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Cultivating a Commons approach: Europeana Governance

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This blog is the first in a series exploring the connection between the Europeana Foundation's Governing Board and the Europeana Network Association. Here, we hear from [Max Kaiser, Chair of the Members Council](#), and [Merete Sanderhoff, Vice Chair of the Members Council](#), both of whom sit on the Europeana Association's Management Board and the Foundation Governing Board. They update us on April's Foundation Board Meeting, and the developments that have happened since then.

In December last year, we were both elected to sit on the Management Board of the [Europeana Members Council](#). This means we, along with four others ([Paul Keller](#), [Johan Oomen](#), [Joke van der Leeuw-Roord](#) and [Rolf Källman](#)), represent the Council and through this, the Europeana Network Association, on the Board of the Europeana Foundation.

The values of the commons

As a representative group of six, we aim to ensure the Network Association effectively shapes the way Europeana is managed. This forms part of a broader belief in Europeana's future as a cultural commons, as touched upon in Europeana's [Strategy 2020](#), upholding principles like mutuality and engagement. To make this belief a reality, we want to build in the [values of the commons](#) to every aspect of the work Europeana does, and this includes its governance. It is not enough to simply emphasise principles like trust, reciprocity and collectivity; we must find practical ways to embed them at every level too.

As you might be aware, a major move in this direction is the transformation of Europeana's Network into an Association, formalising its role in decision making. You've probably seen some [previous blogs about this](#), as well as an email inviting you to become an official member. If you'd like your voice to be heard, we encourage you to reply and convert your membership if you haven't already - **the deadline to do so is 30 September**.

Part of this transformation to an Association required us to finalise a set of bylaws that complement the Association's Statutes. The bylaws relate to aspects of the way the Association operates, for instance regulating how the annual Members Council elections are run, and the terms of becoming a Network member.





View of Smyrna Rijksmuseum, public domain.

Our work on the Europeana Foundation Governing Board of course reflects these important changes. At the Board meeting in April, further steps to finalise the renewed Europeana governance structure were confirmed.

It was agreed that two of Europeana's founding members should be appointed for 12 months; Bruno Racine, President of the Bibliothèque nationale de France, was re-appointed Chair of the Europeana Foundation, while Hans Jansen, Deputy Director General of the National Library of the Netherlands, agreed to remain as Treasurer.

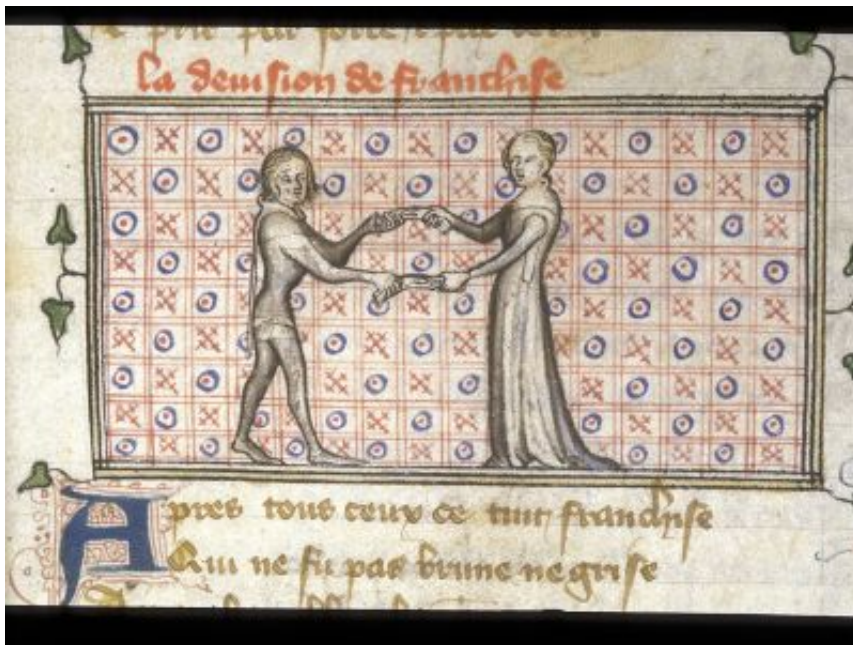
Importantly, Joke van der Leeuw-Roord, Executive Director of EUROCLIO, became Vice Chair, a position she will hold for 24 months, giving the Association a decisive role in the Foundation Governing Board.

The next Europeana Members Council meeting takes place at the Austrian National Library in Vienna on 8 July. There, we will begin work on the Europeana Business Plan for 2016. We will also address some of the objectives in this year's [Business Plan](#), particularly those about the enhancement of Europeana's sustainability structure.

On top of this, as we are still in a transition year, it will provide a valuable chance to reflect on the first six months of the Association. It also means we can kickstart preparations for the [Annual General Meeting](#), set for 3-4 November in Amsterdam. A key event for all members of the Network, we look forward to seeing you there.

As ever, we welcome any feedback or ideas in the meantime, and stay tuned for an update from our next meeting with the rest of the Members Council. #AllezCulture!

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