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Information Society and Media Directorate-General

Digital Content & Cognitive Systems
eContent and Safer Internet

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Ms Rosa Caffo
Ministero per i Beni e le Attività
Culturali
via M. Caetani, 32
IT-186 Roma
Italy

Subject: Project ATHENA– Review Report

Dear Ms Caffo,

Please find enclosed a copy of the signed review report as result of the final review of the ATHENA project carried out with the assistance of outside experts.

The Commission endorses the conclusions of the reviewers.

All the reports and deliverables submitted are approved in line with Art. 6.3(a) of the grant agreement. I kindly ask you to inform the consortium members about the results of the review.

Yours sincerely,

Federico Milani
Project Officer

Encl: Signed review report

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Final Review Report

Project No.:	517005
Project acronym:	ATHENA
Project website:	www.athenaeurope.org
Period reviewed:	February 2010 - April 2011
Review type:	☑ Based on project deliverables and formal meeting (Option 1)
	☐ Based on project deliverables (Option 2)
Names of Reviewers:	Mario Barajas
	Charalampos Karagiannidis
Date of meeting:	July 4, 2011

Overall Assessment

1. Summary

Free text giving the reviewers' overall assessment.

Overall, the ATHENA Best Practise Network (BPN) was very successful in making digital content from museums in Europe more accessible, usable and exploitable.

ATHENA is currently the biggest aggregator of Europeana, attracting content even from countries/museums which are not part of the BPN and do not receive funding from the EC.

The ATHENA consortium successfully managed to build on and extend the results of a large number of previous EC projects, and delivered a set of guidelines, recommendations and tools for exchanging museum content across Europe.

Technical results such as the LIDO (Lightweight Information Describing Object), a de-facto standard recognised internationally, and guidelines and recommendations reports are already been adopted and used by a large number of EC organisations and projects. Other results, such as the IPR guide, can be used as best practise examples for other projects, when developing documents which aim to provide step-by-step guidance to users.

Finally, the project results have been heavily disseminated to the community, as this is reflected in the impressive number of web site visits and document downloads.

2. Recommendations

In order to further increase the impact of the ATHENA results, it is recommended that:

- the web site is re-organised, making the main outputs of the BPN more visible,
- the ingestion tool usability is improved by the addition of a help function, and
- the translation of the project in the web site is further elaborated in all EU languages.

3. Conclusions

x   The project has achieved its objectives and technical goals for the period.

☐   The project has achieved most of its objectives and technical goals for the period, but some action should be taken to fulfil the provisions set out in Annex I to the grant agreement.

☐   The project has failed to achieve critical objectives and/or did not fulfil the project work plan as described in Annex I to the grant agreement.

A. Objectives

Free text giving the reviewers' comments on the degree of achievement of the project objectives as described in Annex I. This might include answers to the following questions:
1. *Have the objectives for the period been achieved?*
2. *Performance indicators: have the targets been reached?*
3. *Are the overall objectives still relevant and still achievable within the time and resources available to the project?*

The Network achieved all the objectives as described in the DoW: it reviewed existing methodologies, tools and standards, and delivered a set of guidelines and recommendations which are already been used by other projects/organisations; based on them, it also developed the LIDO standard for describing and exchanging museum content across Europe, which is already used by other projects/organisations.

All performance indicators were achieved, and many of them were impressively surpassed: ATHENA was able to aggregate almost 4 million data in Europeana; web site visits and hits and document downloads are impressive, and demonstrate the impact and sustainability of the BPN in the community.

B. Work plan:

Free text giving the reviewers' comments on the degree of fulfilment of the project work plan as described in Annex I. This might include answers to the following questions:
1. *Has each work package (WP) been making satisfactory progress in relation to the Description of Work (Annex I to the grant agreement)?*
2. *Have planned milestones been achieved for the activity period?*
3. *Have planned deliverables been completed for the activity period?*
4. *Do the technical solutions employed reflect the "State of the art"?*

All Workpackages progressed as described in the DoW, all milestones were achieved and all deliverables were submitted (with minor delays) and are of very high-quality, with the following comments:

- D1.3 - Second Periodic Report: no major deviations, work progressed as planned in the DoW with some delays
- D1.4 - Second Annual Report: several delays in the submission of deliverables, which do not affect the quality of the results; all indicators are heavily surpassed
- D1.5 - Final report: ATHENA is the biggest aggregator for Europeana with 3,8 Mdata; the web statistics are impressive; most indicators are heavily surpassed, apart from people receiving the ATHENA journal and countries with museums contributing to Europeana
- D2.3 - Set of instruments to support newcomers to join: the revised version is very much improved over the initial one
- D2.5 - First Issue of the ATHENA Journal: the journal includes many contributions from different countries; the consortium confirmed during the review meeting its commitment to sustain its publication
- D3.4 - Assessment of requirements for persistent identification of objects, collections & institutions, in concertation with Europeana: good technical report, includes surveys (but mainly within the consortium) and literature review
- D3.5 - Technical and policy infrastructure to support persistent identifiers: good technical report
- D3.6 - Specific tools to be used for conversion & adaptation of proprietary museum data: it includes a guide to providing content to Europeana, which is very informative and easily visible in the web site
- D4.2 - Guidelines for mapping into SKOS, dealing with translations: good technical report

- D4.3 - Recommendation for integrating Digital resources present in museums in Europeana: good technical report, very useful step-by-step guidance
- D5.3 - Core Content Map of Digital Cultural Heritage: impressive amount of content, detailed description of distribution
- D5.4 - Final Report on networking framework of non-partner projects and other bodies: it includes a good survey, but the conclusions could be elaborated
- D5.5 - Implementation plan for taking the content into Europeana: good technical report
- D6.2 - Step by Step Guide on IPR issues: it includes the methodology for IPR issues, an excellent work
- D6.3 - Overview of collective licensing models and of DRM systems and technologies used for IPR protection and management: good technical report, but the conclusions could be elaborated
- D6.4 - Database containing IPR information per member state: good technical report
- D7.2 - Guidelines for Geographic Location Description (including training): good technical report, but the conclusions could be elaborated
- D7.3 - Skosification of the existing metadata standards & terminology sets used by the participating Museums: good technical report
- D7.4 - Report on the integration of the plug-in with the Europeana portal: good technical report
- D7.5 - Implementation plan and access to content of museums through Europeana: good technical description

The Consortium was also very successful in responding to the comments made during the 1st review

The technical solutions are clearly based on the state of the art, building on and extending the results of a large number of past EC projects.

Some of the project results could be used as benchmarks for future EC projects: the ATHENA wiki and the IPR guide demonstrate an excellent step-by-step way to guide users in understanding and adopting standards.

C. Project management and resources

Free text giving the reviewers' comments on the project management. This might include answers to the following questions:
1. *Is the management of the project of sufficient quality*
2. *Has the project implemented an active risk management?*
3. *Is the consortium interacting in a satisfactory manner with other related projects or other national/international programmes (if relevant)?*
4. *Have resources been deployed as foreseen in Annex I, overall and for each beneficiary?*

The management of the Network, was of high quality in all terms – all the mechanisms for managing the project worked well (steering committee, internal evaluator, etc). No conflicts among the partners appear in the documentation.

Collaboration and communication with other projects (some partners do participate in international projects and national initiatives, e.g Europeana is also partner), has been key, and successful in terms of sharing/giving resources, or participating in discussions about common matters, etc.

Project resources have been deployed satisfactorily, and the Network was able to deliver all the results described in the DoW with less resources than planned.

D. Consortium partnership

Free text giving the reviewers' comments on the consortium partnership. This might include answers to the following questions:
1. *Has the collaboration between the participants been effective?*
2. *Have the partners contributed as planned to the project and tasks assigned to them?*
3. *Do you identify any conflicts or evidence of underperforming partners, lack of commitment or change of interest of any partners? Do you recommend any changes in responsibilities?*

The Network started with 34 partners from 20 EU Member States, and ended with two additional partners.

The collaboration between the participants has been effective.

All partners contributed as planned, and there is no evidence for any conflict of interest or underperforming partners.

E. Dissemination and awareness activities

Free text giving the reviewers' comments on the effectiveness of the dissemination and awareness activities. This might include answers to the following questions:
1. *Is the project website up-to-date and a relevant source of information for the project activities?*
2. *Has the consortium disseminated project results and information as foreseen?*
3. *Are potential users and other stakeholders (outside the consortium) suitably informed?*

The project website is very comprehensive. It contains not only the facts about the project but also all the relevant documents produced devoted to experts, and interested parties and public in general. In this sense it is very useful and easy to use, and to access the information. The website complies with the standards (W3C compliant), e.g. the images contain descriptive text for people with disabilities. Little is presented in languages other than English. Even some materials, as the ATHENA Virtual Exhibition is only en English. It would been better to have a more comprehensive translation of the home website, as well as some materials in different languages

Dissemination of outcomes is a plus in the project; apart from the dissemination in the website (with a large number of visitors), ATHENA has been present in numerous conferences, national workshops, and other events; particularly the final conference organised by the project has been very successful in terms of content and an important turnout.

Potential stakeholders were aware of the activities of the project as demonstrated by the number of participants in the different events, the hits in the website, and the disseminations materials distributed. The fact of working with Europeana made the project visible for the stakeholders. The large number of associated partners who signed cooperation agreements is an example of the successful dissemination of the results.

F. Impact and Sustainability

Free text giving the reviewers' comments on the extent to which the project results impact on the specific field. This might include answers to the following questions:

1. Have intellectual property rights for the underlying content been solved?
2. Are there any risks related to intellectual property rights for the project results?
3. Are the user needs properly reflected in the user requirements and/or the implementation?
4. Does the project contribute significantly to achieving the eContentplus objective of making "digital content in Europe more accessible, usable and exploitable?

Intellectual property rights have been successfully addressed: the documentation submitted is very informative, and includes IPR info for each partner. The project has been closely collaborating with Europeana in setting different levels of IPR that are acceptable by the providers, including a non-commercial clause. In this respect the work done in IPR, which includes a very comprehensive Guidelines, is excellent.

The project results are already being adopted and sustained by other projects, demonstrating a very successful case of sustainability for a BPN.

ATHENA contributes very significantly to achieving the Programme's objectives of making digital content accessible, usable and exploitable: approximately 3.800.000 data has been included to Europeana. The guidelines and recommendations produced by the Network have already been downloaded and used by thousands of users.

Name(s) of the reviewer(s):   **Mario Barajas**   **Charalampos Karagiannidis**

Date: July 11, 2011

Signature(s):

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Name(s) of the reviewer(s): MARIO BARAJAS

Date: 19.07.2011

Signature(s):

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