oversee the planning and delivery of communication about eCloud to Europe's Research Infrastructures, with particular reference to:
 - Communicating the ideas and concepts of the Europeana Cloud
 - Promoting the outputs of eCloud: API, researcher platform, etc.
- Develop a governance framework to enable sustainable, long-term strategic relationships between members of the Europeana Research Coordinators Group

The principles under which the ERCG operates are formulated in the *ERCG Terms of Reference* (current version 1.3, 1 September 2013).

3. About the members of the ERCG

The ERCG currently consist of eight members, representing research infrastructures (RI's) in Europe. All members of the ERCG represent the position of their Research Infrastructure consortium on all issues regarding eCloud and its developments. In multiple meetings per year, the members discuss topics, and provide input to and feedback on documents circulated and the relevant eCloud deliverables. Each member undertakes to ensure that the principles agreed by the ERCG are carried out effectively within their Research Infrastructure.

This section gives short descriptions of the RIs in the ERCG, based on the information provided by the individual members¹. A quick overview of the member RI's and their representatives in the ERCG can be found in Appendix A.



CENDARI: Collaborative European Digital Archival Research Infrastructure

Website: www.cendari.eu
ERCG member: Jennifer Edmond

CENDARI (Collaborative European Digital Archive Infrastructure) is a research collaboration aimed at integrating digital archives and resources for research on medieval and modern European history. The project brings information and computer scientists together with leading historians and existing historical research infrastructures (archives, libraries and other digital projects) to improve the conditions for historical scholarship in Europe through active reflection of and considered response to the impact of the digital age on scholarly and archival practice.

CENDARI is a 4-year, European Commission-funded project led by Trinity College Dublin, in partnership with 13 institutions across 7 countries, to facilitate access to archives and resources in Europe for the benefit of researchers everywhere.



CLARIN: Common Language Resources and Technology Infrastructure

Website: www.clarin.eu
ERCG member: Dieter van Uytvanck

CLARIN aims to provide easy and sustainable access for scholars in the humanities and social sciences to digital language data and advanced tools to discover, explore, exploit,

¹ End June 2013 a questionnaire was send out by KNAW-DANS to all members of the ERCG, of which the answers provided are the basis for this document. See Appendix A.

annotate, analyse or combine them, independent of where they are located. To this end CLARIN is in the process of building a networked federation of European data repositories, service centres and centres of expertise, with single sign-on access for all members of the academic community in all participating countries. Tools and data from different centres will be interoperable, so that data collections can be combined and tools from different sources can be chained to perform complex operations to support researchers in their work.

The CLARIN infrastructure is still under construction, but a number of participating centres are already offering access services to data, tools and expertise.




DARIAH: Digital Research Infrastructure for the Arts and Humanities

Website: www.dariah.eu
ERCG member: Tobias Blanke and Laurent Romary

The mission of the European eInfrastructure DARIAH is to enhance and support digitally-enabled research across the humanities and arts. DARIAH aims to develop and maintain an infrastructure in support of ICT-based research practices. DARIAH is working with communities of practice to:

- Explore and apply ICT-based methods and tools to enable new research questions to be asked and old questions to be posed in new ways
- Improve research opportunities and outcomes through linking distributed digital source materials of many kinds
- Exchange knowledge, expertise, methodologies and practices across domains and disciplines



DASISH: Digital Services Infrastructure for Social Sciences and Humanities

Website: www.dasish.eu
ERCG member: Hans Jørgen Marker

DASISH brings together all 5 ESFRI research infrastructure initiatives in the social sciences and humanities: CESSDA, CLARIN, DARIAH, ESS and SHARE. The goal of DASISH is to determine areas of cross-fertilization and synergy in the infrastructure development all five communities are entering into as of the beginning of 2012 and to work on concrete joint activities related to data, such as data access, data sharing, data quality, and data archiving. Synergy can also be achieved by working together on solutions regarding legal and ethical aspects.



EUDAT: European Data Infrastructure

Website: www.eudat.eu
ERCG member: Daan Broeder

The EUDAT vision is to support a Collaborative Data Infrastructure, which will allow researchers to share data within and between communities and enable them to carry out their research effectively. EUDAT aims to provide a solution that will be affordable, trustworthy, robust, persistent and easy to use.



Europeana

Website: www.europeana.eu
ERCG member: Antoine Isaac

Europeana is an online portal that contains over 18 million digitised objects from Europe's museums, libraries, archives and audiovisual sources. It connects to Europe's cultural heritage by providing access to items from over 1,000 heritage collections. Europeana is supported by funding from the European Commission and member states. Originally known as the European digital library network – EDLnet – it is a partnership of 100 representatives of heritage and knowledge organisations and IT experts from throughout Europe. They contribute to the work packages that are solving the technical and usability issues. The project is run by a core team based in the National Library of the Netherlands, the Koninklijke Bibliotheek. Overseeing the project is the Europeana Foundation, which includes key European cultural heritage associations.



The European Library

Website: www.theeuropeanlibrary.org
ERCG member: Alastair Dunning

In existence since projects since the late 1990s, The European Library is the library aggregator for national, and recently research, libraries in Europe. From its members it has aggregated over 115m bibliographic records, and over 18m metadata records pointing to digitised items. These records are currently available via a dedicated portal and are also forwarded to Europeana, and are scheduled be released as CC0 early in 2014.



OpenAIRE: Open Access Infrastructure for Research in Europe

OpenAIRE
Open Access Infrastructure for Research in Europe

Website: www.openaire.eu

ERCG member: Paolo Manghi

OpenAIREplus (2nd Generation of Open Access Infrastructure for Research in Europe) is a 30 month project, funded by the EC 7th Framework Programme. It will work in tandem with OpenAIRE, extending the mission further to facilitate access to the entire Open Access scientific production of the European Research Area, providing cross-links from publications to data and funding schemes. It will integrate and take over the Open Access publication infrastructure DRIVER and include more than 8 millions documents from more than 400 data sources. This large-scale project brings together 41 pan-European partners, including three cross-disciplinary research communities.

4. High-level analysis of overlapping interests

On the basis of the responses to the ERCG questionnaire (see Appendix B), overlapping interest between the participating RIs can be identified. This section will follow the structure of the questionnaire.

4.1. Developments and interactions with digital cultural heritage

Of the members in the ERCG a distinction can be made between those primarily concerned with research outputs (i.e. data, publications) and those more involved in broader types of content (e.g. digital cultural heritage). Using this broad-brush characterisation, CLARIN, DASISH, EUDAT and OpenAIRE can be assigned to the former group; CENDARI, Europeana and The European Library in the latter. DARIAH can be considered in between those groups: *“Cultural Heritage digital assets are a natural component of humanities research and most of the DARIAH communities and affiliated projects integrate digital cultural heritage aspects in their activities”* (ERCG Questionnaire, DARIAH). Several members identify overlap on the level of content (e.g. between CLARIN and eCloud) and infrastructure (e.g. between EUDAT and eCloud).

4.2. Relevant expertise in relation to the digital cultural heritage content and the eCloud work packages

Aligning questionnaire responses with the work package structure of eCloud, relevant expertise among the members is found in the following areas:

- *researcher needs (eCloud WP 1)*
Most ERCG members have contacts with researcher communities, and are working on the assessment of researcher needs.
- *technical (eCloud WPs 2, 3 and 4)*
All members have a broad expertise on the technical elements of (research)

infrastructure; amongst others data storage, data integration, semantic services, statistics, metadata harmonisation, deduplication, tools for researchers.

- *legal, strategic and economic issues (eCloud WP 5)*
All members are engaging with long term business models and sustainability issues.
- *communication, dissemination (eCloud WP 6)*
CENDARI, CLARIN, DARIAH and OpenAIRE indicated that they have useful dissemination expertise.

4.3. Identification of potential overlap

From the initial analysis of the questionnaire and the subsequent discussion of its findings within the ERCG, potential overlap in the work of Europeana, The European Library and the members of the ERCG is identified in the following areas:

- streamlining the current independent approaches to content holders
- Linked Open Data developments
- connecting different types of data, e.g. language data
- addressing research communities
- services for research communities: metadata domain, data deposition, data storage and replication

These subjects can be grouped in larger categories: technology (infrastructure, metadata), legal/sustainability, and research communities (see also section 5.1).

4.4. Benefits of a cloud infrastructure

Several members of the ERCG indicate they want to share their knowledge and expertise, and are willing to interact with the infrastructure to be built in eCloud. What can be observed though are the specific needs of the different RIs, e.g. the need for rich metadata for CENDARI. The DARIAH representative mentions that the developments of eCloud should be aligned with other developments in SSH, grouped in the DASISH consortium.

5. Tools and mechanisms

This section defines the mechanisms through which the ERCG will work over the course of the project. It identifies the means by which the ERCG will influence the development of eCloud, and discusses the issue of communication from the project to external stakeholders and that of sustaining the ERCG after the end of the project.

5.1. Enhancing eCloud with ERCG expertise

As mentioned above in 3.3, there are several areas in which the ERCG members have common expertise. eCloud can greatly benefit from this expertise when properly channelled.

As part of the ERCG's review of the findings from the questionnaire, it was agreed that the ERCG and eCloud should arrange a programme of themed meetings over the course of the project, relating to specific eCloud Tasks and Deliverables. These 'themed ERCG meetings' will involve participation from the ERCG members, relevant colleagues from the RI

consortia and the eCloud project. Each meeting will build upon the common interests identified in paragraph 3 above.

The only caveat associated with this commitment is that the discussions – and also the work in eCloud in general – should not disrupt other developments already being pursued by the RIs/consortia. The discussions should be anchored in the objectives and progress of eCloud.

Table 5.1 (below) gives more detail of the proposed themed meetings. The dates for the ERCG meetings are rough indications, related to the eCloud deliverables. The exact dates will be established in consultation with the ERCG members, and the leaders of the eCloud WPs in question. Where possible the themed meetings coincide with international conferences related to the themes and activities of the ERCG and eCloud project.

Each meeting will produce a report with the results of the discussions, and an overview of further activities around the theme. Each report will outline how the outcomes of the particular meeting benefit both the eCloud project as well as the ERCG members, e.g. in terms of raised awareness of developments (RI members amongst each other and in relation to eCloud project).

Theme	eCloud deliverable ²	date deliverable ³	ERCG meeting
1. cloud infrastructure	D2.2 D5.1	M6 M10	Winter 2013-14
<i>Possible topics: metadata infrastructure vs storage / storage vs tools and services / computational power → what are the solutions chosen by eCloud?</i>			
2. research communities	D1.2 D1.4 D3.1	M9 M18 M30	Summer 2014
<i>Possible topics: researcher needs / discipline specific needs / tools & services / communication to researchers</i>			
3. legal / sustainability	D5.3 D5.4	M18 M28	Winter 2014-15
<i>Possible topics: business models / cost schemes / licensing / rights / organizational embedding</i>			
4. metadata	D4.3 D4.4	M36 M30	Summer 2015
<i>Possible topics: interoperability / standardization / discipline specific needs</i>			

Table 5.1: provisional timetable and high-level agenda for themed meetings of the ERCG and Europeana Cloud

² A description of these deliverables and the related work packages can be found in the Description of Work of eCloud, <http://pro.europeana.eu/documents/1414567/1861926/Europeana+Cloud+-+Description+of+Work?version=1.2>.

³ Month 1 = February 2013.

5.2. Building external awareness of the ERCG and its member RIs

The ERCG is pivotal in connecting the digital heritage sector (Europeana, The European Library) and the large RIs in SSH (Social Science and the Humanities). As a forum for knowledge exchange and strategic alignment, it brings benefits to both parties. To create awareness of the ERCG, its members and activities, and to further enhance its visibility, the mechanisms of eCloud W6 will be used. *D6.1: Stakeholder Engagement Plan*⁴ shows the many stakeholders of the eCloud project, the key messages to be shared with each stakeholder group, and the channels and materials to be used to deliver those messages. Since the ERCG is an integral part of the work of WP6 these mechanisms can be deployed most efficiently.

The internal project partners will be reached via the regular communication channels of the project, and by actively participating, by invitation, in the themed ERCG meetings. Communication aimed at the external stakeholders of eCloud will further raise the visibility of the member RIs, and can be considered a benefit of their participation in the ERCG. Results from the themed meetings will be valuable messages to disseminate, stressing the importance of the cooperation between the ERCG and eCloud, and of the ERCG members amongst each other.

The coordinator of the ERCG, as a member of the WP6 Working Group, will maintain close contact with the key partners in WP6 in order to ensure the alignment of ERCG developments with the WP6 communication activities. Based on the schedule of deliverables of the eCloud project and of the activities of WP6, a more detailed communication plan, specifically aimed at the member RIs and their stakeholders, will be produced in M18.

5.3. Sustainability of the ERCG

Although in principle the ERCG is an output from the eCloud project (February 2013 – January 2016), there is certainly a case for prolonging its activities, beyond the end of eCloud, as a forum for strategic discussion between the member RIs. In month 30 of the eCloud project this possible extension of the ERCG, as a long-term forum for strategic alignment, will be evaluated, and appropriate mechanisms will be devised for the post-project continuation of dialogue in the spirit and scope of the ERCG as conceived in eCloud.

⁴ To be published on <http://pro.europeana.eu/web/europeana-cloud/>.

6. Summary

In summary:

- The ERCG is now established as a venue for strategic discussion and knowledge exchange between Research Infrastructures, with particular reference to digital cultural heritage.
- Areas of overlapping interest between member RIs, and between member RIs and eCloud, have been identified.
- During the project, the ERCG will explore these intersections further through a series of themed meetings between representatives of eCloud and the member RIs. The meetings will be scheduled to deliver timely support for eCloud and maximum benefits to the ERCG members.
- The ERCG will be closely aligned with eCloud WP6, to ensure that communication opportunities offered by the member RIs are maximised, and also that the ERCG continues to offer its members a forum for sustained mutual strategic awareness.
- The ERCG, through its Terms of Reference, is committed to post-project continuation in some shape or form; the appropriate model for this continuity will be agreed by the membership in year 3 of eCloud.

Appendix A – The members of the ERCG

(per 1 September 2013)

Member RI	Website	Representative
CENDARI	www.cendari.eu	Jennifer Edmond
CLARIN	www.clarin.eu	Dieter van Uytvanck
DARIAH	www.dariah.eu	Tobias Blanke and Laurent Romary
DASISH	www.dasish.eu	Hans Jørgen Marker
EUDAT	www.eudat.eu	Daan Broeder
Europeana	www.europeana.eu	Antoine Isaac
The European Library	www.theeuropeanlibrary.org	Alastair Dunning
OpenAIRE	www.openaire.eu	Paolo Manghi
From eCloud:		
Marnix van Berchum (ERCG Co-ordinator)		
Martin Moyle (eCloud WP Leader, Dissemination)		

Appendix B – ERCG Questionnaire, June 2013

Consortium Name		
URL		
Representative in ERCG		
Short introduction on consortium⁵		
What are current developments and/or interactions of your consortium with digital cultural heritage? (i.e. content from GLAM institutions: Galleries – Libraries – Archives - Museums)		
Could you identify relevant expertise in your consortium with regard to this content, and/or for the eCloud project in particular? Regarding the latter, please indicate in the Work Package list below (for full description see DoW) ⁶ , whether your consortium is able to provide expertise.		
	WP1 - Assessing Researcher Needs in the Cloud and Ensuring Community Engagement	
	WP2 - Developing the Infrastructure for Europeana Cloud	
	WP3 - Exploiting Europeana Cloud with services and tools for researchers	
	WP4 - Ingestion of Content and Metadata	

⁵ This may be a boilerplate text from your website, and/or may include an overview of current developments in the consortium.

⁶ WP6 'Dissemination and Networking' and WP7 'Project Management' excluded.

	Development	
	WP5 - Sustaining the Europeana Cloud: Legal, Strategic and Economic Issues	
	WP6 - Dissemination and Networking	
Are there specific areas where you see potential overlap in work with Europeana, The European Library or indeed other consortia within the ERCG?		
The Europeana Cloud envisages a shared technical infrastructure for cultural heritage. In what way might such a cloud infrastructure be beneficial to the work pursued in your consortium?		