europeana

STRATEGY 2020-2025

EMPOWERING DIGITAL CHANGE

This strategy has been developed following the *Report from the European Commission to the Parliament and the Council on the evaluation of Europeana and the way forward (COM /2018/612)* **[1]** and is based on the recommendations from the Expert Group on Digital Cultural Heritage and Europeana (DCHE) **[2]** prepared by its sub-group on Europeana. We would like to extend our gratitude to everyone who contributed to the formulation of this strategy, especially representatives of Member States in the DCHE, representatives of the European Commission Directorate-General for Communications Networks, Content and Technology and members of the DCHE sub-group on Europeana.

The implementation of this strategy will be supported by European Union funding from September 2020, subject to adequate funding being secured. Key performance indicators will be developed based on this strategy.

Europeana is an initiative of the European Union, financially and politically supported by the European Commission since its launch in 2008. Currently it is funded under the Connecting Europe Facility (CEF) **[3]** funding instrument and is operated by a consortium led by the Europeana Foundation, under a service contract with the European Commission. For the Multiannual Financial Framework 2021-2027, the Commission has proposed to fund Europeana under the Digital Europe Programme.

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Vision 2020-2025

This vision for Europeana imagines a cultural heritage sector powered by digital and a Europe powered by culture, giving it a resilient, growing economy, increased employment, improved well-being and a sense of European identity.

Mission 2020-2025

Europeana empowers the cultural heritage sector in its digital transformation. We develop expertise, tools and policies to embrace digital change and encourage partnerships that foster innovation. We make it easier for people to use cultural heritage for education, research, creation and recreation. Our work contributes to an open, knowledgeable and creative society.

'To my mind, the cultural side of our continent is just as important as our economic outreach. Europe can and must become a real, vibrant ecosystem in the 21st century, a strong community based on the three challenges, the environmental, digital and social challenges.'

Thierry Breton,
European Commissioner for Internal Market

Priorities

Priority #1: Strengthen the infrastructure
Challenge: Inefficiencies in technical infrastructure make it harder for institutions to share their collections online effectively.
Solution: The Europeana Initiative will invest in supporting innovation activities that keep the infrastructure aligned with state-of-the-art tech.

Priority #2: Improve data quality
Challenge: The lack of sufficient high-quality content and metadata highly affects the access to and visibility and reusability of digital content.
Solution: The Europeana Initiative will invest resources in activities related to metadata and content improvement. It will use new technologies like machine-learning algorithms to enrich metadata records.

Priority #3: Build capacity
*Challenge:* The needs of cultural heritage institutions are many and varied, so it's difficult to achieve consistency in digital output and mindset across the sector.
Solution: The Europeana Initiative will support institutions in their digital transformation. It will showcase the importance and added value of digitisation, adoption of standards, best practice and common solutions.
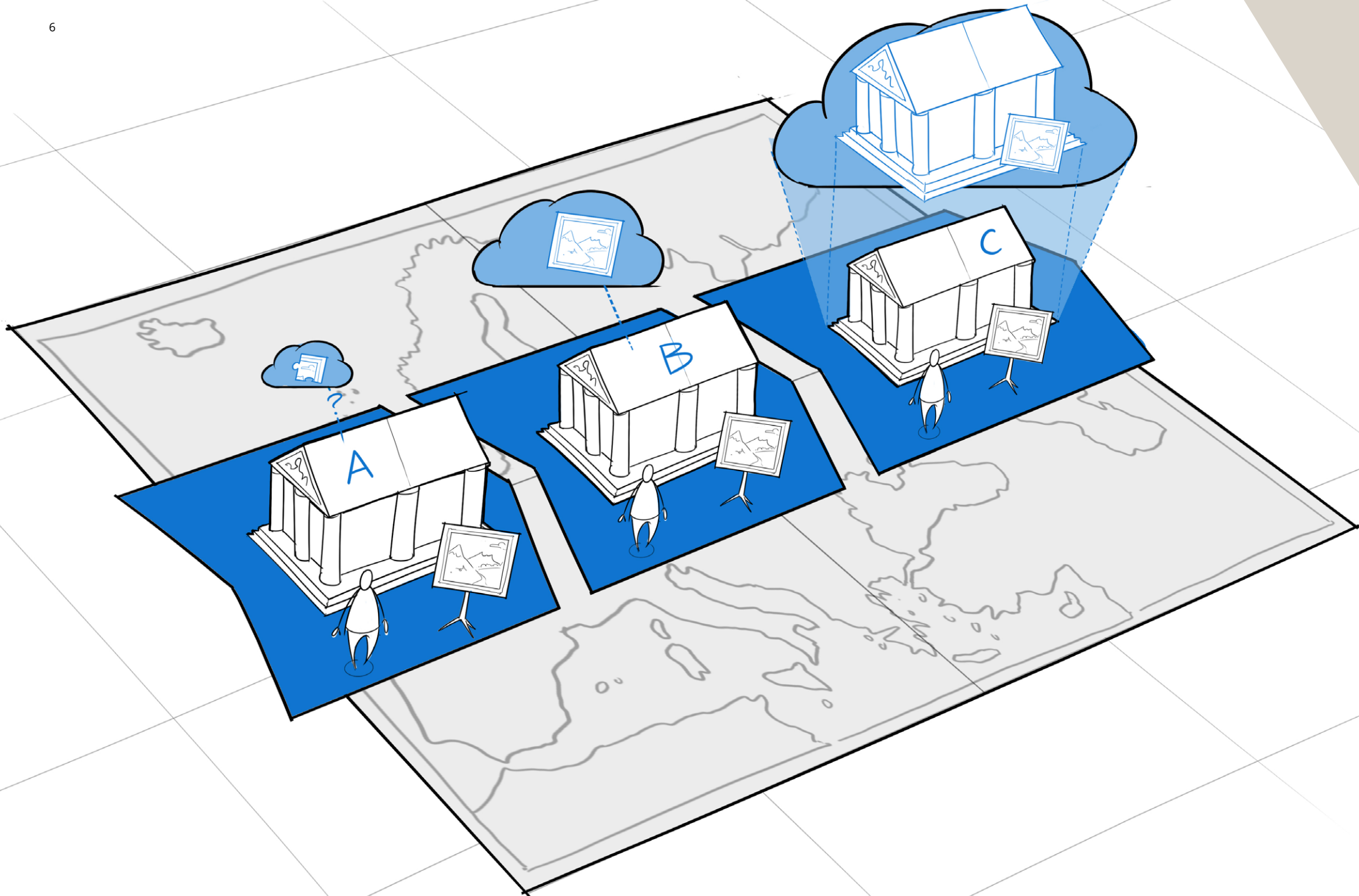
Introduction

Europeana is the result of the inspiring idea, backed by a letter from six heads of state to the President of the European Commission, that Europe should take ownership and responsibility of its past and make it an integral part of its future.

Today, Europeana empowers cultural heritage institutions to share their collections with the world. And so far, over 58 million cultural heritage items from around 4,000 institutions across Europe are available via Europeana online.

But these numbers alone do not tell the whole story. Europeana's most important outcome is the introduction of policies and standards that evolve in line with EU directives and that allow the alignment of cultural heritage digitisation throughout Europe.

From 2020 onwards, while safeguarding the core components of the activities that have made Europeana an important agent of change over the past decade, Europeana will focus on a single task: supporting the digital transformation of Europe's cultural heritage sector.

'I need to thank Europeana for accelerating the discussion and the decision-making concerning our licensing policy here at the Finnish National Gallery.'

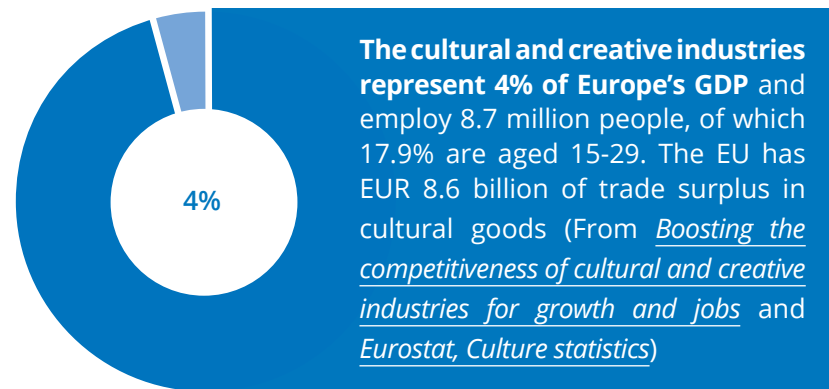Dr. Riitta Ojanperä,
Finnish National Gallery

Why? Because making sure the ongoing digital transformation has a 'positive effect on European growth, employment and well-being' is part of the European Commission's Digital Europe Programme pledges. For the cultural heritage sector, that means addressing 'an urgent need to make the most of digital technologies to record, document, preserve, and make Europe's cultural heritage accessible online' (Digital Europe).

As part of a digital single market, Europeana contributes to a Europe transformed by culture; one that uses technology to achieve an 'inclusive digital society' bringing economic and social benefits for Europe (Economy and Society).

With this strategic plan for 2020-2025, the Europeana Initiative will be strengthened, supported and reinvigorated as a strong networked organisation focusing on supporting the digital transformation of Europe's large and diffuse cultural heritage sector.

This strategy has been developed by the European Commission and Member States. It will be delivered by a collaborative approach led by the Europeana Foundation under a service contract with the European Commission, with the Europeana Network Association, the Europeana Aggregators' Forum and their network of data partners, European Union Member States and external partners.

4%

The cultural and creative industries represent 4% of Europe's GDP and employ 8.7 million people, of which 17.9% are aged 15-29. The EU has EUR 8.6 billion of trade surplus in cultural goods (From *Boosting the competitiveness of cultural and creative industries for growth and jobs* and *Eurostat, Culture statistics*)

Europeana's values

Access to cultural heritage leads to positive social and economic change, and digital technology can support and accelerate that change. However, that does not simply mean applying technology. It means applying it with serious consideration in line with a set of core values that are deeply ingrained throughout an organisation.

Digital means 'usable'. Europeana provides the impetus, expertise and tools to support cultural heritage institutions in harnessing digital to open up their collections - to make them available to be used in new ways. Content and technology need to be accessible. They need to be easy-to-use and open, or the reach of any social or economic impact will be limited.

Europeana works for 'mutual' benefit. The Europeana Initiative is a networked organisation, a partnership of connected bodies and cultural heritage professionals. Europeana fosters creative collaboration and teamwork, working towards common goals for mutual benefit. Innovation needs to be community-based and reciprocal, combining the best of sector knowledge and practices.

Europeana's work is 'reliable'. Europeana supports the cultural heritage institutions that safeguard Europe's heritage, those who organise it, structure it and make it accessible with great care and precision. Europeana is committed to ensuring that its digital data is always authentic, trustworthy and robust, that it's easy to create with and that partners benefit from sharing it.

Jonge leerlingen tijdens het boogschieten in Hermannsberg, een nevenvestiging van Schule Schloss Salem, 1929, Rijksmuseum, Netherlands, public domain

Vision 2020-2025

Europeana sees a cultural heritage sector transformed by having digital integrated into every aspect of its operation and mindset. A sector that adopts and implements state-of-the-art technologies. A sector that upholds the values it has held for centuries and operates with 21st century skills. A sector that makes high-quality content available and discoverable online via Europeana, third-party platforms and APIs. A cultural heritage sector that is open, inclusive and sustainable.

This vision for Europeana imagines a Europe powered by culture. And a Europe powered by culture is a Europe with a resilient, growing economy, increased employment, improved well-being and a sense of European identity.

This transformed sector brings Europe's citizens into contact with culture more often and more easily, increasing the opportunities for active participation. That in turn fosters a population with an increased appreciation of cultural diversity, more tolerance for each other and greater social cohesion.

'[T]he future we want — engaged citizens in a healthy and resilient Europe — will only come true if we have the imagination and courage to rethink old assumptions, lift our vision, and make the world anew.'

Michael Peter Edson,
Museum for the United Nations — UN Live
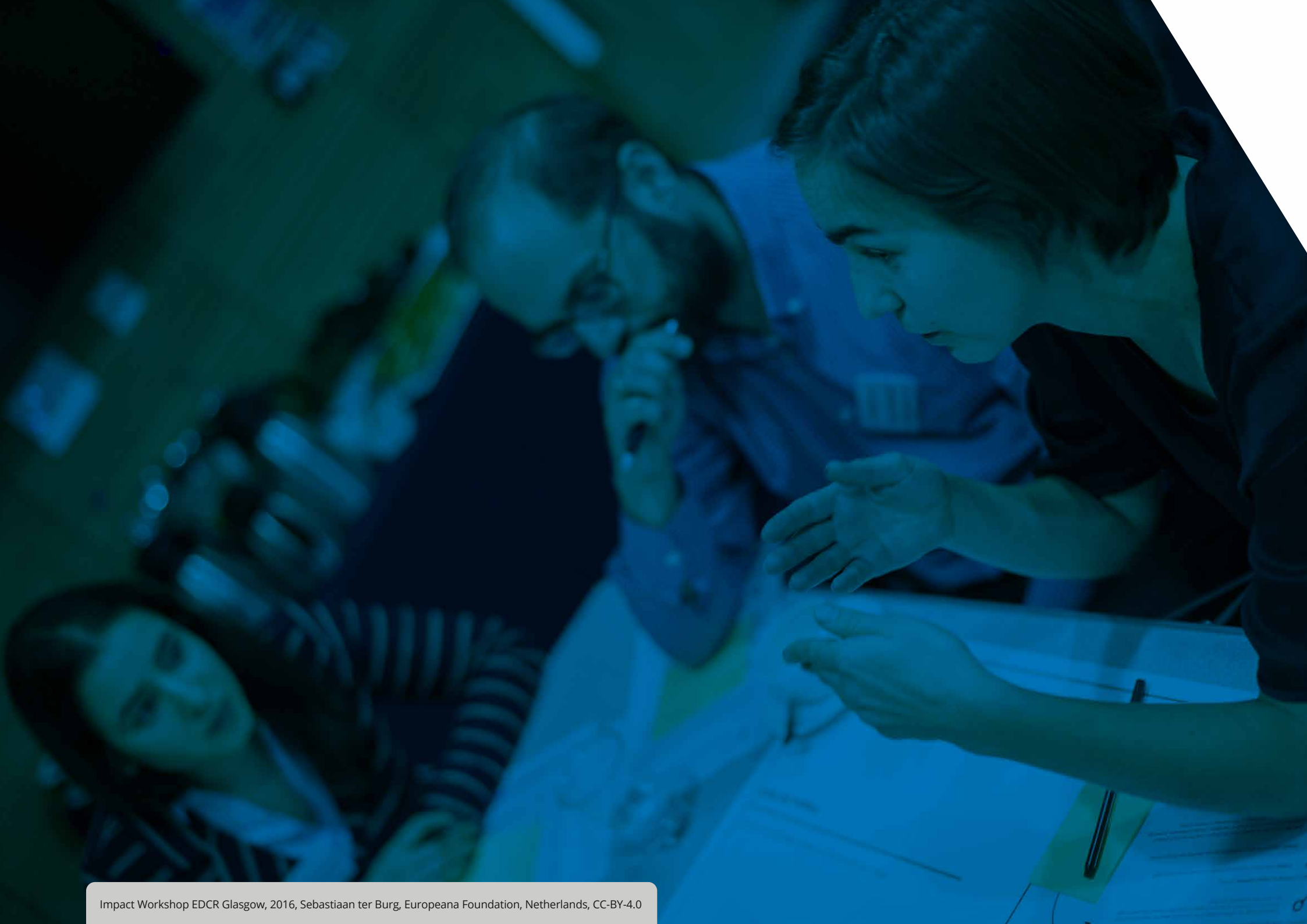
Mission 2020-2025

Empowering digital change

Europeana empowers the cultural heritage sector in its digital transformation. We develop expertise, tools and policies to embrace digital change and encourage partnerships that foster innovation. We make it easier for people to use cultural heritage for education, research, creation and recreation. Our work contributes to an open, knowledgeable and creative society.

'The more we offer open access to high-quality images, provide lively storytelling and share recent research, the more relevant our collections become.'

Emilie Gordenker, Mauritshuis
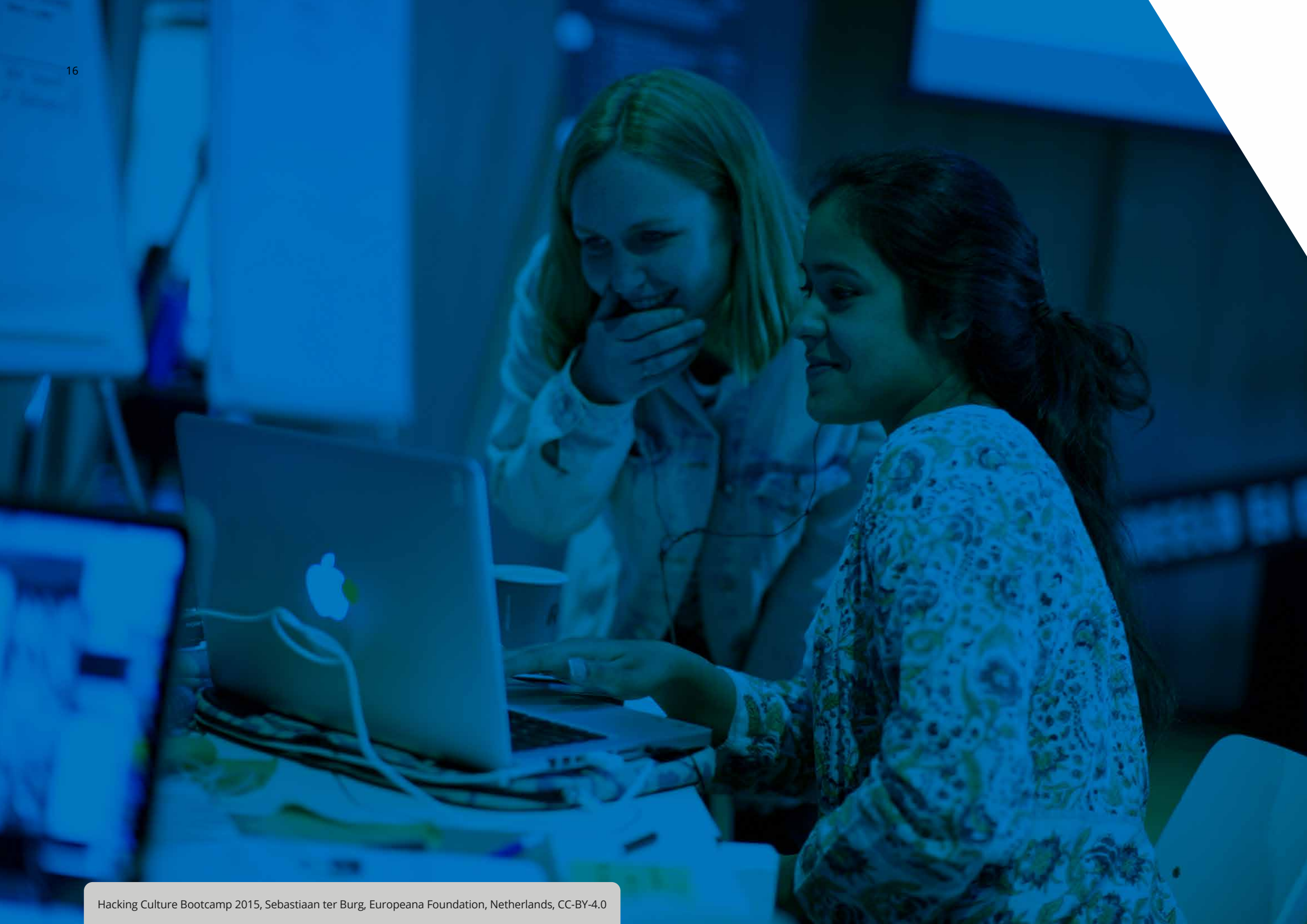
Europeana's role in the digital transformation

The Europeana Initiative will bring together key actors from across the sector to ensure that the region's cultural heritage institutions fully realise their potential, contributing to the digital transformation of Europe.

Digital transformation isn't just about how cultural heritage institutions operate. It is about how they think. It isn't just about technology and assets. It's about people and skills.

Cultural heritage institutions differ significantly, depending on the type of collections they manage, their domain, their funding, their relation to Europeana, and their experience with and openness towards technical innovation.

No matter where they are in their journey, all cultural heritage institutions will be supported to create good quality digital assets in standardised formats, allowing them to share, explore, interrogate and use their collections in ways that fulfil their institutions' own 21st century missions.

As cultural heritage institutions progress in their digital transformation, more will be able to contribute to and work collaboratively with the Europeana Network Association and the Europeana Aggregators' Forum, and with third-party platforms enabled by Europeana's standards and tools (e.g. APIs).

As both the common multilingual access point to digital European heritage and a powerful platform for storytelling, Europeana will enable cultural heritage institutions to transcend cultural and national borders and place their collections in the European context - to be part of the story of Europe.

The heritage shared through Europeana, from all domains, from all countries and in all languages, will be used and enjoyed by citizens, creatives, researchers, educators and students across the world.

MARKET FORCES

TECH INNOVATION

PUBLIC EXPECTATIONS

GLOBAL PERSPECTIVE
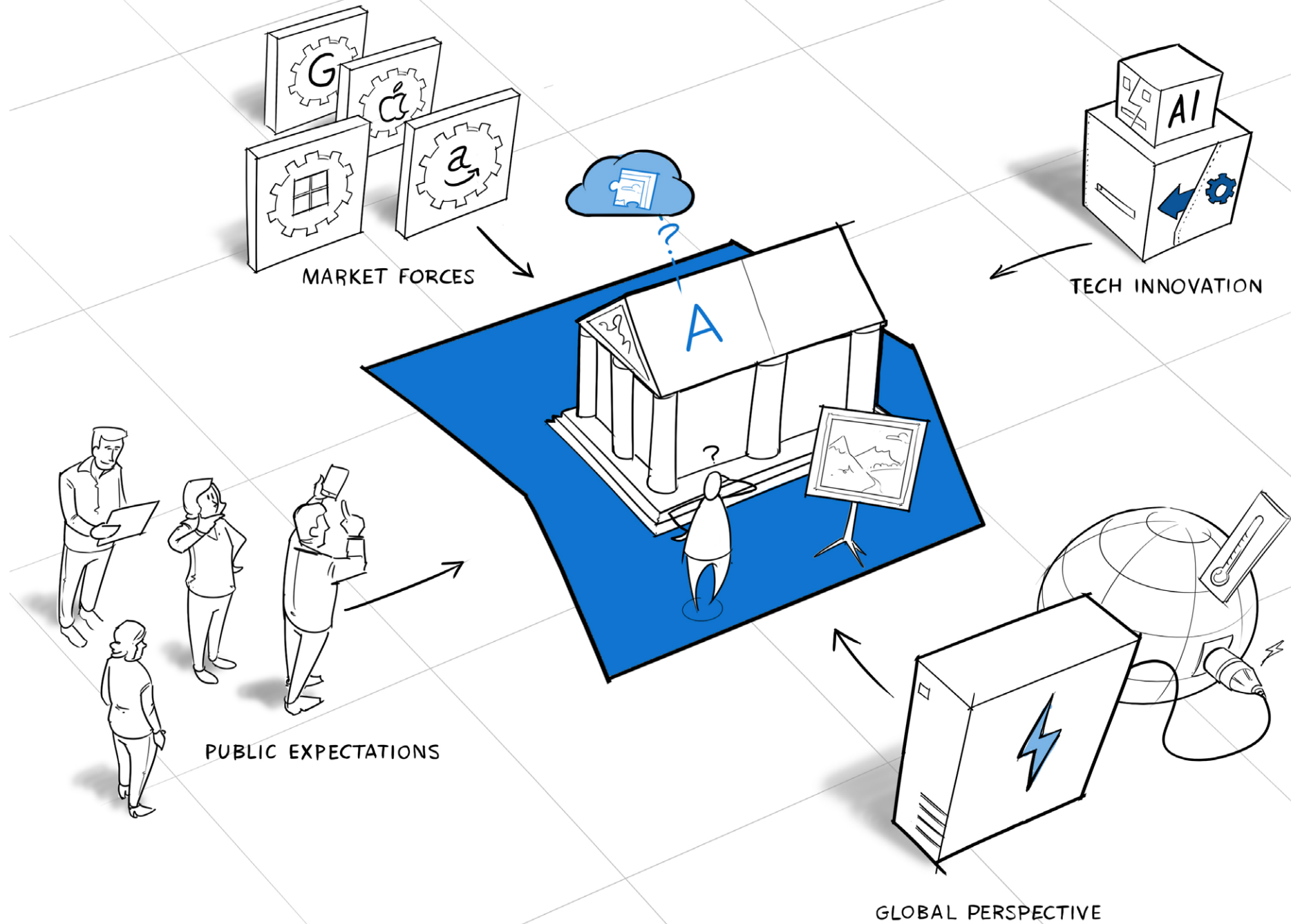
Strategic positioning in evolving landscapes

Europeana should never simply follow the latest trends. Where it has specialist expertise, it should lead them. Where that expertise lies with other organisations or networks, it should collaborate with them, building on its position as a commons-based alternative to the global commercial players.

Here are four areas of change that have influenced the direction of this strategic plan.

Public expectations

We use online services constantly. Our work, leisure and domestic lives are run via apps, websites and smart devices. We expect to find and use information quickly and easily, and to be absolutely confident that this information is robust and trustworthy. And we expect to be able to engage with services - to be active and productive participants.

Cultural heritage institutions are increasingly expected to embrace openness and participatory processes from open licensing to crowdsourcing and leveraging citizen science. The public expects to be made part of institutions' curatorial processes. This challenges traditional business models and communication strategies. It changes the traditional institutional culture – from being exclusive, introvert and authoritative to being open, inclusive, participatory, embracing change and experimentation.

The cultural heritage sector is seen more and more as an environment in which technological, behavioural and organisational experimentation can take place safely. In this context, Europeana will support and upskill cultural heritage organisations to help them progress in and build capacity for their digital transformations, whatever form their institution takes and whatever part of the journey they find themselves on.

CASE STUDY

SMK, the national gallery of Denmark, openly licensed its collection data and images in 2012. This was the first step in a digital transformation that changed the museum's perception of itself from an institution of experts to a facilitator of knowledge. Today, SMK is a platform for participation, collaborating with the people who use its digitised assets – from educators and Wikipedians to creatives and start-ups (*Making the case for impact at SMK*).

Market forces

As the importance of digital culture takes a more prominent place on the political agenda, Europeana can confidently assert its unique position in the field of digital transformation while welcoming new and emerging actors with pan-European ambition such as Time Machine and the European Open Science Cloud.

The raw digitisation of cultural heritage is not among Europeana's tasks and yet a huge digitisation gap remains. As other actors take this on, Europeana will pursue close coordination and partnership with them so that they can benefit from the building blocks of policies and frameworks that Europeana has established.

Cultural heritage institutions are approached by and work with commercial organisations, not only global players such as Facebook, Google, Amazon, Microsoft and Apple, but also commercial image services and digital solutions based in their own countries. These partnerships are important. But the sector cannot rely on commercial systems alone to safeguard public access to our cultural heritage. A strong public alternative is crucial. Europeana provides an access point for reliable data and knowledge from the trusted sources of Europe's cultural heritage institutions, contributing to a Cultural Commons that benefits both institutions and citizens.

10%

Only around 10% of Europe's cultural heritage has been digitised, out of which only about one-third is available online and of that, just over one-third is available for reuse. (ENUMERATE)

'This is the future of digital culture: individuals, institutions and open knowledge advocates working together to build an inclusive, resilient digital commons.'

Katherine Maher,
Wikimedia Foundation

Technological innovation

Europeana can help the cultural heritage sector to use technologies in ways that support its digital transformation - to lead with technology, not be led by it.

Tech is changing all the time. Reflecting its public service role, Europeana will develop and use cutting-edge technologies such as artificial intelligence, e-translation and machine learning in line with the European Commission's *Ethics guidelines for trustworthy AI*. This will anchor and position the Europeana Initiative as a key component in a larger distributed cultural sphere built on similar principles.

Europeana will continue taking the leading position in digital transformation. It will develop standards and rights, and provide visibility of aggregated material from across Europe on one platform. It will also offer the sector's institutions more digital tools that can support them in their own digital transformations.

'[F]uture AI [...] could lead to a powerful new understanding of our world and its long-term patterns. It will act as a simulation engine for possible futures, thus offering a unique advantage to research institutions, decision-makers and businesses.'

Frédéric Kaplan,
École Polytechnique Fédérale de Lausanne

Global perspectives

Climate change is putting physical heritage at risk. The digital reconstruction of sites at risk from flooding, temperature change or rising sea levels is an important development but prevention of such damage is of paramount importance. The cultural heritage sector is starting to articulate a response to this climate crisis (for example Barbara Fischer and Natural History Museum). As a community, the Europeana Network Association can surface concerns, approaches and best practice for responses at both institution and sector level.

The climate crisis forces us to work together as a global community. To put into action the European Union's ambition of 'Unity in Diversity'. This is already the Europeana way.

The Europeana platform reflects cultural heritage from all European countries and regions, while the Initiative maintains vibrant communities and networks of experts and stakeholders in the cultural field. This respect for cultural diversity is one of our core value propositions.

Respecting cultural diversity, and the cultural items that represent it, is important. There is increasing global awareness that institutions need to recognise different framings of the past and repatriate heritage that was br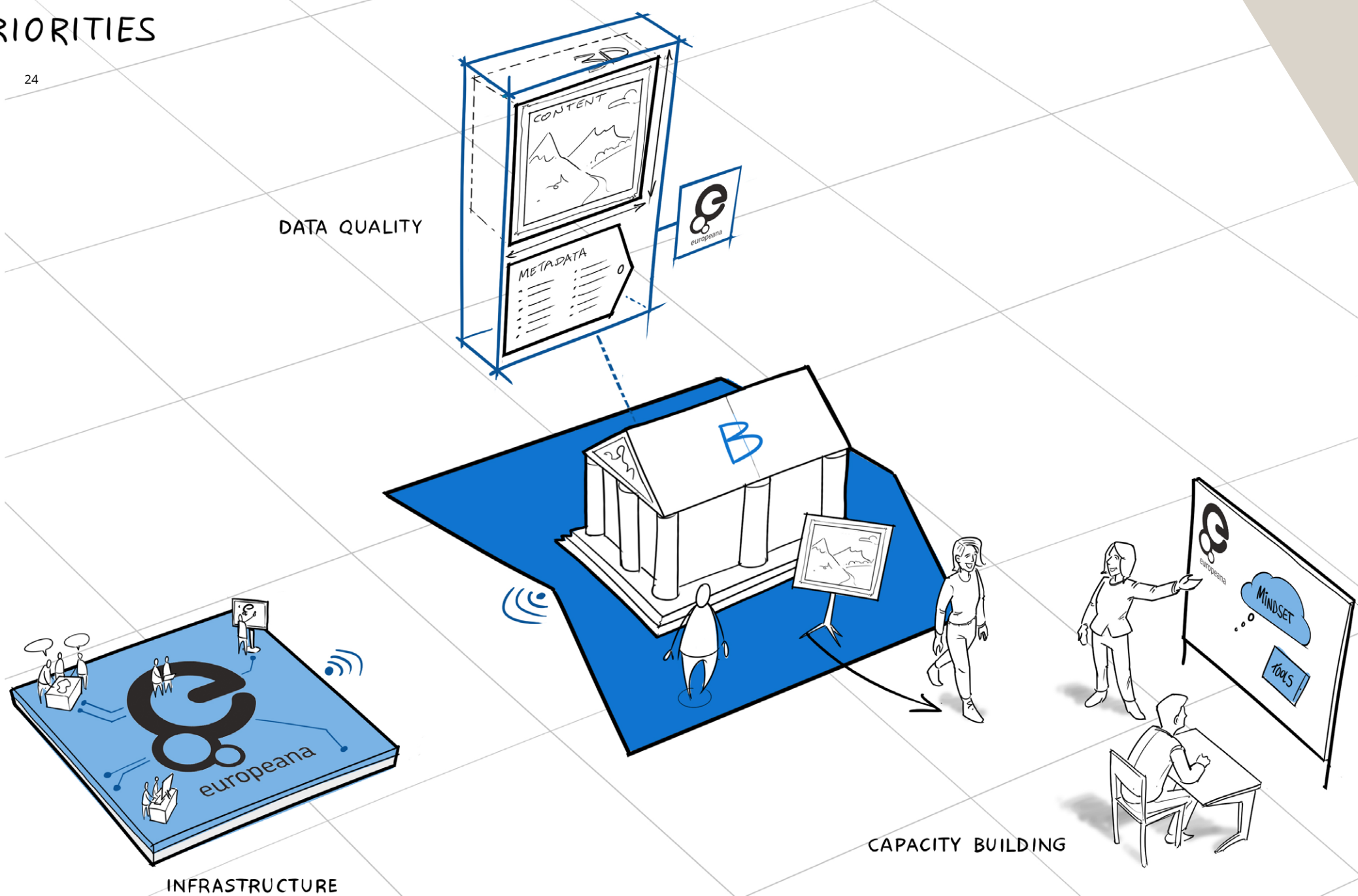ought to Europe as part of colonial infrastructures. This has implications for digitised cultural heritage (for example *Response to the 2018 Sarr-Savoy Report*). Europeana can help institutions digitise and open up collections that contain heritage from cultures outside Europe, with respect for the original creators and their communities.

'We, the Europeana Network Association, could stand up and encourage all GLAM and Science institutions out there to inform on climate change, to encourage the citizens to take action to raise their voice to stop climate change... If we transform the world with culture, we ought to be the first to rise.'

Barbara Fischer,
German National Library

DATA QUALITY

CONTENT

METADATA

INFRASTRUCTURE

CAPACITY BUILDING

MINDSET

tools

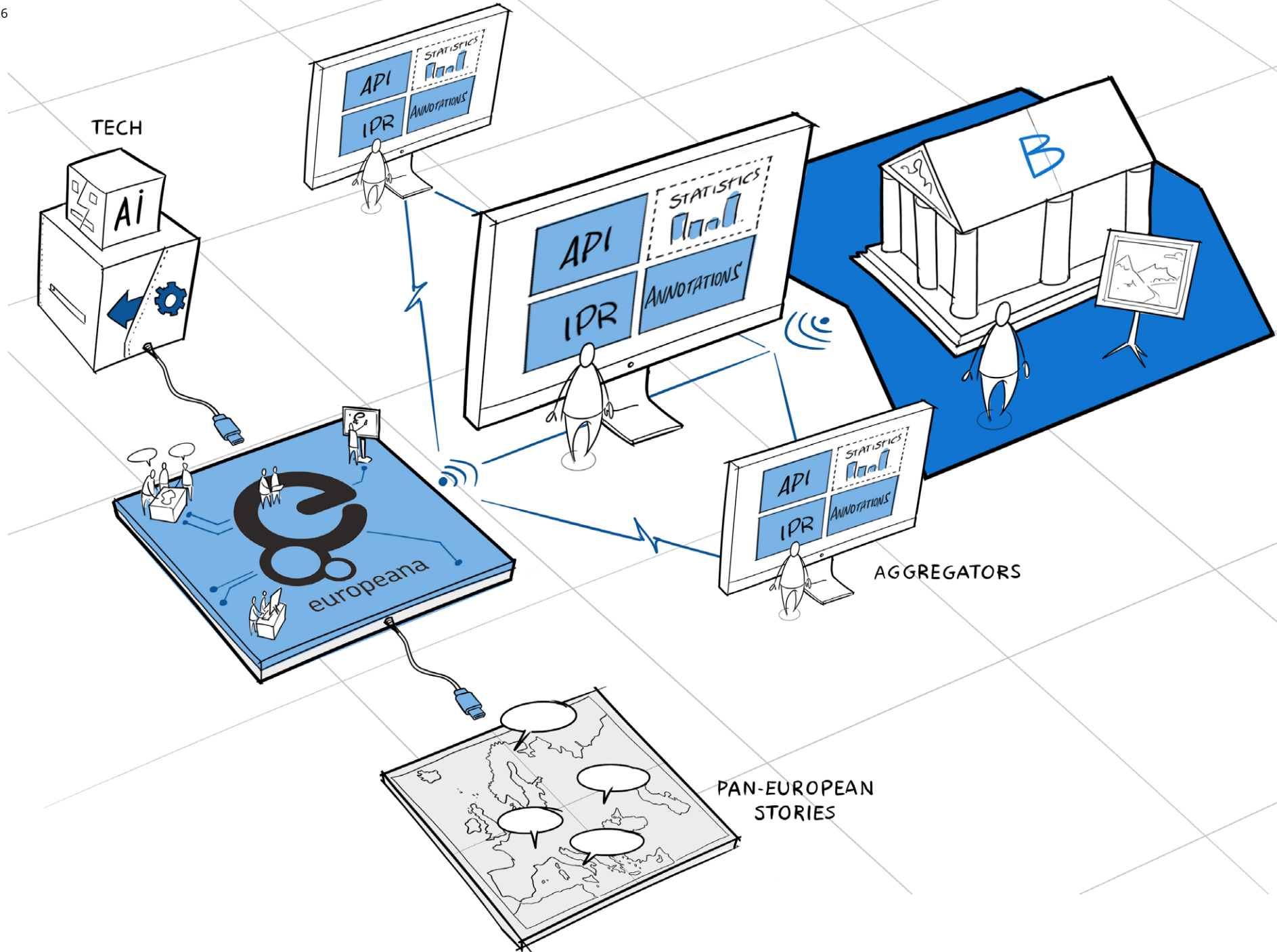Priorities, Europeana Foundation and Sketchy Business, 2020, The Netherlands, public domain

Priorities

The Europeana Strategy 2020-2025 has three priorities:

1. Strengthen the infrastructure
2. Improve data quality
3. Build capacity

TECH

API
STATISTICS
IPR
ANNOTATIONS

B

API
STATISTICS
IPR
ANNOTATIONS

API
STATISTICS
IPR
ANNOTATIONS

AGGREGATORS

europeana

PAN-EUROPEAN
STORIES

Objectives

PRIORITY 1

Strengthen the infrastructure

Challenge: Inefficiencies in technical infrastructure make it harder for institutions to share their collections online effectively.

Solution: The Europeana Initiative will invest in supporting innovation activities that keep the infrastructure aligned with state-of-the-art tech.

'Portals are for visiting, platforms are for building on'

Tim Sherratt,
Trove

OBJECTIVE 1A

Develop a more efficient aggregation infrastructure

An improved Europeana aggregation infrastructure and service can significantly simplify the process of making content and metadata available through Europeana.

The release of an efficient ingestion platform (Metis) for direct use by aggregators (and later institutions themselves) is crucial for speeding up and streamlining the aggregation process. Aggregators should be able to continually ingest, check, publish and update content, overcoming bottlenecks in the publication workflow created by a centralised ingestion office. This platform should also offer services for testing, validating and previewing metadata records to optimise the publication process.

The development process of the ingestion platform and the related services will be based on an agreed strategy and primarily involve national, regional and domain/thematic aggregators in both the requirements-gathering and the subsequent testing phase.

OBJECTIVE 1B

Provide better services for data providers and aggregators

Offering cultural heritage institutions and aggregators a fully working and efficient set of APIs (for interacting with stored metadata, annotations, etc.) is crucial to allow them to support reuse and engagement of different stakeholders in the creative industries, research and education sectors.

The set of Search, Annotation and Entity APIs will be improved, well-documented, made available and promoted. In particular, the Annotation API will allow for the storing, indexing and presentation of annotations directly in the Europeana platform.

Content providers and aggregators also need tools to measure the use and impact of their content in Europeana. A statistical dashboard will be made available first for aggregators and later for institutions and will offer basic information such as number, type and tier of a data provider's records, as well as insights into the access and use of that content, for example, most viewed items, visitors per country, top referral sites and distribution of published content by type.

OBJECTIVE 1C

Make it easier to find and browse content

A good indexing mechanism for Europeana content will enable greater access via search engines. Access will also be improved by multilingual approaches based on Linked Open Data standards and further Search Engine Optimisation work, such as fully exploiting Schema.org.

The browsability of content on Europeana Collections will be improved by the possibility to contextualise, compare and interlink content. The browsing of content through semantic entities will be prioritised.

A management system will be introduced to allow users of the Europeana platform to create, organise and save collections of items for their own research, reference and reuse.

New curatorial themes will be proposed, and editorial content such as exhibitions and blog posts will be localised in multiple languages to make them widely accessible. This user engagement approach will benefit from the support of domain and thematic aggregators within the Europeana Initiative and related thematic projects.
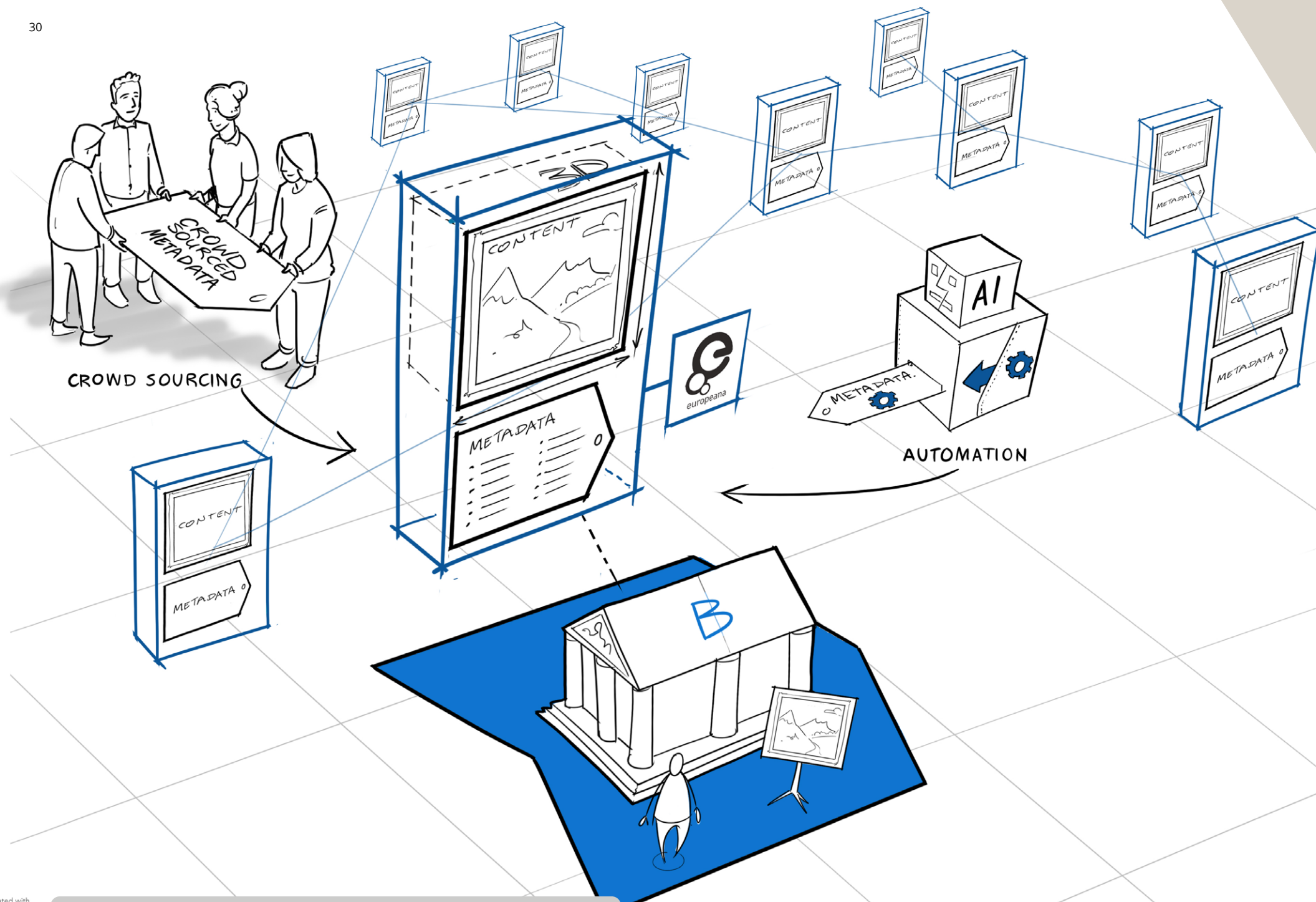
CROWD SOURCING

AUTOMATION

PRIORITY 2

Improve data quality

Challenge: The lack of sufficient high-quality content and structured descriptive metadata highly affects the access to and visibility and reusability of digital content. This limits the user experience on the Europeana platform.

Solution: The Europeana Initiative will invest resources in activities related to metadata and content improvement in collaboration with aggregators and data providers. It will use new technologies like machine-learning algorithms to automatically or semi-automatically enrich metadata records in a faster and more scalable way.

'Frameworks such as the Europeana Publishing Framework are greatly valued at a time when organisations such as ourselves are developing policies and practices around open access to collections.'

Dr. Dafydd Tudur,
National Library of Wales

OBJECTIVE 2A

Increase high-quality content

Harnessing existing aggregators' networks, Europeana will support institutions to raise their competency levels in digitisation and the production of high-quality content. Incentive for high-quality content will come from projects linking national infrastructures, Member States funding and awareness-raising aimed at institutions as well as national and regional aggregators. Quality targets for content provision will be supported by the DCHE.

The Europeana Publishing Framework will better define quality tiers for audiovisual and 3D content. Very low quality (Tier 0) content such as items with broken links or very low-res content will be hidden and the responsible data provider or aggregator notified and supported in taking remedial action.

An editorial strategy for campaigns/seasons on pan-European topics will harness Europeana's full potential as a powerful platform for storytelling. This thematic approach will involve aggregators and cultural heritage institutions in its production and count on the support of related thematic projects, the Europeana core project and Member States.

OBJECTIVE 2B

Increase high-quality metadata

Metadata quality is key to enabling discoverability, access to and reuse of digital content.

The new version of the Europeana Publishing Framework contains metrics that can be used to rank the quality of metadata in published records. This will be finalised and disseminated in order to stimulate data providers to improve their metadata.

Resources in the Core Service will be allocated to metadata quality improvements by domain and thematic aggregators. Clear targets will be set using the newly defined metadata component of the Europeana Publishing Framework. Metadata quality targets will also be set by Member States and their respective national aggregation infrastructures.

To encourage institutions to participate in Europeana, the platform will put more emphasis on its partner institutions, making sure that institutions' and aggregators' results are visible to all.

Encourage greater use of interoperable formats

When cultural content and metadata are prepared according to sector standards, they can be used in and across a wide range of systems, including but not limited to the Europeana platform. Cultural heritage institutions can benefit from, for example, interoperability with collections from other institutions or connections to international initiatives such as Wikidata.

Linked data is not yet a common standard among institutions because availability of useful linked data sources is limited and finding solution providers with the necessary skills or interest is difficult. However, there is a willingness within institutions in Europe to use the Resource Description Framework (RDF) to describe data, to publish data through SPARQL endpoints and to interconnect to other systems using Linked Data APIs.

Europeana will promote the benefits of using well-described data shared through a common API with a common query language.

OBJECTIVE 2D

Experiment with improving metadata automatically

Manually improving the metadata quality of millions of records from different sources requires a huge amount of time and resources. The application of artificial intelligence tools and machine-learning networks for automatic enrichment, combined with human knowledge provided by domain experts, offers a remarkable opportunity for improving the quality of metadata.

Machine-learning algorithms can process high volumes of data and the outcome can be validated and/or corrected by the domain experts (see objective 2F).

Funding from related thematic projects will be used to experiment with tools for semi-automatic metadata quality improvement. Europeana will evaluate the outcomes of these experiments and, where appropriate, integrate and deploy these tools into the Core Service.

Europeana will work towards setting up a space in which aggregators and institutions can provide and share annotated datasets that will enable the training and evaluation of machine-learning algorithms. Europeana will invite stakeholders such as universities, research institutes and private companies to use these training datasets in order to propose and develop innovative solutions that will automate tasks from metadata mapping to enrichment. Europeana will delegate the work of establishing such a training repository to research institutes within the Europeana Initiative with the relevant scientific expertise.

Improve multilingualism

Multilingualism continues to be a burning issue. While continuing to develop multilingualism via metadata enrichment and vocabularies, Europeana will look into alternative and complementary approaches, such as the Connecting Europe Facility's eTranslation service. eTranslation's main goal is to help European and national organisations overcome language barriers by providing machine translation capabilities that will potentially enable all Digital Service Infrastructures to be multilingual.

The use and fine-tuning of the eTranslation service and its application to cultural heritage metadata will be experimented with and tested via related thematic projects. Europeana will closely evaluate the results of the eTranslation service without the need to directly invest resources from the Core Service budget.

Use crowdsourcing to enrich metadata

Crowdsourcing can reduce costs and improve the speed and scalability of a process that is applied to a high volume of content, such as the Europeana repository. Machine-learning techniques for metadata enrichment (such as feature extraction from digital content or named entity recognition from metadata) can be applied efficiently to large volumes of data and have proven to be effective when combined with human intelligence.

Europeana will exploit the 'gamification' offered by crowdsourcing platforms to manually enrich metadata in dedicated campaigns. Europeana will integrate and use crowdsourcing platforms that have been developed in the community (such as those by EnrichEuropeana and CrowdHeritage) and promote them among aggregators and institutions, who can actively contribute to the validation of automatic enrichments or directly involve users in manual enrichments of published metadata.

Europeana will finalise and deploy the Annotation API in order to properly aggregate, store, index and present the enrichments created or validated by users (see objective 1B).
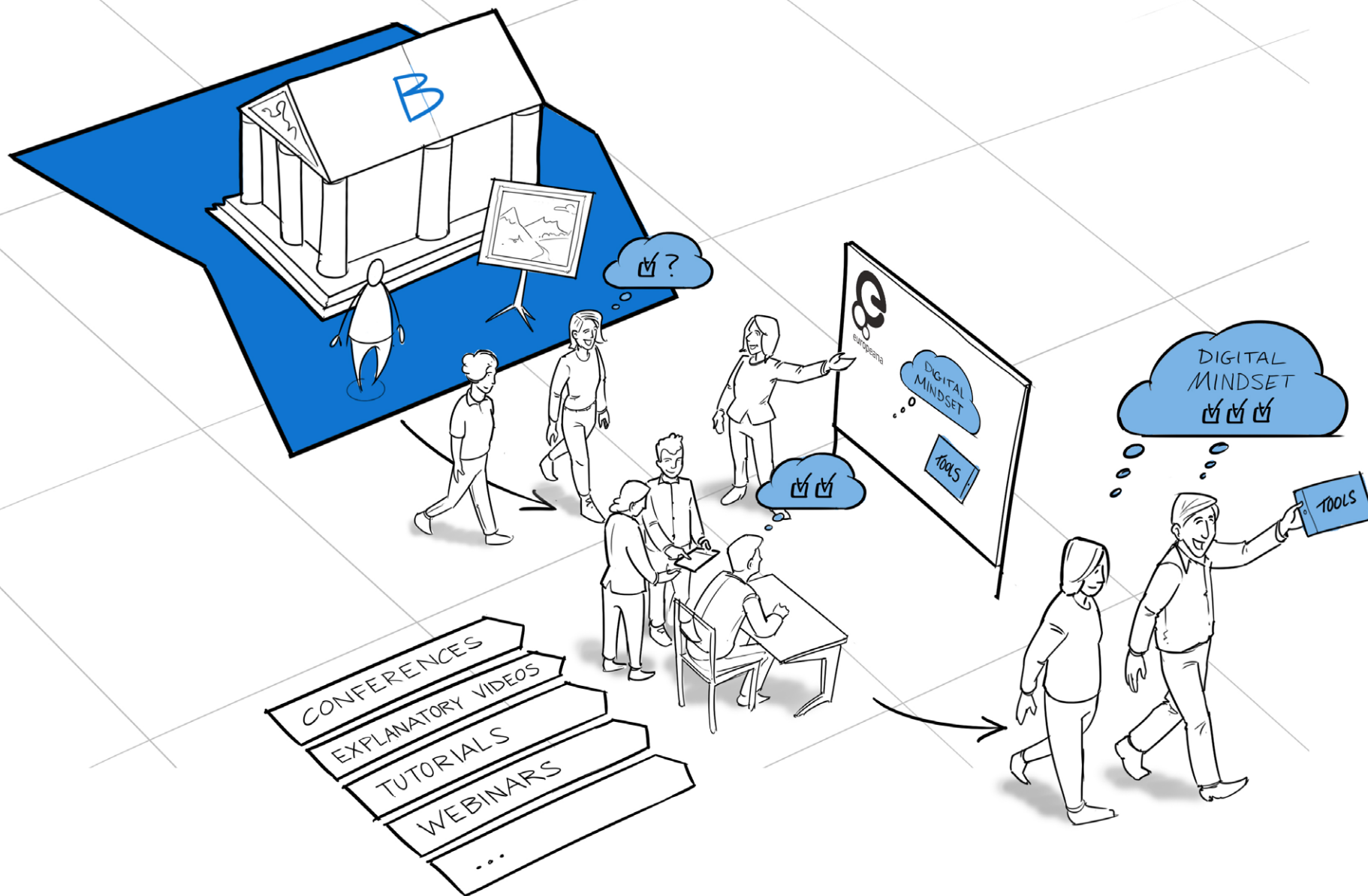
PRIORITY 3

Build capacity

Challenge: The needs of cultural heritage institutions are many and varied, and depend on their individual size, domain, mission, levels of staff skill and expertise, budget, and on the influence of national policies and infrastructure. Therefore, it's difficult to achieve consistency in digital output and mindset across the sector. Digital transformation is particularly challenging for small and medium institutions with limited internal skills and capacity.

Solution: The Europeana Initiative will support institutions in their digital transformation. It will showcase the importance and added value of digitisation, adoption of standards, best practice and common solutions in making quality content that is useful for a global online audience and that fosters innovation.

'If Europeana can help us do the things we do better, cheaper and faster - that would be enormously valuable.'

Lucie Burgess,
British Library

Develop training and skills to build capacity for digital transformation

Europeana will develop as a knowledge centre offering cultural heritage professionals guidelines on topics such as digitisation, metadata enrichment, semantic interoperability, content creation, licensing, reuse, business models and innovation.

The Europeana Pro website will provide a clear and valuable offering to both the institution and the individual. It will provide access to standards and guidelines and illustrate best practices from the Europeana Network Association and the Europeana Aggregators' Forum, as well as innovative experimentation from related thematic projects.

Along with the conferences, regular workshops (following the 'train the trainer' model) will be organised in the framework of the Europeana Aggregators' Forum. Topics will cover areas like IIIF, semantic enrichment, artificial intelligence tools and techniques for automatic and semi-automatic metadata enrichment.

Europeana will encourage and facilitate, in collaboration with the Europeana Aggregators' Forum and Member States, the use of tools and techniques developed in related thematic projects that can concretely support institutions in their digital transformations.

With its established international profile, Europeana will work with national and international partners to foster deeper involvement from cultural heritage institutions. This includes attending conferences or lobbying with organisations such as EU National Information professional associations, international associations related to heritage, other fields such as IPR and other initiatives beyond Europe.

OBJECTIVE 3B

Develop the networks that support digital transformation

Both the Europeana Aggregators' Forum and the Europeana Network Association will be supported and structured so that they can raise awareness, build partnerships, enable peer-to-peer working and reach out to the research, education and creative sectors.

Europeana will ensure that institutions are aware of these partnerships and can produce appropriate resources for these sectors, packaging content for a range of platforms, supporting the export of content in standard formats and the embedding of content in educational or research platforms.

The active communities established by the Europeana Aggregators' Forum are crucial assets in raising the competency levels of cultural heritage institutions. Scaling with partners in activities like training, support and capacity-building can be more efficiently and easily achieved with a decentralised model of expert hubs, mainly maintained by domain and thematic aggregators. Europeana will exploit the specialist support available in the Europeana Network Association and the Europeana Aggregators' Forum to develop these hubs.

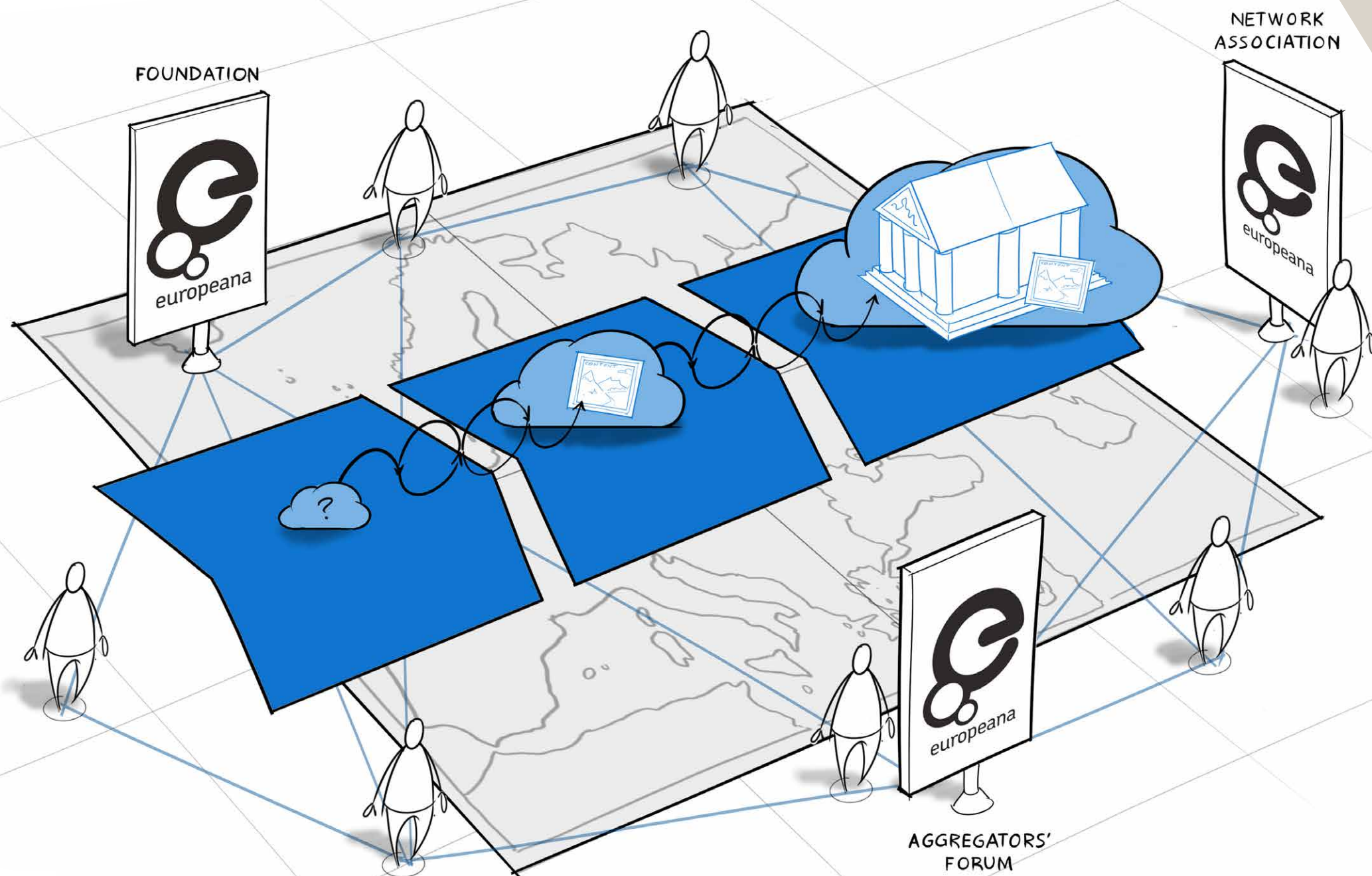## OBJECTIVE 3C

Strengthen national infrastructures

The Europeana Initiative will collaborate with Member States to achieve greater harmony with national policies on digital cultural heritage, to comply with those national policies and to use strong national infrastructures to reach cultural heritage institutions.

Individual institutions need good arguments to invest resources in contributing their collections to Europeana and the uneven distribution of national aggregators across European Member States needs to be tackled.

The Europeana Initiative will make Europeana known as a unique and reliable resource for cultural heritage knowledge, services and experiences for European citizens. It will communicate its efforts, results and impact to its target group of cultural heritage professionals and will appeal to them to act as ambassadors within the influential professional associations in their countries.

ECOSYSTEM

FOUNDATION

NETWORK ASSOCIATION

AGGREGATORS' FORUM

Ecosystem, Europeana Foundation and Sketchy Business, 2020, The Netherlands, public domain

Europeana's ecosystem

European Commission and Member States
The Europeana Initiative is financed by the European Commission and supported by the EU Member States, whose involvement in leveraging the Initiative is crucial. The Initiative is run by the operator of the Core Service - the Europeana Foundation - with a consortium of partners and in close collaboration with the Europeana Aggregators' Forum and the Europeana Network Association. This results in a multiplier effect for the core activities.

Europeana's success is dependent on the interplay of the Europeana Initiative and activities that occur on a national level. Efforts should be developed by the European Commission and the Member States to secure the commitment to Europeana and the digital transformation of the cultural heritage sector. This creates a balanced ecosystem in which the Member States are supported in their efforts by the Europeana Initiative through the advancement of standards, technology and capacity-building that can be adapted and adopted on a local level. This should secure maximum impact of the Initiative.

Europeana Foundation
The Europeana Foundation leads the consortium of partners that delivers the Core Service provided by the Europeana platform. It drives capacity-building for the digital transformation of the cultural heritage sector.

Europeana Network Association
This community of over 2,700 cultural heritage professionals is committed to promoting and strengthening the Europeana Initiative, disseminating its activities within professionals' networks across Europe and fostering innovation and cross-border and cross-domain collaboration between people from cultural heritage, creative, technology, education and research areas.

Europeana Aggregators' Forum
Almost 40 Europeana accredited aggregators represent the pan-European networks of domain and thematic aggregators and the growing network of national aggregators. The Forum has proven crucial for maximising the impact of the Europeana Initiative by supporting cultural heritage institutions in preparing and publishing high-quality digital content and metadata, and by disseminating and fostering the adoption of standards, best practices and new technologies.

Europeana's stakeholders

This strategy supports Europe's cultural heritage sector. Europeana works both with and for cultural heritage institutions to support their digital transformation, and harnesses partnerships with other digital platforms like Time Machine, European Open Science Cloud and Wikipedia in order to do so.

The education and research sectors, the creative industries and more broadly, the citizens of Europe, are the audiences who benefit from the access to Europeana's content that a successful digital transformation of the cultural heritage sector makes possible.

The Europeana Initiative operates in line with EU policies and strategies in areas such as inclusiveness, online accessibility, reuse of public information, promotion of EU research, development and innovation.

Glossary

The framework

Europeana Initiative - a term used to capture the entirety of the work that the Europeana Foundation (the operator) and partners, the Europeana Aggregators' Forum and the Europeana Network Association do to deliver the service according to the Europeana strategy.

Europeana Strategy - the direction of travel, set by the European Commission and the DCHE, including the high level priorities for the period 2020-2025.

The funding programmes

Connecting Europe Facility (CEF) - the EU infrastructure programme supporting the establishment of transport, energy and digital infrastructures, under which the Europeana DSI is financed from 2014 to August 2022.

Digital Europe Programme (DEP) - the EU infrastructure programme focused on building the strategic digital capacities of the EU, under which the Europeana Core Service will be co-financed from September 2022.

The service

Europeana Digital Service Infrastructure (DSI) - the infrastructure that provides the key services of Europeana. DSIs are composed of 'Core Service Platforms' and 'Generic Services' which link national infrastructures to the Core Service Platforms.

Core Service Platform - part of a Digital Service Infrastructure (funded through procurement), enabling trans-European connectivity and interoperability. For Europeana, this means the set of services that includes the aggregation infrastructure, the collections website, the APIs, interoperability services and capacity-building efforts that enable the digital transformation of the cultural heritage sector.

Generic Services - projects aimed at supporting the Core Service Platform. Generic Services are financed through grants. Proposals may be submitted by consortia composed of a minimum of three organisations based in three different Member States and/or EEA countries participating in the CEF programme.

The actors

Europeana Foundation - the operator and leader of the consortium that delivers the Europeana Core Service.

Europeana Aggregators' Forum - a network of national, domain and thematic aggregators who support cultural institutions providing data and content to Europeana.

Europeana Network Association - a strong and democratic community with a mission to expand and improve access to Europe's digital cultural heritage.

Expert Group on Digital Cultural Heritage and Europeana (DCHE)
The Expert Group on Digital Cultural Heritage and Europeana (DCHE) assists the Commission in monitoring the implementation of the Europeana DSI and provides guidance on Europeana's general objectives, governance and strategic priorities for CEF Work Programmes. In addition, the DCHE provides a forum for involvement of the Member States and their cultural institutions. The Europeana Foundation regularly reports on its activities and its financial situation to the DCHE which is chaired by the Commission and meets twice a year.

Sub-group of the Expert Group on Digital Cultural Heritage and Europeana (DCHE)
The sub-group provides the DCHE with advice on certain aspects of the Europeana Digital Service Infrastructure, such as Europeana's general objectives, governance, strategic priorities, evolution and sustainability. The sub-group on Europeana has 12 members: eight members appointed following an open call for applications and four members appointed by nominations of Member States.

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