

01. Planning

For Europeana 1914-1918 Roadshows

1. Summary of document:

- What happens at a roadshow?
- set-up for a Europeana 1914-1918 roadshow depends on a number of factors (timing, available space and staff etc.);
- ensure you have enough staff and that they are prepared/trained ;
- trial the roadshow at the venue with a few sample objects to test and modify the procedures and train the staff

The aim of the roadshow is to collect stories and memorabilia held by the public and add these to the Europeana 1914-1918 website <http://europeana1914-1918.eu/>. The day can also be effective for drawing attention to the website and encourage people to add their stories there or explore the existing material. How many staff you need depends on how many visitors you anticipate on the day and how many objects they bring to contribute.

You should aim to make the roadshow a pleasant experience for the contributors.

STEP 0: What is a roadshow?

At a roadshow/collection day you record stories and digitise objects. The day is also a chance for participants to share their stories with people who are interested and who may be able to offer relevant information:

- Base yourself in a venue which people will be able to visit easily (for example local museum or library);
- Invite the public to bring their objects along on a particular day or a series of days/period of time;
- Talk to the contributors about their objects and record their stories on the website;
- Photograph/scan the objects;
- (after the event) Add the digital images to the stories and publish them on the website.

Figure 1 A volunteer interviews a family about what they have brought



STEP 1: Timing and locating the roadshow

When you choose the venue for your roadshow you want to consider a number of factors, such as:

- Size – is there enough room for staff, visitors, and equipment?
- Accessibility –
 - Can people with reduced mobility access it?
 - Is it easy to find and get to? Public transport? Parking?
- Does it have (enough):
 - power sockets;
 - Internet connection;
 - tables;
 - chairs;
 - natural light;
 - enough space to hold your equipment;
- Is there room for people to wait and something for them to see/do while waiting (for example in a museum people can visit the exhibitions)?

When choosing the **time/date** for your event, you need to think about a number of factors, many of them local. For example, holding your roadshow on the same day as a local festival to promote history may bring more people to it, or reduce the number of visitors (since they are at the other event). Holding a roadshow during holidays or when all local schools will be on holiday may reduce the number of people who are able to attend, or it may allow people who would otherwise be at work to attend. You may want to hold your roadshow after building up momentum for public interest in the subject with a series of lectures or an exhibition on local history or family history. Some timing considerations include:

- national holidays/ local public holidays;
- existing promotional events which can be added to like library reading weeks, an archives' family history events;
- local market days;
- weekends or work days in a town with a commuting population.

STEP 2: Staff for the roadshow

You need staff to interact with the public and perform the digitisation and contribute the digital material to the website. How many depends on the set-up of your event, your venue and the number of visitors you are expecting (which is usually very difficult to know). You normally need a team of at least 10 (members of your staff and/or volunteers) to assist on the day. You also need to make sure you have someone who:

- is a representative from the venue itself, to liaise between the venue and the project team and be aware of housekeeping and safety issues;
- can help with the IT set-up and support on the day (some of the staff roles also require IT literacy);
- is a historian or have the subject expertise to answer the public's questions and give advice to the team recording the stories and information about the objects people bring. You could contact the local branch of an association interested in family history or in the history of the First World War to see if they can assist by supplying volunteers.

For more information, see **"03. Staff Roles Check List for Europeana 1914-1918 Roadshows"**.

All of the team must understand the terms and conditions that every individual must agree to when they make their contribution.

It is quite possible to run the roadshow with some of the team there all day and some volunteers only being available for parts of the day. Obviously if you have team members coming and going you should plan this to cover anticipated busy periods and so that you always have the staff in the required place. There are a number of tasks during the roadshow where additional team members will be invaluable. However you should also ensure that during quieter periods the team presence does not overwhelm the public.

Some types of visitor to prepare for

The type and number of contributors your roadshow attracts will vary. However, in general, you can prepare your team to deal with the following types:

- Visitor is interested in the subject. They may have been passing and saw your posters and want to chat and find out more. Some might be encouraged to contribute a story now, or to return later to participate in the roadshow, or to make their contribution online from home;
- Contributor with a story to tell and objects to go with it (letters, photographs, medals, etc). Their stories are recorded on the website and their objects are scanned or photographed.



Figure 2. In your planning you must also accommodate comfort and meal breaks for the team



vary.

Some queries to prepare for

The roadshow is an opportunity for people not only to share their stories and objects but can also give them something in return. Prepare staff to answer enquiries/give information on the day, including:

- advise how best to preserve fragile objects;
- information about the objects the contributors have brought in and about the subject of their photos etc.;

- suggestions about how to research more information;
- suggestions for local arrangements for visitors who arrive by chance at the roadshow who think they might have objects to contribute but seem unsure whether they will be able to submit this online from home;
- a museum or archive where the contributor can deposit this object if they wish to pass it on (maybe because their family are not interested in preserving it);
- addresses and contact details for local/national organisations interested in family history or in the First World War;
- simple questions about the Europeana 1914-1918 project, and provide a computer with access to the project's website <http://www.europeana1914-1918.eu/>;
- general questions about copyright and specifically the terms and conditions of the project.

STEP 3: Equipment for the roadshow

For equipment set-up see “**04. Equipment Check List for Europeana 1914-1918 Roadshows**”.

If you cannot match that ideal situation then it is best to use what you have available. Equally, if you can get more equipment then make use of this in innovative ways!

STEP 4 Digitisation formats

The formats for audio and images see “**10. Marantz Recorder Settings for Europeana 1914-1918 Roadshows**” and “**11. Camera Settings for Europeana 1914-1918 Roadshows**”.

STEP 5: Advertising the Roadshow

You must let people know when and where you are going to hold the Roadshow. Europeana 1914-1918 has found that the local daily/evening newspaper has been the primary catalyst for people coming to roadshows. You should focus on local media, such as newspapers and radio and TV.

Liaise with the Europeana 1914-1918 project team who may help with national advertising, including national newspapers, social networking sites like Facebook, Twitter, and the national broadcast media. They may also be able to help with or advise on posters, leaflets and a press release to help you advertise your event.

If you have a Press Office or similar in your organisation you should work closely with them, and/or with the Press Office of the venue (for example the city council that administrate the library), your funder and/or the organisations interested in assisting in your roadshow:

- give the Press Office lots of time in the lead-up to the day;
- provide the Press Office with information;
- write a press release with details about the project and the day;
- mention funders etc.;
- include third-party endorsements like a family historian explaining why she is contributing;
- include anecdotes and human interest stories about the collection.

You should provide high quality photos for the press to use, and be prepared to set aside time to give interviews to the press.

Organising the local media to come along and film your submissions day will help raise the profile of the Europeana 1914-1918 project and your venue.

You could hold a roadshow after building up momentum for public interest in the subject. This could be done with a series of lectures on local history or family history, or as part of an exhibition. You may also want to encourage local schools to be involved in your activities.

STEP 6: A trial run

You should trial the Roadshow at the venue with a few sample objects before you run the day itself. This will allow you to test your procedures, and modify them to fit your conditions and set-up. Encourage all staff to attend this as part of their training.



Figure 3 A news team interviews a contributor



You may also need to write instructions for your team for the day. For more information see [“05. Work-flow for Europeana 1914-1918 Roadshows”](#).

STEP 7: Set up the venue for the roadshow

For guidelines for setting up the room see [“02. Setting Up the Venue for Europeana 1914-1918 Roadshows”](#).

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