Paper 1B - Public Europeana Foundation Supervisory Board Meeting

30 March, 2022
15:00 - 17:00 CET
[Google Meet](#)

Public précis of minutes of 9 February 2022 Supervisory Board meeting

Action proposed: Board to approve for publication on Europeana Pro

---

Attendees

Elisabeth Niggemann (EN) - Chair

Joke van der Leeuw-Roord (JLR) - Vice-chair

Marco de Niet (MdN)

Taja Vovk van Gaal (TVG)

Kerstin Herlt (KH)

Brid Dooley (BD)

Anne Torreggiani (AT)

Martina Bagnoli (MB)

Wim Nieuwenhuijse (WN)

Harry Verwayen (HV)

Albert Verhaar (AV)

Hannah Baker Hitzhusen (HBH)

Valentine Charles (VC)

Shadi Ardalan (SA)

Some discussions are omitted from the précis of the minutes as they are deemed confidential to the Supervisory Board at this point in time. The public meeting papers and documents referred to in these minutes can be seen on [Europeana Pro](#).
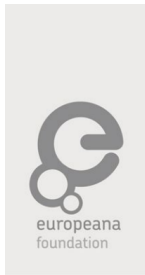
Opening

The meeting was held in person and online on 9 February, 2022, chaired by Elisabeth Niggemann (EN). Five board members attended the meeting in person and two online forming a quorum. The chair-elect Martina Bagnoli and the new member Wim Nieuwenhuijse attended the meeting. The proposed agenda was adopted by the Supervisory Board.

I. Actions and decisions from previous meetings

The board has approved the minutes of 24 November 2021 meeting and the public précis of those minutes, as well as the minutes of 14 December 2021 extraordinary meeting via email. All actions from previous meetings have been completed. After the tender process, the board will discuss sustainable longer term funding for Europeana Foundation (EF) and explore ways to strengthen relationships with the Member States and a PR strategy to support that. In that context, the board will also explore the opportunity of 'building co-programmed partnership' which Kerstin introduced last year, and will discuss it with DG CONNECT after the tender.

II. Governance

The Board discussed working with the Advisory Board.

Decision 1 - The board approved to invite Susan Hazan and Jeftha Pattikawa to the Advisory Board. For the future iterations and additions an open and transparent process needs to be put in place. A committee with HV, Brid Dooley (BD) and a representative of the Advisory Board as members, will scope out and propose a long-term working group as an interface for the three boards and set up a framework for: its composition, process, working method and remit to look into the Advisory Board membership, good functioning, induction, and how to make best of the interactions of the three boards.

III. Europeana Foundation management, operational update and business plan

EF is operating in the last year of Europeana DSI-4 contract under CEF and if we win the tender, in September we will transit to the next contract for the Common European Data Space for Cultural Heritage under the Digital Europe Programme (DEP). A full management report was submitted to the board before the meeting and a more detailed update on multilingualism and user research was presented to the board.

Multilingualism is a big topic for EF and for the European Commission (EC). EF is currently working on and progressing in four main use cases: 1) *Navigate the Europeana website* - users can benefit from translation of User Interface (UI) in their own language (24 EU official languages + Basque). It always requires adaptation to new features and to feedback. 2) *Read editorial content* - users of the Europeana website have access to more editorials in their own languages. Percentage of exhibitions published in more than one language has increased from 50% to 64%. 3) *Read item text* - users of the website can translate the metadata description of an item in their language of choice. The feature was released in October 2021. 4) *Search Europeana* - with the Spanish search pilot, a user searching the Spanish version of Europeana will obtain more results described in English next to the Spanish ones. Spanish to English translation was implemented in the Spanish version of Europeana in December 2021. With the Spanish pilot in place, Europeana can continue investigating the need for translation in search and get more information about usage. We haven't gathered much feedback from users. Data providers have given most of the feedback. One issue highlighted by data providers regards the translation of named entities (creator name, organisations. Item translation works through these steps: 1) Check on the translated metadata provided by a partner (includes the additional translation provided by vocabularies). 2) Check if the partner or project provided translation as an enrichment. 3) Automated translation powered by the Google Translate API. The current setting allows for 5.000.000 characters estimated up to 10.000 record views per day. The feature only returns results for the 24 EU official languages. At the moment we are using Google Translate API. It's a paid service. BD introduced the [European Language Resource Coordination](#) - a collaborative community initiative consisting in collecting Language Resources and Language Tools. The initiative covers all non commercial research activities in various domains such as NLP, social sciences and humanities. It'd be useful to explore. The board pointed out that prioritisation of users - who are in most need of the translation service - is a brilliant yet an enormous and also an important effort. We collaborate with Europeana Translate, gathering data for training translation engines and preparing the architecture for the delivery and integration of English translation for 25 million metadata records from Europeana back into our services. We also collaborate with the Generic Services projects on validation of enrichment (with a focus on translation type of enrichment). It was suggested the label metadata in the website UI should change to catalogue and reference for ordinary users. The most challenging area for Europeana is multilingual search. The multilingual experience will only be complete when we have the translation cycle complete, i.e. language X to English to language Y. Focus on enrichment of underlying data is also a priority. Crowdsourcing and community are key in multilingualism. The difficulties related to multilingualism do not affect the performance of the overall infrastructure.
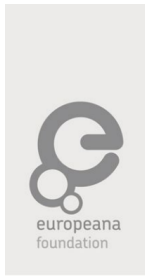
User research - To conduct a user research, EF employed a research agency to contact two user groups: 963 newsletter subscribers - a captive audience, of a total population of 50,000 approximately. 30% of them work in cultural heritage. The second group 165 regular Europeana website visitors of a total population of approximately 450,000 visitors/month, 35% of which working for cultural heritage. The response achieved among both target groups is sufficiently large to be able to make statistically reliable statements about both groups. Website visitors are of all ages—with more than a quarter between 10-29, and another quarter between 50-59. Website visitors have a substantial group of 10-19 year olds, and 20-29 year olds. The majority of both website visitors and newsletter subscribers are from across Europe. More than 1 in 5 visitors is studying; almost half are working. Areas are education, research, cultural heritage. Three out of ten visitors come to Europeana to find a specific object; newsletter subscribers browse content to get inspired. All are very interesting and useful insights. TVG and AT are interested in more time to discuss user research and participation with HBH. In preparation for the tender, EF is organising workshops around user research and participation. The board is welcome to join the workshops[1]. It's interesting to see how user research and translation/multilingualism come together when we think of other user groups from non European backgrounds who are part of our society today like Arabic and Chinese or South American communities. Europeana should also decide if it goes where market opportunity takes it or whether the diversity matters most.

Hybrid working culture - We've made a significant departure from what we define working space where we started and where we are moving to. As a networked organisation, employees will decide the location to work from, which best meet their and the organisation's needs.

Management report
The board asked about the risk of Metis or the Sandbox not having all the expected functionalities implemented at once. From the aggregators perspective, some issues might arise in data processes. So far EF has mitigated such issues and data providers have never been affected.

---

[1]
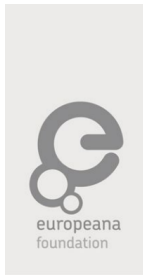
IV. Finance & financial sustainability

The Board discussed the Europeana Foundation finances, cashflow, funding, 2021 annual report and 2022 budget.

Decision 2 - The board approved budget 2022 based on the assumption that EF wins the tender.

V. Business Plan 2022

This year's Business Plan provides a high level overview of what the Foundation is aiming to achieve, and why. It does not provide in detail how our organisation defines its objectives and how it is going to achieve its goals. The Business Plan is in essence intended to be motivational and seen as a communication tool. It should be read in conjunction with our implementation plan which details what we are working on in relation to the Core Service (85% of our work) and other projects. There is no budget in the Business Plan due to the tender. EF deliberately decided not to set a substantially new business plan for 2022. Through the development of a vision for the tender, EF will get a clearer view of planning for the next round of business planning including a more user oriented approach, reflecting on access for all and a commitment to understand user groups and their differentiated needs as pointed out by AT. Through the exercise of user research, EF hopes to be able to make Europeana known in specific segments. It'd be useful to report against annual business plans in the way we do the Europeana DSI reporting. The board would like to see how the organisation is progressing towards yearly business plan goals. It's also a good way of thinking about strategy. Clear use of the terms "Common European Data Space", "digital space" and "public space" in the business plan is recommended to avoid misunderstanding.

Decision 3: The board approved Business Plan 2022.

VI. Board evaluation

Due to lack of time, the board didn't discuss the evaluation. It will be discussed at the next board meeting.

VII. Transition and farewell

Decision 4: The outgoing Chair Elisabeth Niggemann and Vice-chair Joke van der Leeuw Roord stepped down. Chair-elect Martina Bagnoli and new member Wim Nieuwenhuijse took up office. Taja Vovk van Gaal took over as Vice-chair. Marco de Niet and Kerstin Herlt took over governance and finance respectively. The Board awarded the honorary title of "Europeana
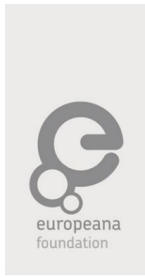
Champion" to Elisabeth and Joke for their extraordinary and longstanding contribution to Europeana. It's to honour their extraordinary leadership and outstanding achievements and solely as a celebration and encouragement for future connections. They will always be welcome to future events of the Foundation and the possibility to chair a session, handing over an award, or similar.

End of the meeting

The précis of the minutes is a public document on Europeana Pro.