europeana
network association

ACTIVITY PLAN 2024

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2024: DARING IS CARING

'We are delighted,' opened Harry Verwayen in his newspost of September 2022, announcing that the Europeana Initiative, together with a consortium of committed partners, had been awarded the tender to deploy the common European data space (DS) for cultural heritage (CH). 'This momentum is immensely exciting,' I wrote in my prelude to last year's Activity Plan. Coming across these statements in my preparation for the ENA AGM 2023, I couldn't help but smile: delight is still aplenty, excitement fresh and crispy!

Entering the second year of activities within the Europeana Initiative (EI) in its new role, a lot has happened. The DS is a breathing, living, dynamic project on which we as ENA, together with our colleagues from the Europeana Foundation (EF) and the Europeana Aggregators' Forum (EAF) have embarked with full conviction, enthusiasm and energy.

Significant achievements have been made, including the co-development of the year 2 Implementation Plan (IP), the establishment of a Country Groups Pilot, the journey of discovery into what cooperation between the three Europeana pillars could and should be, the design of a new cross-initiative Task Force on the topic of decentralisation, the exploration of new funding paths for ENA, and the tapping of new network potential, such as. through the awarding of grants to ENA members joining the Europeana Conference. We've been looking with many sets of eyes - including those of our Members Council (MC) representatives - at alternative ways to make the DS more co-creative and inclusive, aiming to energise new and more nodes in the network, redistribute agency and accountability across the stakeholders and continuing to grow a community that is representative of and actively engaged in the DS.

Good progress on our journey, indeed. But a holiday cruise it was not. We've been experiencing the kind of turbulence that occurs when a large vessel is making waves - which is exactly what we should be doing, as champions of a new era in digital heritage and an exemplum in the emerging landscape of data spaces. The waves are helping us to navigate in a more focused, efficient and impactful way. Enhanced responsibilities in the context of the DS contract have, among other, required us to look into workflows, planning practices, decision making processes, communication pipelines, governance models, internal capacity, and external relationships to other initiatives emerging in the digital cultural heritage sphere.

In 2024, we are taking this venture into uncharted digital territories to the next level. The Initiative-wide visioning process will move into a new phase, prompting stakeholders to think outside of the box to enhance Europeana's role not only as a data space steward and champion of digital transformation, but as a leader in digital cultural heritage creation, management and brokership.

Believing that 'daring is caring', we will build on what was achieved in the past 15 years, investigate how to ensure Europeana's success in realising the DS contract, and look beyond: Europeana needs to remain at the vanguard of digital trends, co-steering technological innovation and setting policy agendas for the sector.

The latter is setting off before the end of this year, as ENA joins EF and EAF in modelling a visioning process. We are embracing the bottom-up approach, so part of this task will lie in exploring ways to more efficiently and adequately consult the membership on its needs and wishes, straight-on requirements or novel ideas for the data space. The former is carefully laid out in a Roadmap shared across the pillars, breaking down the tender contract into work packages, tasks, milestones, deliverables and responsibilities - including those of its current ENA Management Board (MB) and Members Council (MC). In this respect too, we are looking to expand and deepen network involvement as growing responsibilities for ENA in the context of the DS also reflect in the efforts needed to carry out

the work - efforts that would benefit immensely from all the experience and expertise present in the Network.

In our Activity Plan for 2024 we see this twofold perspective as a frame for everything we undertake. Furthermore, we let ourselves be guided by four strategic focal points: *Engaging the Network*, such as by activating local nodes through Country Groups; *Sound and effective governance*, daring to question the ways in which the three pillars, the Management Board, the Members Council and the wider membership work together; *Inclusivity and diversity*, as the data space is a unique opportunity to involve under-represented stakeholders and new voices in the realm of digital cultural heritage; and finally: *Funding ENA* - increasing our own capacity should not solely rest upon voluntary work but also endeavour to expand and reinforce the professional side of our operations.

Where would we like to be by this time next year? At an increased and diversified membership, smoothened workflows, tangible outcomes of all activities taking place in the ENA orbit, and crazy, brilliant, trailblazing, thought-provoking, ingenious ideas for what the distant future of the data space could be. Long story short: we'd love to end up at a place where our delight and excitement have not only remained intact but have been multiplied by 5,000 Network members. The present document is an outline of how we hope to arrive there. Welcome on board!

Sofie Taes
Vice-Chair of the Europeana Network Association

1. FOUR KEY AREAS OF ACTION

The Activity Plan detailed below takes as a point of departure the updated [ENA strategy document](#), centered around four priority areas.
It is worth noting that, inherent to the Europeana Initiative's role as an operator, steward and champion of the data space, activities will continue to unfold in 2024 along several parallel tracks: i) day-to-day operations following the route mapped out in the DS contract, the Implementation Plan and the Roadmap based upon it; ii) second horizon activities, in which we re-evaluate short- to mid-term objectives and impact areas considering the contract specifications against emerging opportunities, challenges and digital/societal trends; and iii) third horizon activities, i.e. long-term visioning both for the Europeana Initiative and the data space for cultural heritage.

The four themes given below should therefore be seen as lenses through which ENA's activities on the different tracks can be followed, monitored and assessed.

Engaging the Network
Growing to a membership of almost 5,000 people with a professional and/or personal interest in cultural heritage, ENA is increasingly becoming a key stakeholder and a key asset of the data space for cultural heritage. However, there's room for progress when it comes to leveraging this common point of interest into a genuine value proposition that could propel this group to becoming an impact network. Next to the question of what the data space can do for ENA members, we also need to open up pipelines of information and communication to uncover what ENA members can do for the data space. Only if we continuously invest

in gaining clarity on both sides of the equation, will we be able to match needs to offerings and make the data space into something more than the sum of its parts.

Through this lens we will be looking at topics such as:

- Mining more efficiently and thoroughly the expertise, experience, skills and assets present in our network
- Piloting Country Groups helping to activate local network nodes
- Enhancing the work of Communities and broadening the uptake of what they produce
- Increasing the visibility and uptake remit of ENA Task Forces.

Sound and effective governance

At the very backbone of the data space concept is the unique entanglement of openness, inclusivity, flexibility and co-governance on the one hand, and ownership, sovereignty, security, accountability and performance analysis on the other. To live up to this

exciting premise of what life in the data space could (should?) be like, we must start by assessing and improving our decision-making processes and critically reviewing the ways in which we collaborate within the network and across the three pillars of the Europeana Initiative.

Through this lens we will be looking at topics such as:

- Revisioning ENA governance, particularly with a view to the new reality posed by the data space as well as the emerging Country Groups
- Revisioning communication practices within and beyond the network, both on an operational (what can be done today and tomorrow to improve interaction and participation?) and at a strategic level (what would ideal communication streams, practices, tools, outcomes… be?)
- Examining how governance principles at the core of the ENA and the EI relate to or echo in the governance framework for the DS

Inclusivity and diversity (I&D)

Again, this theme prompts us to look in two directions. For one, increasing I&D in the context of the data space means making more stakeholders aware of what it is and has to offer. This involves advocacy for the data space and Europeana as its steward, supporting and expressing better its value propositions, and reaching out to audiences currently not taking part in the ecosystem. But we need to hold up a mirror. How inclusive and representative are our governance bodies? How can we make sure the membership's voices get heard in long-term visioning processes? How do we ensure established cultural heritage practices and fresh views on the sector intertwine in exhilarating polyphony?

Through this lens we will be looking at topics such as:

- The Pilot Action aimed at establishing the first EI Country Groups
- Improving representation of different Member States, sectors, cultural traditions and expertises in ENA governance bodies

- Widening the membership to un(der)served stakeholder groups, including those from European regions not yet very active in the Europeana ecosystem, non-European audience groups, stakeholders from adjacent sectors/reusers/data spaces, young professionals and creative entrepreneurs

Funding ENA

As delighted as we are that the involvement, the stake and the relevance of ENA for the EI as a whole as well as the data space at large is continuously increasing, we are also faced with the practical consequences of this growth path. For one, the capacity of the very active ENA members - those on the Management Board, the Members Council, the Communities and Task Forces - is being probed to a maximum level. To keep on evolving, more (wo)manpower and professional support are necessary. How to create space for growth without having to appeal to data space resources? We have to explore new pathways to generate our own.

Through this lens we will be looking at topics such as:

- Funding programs, project ideas and consortia in which ENA as a legal entity could function as a partner
- Methods, tools, processes to help facilitate decision-making processes regarding funding opportunities across the three Europeana pillars
- Models for the redistribution of task responsibilities and accountabilities within the three pillars, within the Members Council, and all the way across the (active layer of the) ENA membership

2. PRIORITY ACTIVITIES FOR ENA IN 2024

The themes mentioned above are reflected in the Implementation Plan following the tender for the data space, where ENA is included in particular in Work package 3: Capacity building and fostering reuse. We will address these themes throughout our activities in 2024, with the following actions and objectives:

Moving from Roadmap to Galaxy chart… and back

- Our day-to-day commitment remains the same: we support and co-steer the execution of the data space contract along the lines and tasks stipulated in the Implementation Plan and Roadmap, and this in close concertation with the other two EI pillars.
- We will, in parallel, continue to develop, refine and deliver ENA's strategy, in the context of the Europeana Initiative strategy 2020 - 2025.

- As the visioning process for long-term Europeana Initiative and data space strategies enters a new phase, we will contribute to consultation, ideation, validation and communication activities, continuously aiming to gather the widest ENA membership input and feedback possible with the means available.
- We need to grow more aware of/attentive to the wider context in which the DS for CH is to operate
- On a policy level: priority actions such as the Green Deal, New European Bauhaus, the Digital Decade, etc.
- Other (emerging) initiatives in the realm of digital cultural heritage (The Heritage Hub, KIC EIT C&C, ECCCH)
- The landscape in which soon multiple data spaces will be positioned

> *Expected results in 2024:*
- Updated Strategic Plan of ENA
- Definition and implementation of capacity building activities in the scope of the Implementation Plan Year 2
- Contribution to the long-term visioning process pertaining to the DS, within the EI and beyond
- Establishing a confluence between individual aspects of the visioning process and practical manifestations

Revisit/revision the network
- Extending the Network in terms of numbers and diversity, especially with a view to young professionals
- Reaching new audiences in the context of the data space e.g. among re-users
- Developing a plan to follow up on the Pilot Country Group action; create materials for a wider uptake of this model across Member States
- Explore other avenues to activating network nodes: how to find network champions and how to empower them to take up an active role?

- Critically assess communication flows, decision making processes and areas of impact
- Designing a process to optimise the ways in which ENA works vis à vis the tasks it is expected to carry out

> *Expected results in 2024:*
- Increased membership
- Growth of membership among new audiences
- Improved representation of young ENA members on governance bodies
- Improved diversity in terms of member states, sectors and skills
- Examining (and executing) reforms of the MC constituency and its requirements/expectations
- Representing ENA, EI and the DS at various public occasions
- Contribution to an improved cooperation model for Europeana
- Continued activities of the Governance Working Group

From values and benefits to enhanced wellbeing

- As the data space is becoming the new digital reality for our sector, we need to become more precise and expressive in voicing its key value propositions. How can we make sure that all data space benefits are known and accessible to all whom it may concern?
- Being part of a network means being part of a community. This is a key value proposition of ENA membership: meeting like minded people and exchanging thoughts, ideas, experiences and skills. In 2024 we will work on strengthening the sense of community within ENA and establishing new connectivity and communication routes for its members
- What's in it for our members? It's a question we should regard as the carrot dangling before us. A significant part of the answer will pertain to capacity building: many ENA members are seeking specific information, are interested in good practices and successful use cases, or have effective tools, useful services or interesting insights to share themselves. In 2024 our work to become effective 'brokers' of knowledge capital, matching needs to offerings, will continue.

> *Expected results in 2024:*

- Contribution to EF's development of a framework for capacity building and a Learning Management System
- Contribution to EF's efforts in investigating a community collaboration tool, improved CRM and new models for cooperation
- Revised onboarding strategy & customer journey
- Improved Membership Satisfaction
- Revised strategy and activity plan visible on Pro and/or other relevant (Europeana) channels

3. ORGANISATION OF WORK

In-keeping with established practices while also taking into account the new digital reality presented by the emerging data space, the activities of ENA in 2024 will be organised as follows:

ENA Members Council
The [Members Council](), a body of elected ENA representatives, will aim to actively help the Europeana Initiative to implement its strategy, and support the digital transformation of the cultural heritage sector and the deployment of the data space. The Council currently counts 36 Members. A range of scenarios for increasing the involvement and the efficiency of this important body will be investigated in 2024, potentially with a view to adapting that number of representatives, or involving new parameters (e.g. country representation) in its composition.
In the scope of the abovementioned efforts towards

performance improvement, we will also look into the requirements and responsibilities presented to Councillors at the time of their application for election. Current responsibilities will remain: the Members Council evaluates and steers the activities of the communities, Task Forces and Working Groups, ensuring their progress as well as the state of ENA governance and budget. Councillors also engage in activities supporting and expanding ENA's communications efforts. New areas to explore include: involvement in the emerging Country Groups; executing tasks committed to in the Implementation and Roadmap towards the realization of the data space contract; and contributing to the representation of currently untapped, silent or unserved stakeholder groups and communities

The Council meets three times a year to discuss ENA's priorities and progress towards the Europeana Strategy in line with activities of the [Europeana Foundation](#) and [Europeana Aggregators' Forum](#). 2024 will see a reinvestigation of how to most efficiently and beneficially organize these meetings and a discussion on the key role these meetings play in the functioning of the Members Council as a representative and co-governing body.

ENA Management Board

Three of the current [Management Board](#) (elected in January 2022) members - Fred Saunderson, Milena Dobreva and Dafydd Tudur - will step down at the end of 2023. The election of nine new Councillors in December 2023 will be followed in early 2024, by subsequent election/re-election of three MB members. They will join the three current members remaining in place, who will also cover the interim period.

The MB will continue to lead the development of the ENA's strategic vision and oversee ENA governance, policies, budget and membership provisions. They will provide guidance and a governance framework for ENA Communities, Task Forces and Working Groups, including the evaluation of the progress of their work in line with the strategic direction of the ENA. In liaising with the other two pillars of the Europeana Initiative (EF, EAF), MB continuously invests in strengthening collaborations and improving governance towards genuine co-decision making. MB will be directly involved in long-term visioning processes and developing their relationship to implementation and practice. It also closely follows the activities of the Supervisory and Advisory Boards as well as the CEDCHE in its capacity as an advisory body supporting the EC.

The Board will continue to meet monthly online and to communicate regularly within its membership and with MC through in-person meetings, emails and Basecamp messages as well as dedicated WhatsApp groups. Communications with the wider ENA membership will be strengthened by MB taking on an increased role in curating the monthly ENA Newsletter. Furthermore, MB meets up monthly with the other two pillars and has recurring bilateral conversations with the EAF.

ENA Secretariat

The ENA Secretariat, run by [Zuzana Malicherova](#) and the Europeana Foundation's Community and Partner Engagement Team, will continue to provide day to day support to both the Members Council and the Management Board as well the Communities, Task Forces and Working Groups.

ENA Communities

The seven [ENA communities](#) are the ENA's most important instrument in addressing the challenges faced by cultural heritage institutions in this age of digital transformation. The communities will continue to function as trans-national networks of professionals and experts who come together to cultivate and share knowledge and practices around relevant topics.

Community members can sign up to receive community newsletters, join various communication channels and social media groups, and attend community-related events and meetings. The major focus of the communities will be on implementing their 2023 work plans, including [Task Force](#) activities. The progress of these work plans will be monitored by the community Steering Groups, the Management Board and the Members Council.

With a view to the new digital reality presented by the data space, its particular role in the execution of the data space contract's Work Package on capacity building, as well as in the scope of the emerging Country Groups, ENA will examine how the vital contributions of these groups can be optimally supported and enhanced by the Initiative.

ENA Membership

Active engagement and empowerment of [ENA members](#) will, more than ever, be our key priority. So far, our accomplishments in attracting young professionals and underrepresented communities/regions, while keeping the existing network engaged and active, have remained below the level desired. We will actively seek to increase engagement with these audiences and expect the Country Groups to have a positive impact on this area of action.

In terms of numbers we expect to start 2024 with around 4,500 members. We hope to continue to gain between 50 and 80 new members every month, which should see overall membership increase to around 5,000 members by the end of the year.

New members are approved by the ENA Management Board on a monthly basis. The process involves the collation of new applications by the ENA secretariat and the review of each applicant's profile and expression of interest by MB members, using an assessment framework that was developed in 2022.

ENA Working Groups
The Governance Working Group remains responsible for offering recommendations regarding transparent, fair and effective governance to the Management Board and Members Council, as well as any changes in the underlying governance principles and procedures for ENA governance. The Membership Working Group was established in 2021 and had a central role in assessing and implementing the recommendations of the New Professionals Task Force. In 2023 the WG was dissolved as its focal points and activities had been taken up in the context of several other WGs and Task Forces running concurrently. Three cross-initiative WGs are active as well: the WG Supporting the digital cultural heritage of Ukraine, the Capacity Building Working Group and the (emerging)

"Innovative Operating Models WG". All the ENA Working Groups report on their progress at Members Council meetings, including the General Assembly.

ENA General Assembly
Our members will have the opportunity to come together at the ENA General Assembly, in the fall of 2024. During the Assembly, they will be able to express their opinions on governance matters, progress made with the implementation of the tender, approve key documents, and launch the 2024 Members Council elections and voting. The communities will have an opportunity to present their key activities.

ENA Communications
The Europeana Pro website is the main source of information about ENA and its activities. Throughout 2024, we will highlight the work of ENA communities through Europeana Pro news. ENA will continue to work with the EF on the presentation of ENA on Pro, and to make information about ENA more easily accessible.

We will continue to send out a Network Newsletter and are investigating how to better tune this channel to what ENA members need and expect. Under new arrangements, MB and invited Councillors will take on an increased role in determining the content of the Newsletter and in communicating with the wider ENA membership.. The Europeana LinkedIn Group (7,278 members as of November 2023) will continue to provide a discussion forum for ENA members.

We will also promote our communication efforts and dedicated campaigns on X (formerly known as Twitter) using ENA hashtags. The hashtag #EuropeanaCommunities brings the ENA, its specialist communities and other Europeana-related networks together.

Next to these established paths, the above-mentioned community collaboration tool could increase engagement and collaboration between ENA (and communities), and EAF members.

Cross-Initiative cooperation
The implementation of the tender includes an investigation into optimising collaboration among the three pillars of the Initiative. Representatives of EF, ENA, and EAF meet monthly to discuss and align common areas of work, (re)assessing priorities, exchanging insights into developments within each of the groups, and keeping track of progress in achieving tender commitments as well as joint ambitions. As a result of intensified cooperation, we are piloting from the end of 2023 onwards cross-initiative, cross-sectoral member state advocacy groups (Country Groups) to foster and strengthen support for Europeana on a national level.

4. OVERVIEW OF ACTIVITIES AND EVENTS PER QUARTER

Q1: January to March 2024

Communities: Task Forces and work plans approval
Following an open call for and approval of Task Forces in October - December 2023, the communities will have until January 2024 to estimate their budget requirements and finalise and publish their work plans for the year.

Members Council meeting
The first meeting of the Members Council will take place in March 2024 with a focus on discussing issues of strategic importance for ENA within the Europeana Initiative, and setting up governance and projecting activities for the coming year. The meeting may partly be organised together with the Europeana Aggregators' Forum in order to strengthen the collaboration between the Council and the Forum.

ENA strategy update
The ENA strategy will receive its annual update in time for ratification to be requested at the March Members Council meeting.

Q2: April to June 2024

Task Force and Community Steering Group meetings
Community Steering Groups or running Task Forces may plan their own meetings and events in this period.

Q3: July to September 2024

Members Council meeting
In early July 2024, the Members Council will hold its second meeting. The agenda will focus on the work of the communities and formalities related to ENA governance, budget and membership, as well as strategic issues such as ENA's role in digital transformation of the sector and alignment with priorities of the rest of the Europeana Initiative.

Task Force and Community Steering Group meetings
Community Steering Groups or running Task Forces will have an opportunity to organise separate community meetings also in this period.

Start of the 2024 elections and voting preparations
In spring 2024 the requirements, conditions and setup of the MC/MB elections will be revisited, with appropriate opportunities for network members to feedback and validate suggested approaches. Later in the year - and depending upon the timeline for approval of suggested changes in setup and

methodology - the Governance Working Group will nominate the annual Elections and Voting Committee, which will start preparing the 2024 voting and elections process at the latest in fall. A communications plan and timeline will be drawn up in collaboration with the ENA Secretariat. Various announcements around the voting and elections campaign process, championed by the Chair of the Committee, will be featured on Europeana Pro news and on social media.

Start of the 2024 General Assembly preparations
In September 2024, the Management Board, in collaboration with the Elections and Voting Committee and the ENA Secretariat, will begin the preparatory process for the 2024 General Assembly meeting. This includes setting the agenda, preparing documentation, convening the General Assembly and managing all communications surrounding the meeting.

Q4: October to December 2024

Community work plan evaluation
Community work plans will go through a process of evaluation by the Management Board and the Members Council, and the community chairs will be asked to present their main deliverables and milestones achieved in the ENA annual report.

Delivery of Task Force recommendations
Running Task Forces will be required to submit their final recommendations to the Members Council by the end of the year 2024. Once reviewed, the Task Force chairs will be asked to promote their outcomes through Europeana Pro news, Network newsletter and social media channels.

Members Council meetings, Annual Europeana Conference and General Assembly
In this period, the ENA Secretariat will organise the third Members Council meeting of the year, as well as the General Assembly meeting. At the General Assembly, ENA members will formally approve the annual ENA documents and launch the 2024

elections and voting process. The events will be promoted via Europeana Pro as well as through dedicated email campaigns, the Network Newsletter, LinkedIn and X (formerly known as Twitter). It is for the ENA MB and MC to discuss how far it is suitable, desirable or necessary to seek overlap or complementarity between two or more of these meetings.

Community Steering Group & Task Force meetings

Community Steering Groups or running Task Forces will have an opportunity to organise separate community meetings also in this period.

Launch of the 2024 Members Council elections and voting

The voting and elections period - expected to last for a week - will be launched by the Management Board at the General Assembly meeting, and will be overseen by the Elections and Voting Committee. The main campaign milestones will be:

- call for candidates (September)
- announcement of candidates (October)
- launch of campaign (October/November)
- gathering and analysing votes (November/December)
- announcement of voting results (December)

The results of the voting process will be communicated through Europeana Pro news, dedicated email campaigns, the Network Newsletter, LinkedIn and X (formerly known as Twitter).

This is a unique momentum for us all, being at the core of what the data space for cultural heritage is, will be, could be, and can aspire to be.
Thank you for being a part of this journey of discovery!

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