→ **Report on the results of the Wikimedia Taskforce**

15.01.2015

Executive Summary

The ten recommendations have been formulated by a Task Force made up of both Wikimedians and representatives of cultural institutions from the Europeana network. They therefore stress the mutual benefits for both parties. Based on experiences in previous and current projects, listed on the Wikimedia meta-page, Europeana is advised to intensify cooperation with Wikimedia. This can be done by considering a Wikimedia-component to both current and future projects. Also, Europeana can play a role in facilitating relations between GLAMs and the Wikimedia network, as well as distributing knowledge about practices in these respective communities. It is recommended that Europeana seek to further integrate its systems and technology with Wikipedia and other Wikimedia platforms.
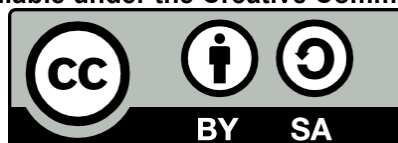
- Specific mention is made of Wikidata, a fast-growing project with enormous potential for linking collections, performing authority control, digital humanities research and synergy with Europeana's systems.
- An overarching operational recommendation that would increase the chances of successful implementation of each of the ten recommendations is to invest in a Europeana staff-member, who could function as a dedicated Wikimedia coordinator and 'product owner' for implementation.
- In particular, that this staff-member investigate the potential for Wikimedia integrations for each major forthcoming Europeana activity, which may require further project-specific investment to implement at the operational level.
- Finally, Europeana should look into the possibilities of teaming up with Wikimedia in seeking external funding for projects and investigating becoming Wikimedia's first movement-partner.

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1.   Introduction

This task force was initially proposed at the 2013 AGM to discuss existing and planned developments between Europeana (sister)projects and the Wikimedia community. In the formation of the task force, the initial proposal[1] was somewhat rewritten in order to move beyond a listing of projects, towards actual strategic recommendations. In the rewritten proposal[2], attention was also paid to recent developments like the development of the GLAMwiki Toolset.[3] The outcomes of the task force are threefold:

1.   A relationship audit
2.   Success factors for working with Wikimedia
3.   Strategic recommendations

The 2015-2020 strategic plan of the Europeana Foundation mentions Wikipedia twice as a possible channel for audiences to connect and interact with cultural heritage materials. The recommendations presented in this report aim to elaborate on these general claims. Every strategic recommendation made in this document is illustrated with possible examples of how to practically implement these recommendations.

It is important to note that the advantages for all recommendations are and should be mutual: both Europeana and Wikimedia can profit from close cooperation and that the mission of the European Wikimedia Chapters (in particular) has many synergies with that of Europeana.

The following strategic recommendations are the result of two meetings, one at the 2014 AGM in Madrid[4] and one in November at the Netherlands Institute for Sound and Vision.[5]

Task Force members

Chair:
Jesse de Vos (Netherlands Institute for Sound and Vision) - Chair
Liam Wyatt (GLAM-wiki coordinator Europeana Foundation) - Co-chair
Joris Pekel (Europeana Foundation) - Europeana liaison

Members:
A mix of people from the Europeana network of GLAMs and people that are active in the Wikimedia community.

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[1] ""Proposing a Europeana Network Task Force - Wikimedia Developments" as submitted on February 12th, 2014
[2] "Final Proposal Europeana - Task Force Wikimedia" as approved on July 14th, 2014
[3] The toolset enables GLAMs to upload content in batch to Wikimedia Commons.
[4] Minutes; http://bit.ly/10AzRNe
[5] Minutes: http://bit.ly/1xH6Avw

Task Force members:

Dan Entous	Europeana
Dimitris Gavrillis	LoCloud
Marco Rendina	Europeana Fashion
Pietro Liuzzo	EAGLE
Àlex Hinojo	Amical Wikimedia (Catalonia)
John Andersson	Wikimedia Sverige
Jonathan Cardy	Wikimedia UK
Gilles Dubuc	Wikimedia Foundation
Barbara Fischer	Wikimedia Deutschland
Jean Frederic Berthelot	Wikimedia France
Stephan Bartholmei	DNB
Georgia Angelaki	EKT

Other people that have been consulted:

Jill Cousins	Europeana
Sebastiaan Ter Burg	Wikimedia Netherlands
Maarten Dammers	Wikimedia volunteer (Netherlands)
Ashley van Haeften	Wikimedia volunteer (UK)
Maarten Brinkerink	Netherlands Institute for Sound and Vision
Jens Ohlig	Wikimedia Germany/ Wikidata
Beat Esterman	Bern University of Applied Sciences / OpenGLAM CH
Allison Kupietzky	The Israel Museum

2. Outcome 1: Relationship audit

This overview of all past and ongoing activities, events, development and partnerships between Europeana and Wikimedia (Chapters, Foundation, community) has been published on the 'meta-page' at http://meta.wikimedia.org/wiki/Europeana/Projects. The different projects are divided into categories based on the level of Europeana's direct involvement:

1. Direct projects: projects in which staff of the Europeana Foundation have a leading role (e.g. Development of GLAMwiki Toolset, Cross-language search support, etc.)
2. Satellite projects: (co)funded projects in the Europeana ecosystem connecting to Wikimedia (e.g. Europeana Awareness, Europeana 1914-1918, etc.)
3. Europeana partner projects: individual GLAM's from the Europeana network that work with Wikimedia and have sometimes been supported by Europeana with contact-information and introductions.

3. Outcome 2 and 3: Success factors and strategic recommendations for working with Wikimedia

In what follows, outcomes two and three are combined. The success factors and lessons learned from previous experiences, both organizational and technological, result in the following 10 strategic recommendations for Europeana.

3.1. Recommendation 1: For every Europeana project, considering the possible benefits of a Wikimedia component should be default behaviour.

As the list of projects on the meta-page shows, over the past years a number of Europeana projects, both direct and satellite, have profited from a close link with the Wikimedia ecosystem, by incorporating various Wikimedia components.

Relating to Wikimedia is in line with the role Europeana sees for itself in promoting policies and business models that favour opening up access to cultural heritage content.[6] It is therefore advised to do a 'Wikimedia-check' for new and existing projects. This obviously goes for any project which aims at providing access to content (the reach of Wikipedia is unparalleled), contextualisation of content (encyclopedic articles are a rich source of knowledge) and the creation of new and improved content and metadata through the the active community of volunteers that surrounds Wikimedia. Furthermore, Wikidata offers great potential for linking collections, improving and expanding metadata, and authority control. In technology providing projects the link with Wikimedia platforms should also be considered by default, to enable and improve interoperability between the Europeana and Wikimedia platform. This interoperability is a requirement for making meaningful connections between collections and data from the Data Providers and the knowledge and data that is already available online. If a Wikimedia-component is not viable in a project, it should be argued why not.

Practical ways in which this strategic recommendation could take shape are:

GLAM Example:
Contextualization in Europeana Fashion
The availability of fashion information on Wikipedia has been quite limited. That is why the Europeana Fashion project (March 2012 - 2015) has been organising a series of well-visited fashion edit-a-thons in Sweden (x2), The Netherlands, Belgium, Israel, Italy, France and Serbia. In 2015, the project is closing off with two final editathons in Spain and Greece. On average over 30 participants would attend the edit-a-thons. Hundreds of images were uploaded by participating museums and these were used in many articles. On average about 10-20 new fashion-related articles were written at these events, and many more were improved and expanded.

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[6] See Europeana strategic plan 2015-2020.

- a copyright-compatibility report

This needs to be prioritized in the early stages of the creation of all project proposals that (partly) aim at crowdsourcing, community engagement and/or (creative) reuse. Freely reusable content is a must-have for such activities. It is particularly relevant for the projects wanting to use Wikimedia platforms because these only allow for the open Creative Commons licenses to be used: CC BY-SA, CC BY and CC0/PD. For data, the license must be CC-0. Closed content CC licenses like CC BY-NC cannot be used.

- early involvement of a GLAMwiki expert, preferably a dedicated staff member at the Europeana Foundation, in the planning phase of new project proposals.

Alongside a copyright-report, the wider potential advantages/risks of incorporating a Wikimedia component in any new project should be investigated and built into the project plan. This would include determining the required investment for any liaison coordination.

- a communications /outreach plan

In initial project proposals, a section is dedicated to a communication or outreach plan that takes into account the specific nature of the volunteer community of Wikimedia. A dedicated staff member at the Europeana office that knows the requirements of interacting with the Wikimedia community would be a valuable asset in this process.

- a specific liaison coordinator for managing any ongoing GLAMwiki activity in any specific project.

The level of investment will depend on the nature of the project. It can vary from contracting a Wikimedia Chapter to manage that part of a wider project full time, to dedicating existing office-based resources to the project as needed. The coordinator would seek the active involvement of volunteers across the Wikimedia community to do necessary crowdsourcing to increase the awareness and likely success of the specific project.

3.2.   Recommendation 2: Help to facilitate local connections between GLAMs and Wikimedians.

Europeana can be a lever for institutions to make them more aware of the possibilities of working with Wikimedia. Over the past years, Galleries, Libraries, Archives and Museums have increasingly sought cooperation with Wikimedia. Bigger institutions have resources and manpower to facilitate these type of projects, for instance by hosting a Wikipedian-in-Residence. Even for these bigger institutions however, engaging with Wikimedia can be quite intimidating, and it takes time and energy to build knowledge about and trust with the Wikimedia community. Equally, there are Wikimedians who live in countries that do not have existing relationships and networks with GLAMs. For instance, the lack of a GLAM-person at the chapter office, or the lack of experienced GLAM-volunteers in a country, can cause Wikimedians to remain ignorant about how to approach their local cultural organisations and about their common practices.

Europeana can provide an 'introduction and support service', in either direction, that is context-appropriate and on a case-by-case basis. Europeana, as a provider of digital expertise, should know how to link Wikimedia Chapters to GLAMs and vice-versa. In countries where there is no Wikimedia Chapter, such as Latvia and Greece, Europeana could facilitate a direct link with local Wikimedia volunteers that are interested in working with GLAMs.

Practically this could mean:
- A permanent HR investment by hiring a GLAMwiki Coordinator that, where needed, could function like a nodal point between the Wikimedia network, meaning both volunteers and chapter-staff, and GLAMs.
- Pro-actively seek to align Europeana outreach activities with Wikimedia outreach activities.

Crowdsourcing Example:
Content generation in WikiLovesMonuments
WikiLovesMonuments is a photo contest in which volunteers from the Wikimedia community take pictures of monuments, which are then published under a Creative Commons license. A pilot ran in the Netherlands in 2010, which was based on the database of monuments from the Cultural Heritage Agency of the Netherlands. This pilot resulted in 12.500 freely licensed images of monuments that were uploaded to Wikimedia Commons under a Creative Commons license for anyone to use them. In 2012 35 countries participated in the contest, which resulted in more than 350.000 images of cultural heritage submitted by over 15.000 participants. 22.000 of the images collected in 2014 are being used in articles on Wikipedia. Data improvements have also been the result of these projects, for example in a project in Austria's Bundesdenkmalamt.

3.3. Recommendation 3: Generate and distribute knowledge about Wikimedia culture among Europeana-staff.

The success of Wikimedia platforms is made possible by a large, worldwide community of volunteers, driven by a vision[7] as well as fun in their activities. There are different roles that people can take on in this community, but its structure is very democratic. This is in contrast to the more hierarchical organizational structures that we know in professional GLAM institutions and within Europeana itself. A better awareness of the specific nature of the Wikimedia Community would benefit members of staff who try to envision the default Wikimedia-component that was proposed in recommendation 1.

Practically this could mean:
- Give Europeana-staff and national aggregators 'masterclass' training on Wikimedia: its vision (and the overlap with Europeana's vision), platforms and culture.

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[7] Wikimedia vision statement: "Imagine a world in which every single human being can freely share in the sum of all knowledge. That's our commitment."

- Other Wikimedia-related internal staff activities (e.g. half hour coffee break editathon)
- Have a Wikimedia-expert available as a Europeana staff member that can educate and assist if needed.

3.4. Recommendation 4: Generate and distribute knowledge about Europeana and GLAMs among Wikimedia.

Make knowledge about GLAMs, their practices, infrastructure and culture, accessible and reusable for laymen, like the Wikimedia movement. This could entail:
- Make case studies in which GLAMs work with Wikimedia more visible for a wider audience
- Create awareness of professional practices, for instance the use of accession numbers and metadata standards like the Europeana Data Model (EDM). This is relevant for several Wikimedia platforms, but especially in the development of Wikidata
- Help ensure that GLAM perspectives are taken into account when Wikimedia projects potentially affect them (e.g. WMF development of statistics infrastructure)

3.5. Recommendation 5: Europeana should support efforts in bringing pro-forma policy to partners regarding open licensing of both content and data.

Working with Wikimedia-platforms can be a good learning experience about Intellectual Property Rights and open content. It is a great opportunity for Europeana to promote Open Licenses and their benefits to its partners.

Practically:
- Continue to produce, support and disseminate (where possible in cooperation with Wikimedia chapters) manuals with case studies about open licensing and re-use.
- Europeana can work together with Wikimedia to play a role in the development and management of Linked Open Data tools. There are many different efforts now and with some coordination this can be done more effectively, especially in coordination with Wikidata.

3.6. Recommendation 6: Europeana to gather and distribute best practices about measuring impact on the Wikimedia platforms.

Two important reasons for GLAMs to engage with Wikimedia are access to a big audience and for their material and knowledge to be reused in a relevant context.

Both of these goals need to be evaluated based on statistics about reuse and reach. The platforms of Wikimedia currently have a number of tools available to gather these statistics. It requires some expertise though to analyse and interpret the data. The tools presently available are subject to changes and better tools are being developed. Europeana should:

- Disseminate the results of evaluation of reuse, for instance by incorporating Wikimedia-statistic data into Europeana institutional level statistic dashboard
- Regularly test and report on existing and new tools, and engage with their creators and user communities, in order to improve the tools
- Create best-practice documents about measuring impact for Europeana partners, Data Providers and the Europeana Network.

3.7. Recommendation 7: Make Wikidata a central element of the ´portal to platform´ strategy

Wikidata, one of the most recent Wikimedia projects, is growing rapidly into a huge linked open data repository. It provides a long term stable, global semantic interconnection to make meaningful connections between collections and databases. Europeana websites can be built using the Wikidata database and API, outreach events can be directed specifically at Wikidata or a Europeana Data project could be envisaged.

For research activities, Wikidata can serve as a basis for research in a variety of fields (examples can be found on the Wikiproject "Wikidata for Research"). Wikidata is still very much in development, and the full impact will only become clear over time as other platforms begin to rely on it. In its current state however, Wikidata already offers sufficient opportunity for Europeana to start building an early and deep relationship with Wikidata.

Technology Example:
Translation of inscriptions in EAGLE
The EAGLE BPN, The Europeana network of Ancient Greek and Latin Epigraphy is a best-practice network co-funded by the European Commission. EAGLE will provide a single user-friendly portal to the inscriptions of the Ancient World, a massive resource for both the curious and scholarly. It uses Mediawiki software with the Wikibase extension, and collaborates with Wikimedia Germany and Wikimedia Italy. The project has proven successful already: over 1.200 users generated 10.000 translations of inscriptions in up to 13 languages. These got over half a million views.

- Provide awareness of the value of Wikidata for GLAMs by initiating and stimulating pilot projects, writing up and publicising case studies
- Wikidata can function as a point of Authority-control (instead of Wikipedia) and provide two-way traffic of data improvement. Linking Europeana items to

Wikidata integrates it with diverse other authority projects (e.g. VIAF, Getty vocabularies[8])

- Europeana has a lot of knowledge about metadata standards and data models for GLAMs. The Wikidata community could profit from this domain knowledge. A yearly meeting of Europeana metadata experts and active members of the Wikidata community is recommended
- A yearly hackathon with developers employed by Europeana and volunteers from the Wikidata community
- Create a standard mapping between the different EDM profiles and Wikidata Datamodel
- Integrate Wikidata identifiers with Europeana's metadata (its defined vocabulary)
- More institutions contributing collections to the Europeana database so they can be used on Wikidata.

3.8. Recommendation 8: Europeana should continue to invest in technology that improves the interoperability between GLAMs and Wikimedia platforms.

With the creation of the GLAMwiki Toolset, Europeana (in partnership with four local Wikimedia Chapters) has stepped into the gap that exists between professional GLAM institutions wanting to share their open content for use on Wikipedia, and the platforms of Wikimedia. The process of envisioning and creating the tool shows that there is a need for a larger scale organization, with a helicopter view of what is needed by GLAMs, to (co-)create the technology to improve the interoperability between GLAMs (their collections, data and knowledge) and Wikimedia platforms.

- Further improvements should be made to the GLAMwiki Toolset. To date, over 320.000 files have been uploaded to Wikimedia Commons via the Toolset[9]. The learning curve for working with the Toolset is still rather large, making it hard for GLAMs with limited resources to use it. Europeana should continue to improve the Toolset, making it more accessible and easy to use.
- Europeana could play a role in researching the options for the linking of data with Wikidata (see recommendation 7) and ways in which specialized knowledge in GLAMs can be made available to the volunteers who write Wikipedia.

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[8] There are other possible routes for linking Europeana items with authority projects. This task force however, believes that Wikidata will be increasingly central to authority control. The importance of Wikidata is illustrated by the fact that Google recently ended its Freebase project stating that Wikidata is better-suited to lead an open collaborative knowledge base.
[9] This number includes uploads done by GLAMs themselves and uploads done by volunteers.

3.9. Recommendation 9: Europeana should pursue joint applications for external funding opportunities

A more systematic approach to identify relevant joint external funding opportunities should be developed. Europeana's reputation, combined with Wikimedia Chapters' brand visibility and pan-European presence, would form a very strong and EU wide alliance with supporting competencies, and hence increase the chances for external funding.

The older European Wikimedia chapters have increasing experience in applying for external grant funding and in some circumstances they have also pooled their resources to coordinate.

Funding is not a goal in itself but a means to an end. Therefore, the aforementioned eight recommendations would be the valid topics in which to investigate funding opportunities, as they are the identified areas of synergy between Europeana and Wikimedia.

Practically:

- When applying for specific project funding, Europeana should contact the relevant Wikimedia chapter(s) to see if joint-application or supporting statements are possible.
- European Union funding calls
- University-consortium and national research-council funding bodies
- Wikimedia Foundation project grants and other organisations which fund 'open' topics.

3.10. Recommendation 10: Europeana should investigate becoming the first Wikimedia "Movement Partner"

The Wikimedia Foundation has several official ways of formally recognising a relationship - the most well known being a "Chapter". A new type of relationship that is being developed is the "movement partner" - a format specifically designed for non-Wikimedia organisations that share similar values. This format is still new, and the rights, rules and expectations are not yet decided upon. If Europeana became the first official Wikimedia movement partner, it would raise the visibility of Europeana (and its operating principles) within the open-access community. Aside from being a stakeholder in the design of the Movement Partner concept itself, if successful, this could potentially give Europeana access to a trademark license, streamlined access to grants, access to developers, invitations to events etc.

Publicly declaring an interest in the concept of being a Movement Partner would kickstart a, probably slow, process to determine what such a status would *mean* in practice. Once that process has a reasonably clear outcome, Europeana could decide whether it wished to formally apply.

4.   Conclusions

The ten strategic recommendations listed could be responded to in a variety of ways and it is beyond the scope of the TaskForce to decide the best method. However, because they are highly interrelated, it is our opinion that many could be addressed operationally both simultaneously and effectively. Therefore, our overarching *operational recommendations* to address the mentioned *strategic recommendations* include hiring a full time Europeana-Wikimedia coordinator to operationalise many of the suggested recommendations. This coordinator would both be involved in the planning stage of new projects, but would also ensure continuity in those projects that have a Wikimedia component.

Another common thread running through the operational recommendations is the (further) integration of Europeana projects, infrastructure, tools and procedures with those of Wikimedia. Finally, Europeana should make a continued effort to measure and evaluate case studies involving Wikimedia in one way or another, and actively disseminate these studies in its network.

The task force believes these recommendation to provide the groundwork for the successful continuation and expansion of the cooperation between Europeana and Wikimedia.