



Model of Cooperation

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Introduction

The partners of the Europeana Initiative have explored and developed methods to enhance the cooperation between the Foundation, Forum and Network Association as part of a shared ambition to facilitate the stewardship of the data space for cultural heritage. During a period of 18 months from September 2022 through to February 2024 a range of actions and activities have been identified, developed and explored. In doing so, an enhanced model of cooperation emerges that identifies and implements i) methods that improve cooperation on strategic matters, ii) mechanisms that facilitate working for mutual benefit and iii) practical actions that improve communication, transparency and accountability.

This paper outlines each of the three areas that have been developed, describes how they have been implemented and the progress made with those implementations. Where it is feasible, foresee future iterations are identified.

Through this paper we aim to raise awareness among our broad and diverse stakeholders of this model. So that we can together continue to refine, enhance and regenerate how we work throughout the Europeana ecosystem, and further as the operator of the data space for cultural heritage.

Key Terms

In the course of this paper three terms are used frequently and will hence benefit from clarification¹ to have a common starting point. Other terms used follow the Europeana Glossary² published via Europeana Pro.

Cultural Heritage Institution (CHI) - Where used, this is generally understood to refer to an institution that (is funded to) work(s) with, give(s) access to and preserve(s) cultural heritage for the public interest at a national, regional, or local level; often such institutions have been established as a Library, Museum, Gallery or Archive.

Cultural Heritage Professional (CHP) - Where used, this is generally understood to refer to an employee of a CHI who has a role or responsibility for the preservation, provision, enrichment or use of cultural heritage material and data. Noting that the scope and focus of such roles can be broad and varied - elaborated further in section "CHIs and their Professionals".

Europeana Initiative Group - Where used, this refers to an operational coalition formed from representatives from the Foundation (Harry Verwayen, Julia Fallon), the Steering Group of the Aggregators' Forum³ (Kerstin Arnold, Tom Miles, Corinne Szteinszneider) and from the Management Board of the Network Association⁴ (Rob Davies, Sofie Taes). This group meets at regular intervals to discuss strategic matters concerning the Initiative and through this contributes to the enhancement of cooperation.

Context

Since 2015 Europeana has held a strong track record of bringing together broad and diverse stakeholders to tackle shared problems and unite behind common solutions. Enabling foundations of the current Europeana service - the Licensing Framework

¹ This clarification is not intended to form a definition for these terms. It is shared as an aid to the reader, and reflects a developing discussion in the preparation of this paper.

² Glossary of Terms, Europeana Pro <https://pro.europeana.eu/page/glossary>

³ Following the term expiry of Forum Chair Marie-Veronique Leroi in January 2024, Corinne Szteinszneider was elected to the Steering Group, and joins Initiative discussions from April 2024.

⁴ Previous representatives of ENA Management Board Fred Saunderson and Daffyd Tudur, replaced by Juha Henriksson and Ines Vodopivec in the January 2024 Management Board elections. <https://pro.europeana.eu/index.php/post/europeana-network-association-management-board-welcomes-new-members>

and Data Model were developed and refined with stakeholders through task forces, working groups and projects. The Network Association and Aggregators Forum were founded on the growing desire for both individual professionals and organisations providing aggregating services to cultural organisations, to work for mutual benefit with peers to share knowledge and continue to tackle common problems within the evolving ecosystem.

This inclusive and open approach to cooperation is colloquially termed the Europeana Method. Each year task forces⁵ are convened to address specific issues and topics experienced within the digital cultural heritage domain, and which impacts the stakeholders within the Europeana ecosystem. And working groups are formed or continued which have the aim of facilitating discussions on topics or issues that have continuing relevance for the ecosystem. Typically, Task Forces and Working Groups are mandated and overseen by either the Foundation, Forum or Network. Further Europeana Foundation participates in various funded projects⁶ complimenting the core work of the data space, and nurtures strategic partnerships⁷ that help to broaden the reach and effectiveness of the ecosystem, and education and research partnerships that further the potential reuse possibilities.

Within the Initiative, the Foundation, Forum and Network operate somewhat independent governance structures. The Foundation is led by a Senior Management Team, overseen by a Supervisory Board, further supported by an Advisory Board. Since 2013 the Advisory Board⁸ of the Foundation includes representation from the Forum and Network. The informally convened Forum is run by an elected Steering Group, supported by a member of the Foundation. The legally formed Network Association is run through an elected Members Council, supported by the Management Board and a member of the Foundation. Together they oversee a wide range of funded, in-kind and volunteer-led work, which, as the potential for digital cultural heritage evolves, becomes more complex and challenging to coordinate. A more detailed breakdown of the pre-existing governance structures and methods of collaboration can be found in Annex

In September 2022 the Foundation, together with the Initiative partners, began the transition from operating Europeana as a Digital Service Infrastructure (DS)

⁵ Europeana Task Forces & Working Groups: past and present
<https://pro.europeana.eu/page/task-forces>

⁶ Europeana projects: <https://pro.europeana.eu/about-us/projects>

⁷ Europeana partnerships: strategic, education & research
<https://pro.europeana.eu/about-us/partnerships>

⁸ In 2020 a reformatted governance structure transformed the Governing Board into i) a Supervisory and ii) Advisory Board.

to being the steward of the data space for cultural heritage. In the final years of the DSI, closer cooperation and collaboration was nurtured to tackle shared topics of interest and concern, such as developing a response to world events such as with the Supporting Ukraine Working Group⁹, and exploring how to approach diversity and inclusivity¹⁰. As well as addressing uncertainty and challenges experienced throughout the Covid 19 pandemic, such as the transition to digital and subsequently hybrid events and conferences¹¹ that in turn created opportunities for greater collaboration and increased reach to professionals through the sector.

The transition to the data space provided the forum and opportunity for these experiences to be built upon. The Foundation, Forum and Network agreed to work more closely through enhanced collaboration, cooperation and joined up thinking. With the intention that this approach would leverage existing synergies, and create more opportunities to be explored. In the design of the data space activities certain shared topics of interest were documented and integrated into the work plans of various partners. In a first meeting of the Initiative on this work strand, held in October 2022, the Foundation, Forum and Network identified three additional areas in which to make progress as a result of enhanced collaboration.

Topics of shared interests are (topics developed in October 2022 highlighted in Italics);

- Permanent and Unique identifiers
- Developing a shared vision for a decentralised data sharing mechanism
- Aggregation of 3D content in the data space
- Data governance mechanisms that drive data quality and facilitate reuse
- Engaging cultural heritage professionals with the data space and motivating the exchange of knowledge
- Developing a common approach that promotes diverse, inclusive and enriched high quality data
- *Develop approaches to be more effective in member states*
- *Develop better ways to retain and share knowledge*
- *Develop methods to improve communication, accountability & transparency across the Initiative*

⁹ The Initiative mandated 'Supporting the digital cultural heritage of ukraine working group' formed in April 2022

<https://pro.europeana.eu/project/supporting-the-digital-cultural-heritage-of-ukraine-working-group>

¹⁰ The Initiative Diversity & Inclusivity Task Force', formed in March 2022

<https://pro.europeana.eu/project/diversity-and-inclusion-task-force>

¹¹ Europeana events <https://pro.europeana.eu/about-us/events>

Method & Methodology

The desire to enhance cooperation and collaboration is founded from the goal to become more effective or efficient¹². Through a twenty-four month programme¹³, the Initiative explored, developed and piloted activities that aimed to enhance collaboration and cooperation. The main aspects of each method utilised is described further, followed by an outline of how these are operationalised through the 24 month programme.

Methodology

The approach to developing and implementing an enhanced model for collaboration principally follows Kotter's established industry principles¹⁴ and processes¹⁵ for developing and implementing lasting change. Additioning, the working methods utilised practices from Lean Start-Up¹⁶ by Eric Ries, as well as Europeana's iteratively and collaboratively developed Impact Playbook¹⁷ and Inclusive Engagement Guidelines¹⁸.

Kotter's 4 Principles of Change

The 4 principles of change describe the attitude, behaviours and mindsets needed for a change to take place. The principles are; 1) Few & Many, 2) Have to & Want to, 3) Head & Heart and 4) Management & Leadership

Europeana follow these principles by including a variety of colleagues of levels and roles from the Foundation, Forum and Network. Ranging from those that have leadership and management roles, to those with particular expertise or experiences valuable to the exercises or discussions. All involved share a passion and ambition for a healthy and impactful collaboration, for working with professionals in the sector eager to develop the digital activities of their organisation, and are motivated to act as agents of change.

¹² Kotter identifies two fundamental goals underscoring most transformations are i) increased revenue/profits or decreased costs, or ii) become more effective or efficient.

¹³ Starting September 2022, under the data space contract, Task 3.1: Enhancing Cooperation

¹⁴ Kotters 4 principles of change

<https://www.kotterinc.com/methodology/the-4-core-change-principles-dr-john-kotter/>

¹⁵ Kotters 8 step process for leading change <https://www.kotterinc.com/methodology/8-steps/>

¹⁶ Lean Startup by Eric Ries <https://theleanstartup.com/principles>

¹⁷ Europeana Impact Playbook <https://pro.europeana.eu/page/impact>

¹⁸ Europeana Inclusive Engagement Guidelines

<https://pro.europeana.eu/page/europeana-inclusive-engagement-guidelines>

Kotter's 8-step process for Leading Change

The process of developing an enhanced model for collaboration broadly follows Kotter's 8-step process for leading change. The process, principally led by the Foundation, provides the framework for the critical steps necessary to achieve a lasting change.

1. Create a sense of urgency: Inspire people to act with passion & purpose, to achieve a bold aspirational opportunity.
2. Build a guiding coalition: A volunteer network needs a team of committed people - born of it's own ranks - to guide it, coordinate it and communicate its activities
3. Form a strategic vision: Clarify how the future will be different from the past, and get buy-in for how you can make that future a reality.
4. Enlist a volunteer army: Large scale change can only occur when massive numbers of people rally around a common opportunity.
5. Enable actions by removing barriers: Remove the obstacles that slow things down or create roadblocks to progress.
6. Generate short term wins: Wins are the molecules of results - they must be collected and communicated early and often.
7. Sustain Acceleration: Press harder after your first successes - increased credibility can improve systems, structures and policies.
8. Institute Change: Articulate the connections between new behaviours and organisation successes - making sure they continue to become strong enough to replace old habits.

The practice of each step is outlined below in the section below 'Operationalising the Methods'.

Utilised Practices: Canvases, Processes & Guidelines

Lean Startup is an approach to managing and building a business idea iteratively, through continuous user testing and validation. Using the approach can achieve shorter product development cycles and help to bridge the gap between product-market fit. Europeana has previously¹⁹ utilised Lean Startup most notably in the development of the Impact Playbook.

¹⁹ ' First Tentative Steps utilising Lean Startup', Julia Fallon, 2018 - <https://medium.com/@juliafallon/remembering-my-first-tentative-steps-using-lean-startup-2e6d0d2c71d2>

In the development of the collaboration model we utilise three core principles: i) Entrepreneurs are everywhere, ii) Validated Learning and iii) Build-Measure-Learn. Identifying opportunities to iteratively test approaches through developing a 'Minimum Viable Product' (MVP) and success criteria followed by tests and data gathering. Used to develop very small incremental steps in the management of the monthly meetings, through to the design of the Country Group Pilot.

The **Europeana Impact Playbook** is developed to support cultural heritage organisations to design and assess the impact of their activities. The Playbook outlines a four stage process: design, measurement, narration and evaluation and offers practical tools, training, processes and canvases to users. Canvases and processes from the Impact Playbook, such as the Persona canvas, are used to bring focus on the 'user/stakeholder' perspective. The Change Pathway is used periodically to facilitate discussions connecting the actions being discussed with the intended or desired changes (impact) they contribute to.

The **Europeana Inclusive Guidelines** establish an approach to achieving mutually respectful and inclusive discussion. Setting out a series of expectations around communication and managing conflict, they provide a consistent approach throughout the Initiative. The guidelines are applied generally, but specifically during workshops or all day meetings to encourage healthy, productive and respectful conversation.

Operationalising the methods

This programme of activity is broadly organised in three stages that facilitate the planning, design, testing, preparation and implementation of changes.

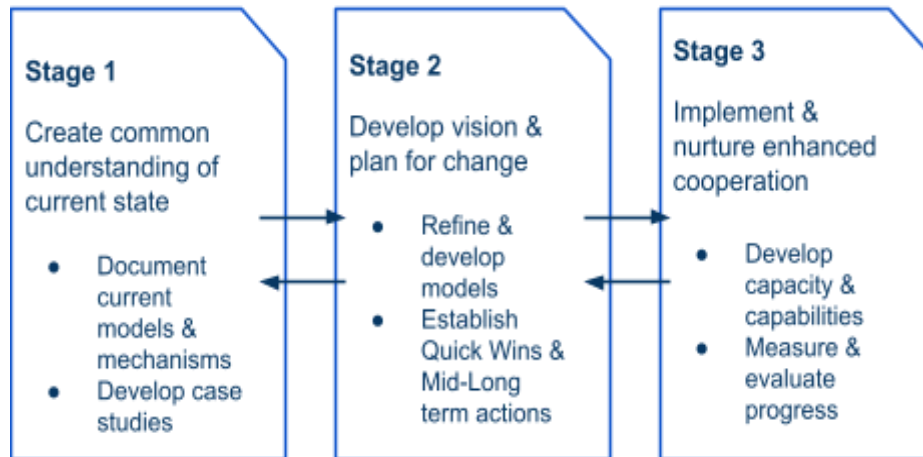


Image: Visualisation of the programme of activity that aims to refine and enhance the cooperation across the Europeana Initiative and through the data space.

Stage 1: Creating a common understanding of the current state (Sep 22 - Apr 23)

Implementing the first 3 steps of the Kotter process for leading lasting change:

- Building the need and urgency for change,
- Developing the guiding coalition, and
- Clarifying the strategic vision.

Through the course of 8 months, the Europeana Initiative Group was formed, and aimed to meet monthly. Chaired initially by Harry Verwayen, the Group agreed the need and urgency for change originated from the need to work more effectively across the Initiative in order to support the development of, and transition to, the data space for cultural heritage.

In addition to the scheduled monthly meeting, two half-day in-person meetings were held in October 22 (The Hague) and March 23 (Antwerp). Which established the scope, issues and aims of the Group. And began to formulate case studies around the need for a clearer value proposition and the need to work more effectively at a national level.

Stage 2: Develop vision & plan for change (May 23 - Jan 24)

Implementing steps 4, 5 & 6 of the Kotter process for leading lasting change:

- Enlist a volunteer army
- Enable actions by removing barriers
- Generate short term wins

During the course of 10 months, the Europeana Initiative Group developed and settled into an improved routine of monthly meetings with rotating chairs, clearer agendas and productive meetings. The Group expanded to more regularly involve Foundation colleagues with a wider variety of experiences and expertise, and the ideas and case studies from Stage 1 were discussed and developed further into quick wins or mid/longer terms actions. Awareness of the work group grew as the Forum and Network briefed their members about the nature of discussion and the opportunities to get involved.

In addition to the monthly online meetings, two in person/hybrid half-day meetings were facilitated at Europeana Office in The Hague in June 23 and October 23. These tackled the development of key areas of discussion within the Group, such as the rough ideation of user personas to draft value propositions for the Initiative. In turn leading to the conclusion that a clearer vision for the data space was needed in order to advance these ideations. Consultations were held to support the development of the vision development workshop series, along with other stakeholders in the Foundation Governing Boards. Leading to the agreement on the scope and participation in the workshops series, and its relation to the subsequent development of the Initiative Impact Model.

In addition, topics such as the future needs of the Group were debated to identify short terms quick wins. These ranged from the design and preparation of the Country Group Pilot - removing barriers such as funding by reviewing and reallocating ENA budgets to support the pilot - leading to its successful implementation at the end of January. Through to the agreement that each monthly meeting would start with a round table 5 minute flash update for each of the three partners, ensuring each would have space to share the more pressing or relevant development from the past month.

Stage 3: Implement & nurture enhanced cooperation (Feb 24 - Aug 24)

Implementing steps 7 & 8 of the Kotter process for leading change:

- Sustain Acceleration
- Institute Change

Through the 7 month period (currently in progress) the Group aims to meet twice in person, to supplement the monthly online meetings. With a range of

activities in motion, the Group aim to focus on supporting the development of the Strategic Cooperation, and in further preparing the Initiative for the focus on implementation of the data space in the 3rd and 4th years of the funded project.

In March 2024 the Network and Forum held consecutive in-person member meetings over the course of three days at the Europeana Office in The Hague. Hosting a joint three hour Network-Forum meeting between the end of the Forum meeting, and the start of the Network meeting. The joint meeting took the opportunity to reinforce the collaborative nature of the relationship between the partners, and hosted a short workshop contributing to the vision development series.

Further the Group hosted a hybrid meeting where focus was placed on exploring the data space blueprint terminology and discussing its impact, and potential opportunities for the Europeana ecosystem.

In the remaining months of Stage 3, further efforts are focused on concluding the visioning and impact exercises, to support the development of future work supporting the data space. Additionally the development or nurturing of partnerships and potential new funding opportunities. This is complemented by evaluations of the Country Group Pilot, and the Cooperation Model itself.

An enhanced Model of Cooperation

The Model of Cooperation can be understood to be a set of agreed mechanisms under which partners work together for mutual benefit. In particular, in supporting the partners in their complementary roles successfully implementing the data space for cultural heritage. In the current state, the partners are the Europeana Foundation, Aggregators Forum and Network Association, together known as the Europeana Initiative. As the needs and operation of the data space continues to evolve, further partners may work through or with this model²⁰.

Supporting this work, is the conceptual development work undertaken (and which runs concurrently) across a range of activities run by Initiative; such as the development of an Impact Model²¹ for the Initiative (due Y2), and further user

²⁰ For example; The “Requirements for a Cooperation Agreement” (Outcome due Jun 24) can consider the mechanisms of the model, and which types of policy instruments are needed to support their implementation.

²¹ Developing an Impact Model for the Initiative was a recommended outcome from the work in Y1 “Approach to creating a rewarding experience to CHI evaluated”.

research to better identify the identity and needs of the Initiative audiences and stakeholder base, and further outreach to engage with other data spaces.

Where a model of cooperation focuses on the act of working together, the cooperation itself is achieved through a range of collaborative actions and activities. In the remainder of this section, the model of cooperation is addressed through three levels of cooperation. Each defined, described and supported with an example of how it is implemented.

Strategic Cooperation

Enhanced methods of working together to improve how we cooperate on strategic matters, to achieve our shared and individual ambitions

Working together on strategic matters enables partners to leverage synergies, and produces better outcomes. By looking at our mid to longer term needs and co-designing and shaping them, we can shape a common future to guide the work that we do together. This is achieved through a range of collaborative actions & activities;

Joint visioning development workshops

A series of workshops are run to gather a range of stakeholder perspectives on the long term ambitions in the context of the common European data space for cultural heritage. The workshops use strategic foresight exercises, and group discussion to identify likely future scenarios within which we can imagine the Initiative and data space will operate.

Developing a unified Impact Model

To support a consistent and connected alignment between our goals and actions, an unified impact model can support the Initiative in designing and delivering sustainable impact. Building on the joint visioning workshops, an Impact Model v1 will start to map out the connection between our activities and our aspirations across the Initiative.

- Uses the outcomes from the joint visioning workshops to shape the future ambition
- Contributes to identifying refinements to metrics and measures used to assess and manage data space activities

Joint Working Groups that shape the Data Space

Through bringing together representatives and expertise from the partners, joint working groups distribute the responsibility of supporting the development of strategically important areas of work.

Reflecting areas that require collective and collaborative development within the operations of the data space, two working groups are overseen by the Initiative.

- Data Governance²² - provides expert input into and contributes to developments defined by the Data Governance Strategy. The strategy outlines how a data governance mechanism builds upon the existing Licensing Framework, to enable the further exchange of data through the data space.
- Innovative Operating Models²³ - provides expert advice and input into defining and establishing the innovations needed in various operating models needed for a well functioning data space. The working group builds upon the recommendations of the Decentralised Aggregation Task Force²⁴

Mechanisms of Collaboration

Defined areas of collaboration bring focus to identifying and delivering actions that help us implement our strategic ambitions

With collaborative and cooperative working a strength of the European ecosystem, agreed tactical approaches to deliver joint goals will produce better quality outcomes. These approaches are defined as mechanisms of collaboration.

Each partner (the Foundation, Forum and Network) manages, liaises with and nurtures different types of communities that function within the ecosystem. As such, each partner contributes and participates to different degrees. By focusing on how we work together within these mechanisms we aim to create an environment where partners are creating opportunities to work towards the aligned objectives that serve mutual ambition.

²² Data Governance Stakeholder Group - <https://pro.europeana.eu/project/ds4ch-data-governance-stakeholder-group>

²³ Innovative Operating Models Working Group <https://pro.europeana.eu/project/innovative-operating-models-working-group>

²⁴ Final report of Decentralised Aggregation Task Force <https://pro.europeana.eu/project/solid-based-decentralised-aggregation-task-force>

Enhancing Community Coordination

Efficient and effective outreach engagement with users of the data space, will increase the reach and impact of the data space. In addition, a need to improve the rewarding experience of CHI and the smooth navigation of the Europeana ecosystem is recognised²⁵. To contribute to this, the partners are exploring how and where to facilitate connections between their respective communities to increase national level cooperation.

The Country Group Pilot²⁶ is an example of ENA and EAF together identifying a need to take action at a country level, and with the support of EF develop the methods to do that. Such as what level of organic outreach and engagement can be achieved with a sustainable minimal level of support from the partner, and how each country group cooperates with existing national level bodies formed to support cultural heritage activities.

- The Pilot runs in Bulgaria, Italy & Slovenia.
- The pilot will be evaluated after 6 months of operation, and if a positive outcome is achieved, launching further country groups will be facilitated.
- The pilot provided an opportunity to connect across multiple layers of interest: The Bulgarian pilot recently co-organised an event that explored the landscape of national digitisation with a focus on 3D²⁷

Developing opportunities for thematic working

Thematic working serves as a connector across the initiative and between partners, stakeholders and users of the data space. It stimulates managed and organic cooperation and collaboration along the spectrum of data supply, enrichment and reuse. Strengthening how we design and deliver opportunities for thematic working has the potential to increase the impact of this popular and effective activity.

On the side of data provision these themes range from technological and the need to explore the potential of AI tools, to legal and the need to tackle issues such as managing rights, including privacy in the dissemination of cultural data. Existing predominantly on the side of consumption of cultural data, there is a

²⁵ Need & recommendation derived from 'Approach to Creating a rewarding experience for CHI evaluated'

²⁶ Country Group Pilot Project <https://pro.europeana.eu/project/country-groups-pilot-project>

²⁷ Europeana Initiative Country Group for Bulgaria co-organises national strategic event around digital transformation and 3D
<https://pro.europeana.eu/post/europeana-initiative-country-group-for-bulgaria-co-organises-national-strategic-event-around-digital-transformation-and-3d>

mutual need to explore how 3D and developing technologies can enhance engagement with cultural data, as much as the need for content to serve the needs of the future generations through educational and academic use.

The TwinIt! Campaign²⁸ brings together a broad range of interests and expertise around the topic of 3D, setting a path for the future. An idea borne from the European Commission, developed by Foundation and further implemented with actions by Forum and Network.

- The campaign aims to generate discussion around the topics of 3D data and reuse. Providing opportunities to increase awareness and capacity building through resources and training.
- Stakeholders are encouraged to engage in opportunities to develop more 3D content and reuse applications through emerging funding streams that further support the reuse of 3D in the data space²⁹.
- Twin it! kicked-off on 21 June 2023 during the Swedish Presidency of the EU. It ran through the presidency of Spain and will end during Belgium's Presidency in 2024.

Nurturing and Developing Partnerships

The data space presents the opportunity to nurture partnerships that can scale the reach of the Europeana ecosystem, and enrich it. The partners are exploring and developing the approach to engage in projects and partnerships. In addition further funding streams offer opportunities for participation in projects that serve mutual interests.

The partners will continue to develop relationships with innovative stakeholders such as the Time Machine Organisation, and the European Cloud for Cultural Heritage³⁰. Deepen collaboration with stakeholders such as the European Students Association for Cultural Heritage³¹ to support the development of a sustainable and strong cultural sector. And explore new partnerships with data spaces, with the support of the Data Space Support Centre.

²⁸ TwinIt! Campaign <https://pro.europeana.eu/page/twin-it-3d-for-europe-s-culture>

²⁹ Promoting funding call for 3D and XR

<https://pro.europeana.eu/post/apply-now-for-a-new-call-for-proposals-to-enhance-3d-and-xr-heritage-in-the-common-european-data-space-for-cultural-heritage>

³⁰ The data space and the Collaborative Cloud: cooperation for mutual and collective benefit

<https://pro.europeana.eu/post/the-data-space-and-the-collaborative-cloud-cooperation-for-mutual-and-collective-benefit>

³¹ ESACH shares their position paper 'Youth for the future of cultural heritage in Europe

<https://pro.europeana.eu/post/esach-shares-their-position-paper-youth-for-the-future-of-cultural-heritage-in-europe>

Practical Actions

Actions that address improvements in communication, accountability & transparency

With an increase in the cooperation between partners comes a need to ensure that the group operates effectively and efficiently, in a sustainable manner. Both new processes are developed and put into practice, and areas of improvement are identified that support a sustainable approach to enhance cooperation.

Stimulating Engagement

Through monthly online meetings the partners discuss ways to primarily improve collaboration and cooperation within the Initiative, and secondarily across partnerships and data spaces. This is further embellished with quarterly full day meetings to facilitate more detailed ideation and discussion.

The management of meetings has been iteratively developed;

- Each 90 minute meeting is attended by at least one representative of the Foundation, Forum and Network
- The position of Chair rotates each month, supported and coordinated by a member of the Foundation staff.
- A fixed agenda following the elements of the model of cooperation, encourages a consistent approach for participants.
- Outline Notes, decisions and agreed actions are recorded and managed by a member of the Foundation.

Improving Communications

A shared online workspace is established for the partners to share information relevant to the cooperation of the Initiative. This serves the recognised need to improve transparency, and develop better ways to retain and share knowledge between partners.

- The shared workspace is open to invited representatives of the partners and is used to communicate on topics from agenda, project proposals and new ideas for cooperation.
- An agenda for future agenda topics provides transparent documentation, communication and management of desired topics for discussion

Further development

In addition to the outcomes outlined in this paper, further development and alignment with ongoing work and activity is anticipated through the model for cooperation in the coming 6 months.

Further coordination and alignment around the data space terminology

Through resources such as the data space support centres' evolving blueprint³² we aim to host discussions with the partners. To develop our collective understanding of the requirements from the blueprint, raise awareness of critical terms and concepts and ideate around future opportunities.

Further coordination of community management activities

Through planned work such as the development of a community impact model, and an evaluation of the community management scheme, we aim to extend these to consider the country group pilot, as well as reevaluate how we define communities and groups. Through these actions we aim to increase consistency in both how we plan and manage supporting community activities across the Initiative, as well as the experience of members and stakeholders.

Evaluate the model of cooperation

An evaluation of the model of cooperation will be completed by partners by 31st July 2024. Through this action we aim to ensure we continue the iterative development of the model and processes. Addressing considerations such as the decision making processes, transparency and accountability. As well as identify key actions that drive successful and sustainable changes implemented from this model. The evaluation will identify the future needs of the Initiative to continue to develop the model and how it is implemented through the data space.

³² Data Space Support Centre Blueprint
<https://dssc.eu/space/BPE/179175433/Data+Spaces+Blueprint+%7C+Version+0.5+%7C+September+2023>

Annex 1: Existing models of cooperation across the Europeana Initiative

Zuzana Malicherova, December 2023

Introduction

This document summarises the governance and collaboration structure of the three pillars of the Europeana Initiative - the Europeana Foundation, the Europeana Network Association and the Europeana Aggregators' Forum - and serves as a basis for optimising and enhancing the current cooperation model as the process to take place throughout 2023 and 2024.

The three Europeana Initiative bodies

The Europeana ecosystem brings together cultural heritage professionals from all domains and from all of Europe through the Europeana Network Association, the Europeana Aggregators' Forum, diverse projects and partnerships and a programme of physical and digital events.

1. Europeana Foundation (EF)

The Europeana Foundation (EF) is an independent, non-profit organisation that operates the Europeana platform with 60+ staff members and works with other digital initiatives that put cultural heritage to good use in the world.

The Foundation has a Supervisory Board with 7 members, who supervise the management of the Foundation and help set strategy and policy. Members are legally and financially responsible for the activities of the Foundation. The Board is responsible for appointing the Board of Directors.

The Foundation Advisory Board members provide expert insight, knowledge and recommendations relating to the strategic direction of the Foundation. The Advisory Board represents the voice of the sector at large, with members reflecting a wide range of countries, domains and perspectives. Together with the Board of Directors and the Supervisory Board, they are committed to considering, understanding and representing diversity in all its forms and are determined to further increase diversity within the board itself over time. Members have no legal or financial responsibility for the activities of the

Foundation. They meet at least twice per year and their participation is voluntary and unpaid.

2. Europeana Network Association (ENA)

The Europeana Network Association (ENA) is a democratic community of 4000+ professionals working in the field of digital cultural heritage. ENA is a legal entity, governed by [Statutes](#), [Bylaws](#), [Procedures](#) and its own [Decision-making grid](#). The membership is free.

On a regular basis, ENA members elect a governing body of 36 representatives to form the ENA Members Council (MC). The Members Council decides on the Association's priorities, steers its activities and ensures general progress against the Europeana Strategy. The Council approves ENA policies, annual work plans and other documents of strategic importance, proposals as well as work progress of the ENA Communities and their Working Groups and Task Forces (described more in detail in this and the following section). Councillors come together in a formal meeting three times a year and carry out their activities in line with their [terms of reference](#). Their participation is voluntary and unpaid.

The Council then appoints six members to form the ENA Management Board (MB). The Board leads the development of the ENA's strategic vision and budget. Board members also act as ENA's legal representatives and decision-making executives. The Board represents interests of ENA in strategic discussions within the Europeana Initiative (towards the Europeana Aggregators' Forum, the Foundation Directors and the Supervisory Board and Advisory Board), as well as at conferences and events organised by the European Commission, the CEDCHE Subgroup, and the Member States. The Board meets on a monthly basis and carry out their activities in line with their [terms of reference](#).

ENA members are invited to come together once a year in the ENA annual General Assembly meeting, where they are presented with all the vital work that has taken place over the year in the ENA and the Communities, and set the groundwork for the year to come in the form of annual achievements, activity highlights and priorities. The Assembly is invited to launch the MC elections and approve the formal ENA documents (annual and financial reports). These documents together with the Councillor election (when applicable) are then subject to an official online voting process that all registered ENA members are invited to participate in.

ENA Communities

Seven [ENA Communities](#) gather international networks of professionals interested in cultivating and sharing knowledge, expertise and best practices

around seven specific topics of common interest. They function under the combined leadership of the community Chairs, Steering Groups and Managers. They operate in accordance with the Europeana Initiative Strategy, they are open to all the ENA members and are based on voluntary work. They grow organically based on internal or external initiatives, and develop their own methodology and annual work plans depending on their character, needs, and type of audience in line with the [Community Terms of Reference](#). Communities report regularly to the Management Board and the Members Council, they run Task Forces and Working Groups, and make use of their own budgets and communication tools.

3. Europeana Aggregators' Forum (EAF)

The Europeana Aggregators work with cultural heritage institutions to gather data and make it accessible through Europeana. All the Europeana aggregators are members of the Europeana Aggregators' Forum (EAF) - a network of national, regional, domain and thematic aggregators who - among others - work to exchange the knowledge and best practice that supports aggregation and data sharing with Europeana.

There are currently 40 accredited aggregators. Domain and thematic aggregators define their scope by cultural domain (GLAMs) or by theme (e.g. fashion), and work across different countries. National and regional aggregators define their scope by specific country or region and work with contributors situated within that country / region. The aggregator representatives meet bi-annually (spring and autumn) and their participation is voluntary and unpaid.

The Steering Group of the EAF is made up of three elected representatives from accredited aggregators and one representative of the Europeana Foundation. The members meet monthly, and are responsible for overall coordination of operational, governance and communications activities, and for organisation of the EAF meetings. The Steering Group represents the EAF in strategic discussions within the Europeana Initiative as well as at conferences and events organised by the European Commission, the CEDCHE Subgroup or the Member States.

Current mechanisms for collaboration within the Europeana Initiative

1. Task Forces and Working Groups

Through Task Forces and Working Groups, the ENA, EAF, and the EF collaborate either individually or together to address key issues in the digital cultural heritage sector.

Until 2020, it was mainly the ENA that had its Task Force and Working Groups; since then they started running also under the flagship of the EAF and the wider Europeana Initiative.

[Working Groups](#) facilitate ongoing discussions on topics of interest to (a group of) Members, without necessarily resulting in concrete deliverables. There is no limited time frame for Working Groups; they can remain in existence whilst there is a need for them.

There are two long standing Working Groups of a specific interest to the ENA Members Council only: [ENA Governance Working Group](#) (renewed annually) and [ENA Membership Working Group](#). The rest of the Working Groups run either under the ENA Communities, under the EAF, or as common cross-Initiative ones. Overview of all the active and past Working Groups can be found [here](#).

[Task Forces](#), on the other hand, run for a limited period of time (usually for six to nine months) and result in the delivery of a set of publishable recommendations on their subject. Most of them run under the ENA and its Communities, but some are specific to the EAF, and a few have existed as cross-Initiative Task Forces. Overview of all the active and past Task Forces can be found [here](#).

These current cooperation mechanisms provide a sound operational basis for current activities. Their evolution to achieve further strategic impact is an ongoing consideration, which can potentially be enhanced by the introduction of new and innovative mechanisms and actions such as training activities and new kinds of knowledge exchange entities.

2. Cross-Initiative Strategy Meetings

The Cross-Initiative Strategy meetings act as another formal coordination mechanism between the three main bodies of the Europeana Initiative to coordinate (and anticipate) strategic efforts across the organisation. The agenda consists of topics such as consultations that the three pillars jointly wish to

respond to, defining and publishing positions on topics of joint interest, adopting joint frameworks, and looking for ways to optimise performance across different areas. The meetings take place monthly and are attended by the members of the ENA MB (ENA Chair, Vice-chair and Treasurer), the EAF Steering Group, and the EF Directors / Senior Management Team members and EF Managers responsible for the stakeholder relations.

Furthermore, both ENA and the EAF have their own formal representatives appointed to the Foundation's Supervisory Board and Advisory Board. These representatives facilitate an ongoing communication and information exchange between the Foundation Boards, the ENA Board and the EAF Steering Group and regularly attend meetings of each of these governing bodies.