



# Recommendations for a Europeana Communicators' Group

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The Hague

By the Europeana Network Association Communicators' Group Task Force

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## **1. Introduction**

### **1.1. Task Force members**

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### **1.2. Purpose and background**

The Europeana Network Association Communicators' Group Task Force ran from March to December 2015.

The purpose of this Task Force was to create recommendations for a workable and sustainable Europeana Communicators' Group. This document outlines those recommendations.

In recent years, the Europeana Foundation's Corporate Communications team has held a list of people working within Europeana projects (c. 175 people) who have an element of communications/dissemination in their work. This group was made up of national leads from all EU member states, who were involved in the Europeana Awareness project, as well as the communications/dissemination leads from all other Europeana-related projects.

The Corporate Communications team notified this group of news/information related to Europeana and digital cultural heritage via a monthly email and met through occasional workshops, held under the banner of Europeana Awareness.



However, there was no formal way of joining/leaving the group, nor was any information about the group publicly available online. Limited information is held about the members on the list, e.g. there is no consistent information on country/domain/organization.<sup>1</sup>

The Europeana Awareness project ended in December 2014. Around the same time, the structure of Europeana's work changed from being project-based to serving as a Digital Service Infrastructure (DSI).

In line with these changes, the Europeana Network Association was created on 1 January 2015, creating a representative, democratic and transparent way for partners to work with Europeana. The Network Association is led by a Members Council with various Working Groups, one of which focuses on communications.

The Europeana Foundation proposed this Task Force to create recommendations for a more effective way of communicating within the Europeana ecosystem and to the wider network, in a manner that fits with how Europeana works as a DSI and with the Europeana Network Association.

In August 2015, the Task Force consulted with the existing group of communicators about their Europeana/communications needs via an online survey.<sup>2</sup> The responses helped to shape the recommendations.<sup>3</sup>

This document outlines the Task Force's recommendations for the structure, governance and workflow of two new formal bodies of communicators - a Europeana Communicators' Group with defined membership and set objectives and a Europeana Communicators' Forum that is open to all.

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<sup>1</sup> See

<https://docs.google.com/document/d/1zMXSYqZS8VGY8nFkrU9UQnkd0L2jhpUPoX8uPaKojcc/edit> for an overview of this list.

<sup>2</sup> Questions here: <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/MVMFGPC>

<sup>3</sup> Responses here: <https://www.surveymonkey.net/results/SM-VCKYYR2J/>



## 2. Objectives

### 2.1. Objectives of the Europeana Communicators' Group

The Task Force recommends that the objectives of the Communicators' Group are:

- To be representative of all segments of the Europeana ecosystem
- To support and promote the communication of Europeana messages and campaigns to relevant audiences through existing network and community channels
- To facilitate the exchange and dissemination of information and best practice on communication within the Europeana wider network
- To advise Europeana on communication needs and strategies
- To ensure that the group is sustainable.

### 2.2. Objectives of the Europeana Communicators' Forum

The Task Force recommends that the objectives of the Communicators' Forum are:

- To support and promote the communication of Europeana messages and campaigns to relevant audiences through existing network and community channels
- To facilitate the exchange and dissemination of information and best practice on communication within the Europeana wider network
- To ensure a broad geographical outreach.

## 3. Structure

It is recommended that Network Association members involved with/interested in supporting Europeana communications become a more formal entity than the current loose grouping, and that they operate through a two-tier structure. Those able to provide low-level commitment/activity will join the Europeana Communicators' Forum. To make sure that Europeana communication reaches its target audiences as defined in the business plan<sup>4</sup>, the composition of the group

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<sup>4</sup> Make the beautiful thing. Europeana business plan 2015.

[http://pro.europeana.eu/files/Europeana\\_Professional/Publications/Make%20the%20Beautiful%20Thing%20Business%20Plan%202015.pdf](http://pro.europeana.eu/files/Europeana_Professional/Publications/Make%20the%20Beautiful%20Thing%20Business%20Plan%202015.pdf)



should both reflect the Europeana ecosystem and also being able to extend its reach to the creative sectors, technology, tourism or education. So a higher level of commitment is requested from the members of the Communicator's Group.

It is recommended that both tiers are structured in such a way that membership and participation is sustainable.

The Europeana Communicators' Group:

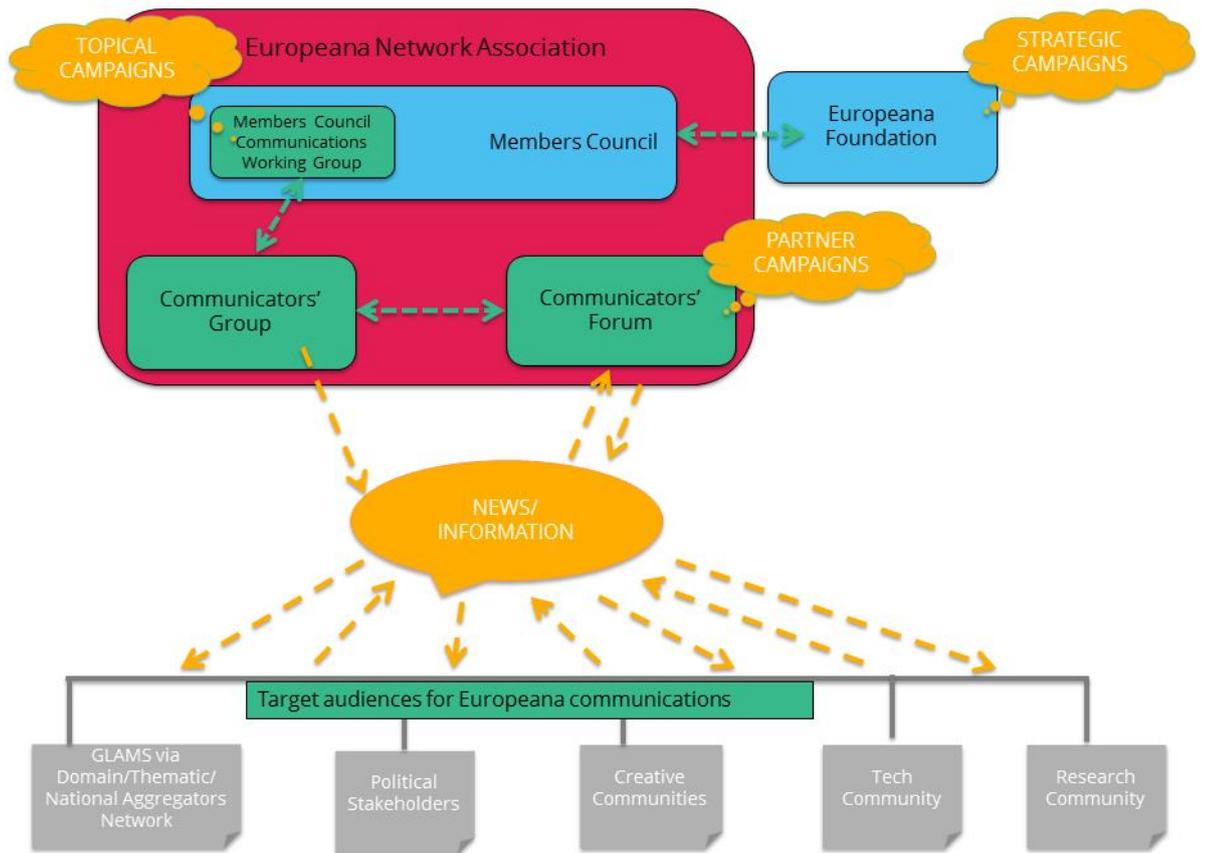
- Approximately 15 members (not including Europeana Foundation representatives).
- Proactively supports key strategic Europeana campaigns (tending to be long-term) through its members' own expert input, networks and channels.
- Is consulted as a stakeholder group at the campaign planning stage. There will be one key strategic and pan-European campaign per year.
- Has a limited membership of max. 20 members that should meet criteria as described below. Some members will be dictated by DSI partner representation. Meets in person once per year. It is recommended that at least one related session of this meeting involves the Europeana Communications' Forum and takes place around/at the Europeana Network Association AGM to encourage participation and provide a cost-effective approach.
- Proactively supports the organization of the wider annual meeting.
- Holds at least four virtual meetings per year. Europeana Foundation will provide the man hours for the organization, agenda and minutes of the virtual Communicators' Group meetings. Members must provide input for the agenda of these meetings in advance.
- Operates online through a dedicated Basecamp project.
- Informs the Europeana strategic communications agenda through the Members Council Communications Working Group.
- Takes a dissemination role on individual Europeana topical campaigns (usually short term).
- Spreads news from the Communicators' Forum (such as partner campaigns) through members' own networks as relevant.
- Issues monthly updates about its activity and other pertinent communications information. Members provide the content and the Europeana Foundation edits and issues the update.
- Information on the Europeana Communicators' Group objectives, activity and membership (including how to apply) should be made available on Europeana Pro.



## The Europeana Communicators' Forum:

- Has an unlimited and open membership, but it is recommended that members meet criteria described below and between them have a geographical coverage spanning the whole EU. The composition of the Forum should reflect the linguistic and cultural diversity of the Europeana Network Association
- Operates mainly online via a mailing list, which all members can post to. Europeana Foundation will maintain the LISTSERV account (mailing list) for members of the Forum and manage the membership process.
- May decide to use other platforms for internal communication (e.g. Basecamp). It is recommended that any such platform includes an alert system (such as email notifications) so that information is easily surfaced.
- Has the opportunity to meet in person once per year as part of a communications-focused event with the Europeana Communicators' Group. It is recommended that this meeting takes place around/at the Europeana Network Association AGM and that it communicates the Group's objectives to the Forum as well as sharing best practice information.
- Receives news/information from the Europeana Communicator's Group.
- Responds to calls to action from the Europeana Communicators' Group, e.g. sharing information via members' own networks/channels.
- Provides Europeana Communicators' Group with cultural heritage information and news from members' own domains/organizations and their own campaigns.
- Shares resources, best practices and peer expertise.
- The Europeana Foundation should take an active role in inviting new members to the Forum, e.g. at the start of any new Europeana-related projects.

Note, a third body concerned with communications exists - the Europeana Network Association Members Council Communications Working Group. This Working Group acts as a steering committee for the Europeana Communicators' Group. See 'Governance' section below.



*Communications bodies and information flow within the Europeana ecosystem.*

### 3.1. Composition of Europeana Communicators' Group

With the correct membership, the Communicators' Group will be able to communicate out from Europeana to the wider cultural/technology sectors via relevant networks and communities. This will allow messages to reach the correct audiences and to be communicated/amplified via the most relevant channels.

The make-up of the Communicators' Group should then be such that its members have access to/can engage with all the relevant audiences.



<b>Body represented</b>	<b>Number of representatives</b>	<b>Notes</b>
Europeana Network Association Members Council & Communications Working Group	1	Chairs the Europeana Communicators' Group. Provides the ECG with credibility as well as a link to the Members Council for governance/accountability.
Europeana Foundation	2	One data expert who also represents the Europeana Aggregators' Forum. One communications expert.
Europeana DSI partnerships (domain/theme aggregators)	4 (+1)	Representation from Europeana DSI provides an essential link to the core of Europeana's work and should help secure budget for essential activities including physical meetings.
Europeana's target communities in the creative industries, technology, tourism or education	3 (+1)	Direct links to these sectors ensure that their communications needs can be met.
Europeana projects - Sounds, Food&Drink, Space, Commit and LoCloud	5	The Communicators' Group should contact the person responsible for communications whenever a new project begins.
	+/-15 (+2)	



Geographical representation:

- Geography should not be the main criterion for membership but the Communicators' Group should try to ensure it provides good European coverage, and that there is active participation from its members across the whole of Europe.
- Effort needs to be put into encouraging participation/representation from Eastern Europe which is very low in the current loose grouping of communicators. It is recommended that Europeana taps into relationships with partners in this region, for example, those who took part in Europeana Awareness.

### **3.2. Criteria for membership of Communicators' Group**

Whilst each potential member will be assessed on their own strengths, in order to ensure that the Europeanana Communicators' Group provides the necessary expertise, experience and motivation, it is recommended that members applying meet the following criteria:

- Be a member of the Europeanana Network Association.<sup>5</sup>
- Represent one of the bodies listed above, e.g. domain/thematic aggregators, creative industries or a Europeanana project. As mentioned above, domain/thematic representation will be linked to partners in the Europeanana DSI.
- Have a communications element to their main job (preferable but not essential).
- Be willing to be proactive and to share, contributing to the individual campaign tasks the group undertakes as well as to the ongoing administration/sustainability of the group itself. The group will only be sustainable if its members are active. For this reason, members may be asked to revise their commitment to the group if they are unable to participate at the required level. Activity will be measured by presence and input at virtual/in-person meetings as well as responses to calls to action.
- Be able to access and engage with Europeanana's target audiences via members' domain/community communication networks.
- Be willing to commit to the group's objectives and take responsibility for achieving them.

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<sup>5</sup> Non-members can sign up easily at <http://pro.europeana.eu/get-involved/our-network/sign-up>



- Be willing to commit for the period of one calendar year at least.

### **3.3. Joining the Europeanana Communicators' Group**

The Chair of the Communicator's Group will contact Europeanana domain/thematic aggregators and Europeanana projects to appoint a representative for the CG, in line with the criteria above. The CG will also invite experts from Europeanana target communities (creative industries, technology, tourism or education) to join the Communicators' Group.

### **3.4. Membership of Europeanana Communicators' Forum**

There should be no formal criteria for membership of the Europeanana Communicators' Forum, however it is recommended that members:

- Have an interest/involvement in communications.
- Are willing to discuss/share information about Europeanana and cultural heritage in general with their networks.
- Are part of the Europeanana Network Association.<sup>6</sup>

Geographical representation:

- The Communicators' Forum should provide good European coverage and linguistic diversity, with members from across the whole of Europe.
- Effort needs to be put into encouraging participation/representation from Eastern Europe which is currently very low. It is recommended that Europeanana taps into relationships with partners in this region, for example, those who took part in Europeanana Awareness.
- It is recommended that promoting membership of the Forum is a stated task for the Communicators' Group.

Information on the Europeanana Communicators' Forum objectives, activity and membership (including how to join) should be made available on Europeanana Pro.

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<sup>6</sup> Non-members can sign up easily at <http://pro.europeanana.eu/get-involved/our-network/sign-up>



### **3.5. Joining the Communicators' Forum**

It should be easy to join the Forum, but it would be helpful to have some background information about members' domain/project/expertise, so applicants should be asked to fill in a form available on Europeana Pro before they are added to the Forum mailing list.

## **4. Governance**

### **4.1. Relationship between the Communicators' Group and Members Council**

The Communicators' Group operates under the guidance of the Members Council and its Communications Working Group (MC – CWG).

The MC – CWG acts as a steering committee, evaluating and monitoring the work and progress of the Communicators' Group.

The MC – CWG appoints one of its members to chair the Communicators' Group.

### **4.2. Role of the Chair of the Europeana Communicators' Group**

The Chair is appointed for a term of one year.

These tasks may be delegated, but the Chair remains ultimately responsible for:

- keeping the Communicators' Group operational



- overseeing workflow
  - convening meetings (virtual and physical)
- managing the Communicators' Group information
  - keeping information about the group and its procedures on Europeana Pro up-to-date
  - managing mailing lists
  - managing the group's membership list
  - managing other communications channels
- making sure that the composition of the Communicators' Group is such that it is able to engage with relevant audiences
  - contacting new projects
  - contacting sector organizations not yet represented
- liaising with the Members Council Communications Working Group
  - reporting work and progress to the MC - CWG
  - submitting annual reports to the MC - CWG

## 5. Workflow

As described above, the goal of the Communicators' Group is to: support and facilitate Europeana ecosystem communications via access to expertise, relevant networks and communities. An efficient and timely workflow is key to achieving this.

Example of a recommended workflow from Europeana Foundation to Communicators' Group/Forum:

- Europeana requests support of Communicators' Group in key campaigns and communication exercises promoting/communicating Europeana-related issues and messages.  
Expected level of commitment - one pan-European strategic campaign per year, and some smaller topical ones.
- Development - Europeana consults with Communicators' Group as a stakeholder at the development stage of campaigns for input (feedback and strategic advice) on areas such as relevance/messages/approach.
- Implementation - Europeana asks Communicators' Group members to support/amplify campaigns/communications through their respective networks and related channels in line with agreed campaign approach, messages and timeline. Europeana to ensure that necessary messaging and any other supporting materials are shared. Communicators' Group support campaign as requested.
- Communicators' Forum informed of campaign – can promote as they wish alongside other activities.



Example of a recommended workflow from the Europeana Communicators' Group/Forum to the Europeana Foundation:

- Issues (e.g. substantial/strategic topics or issues that may feed into Europeana's communications agenda) come to light via the Communicators' Forum and are picked up by a Communicators' Group member OR are flagged directly by a Communicators' Group member.
- Issue discussed at a Communicators' Group meeting.
- Relevant and appropriate recommendations made by the Communicators' Group.
- Chair of the Communicators' Group feeds recommendation back to Members Council.
- Members Council discusses issue with the Europeana Foundation.

This mechanism gives the Communicators' Group recommendations the necessary credibility as well as a recognised channel for consideration by the Europeana Foundation.

## **6. Sustainability**

To ensure sustainability and continuous effective activity of the Communicators' Group, it is recommended that participation is for a minimum of one year, with all the appropriate sectors/organizations well represented. These requirements should be reviewed/updated over time.

## **7. Budget**

It is important that the group has access to some form of budget to cover the costs of an annual in-person meeting and to secure active participation of the Communicators' Group in the organisation of such a meeting.

It is recommended that this budget be secured through the Europeana DSI and that relevant DSI partners have a subtask of active representation on and participation in Communicators' Group, in particular organizing physical meetings associated with the AGM or other such event. As per Europeana Awareness, there is no additional money available for travel or accommodation so it is recommended that Communicators' Group/Forum meetings are associated with another event.



## 8. Next steps

Assuming that the recommendations within this document are adopted, the next steps to take to set up the Communicators' Group and Forum would be:

- Set up Basecamp project for the Communicators' Group.
- Ensure that information about the Communicators' Group and Forum is provided on Europeana Pro.
- Produce and distribute additional documentation for prospective members, e.g. the 'Benefits' document (see 'Supporting documentation' below).
- Run membership/application campaign for both the Communicators' Group and Forum - joint responsibility of the Europeana Foundation and the Communicators' Group.
- Once membership campaigns have been run, set up the first activities:
  - First Communicators' Group virtual meeting. Europeana Foundation will provide the man hours for the organization, agenda and minutes of the virtual Communicators' Group meetings. Members must provide input for the agenda of these meetings in advance.
  - First Communicators' Forum posts. Europeana Foundation will maintain the LISTSERV account (mailing list) for members of the Forum.
- Initiate regular activities:
  - Europeana Foundation will edit and issue the Communicators' Group monthly update - members must provide its content.

## 9. Supporting documentation

- Survey questions  
<https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/MVMFGPC>
- Survey responses  
<https://www.surveymonkey.net/results/SM-VCKYYR2J/>
- Brief analysis of existing list of communicators held by Europeana (below)
- Benefits of joining the Europeana Communicators' Group/Forum (attached).



## **Brief analysis of existing list of communicators held by Europeana**

### **Communicators group in current form:**

#### **Overview of membership**

Number of members: 175

We only hold names and email addresses for members. We do not have a specific overview of domain, country of residence, organisation they work for.

#### **Geographical representation**

Appears to be low in Eastern Europe. Based on the suffixes of email addresses (e.g. .pl, .ro, .hu), Eastern European membership is as follows:

- 8 Polish members
- 3 Hungarian members
- 1 Romanian member
- 3 Bulgarian members
- 5 Czech members
- 3 Serbian members
- 2 Slovakian members

Total: 25

### **Projects Group:**

#### **Overview of membership**

Number of members: 143

We only hold names and email addresses for members. We do not have a specific overview of domain, country of residence, organisation they work for.

There is only limited cross over between this group and the communicators group (@20%). This group is not very active.

Based on the suffixes of email addresses (e.g. .pl, .ro, .hu), Eastern European membership is as follows:

- 1 Polish member

#### **Proposed information required from all members of a future group:**

- Full name
- Affiliated organisation
- Europeana project
- Domain
- Country of residence

Optional: Relevant networks they are part of e.g. IFLA, OpenGLAM etc.