

LoCloud



LoCloud aims to build on the achievements of CARARE in establishing a repository-based aggregator for Archaeological and Architectural heritage (and which will, by the end of 2015 have contributed some 3 million items to Europeana); and of Europeana Local in its work with local institutions and their regional and national aggregators, which resulted in the contribution to date of well over 5 million items. Together, content from these two projects constituted about 35% of the total content (25 million items) envisaged to be in Europeana by the end of 2012.

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Its objectives are to:

1. Continue to ease the task of enabling heritage organisations in making their contents accessible via Europeana, by using the cloud to provide services and tools which help to reduce technical, semantic and skills barriers.
2. Make it easier for digital content emerging from small and medium cultural institutions, and also through collaborative crowdsourcing initiatives, to be made available to Europeana in order to increase the richness and representativeness of Europeana's record of local history.
3. Improve the interoperability of relevant content from localities across Europe from institutional domains which in some countries act separately: namely the 'heritage' sector and the MLA (museums, libraries, archives) sectors, in order to provide a more coherent 'views' of the history and heritage of a given locality.
4. Enable smaller institution types such as house museums, which currently fall outside most aggregation infrastructures, to contribute their content to Europeana.
5. Explore the potential of cloud computing for aggregation, enrichment and re-use, with a special focus on geographic location.
6. Explore and trial a cloud based architecture as a scalable platform for Europeana metadata aggregation and harvesting with higher efficiency and reduced maintenance costs.
7. Develop a portal and support service to serve the needs of content providers.



LoCloud is co-funded under the CIP ICT-PSP programme



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In the first year LoCloud has focused chiefly on the planning and preparatory work required to accomplish these objectives, specifically:

- To review the state-of-the art and make a detailed assessment of aspects of the cloud relevant to the needs of the project and to small and medium sized institutions.
- To review existing infrastructures and attitudes towards adopting cloud or other aggregation solutions within the operational contexts of the content providing institutions participating in ICT-PSP and within Europeana.
- To assess the remaining barriers to cloud use and establish potential means of addressing them.
- To establish a plan of action for each content partner taking into account the varying national and regional contexts.
- To establish the infrastructural requirements of smaller/local institutions for aggregation and services necessary to interact with Europeana.
- To specify the cloud-based infrastructure necessary to meet these requirements.

The consortium has achieved all these goals and has established a strategic collaboration with European Cloud and other key projects critical to ensuring the future sustainability of Europeana. In its second year the ingestion of content through its infrastructural pipeline to Europeana will commence. The development of planned microservices will enable the enrichment of metadata in the LoCloud aggregation service. A Europeana-compatible, cloud-based Lightweight Digital library will be developed and made available to the many smaller institutions which currently experience problems in contributing to Europeana.

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