



Europeana Foundation Governing Board Meeting

28 September 2017
09h30 – 16h30 CEST
Vrije Universiteit
[De Boelelaan 1105, 1081 HV Amsterdam](#)

Summary of DSI-2 Report

Action proposed: For information and discussion

Introduction

Europeana DSI-2 was the project that operated the Europeana Core Service Platform between July 2016 and September 2017. With 34 participants and Europeana Foundation as its coordinator, the project has delivered interoperability and connectivity of digital cultural heritage at a European level.

Key objectives

The key objective of Europeana DSI-2 project was the continued operation of the Europeana DSI infrastructure to achieve the aims of the Europeana Strategic plan. The project therefore served to operate a multi-sided platform for access, enrichment and distribution of multilingual and multi-domain resources for application in five markets: Cultural Heritage Institutions (CHI), the European citizen, Education, Creative Industries and Academic Research.

Key results

Europeana DSI-2 ended on 31 August 2017 with good results and its work will continue under the Europeana DSI-3 Service Contract with the European Commission. This final report documents the activities, outcomes and impact of Europeana DSI-2 during the full project period.

'A call to culture': strategic update

Arguably the most important achievement of this project is the update of the Europeana strategy. After a-year-long consultation with stakeholders such as users, the European Commission, MEPs, curators, creatives and member states' ministries, the revised strategy highlights three key priorities to have more impact as a Digital Service Infrastructure:

1. Making it easy and rewarding for Cultural Heritage Institutions to share high-quality content
2. Scaling with partners to reach our target markets and audiences





3. Engaging people on our websites and via participatory campaigns

Getting alignment for this course of action was key to reinvigorate the existing strategy as it expresses explicitly where Europeana should focus on to maximise its impact: support cultural heritage institutions with a solid technical infrastructure, policies, frameworks and advocacy to share their material widely and in interoperable and reusable formats. And by improving the customer experience on the Europeana websites, as well as reaching out to users via participatory campaigns like the 1914-18 collection days and through partners who are better positioned to reach deep into our key markets such as education. This gave the project more focus and has allowed us to create tighter product development loops during the DSI-2 project.

Progress towards goals and objectives

The project had, according to the Description of Action, eight objectives that were grouped into four overarching goals. Each of the nine work packages integrally worked towards these goals and objectives.

1. Create Value for Partners

To achieve this first goal, we continued to investigate the needs of the users and their customer journeys in our key markets. This led to interesting insights, some of which we were able to translate to product during DSI-2. While each market has key characteristics and dynamics, our research showed for example that our professional audiences often have similar needs. This led to the integration of Europeana Research and Labs into the new Europeana Professional website which was released in beta in early September.

1.1. Objective 1 – Create a better customer experience

To improve the customer experience on the Europeana sites the product and design team (WP6) worked closely with the market facing teams (WP2, WP3) to investigate user needs and translated these into product requirements. This led to a number of substantial improvements in Europeana Collections and a complete overhaul of the professional websites. Each new feature was introduced using easy feedback mechanisms (hotjar) to solicit feedback.

New Pro: towards a seamless user journey for our professional audiences

For the professional audiences, Europeana has developed a **new Europeana Pro**, incorporating Europeana Research and Europeana Labs. It highlights a new and fresh visual design and integrated backend functionalities, but its primary aim is to create improved user journeys (highlighting our key services for each audience).

Europeana Collections

Europeana Collections is our main content discovery mechanism for all user groups. A continuous known problem we face is the erratic way that Google indexes the Europeana material, reducing the number of end-users reaching



Europeana and its content directly through search-engines. While we do what can be done to optimize for search engines (Google, Yahoo, Bing) our active strategy to improve customer value is qualitative; improve uniqueness and relevance of the material by interlinking (entity pages), curation (galleries, exhibitions), thematic organisation (Thematic Collections) and time limited campaigns. During the project we have seen the launch of **Europeana Photography, Europeana Fashion and the integration of Europeana 1914-1918** as full fledged curated thematic collections. All launches were successful and the efforts translated into consistently higher engagement levels (three times higher than average) and Net Promoter Scores between 20 and 30. Unfortunately the launch of Europeana Newspapers as a thematic collection had to be postponed until later this year as it requires a lot of development capacity that was needed in other areas with higher priority. But as the thematic approach had proven so successful we started a pilot to see if we could scale this approach in areas with a more automated approach to curation. The current results are promising.

To improve the way users can navigate between **searching and browsing for Fashion objects** and reading blog posts about Fashion we have integrated display of such blog posts into the thematic Fashion Collections. This will later be done also for all the blog posts we write that are about objects in our collections and new features - regardless of theme (WP2 and WP6).

We have found that we are often most successful when we package our efforts in 'seasonal' approaches. We have for example seen much success from the "**Art Nouveau**" **season** which ran from February to June 2017. The season included a newly created exhibition featuring almost fifty Art Nouveau art works, accompanied by new interest boards and social media outreach to users (WP2). The feedback was encouraging: users reward the exhibition with a Net Promoter Score of over 50.

Image galleries went live on Europeana Collections in April 2017. Galleries present a relatively small curated selection of images on a certain theme. Some bring together artworks from across Europe, while others focus more on just one country. Most of the galleries connect to our thematic collections: Europeana Art, Europeana Music, Europeana Fashion and Europeana 1914-1918. Galleries bring together between 6 and 48 images (all of which are Tier 2+) on a specific topic, curated by the Collections team and our thematic collections partners.

A conceptual design for the **image discovery service** has been made. It focuses on exploration of high-quality imagery via image similarity (so-called Content Based Information Retrieval) computed by analysing the features and colours of the images.

1.2. Objective 2 – Embed network-centric thought

This objective is reliant on the interaction between the Europeana Foundation and the Europeana Network as well as on the effectiveness of the instruments we deploy to co-create. The **Europeana Network Association** is therefore an integral part of how the Europeana DSI operates. During the project the Members Council and Management Board have been driving forces for innovation through task forces and working groups (IIIF, Impact, IPR) and the management and interaction with the network at large. It is worth mentioning for example that the Members Council was heavily involved in the setup and development Europeana



Network Association's response to all the sections of the EC Draft Europeana Evaluation Roadmap.

Several task forces have been set-up by the Europeana Network and they continue to provide valuable insights, advice and consultation on Europeana's business. The key question we are facing now is how to turn more of these recommendations into actionable results. It is worth noting that the Members Council has raised the bar substantially for taskforce proposals to be admitted. The Members Council in close cooperation with the Europeana Secretariat organised a very successful AGM and are in full preparation for a **large conference in 2018** and the **AGM 2017**.

EF also launched a **Member States section on Pro** that features Country Reports and all relevant documentation.

2. Improve Data Quality

This second goal aims to improve the data quality in Europeana, as defined in the Europeana Publishing Framework. The direct results have been very positive. We have been improving a great number of data sets resulting in an increase of 3.2 million items in the higher tiers, well above target. The development of an improved organisational and technical infrastructure has proven to be complex and have experienced some delays, while new quality frameworks such as IIF that Europeana is a founding member of have gained considerable traction.

2.1. Objective 3 – Innovate the way we aggregate material

With all aggregating partners (WP1) we have developed a **data quality plan** and identified the most promising improvements to be made. All domain aggregators are participating in these efforts to improve data quality, e.g. by fixing broken links, repairing thumbnails and updating metadata to new standards which have led to the said increase in tier 2, 3 and 4 material. On the organisational side good progress has been made to transition to a new and more efficient aggregation infrastructure. As can be read in the white paper agreement was found on a number of crucial topics. In particular that in countries where a national aggregator is in place, data will flow via the national aggregator. The domain aggregator will in those cases act as a facilitating expert. Furthermore, DSI funding will fund only one central aggregation infrastructure. On the technical side, progress was made with Metis, but the acceleration came late in the project due to inconsistencies in views on the relationship between Metis and Operation Direct that needed to be solved first. A report of an independent consultant (Richard Padley) brought clarity on these issues which are now being adopted and implemented.

2.2. Objective 4 – Implement quality frameworks

We published the new [Europeana Content Strategy](#), which will guide our content acquisition process for the coming years. In addition we updated the [Europeana Publishing Framework](#) and [Europeana Publishing Guide](#), to help with the implementation of the content strategy (WP1).

A major result of DSI-2 is the development of a new quality framework to measure **impact** (WP4, also with support of partners in WP2). Europeana initiated a Task Force to support the development of a [toolkit](#) which includes a



Playbook to design, assess and narrate impact as a cultural heritage organisation.

3. Open the Data

Following the three strategic objectives we are making the data available through the most appropriate channels. On the Europeana stack via community segmented services and/or via third party channels. The Europeana thematic sites have been successful in deepening the engagement levels of the users (time on site, number of pages viewed, Net Promoter Scores) while third party channels including social media have had much wider reach than expected. We have lowered our ambitions this year for the creative industries but invested extra in the Education market with some very promising results.

3.1. Objective 5 – Develop community-segmented services

Europeana Collections (WP2) allows all users to see what is available on Europeana and shows clear information on how it can be used and re-used. For Europeana Collections and our thematic collections (art, fashion and music) we develop new features (WP6), based on user-demand or data partner request (also see section 1.1, WP2 and WP6).

Campaigns

While we are gearing up for the migration campaign starting in the fall we ran a smaller #AllezLiterature campaign to promote the written and spoken word elements of our cultural heritage. An interesting area of success remains the Europeana 1914-1918 initiative. Under DSI- 2 we have been working with the **Wikimedia** community to increase the level of engagement with the subject in the Member States we intend to reach new users for the **Europeana 1914-1918** service. Furthermore, the Transcribathon project is spinning off as a new initiative in it's own right. Designed to make the handwritten documents machine-readable, it is not only doing that (currently 8.000 document transcribed) but it is proving to be a very attractive format for teaching environments.

Scaling through Partners

We can sometimes reach levels of engagement through partnerships that we would never be able to have as a standalone initiative. A great example of this is the [ArtUpYourTab Google Chrome extension](#). Developed in partnership with Kennisland and a development firm it allows people to see a work of art each time a new tab is opened in Chrome and recently Firefox. It very quickly grew a user base of over 2500 users and over 1.7 million views.

Europeana Research: the annual grants programme (WP2) was very successful with over 140 applicants. The three winners of the grant are now running their projects. The Europeana Research Advisory Board selected for the Research Grants Programme [three finalists](#), based on best fit to the call for proposals, the detail of project plans, and the planned budget of each proposal and awarded funding to these projects. The final three were clearly the projects of the highest quality of the submitted proposals, as assessed by the Europeana Research Advisory Board.

Under the header of **Europeana Education**, we position ourselves in the education market. Together with European Schoolnet (EUN), we conducted a pilot on the reuse of digital cultural content in education. The pilot concluded with the publication of a pilot validation report on use of Europeana for teaching and learning (D 3.4). Our other key educational partner, EUROCLIO,



launched a new learning environment on their online platform Historiana which allows history educators to find sources, explore learning activities and create online their own learning activities in their own language.

To actively support the development of **new distribution partnerships in education**, we created a dedicated [education area](#) on Europeana Pro. Interested parties can now explore our partnerships, browse case studies of educational applications, resources and platforms featuring Europeana content, and get practical help from our collection of useful resources.

For the **creative industries**, a grants programme for match funding has been implemented to support high potential reuse projects. In February 2017 we launched Europeana's [first match funding call](#) "Strike a match for education" in close cooperation with our partner crowdfunding platform [Goteo.org](#). The call for creative projects in secondary education resulted in 18 applications from across Europe, of which three projects were selected as winners and ran their crowdfunding campaigns. Two of these were successfully funded in the crowdfunding stage and therefore received matchfunding from Europeana.

3.2. Objective 6 – Champion interoperability

As has been outlined in 2.2 (Objective 4) we continue to develop new frameworks that support interoperability. Mature frameworks are then applied, integrated and further developed in the Europeana infrastructure. This includes **EDM** to allow interoperability cross-domain and cross-language. Our Research and Development team (WP6) has been successful in advising other projects and consortia on the implementation of this model, supported by **Europeana Tech**. Europeana Foundation has been elected in the **IIIF Executive Board**, on behalf of the DSI and the Network. The Europeana licensing framework has been turned into a service for cultural heritage institutions via [Rightsstatements.org](#).

4. Strengthen the Europeana ecosystem

The final goal of the Business Plan is to strengthen the Europeana ecosystem. Within this goal, we make best use of the Europeana ecosystem, including the Europeana Network Association, the Member States, the European Commission, Europeana Foundation, and our partnership in the project.

4.1. Objective 7 – Achieve long-term funding

Building on the **Council Conclusions of 2016**, Europeana furthered its efforts to raise awareness of the continued need of long-term funding. The **Europeana 280 campaign**, which was launched to promote and engage people with Europe's art heritage, came to a close at the end of 2016 (WP8). To mark the end of the campaign, our communications approach was to share and celebrate its success with those who participated through: this included targeted mailings, a dedicated [Europeana 280 Slidebean](#) that provided an overview of the campaign's success and was designed to allow participants to use it to promote their own participation and contribution to that success; a closing blog and a final social media rally.

Under WP4, we communicated and promoted the **Europeana Generic Services** opportunities with partners, resulting in three funded projects (**Migration in the Arts and Science, Rise of Literacy and Byzantine Arts**) for new thematic collections on Europeana. In addition, Europeana supported several H2020



projects from external partners. Work with these projects has been prepared and will start from 1 September 2017.

4.2. Objective 8 – Transform the organisation from good to great

With support of the Network Association EF prepared the **Europeana Business Plan 2017**, which was published early February 2017. It contains all plans for Europeana (DSI) in 2017 and is aligned with the revised Strategy 2020 and the Europeana DSI-2 DoA (insofar the project runs during 2017). Preparations have started to develop the Business Plan 2018, making use of the continued funding for Europeana DSI-3 and the revised strategy. This Business Plan will be set up in accordance with the impact framework.

Circulation:

Europeana Foundation Governing Board Members & Observers

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