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I. Overview

This report presents findings and outcomes from a sense-making process that involved 64 participants from 22 countries over 3 weeks during the month of June, 2020. The process was phase 1 of an ongoing effort by the Europeana Foundation to investigate digital transformation and capacity building across the European cultural heritage sector.

Our mandate from the Europeana Foundation was to design and facilitate a sense-making process that would be valuable and enriching for participants; would help participants and Europeana identify opportunities for growth and positive action during the turmoil of the COVID-19 crisis; and would shed light on Europeana's strategic mission to "empower the cultural heritage sector in its digital transformation."

For this report, we summarised, condensed, and simplified 120,000 words of notes and data down to a format that can be read and understood in one sitting — while also trying to do justice to the breadth and depth of the ideas and perspectives of the participants.

In the analysis, we have prioritised speed, rather than perfection, to share results so they can be used to stimulate dialogue and catalyse action as soon as possible. Throughout the process we have put participants in charge of describing and making sense of their own experiences as cultural professionals. We structured this report so that readers can perform their interpretation of the discussions and insights that are presented here.

Ten main themes describe the bulk of the perspectives and possibilities discussed by the participants in the workshops and surveys. These ten themes, which can be seen as important narratives in the digital GLAM sector at the moment, are:

- Theme 1: The possibility of change
- Theme 2: A new perspective on digital
- Theme 3: Social impact and relevance
- Theme 4: Audiences and diversity
- Theme 5: Our core values and culture
- Theme 6: Overcoming the digital divides
- Theme 7: The organisation of cultural heritage
- Theme 8: A networked sector
- Theme 9: Individual growth and learning
- Theme 10: Space for innovation and experiments

We have taken care to share as many of participant's original thoughts and ideas as we can, including outlier statements that were insightful but not easily categorised. To increase the diversity of ideas discussed in the process, we have included a section of ten additional perspectives — some discussed or referenced only once by participants during the process — to complement this main narrative and provide other opportunities to explore capacity building for digital transformation in cultural heritage.

The report also provides insights and analysis with regards to four specific goals that Europeana set for this sense-making process. This includes an exploration of the 'zeitgeist' of the sector, the aspirations and capacity, a discussion on the meaning of digital transformation, and an exploration of new roles and actions that Europeana may take.

A separate and complimentary research project developed by Culture24, a UK-based non-profit consultancy, will explore the issues of digital transformation and capacity building through interviews with experts within and beyond the cultural sector.

In addition to the findings and outcomes of all the conversations together, the process has proven meaningful and applicable to the individual participants. Europeana is conducting a post-process evaluation with participants, but among the many positive responses that have been received, four stand out:

- "This process is helping me reflect on my situation; I have been using the things that have been coming out of these conversations in my writing and talks."
- "This process gave me time to think and calm down. To think things through... It's been very valuable to do this here."
- "Looking back at the sessions, I feel that there has been real value in the process of reflecting collectively on the past and the present and envisioning the future together."
- "Hearing about other people's experiences, both during the COVID-19 pandemic and in general, has confirmed my wish to take action and take responsibility for change within our sector."

We would like to thank all the participants and the Europeana Foundation, Europeana Network Association, and the Europeana Aggregators Forum for their time, effort, expertise, and integrity throughout this process.

— *Michael Peter Edson and Jasper Visser, 29 June 2020.*

A note on change

COVID-19 was merely one of many changes that influenced a sector already going through considerable changes for decades. Soon, Black Lives Matters overtook COVID-19 as the main topic of conversation. For a sector undergoing perpetual change, we feel our ability to talk about change and reflect on it is still far from mature. Many conversations have dealt with the signs and expressions of change, rather than the underlying transformation. We have tried to address this in our analysis.

A note on ‘digital transformation’

There is no universally accepted definition of ‘digital transformation.’ For this process, we have decided not to define it, but allow the participants to use it as they see fit. This opened the door for some discussion on its meaning, which we have tried to summarise.

A note on quotations and formatting

Participants in this process were promised that their contributions would be treated confidentially. Therefore, none of the quotations in this document is attributed to a specific participant. Where this may be deduced, we transcribed the quote to hide the participant’s identity. For readability, paraphrased quotations are indicated with square brackets ([]), e.g. “[A transcription of something a participant said.]”

Reading guide

This is not a report that is meant to be read passively then put on a shelf. We want you to be an active reader and decide what the statements and ideas from these workshops mean to you in your personal experience. What resonates with you? How do these ideas align with your own experience and goals? And what can you put into action now to help your work, your colleagues, or your community become better, stronger, or more resilient?

The following *active reading guide* draws from the Design Thinking and LEGO Serious Play® methodologies to suggest a way of reading this report, individually or in groups, to get the most out of what's here and get your brain working on how to put your ideas into action.

1. Set aside about 90 minutes

Turn off your email and phone, pour yourself something to drink, and find a quiet, comfortable place where you can read and work with no distractions. If you're doing these activities in a group, find a place where you won't be disturbed. Allowing yourself enough time and space to read and think will dramatically improve what you get out of this report.

2. Be an active reader (60 minutes)

Print this report — or open it in a word processing application, e-book reader, or PDF viewer that allows you to make highlights and notes directly on the digital page — then read it, highlighting passages as you go. What jumps out at you? What would you like to know more about, comment on, discuss with colleagues, or build into your own work? Don't over-analyse; just take in the contents and make highlights in one uninterrupted flow.

3. Look for patterns (10 minutes)

Now that you've read it and made your highlights go through the document again, just looking at what you highlighted. Do any patterns or themes emerge? Write down four or five patterns — and any other thoughts or questions you have after looking at your highlights.

4. “How might we...?” (10 minutes)

Based on the notes you made in the step above, complete the following “how might we...?” statements. These will help you move from an *observational perspective* to one that is oriented towards brainstorming and action.

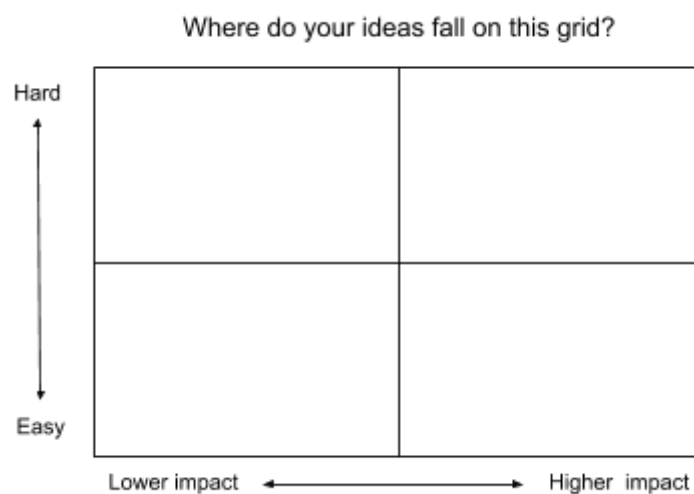
Not all of your notes will fit immediately into these *how might we* statements, so you might need to make a few adjustments to your notes or the questions or create new *how might we* statements altogether. Write down as many answers as you can in 10 minutes.

- How might we get more/new/more diverse people involved in [your idea]?
- How might we test or prototype [your idea] in a couple of hours?

- How might we fund [your idea] in unusual ways?
- How might we make [your idea] more playful, or more serious?
- How might your idea become global? Or work in a single neighborhood?

5. **Hard-easy, large-small (9 minutes)**

Draw a 2x2 grid like the one below and place each of your “how might we?” statements on it. Are any of the things you’re interested in from this report easy to accomplish and high impact? For ideas that are hard to do or lower-impact, how could you make them easier or more impactful? What can you do to start working on the easy /high-impact ideas today?



6. **Share with a friend or colleague (1 minute)**

Change is more comfortable when people work together. Make a list of three people you would like to talk to about your ideas and send them an email inviting them to talk — they’ll be happy you did. As the saying goes, *many hands make light work*.

Thanks to Dana Mitroff Silvers of Designing Insights LLC for her suggestions.

II. Ten main themes

In this section, we present our view of the landscape of ideas that were verbalised, discussed, and written about by the participants of Europeana’s sense-making process. The landscape of ideas consists of hundreds of conversations and ideas. To facilitate your exploration of this landscape, we’ve grouped these in ten main themes and an additional presentation of ideas that stood alone in this process or resisted easy categorisation in part IV.

The ten main themes form a narrative, as told by the participants, about their experiences during the COVID-19 pandemic and their thoughts about capacity building and digital transformation in cultural heritage today. There are many different perspectives on this narrative. Other people — and many readers — will have an alternative narrative or additional perspective.

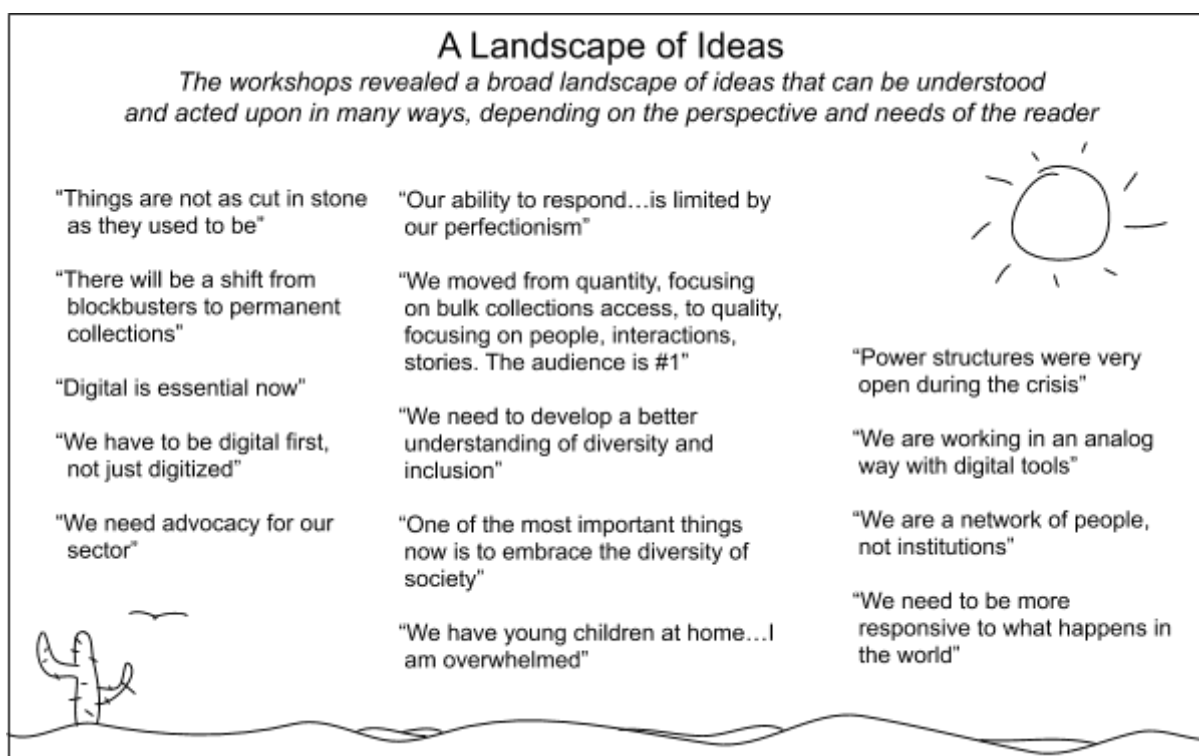


Figure 2: An example of participant responses, which can be grouped into a large number of themes that represent a landscape of ideas, insights, and possibilities.

Every theme and its description is crafted from comments participants have made in the workshops and surveys. To protect the identities of participants, quotations that could be attributed to a single participant have been paraphrased.

Theme 1: The possibility of change

Participants share a sense of urgency and enthusiasm for a decisive change in the GLAM-sector to respond to long-simmering developments within the realm of social justice, health and wellbeing, the environment, and economic development. They understand that our choices in the coming time may turn the sector for the better or the worse.

Headlines

- Participants feel an urgency and — to some extent — enthusiasm for change in the GLAM-sector, and some notice things have begun changing.
- There is considerable uncertainty among participants about the direction the sector should take. Several participants stated that there would be more than one direction the sector can and may take, causing a split in the sector.
- This uncertainty is coupled with existential dilemmas, e.g., with regards to funding and the business model of (digital) cultural heritage.
- Some participants, especially those with close ties to their ‘customers,’ appear to have been more active and adaptable than average — for example, people working in the field of education. The actions and experiences of this group can be a driver of positive change.

What we heard

- **Change and directions**
 - A participant said when predicting a possible future, that going forward, the sector may be “more or less the same it is today,” which will lead to further stagnation, decline, loss of influence, budget cuts, and more stagnation.
 - Another stated that within the sector, “[familiar patterns will cease to be the default]” as the world around us and its ground rules change abruptly and irreversibly.
 - “Things are not as cut in stone as they used to be.”
 - “[Changes have taken place, but for a transformation to occur, these changes have to be permanent. I wish I could be confident this will happen, but I have doubts.]”
 - “[We will move away from a physical presence to a presence created by community building and generosity.]”
 - “[There will be a shift from blockbusters to permanent collections.]”
- **For better or worse**

- To share their thoughts about the necessity for innovation in the cultural sector now, a participant told the story about how dying trees put all their energy in their fruits.
- There is a challenge in, as a participant said, our reliance on a 'monopoly on access to culture' as a business model. Local organisations lose their purpose and relevance in the competition with international GLAMs and non-cultural organisations (such as Google) in a purely online world.
- “[I see the split in the sector between more traditional and more modern organisations become clearer in how they are reacting to COVID-19.]”
- **Responsibility for change**
 - “Change is a process where we cannot just be witnesses.”
 - “[A dependency on public funding is a risk for the sector.]”
 - Said a participant: “We have to ask ourselves, what was acceptable in the past, is that still acceptable now?”

Moving forward

- Europeana can spend some time and effort identifying the ‘leading coalition’ or drivers of change in its network. These people combine a sense of urgency for change with enthusiasm to change and the agency or status to create impact.
- Once known, this ‘leading coalition’ and others in the network can be empowered with training in change management and best practices to turn their ideas into action.
- More broadly, the network can be supported in the process of making everyday choices that help their organisations and the sector move forward. E.g., with guides on how to support social justice as a collections manager or a manual for greening your digital events that can be implemented without prior approval from senior management.

Theme 2: A new perspective on digital

Many participants told stories about how, for a short time during the COVID-19 pandemic, digital took center stage in the GLAM sector and received broad appreciation from audiences, leadership, and other stakeholders. However, the champions of digital culture will need to prove that it is more than a backup option for physical buildings and collections. Participants spoke of the need for evidence and proof of the strategic impact of digital, the sustainability of digital business models, and the creative potential of further digitisation of cultural heritage.

Headlines

- Many participants agreed that the COVID-19 crisis has created a moment of opportunity for 'digital.' Digital was more broadly appreciated than before as a tool to reach audiences, collaborate within organisations, cooperate with others, and as a way to stay in touch with each other under lockdown.
- The reach of digital tools expanded into new demographics, e.g., grandparents.
- But participants noted this positive development comes with a challenge that unless we are able to prove the impact of digital and communicate about this impact, it may remain a second-rate solution reserved only for moments of crisis.
- Participants asked for examples of digital business models that work and deliver value in a predictable way and for the tools to develop them. They noted that a digital business model is more than a traditional business model with some digital elements.
- As participants said, many of the digital technologies, tools, and platforms that have proven to be important during the COVID-19 pandemic have been around for a while. We haven't exhausted their creative potential to reach people and deliver value.
- Participants hope that in time, we will stop talking about digital cultural heritage and consider 'blended' approaches to cultural heritage where physical and digital complement each other as equals.

What we heard

- **Digital center stage**
 - "Finally, the discussion about the need for digital ended." (In other words, the debate was won.)
 - "[Digital collections and experiences are no longer seen as a threat to in-person, physical experiences.]"
 - "Previously, digital was nice to have. Now it is essential."
 - "In [my organisation], my colleagues discovered that digital content and communication is a valuable tool for research, creative development, and engaging with audiences,"
 - "Even the most [conservative organisations] moved online really well."
 - "[Society has learned to be interconnected and digital has proven its lifeline.]"
 - A participant observed many people becoming more confident in using digital devices. For example, grandparents that use Zoom to talk to their grandchildren.
- **Challenges**
 - A participant mentioned as a challenge for the sector our ability to find a way to have a broader impact on society, and reach more people.
 - "[Digital and physical experiences will be blended in the near future.]"
 - "Let the future not swing between digital and physical." (The future should be digital and physical together.)
 - "[We have to be digital first, not just digitised]"

- **Further developments**

- A participant mentioned that Europeana should do an impact assessment to communicate the importance and relevance of digital visitors better.
- A participant noted the opportunity to work on the impact of digital on climate change-related topics.
- “[We need a code of ethics for further digitisation.]”
- “We need more advocacy work on the importance of digitisation.”
- Participants said that Europeana should help to develop digital business models.

Moving forward

- Participants introduced a new (within the context of cultural heritage) digital vocabulary in the workshops, often borrowing from the educational sector: blended approaches, “flipping” the museum/library. Creating and sharing this new vocabulary may help the sector have a more advanced debate and understanding of the role of digital in cultural heritage while moving forward.
- The digital GLAM sector is closely associated with other sectors, including academia and education, which have similarly gone through considerable (digital) changes because of the COVID-19 crisis. It will pay off to learn from each other.
- Europeana, in collaboration with partners, could do an impact assessment of the value added by ‘digital’ to the sector because of the COVID-19 crisis.
- Europeana and the network need to continue their work on (digital) business model creation and share the lessons learned, both recently and in the past, more widely.

Theme 3: Social impact and relevance

Participants strongly feel that digital cultural heritage is essential for societies, communities, and individuals, and GLAMs have a role to play in themes such as social justice, climate action, and diversity. Yet, so far, we have failed to make a coherent, convincing case for our work.

Participants asked for a powerful story about the social impact and relevance of their work, supported by data and case studies. We need to be better advocates for our work at all levels.

Headlines

- Participants believe in the importance of the GLAM sector for society.

- Participants recognise and stress that cultural heritage and their organisations have a role to play in societal trends and developments, including themes such as social justice, climate action, and diversity. So far, by-and-large GLAMs play too small a part in these and other themes.
- Listening to the participants, there is an urgent need for a convincing story about the relevance of cultural heritage for societies, communities, and individuals. Not a story ‘we’ believe, but a story everyone believes, and that can be supported by research and case studies.
- Participants feel everybody in the sector needs to communicate more and more effectively about the impact of (digital) cultural heritage on societies, communities, and individuals. Where we find this information to be lacking, we need to complement it with new research. This includes advocacy, at all levels, for the sector.

What we heard

- **Importance**
 - “[Cultural heritage can add to the development of citizenship.]”
 - “Our job is also very important [to society], but we have to prove our impact.”
- **Social impact**
 - “Sustainability is a key value for the future.”
 - “I would like to see GLAMs be part of wider discussions in society.”
 - “Our ability to respond to, for instance, Black Lives Matter is limited by our perfectionism.”
 - “[We should be more active with regards to the New Green Deal and be greener ourselves.]”
 - A participant mentioned as a challenge for the sector the shift to address more socially sensitive themes and to become more relevant.
 - A participant’s edge prediction read that in 2025, GLAMS will be much more socially involved.
- **A coherent story**
 - Participants asked the question: what are we if we are not a visitor attraction? What are we, if we are not a physical space?
 - A participant stated that we need more general awareness, more lobbying, and more data on the societal value of cultural heritage.
- **Advocacy and storytelling**
 - A participant said that we compete for public support with others who do a much better job of conveying why they are important.
 - “We need advocacy for our sector: why are we here?”
 - “If we *think* we are not important, we are not important.”
 - A participant stated that we need to get better at “advocating our relevance and empower people to tell stories” as well as to help our audiences “become part of our common story.”
 - A participant warned of “the temptations of becoming (...) entertainment machines.” Corporate interests need to be balanced with social value. In

order to achieve that, the participant said we need “more general awareness, more lobbying, and more data on the societal value of culture and heritage.”

- A participant said that Europeana could become a lobbyist for GLAMs. They need to work on public and political awareness, funding, programs, and responsible ways for cultural institutions to work with public money.

Moving forward

- Using the best available research and data as well as case studies, Europeana or another network needs to create a simple, shareable, convincing, and compelling story about the impact of (digital) cultural heritage.
 - This story can take the form of a traditional ‘vision’: what would society lose if there were no more GLAMs, and what is the greatest, near-impossible task we set for ourselves?
 - Alternatively, it can be the story of one institution that is convincing enough that it becomes a template for all GLAMs.
- A ‘research portal’ should bring together the research, data, and case studies that support this story, so GLAM professionals can tailor the story to their specific context.
- Europeana can set up training for GLAM professionals to help them become better advocates for the sector at all levels and apply lobby mechanisms and storytelling to emphasise the role of cultural heritage in society.
- Persuading others of the value of culture in society is likely to be a difficult, long-term project that will require sustained strategic effort at a variety of levels over many years.

Theme 4: Audiences and diversity

We have been talking about our audiences being number one for decades, yet many participants have begun to think that their work excludes more people than it welcomes. Participants feel we have failed to translate our past statements about audiences and diversity into actual inclusive audience-centered behavior, strategies, and actions on our part. We urgently need to take a significant step forward in understanding and working in partnership with all members of society. This means also facing our own biases and exclusive attitudes and practices.

Headlines

- Participants emphasise that the COVID-19 crisis and other recent developments have put the focus once again on audiences.
- Participants, by and large, have a minimal understanding of their audiences and the impact their actions have on them. They are aware of this.
- Black Lives Matter has put a spotlight on the lack of diversity and representation in large parts of the digital GLAM sector. Participants recognise this and see it as a weakness, but did not offer strategies for fixing it in the sessions.
- There is a call for more audience engagement in digital cultural heritage, and for support to develop audience engagement and co-creation techniques.
- Some participants noted that to overcome the lack of diversity and audience engagement, GLAMs will need to have a different approach to staffing and leadership.

What we heard

- **Audiences are #1**
 - “[We moved from quantity, focusing on bulk collections access, to quality, focusing on people, interactions, stories.]”
 - A participant said that to fulfill the promise, audiences, patrons, and customers need to be given top priority. “The Audience is #1!”
- **Understand and engage**
 - “We should do better to understand and reach our audience.”
 - “[To avoid self-rationalisation, we need to base what we do on our users’ needs.]”
 - A participant said that Europeana should “[collate and share audience-related data.]”
 - Another’s edge prediction stated that in 2025, “[GLAMs have a clearer vision with regards to audience engagement and its relevance in community-building efforts.]” They have more trust in their visitors and include them in decision-making and transformation processes.
- **Diversity and inclusion**
 - A participant noted the opportunity to develop a more realistic, effective, nuanced understanding of diversity and inclusion.
 - “We [the participants] are not a mirror of our society.”
 - “We have a massive problem with representation in the (...) sector.”
 - A participant said that all GLAMs are “inherently biased, discriminatory, marginalising, and oppressive.” We need to answer the question about how we will talk about this and hold up a mirror to society.
 - A participant asked for more opportunities for organisational responsibilities towards inclusion, diversity, and a commitment to good practice in the

curatorship of multiple narratives. Europeana, together with others, can play a role in addressing systemic racism, xenophobia, and intolerance.

Moving forward

- The conversation about audiences in the sector needs to move from a conversation about the “why” (for example, “we need to reach more and more diverse audiences”) to a conversation about the “what” and “how” of diversity and audience engagement (“here’s how we reached a new community”).
- The sector needs to increase its understanding of our audiences — those we reach and those we do not. A step forward may be to start bringing together all available data and information about audiences in one place to provide more data to all organisations in the sector.
- Europeana can support GLAMs to translate their intentions with regards to the diversity of their staff into hiring practices that would actually create a more diverse workforce within digital cultural heritage.
- Europeana can use its network to catalyse the wider transformation of the sector from exclusive to inclusive, not only in terms of people, but audiences, content, and partnerships as well.

Theme 5: Our core values and culture

It is clear from the conversations that participants assume a set of core values and shared goals for the digital GLAM-sector. Yet, these values and our culture are not explicit, not shared, and are understood differently by different participants. We can strengthen our community by having an open and ongoing conversation about our core values and culture and by inviting diverse voices to challenge our values and culture. This conversation is linked to the conversation about the meaning of digital transformation.

Headlines

- In the sessions, participants questioned the assumed values of our sector, the way they are translated into behavior and choices, and the degree to which they are actually shared between people and organisations.
- From the responses we got from the participants, it is clear that they are not experienced in discussing the values underlying their work and the culture this implies.

- Nonetheless, it seems that participants feel like they are part of a community of like-minded people that they appreciate and trust. This community is in flux, and participants appreciate open and honest conversations about the community, its values, and culture as a way to make it stronger.
- The conversations and uncertainties about digital, change and transformation, and digital transformation seem to be intertwined with this larger conversation. In other words, to understand the digital transformation of cultural heritage we need to understand more profoundly what the role of cultural heritage is. (see *also part IV, Europeana. goal 3.*)

What we heard

- **Values and culture**
 - “[Our culture of perfectionism stands in the way of rapid responses.]”
 - “[We have a collective culture that is holding us back.]”
 - A participant said that the true value of the sector is our people.
 - A participant asked, “When we are [overworked and burned-out], what will remain of our values?”
 - “Our approach shows our true values,” by which the participant meant shy organisations and nervous staff.
- **A new set of values**
 - “[Our values are good, but our approach to them needs to change. We need to move from the ideal world to the real world.]”
 - “Are the values we have shared values [within the sector at large], or values in our little bubble?”
 - A participant said that “[GLAMs are inherently conservative and therefore responsive instead of innovative.]”
- **Open and inclusive discussion**
 - “Open discussions are a great way to build the community.”
 - “We should have more courage to have more open-minded conversations.”
 - “[We need to ask ourselves questions all the time.]”
 - “Our most important value is inclusivity, but then we also need to include people of color in these conversations.”
- **Digital transformation**
 - *For an in-depth exploration of the conversations about the meaning of digital transformation, please see part IV. Europeana, goal 3.*

Moving forward

- A shared understanding of the values and culture of (digital) cultural heritage will help GLAM professionals improve their understanding of many of the other themes that were discussed in the sessions, including those pertaining to audience, impact, and relevance. Suggestions to develop this understanding have been provided in part V.

- Such a shared understanding will also enable us to discuss the term *digital transformation* and have more productive conversations about the ideas and concepts the term represents.
- To foster the process to greater understanding, Europeana can continue to stimulate open conversations and discussions in the sector. When designed carefully and with the right support, these conversations may lead to a stronger community that is enabled also to achieve its other objectives.
- Any conversations about the values and culture of the sector need to focus on both the 'espoused' (ideal) and 'enacted' (actual) values of the sector, both now and for the future.

Theme 6: Overcoming the digital divides

Participants recognise at least three digital divides in digital cultural heritage. First, a social and technological divide between people who have access to and feel welcomed by digital cultural heritage and those who don't. Then, an inter-organisational divide between GLAMs that are digitised and connected and those who are not. Thirdly, they recognise an intra-organisational divide between colleagues who are digitally-savvy and literate and those who are not. To various degrees, participants feel that as a sector, we need to bridge all three divides.

Headlines

- Participants acknowledge that the COVID-19 crisis has laid bare a digital divide in society between those that have access to digital tools and know how to use them and those who do not. This divide exacerbates the exclusion of certain communities from digital cultural heritage, education, and other services.
- Participants note that the crisis has sometimes lessened the digital divide within organisations. Yet, it hasn't disappeared, and other divides have become apparent, for example, the divide between people who are willing to experiment and those who don't.
- Participants note that there is a significant digital divide between the organisations that are part of Europeana and the large group of smaller institutions that are not yet part of the network.
- Many participants seem to feel that we need to overcome all three digital divides.

What we heard

- **Society**
 - A participant asked for recognition for, and action on, a “lack of investment in IT resources and staff” which makes working from home challenging and a barrier, for example, to people who cannot afford a laptop.
 - A participant pointed to the need for training and support to overcome the digital divide within and beyond the sector, and to understand who we are not reaching and why.
- **Organisations**
 - A participant noted that some older people with limited knowledge of digital tools had shown a willingness to learn new skills to keep working from home. Others noted that many young students who were assumed to be digitally savvy were in fact good with their mobile phones but lacked many of the skills necessary to enable distance learning.
 - A participant said that the digital divide has widened between “[digital savvy people and those more rooted in the physical domain]” with the last group appearing more lost, while digital natives thrive.
 - A participant said about their organisation that there is a digital divide between confident staff who are willing to experiment with digital practices and others. “[Staff with low confidence need training opportunities and support in developing new skills.]”
 - A participant stated that they believed colleagues who became willing to experiment with digital technologies during the COVID-19 crisis would also show an increased willingness to experiment and take risks in other areas of their work.
- **Network**
 - “[We need to get the mini organisations into the Europeana network.]”
 - A participant said that Europeana should “help bridge the gap of digital divide.”

Moving forward

- There is an audience-engagement, and inclusion opportunity in helping communities bridge the (societal) digital divide, much like public libraries have been doing for a long while.
- Europeana can support its network in crossing organisational digital divides through tools and manuals, building on case studies from the COVID-19 period.
- Some participants have mentioned their responsibility or agency in including smaller institutions in the network. Europeana can support these actions and encourage network members to help others in their country cross this divide.

Theme 7: The organisation of cultural heritage

Participants shared various perspectives on how working from home during lockdown has challenged their organisations to rethink how they are structured and organised. Hierarchies have become fluid, teams more dynamic, and information sharing and decision-making have been affected as well. Some of these changes were perceived as good; others less so. Participants want their organisations to be *updated* to be more effective and sustainable for their audiences, staff, and partners in the future.

Headlines

- The COVID-19 crisis has put organisational processes under a lot of stress, and there is a lot of variation among participants and their organisations in how well their processes stood this test. Some GLAMs were structurally and procedurally unprepared.
- Especially in the early weeks of the COVID-19 crisis, many participants experienced that hierarchies became fluid, and leadership roles changed throughout their organisations. Some organisations rebounded quickly and reinforced their hierarchies, while others seem to have changed more permanently.
- As a result, some GLAMs have gotten a taste of what it may mean to have a different hierarchical and leadership structure.
- Working from home and remotely has given new insights into working conditions, the balance between professional and private time, teamwork, and other issues that define the working environment for the participants.

What we heard

- **Processes**
 - “[When accessing content from the other side of the world is easier than accessing it from your local museum, and when all are using the same platforms for delivery (YouTube, Facebook, podcasts...) there is no advantage to being a ‘big, rich, old, official, venerable institution.’]”
 - A participant said that they thought, “we have to reevaluate how we are working. In many ways, we are working in an analog way with digital tools.” With some collective effort, the participant believed we could find “a new way forward that is based on the present and not on old remains of our analog way of working.”

- “[Many GLAMs are big institutions that are challenged to respond quickly to changing situations. It is difficult to rethink processes while we’re working.]”
- “We face a great lack of data to make decisions.”
- A participant asked how organisations can stay relevant to their communities and audiences if the very people who ensure this are not able or not allowed to carry out this work? “We need to ensure that we create fairer employment structures as well as more sustainable personnel planning in order to increase the resilience of the sector. Precarious and inflexible work arrangements cannot be the basis of a strong cultural heritage sector.”
- A participant said that if internal issues are not being resolved, “an organisation will have a much harder time facing external challenges whether it is a pandemic or any other crisis.”
- **Hierarchies**
 - “The power structures were very open during the crisis.”
 - “If we want to, we can be less formal, less structured.”
 - A participant said we need less formalism, more horizontal collaboration.
 - A participant said that our organisations need to be managed more strategically. “[A good strategy includes risk assessment and mitigation plans, future scenarios, analysis of alternatives and understanding of global trends.]”
- **People**
 - To one participant, the colleagues stood out in the recent months: “[we were] working in different places, and we still made it possible to support each other, being in touch and simply reaching out if everyone is okay in these times.”
 - “[The presumption in the sector is: everyone needs to be productive, rather than have some free time.]”
 - “Let’s stop talking about remote working!” (We have proven that it works.)

Moving forward

- An in-depth review and evaluation of organisational procedures that helped GLAMs be better prepared and more resilient during the COVID-19 crisis may help all GLAMs be better prepared for any future crises.
- Equally, capturing the stories and effects of (short-lived) hierarchical changes may give everyone in the sector a more profound understanding of the hierarchical and leadership structures that are suitable for GLAMs that are experiencing crises.
- Europeana could do a continent-wide survey of personal working conditions and experiences of digital GLAM professionals to understand how their work and life has changed because of the COVID-19 crisis.

Theme 8: A networked sector

Within the cultural heritage sector, there is an atmosphere of friendly co-existence and practice of subtle competition — for funding, audiences, and attention. Participants recognise this and regularly comment that they feel increased collaboration and cooperation between GLAMs and with the outside world is pivotal for our long term success. At the same time, they want their organisations and the network to be nimble and quick to respond.

Headlines

- The concept of collaboration and cooperation is mentioned repeatedly by participants.
- Participants have mentioned examples of unexpected collaborations within and outside of the sector as inspirational examples of where the world may be headed. They recognise the value of collaboration with others than immediate peers, e.g., with citizen initiatives, education, or startups.
- Participants want support to collaborate with each other and with others outside the sector. To do so, they also need more communication with each other, networking opportunities, and opportunities for cooperation.
- Many participants see Europeana as a key partner to stimulate more collaboration.

What we heard

- **The “soft commons”**
 - “We are a network of people, not of institutions.”
- **New kinds of collaboration**
 - A participant noted an opportunity to grow new kinds of collaboration “because people are getting so good at distance working.”
 - A participant said that what will change is “the need for collaboration between cultural institutions to provide collective answers.” They continued that we need to set up an ecosystem with well-defined roles and procedures to improve efficiency and user-centricity.
 - A participant said that Europeana should focus on collaboration. “[B]uild partnerships, reach out to the GLAM community and relevant projects to learn what worked for them and elaborate on the mistakes made and lessons learned.”

- Another noted that Europeana could provide “[more networking to share views and statements about ideas such as ‘museums are not neutral’ and to become more involved in social issues such as gender equality, racism, digital divide, education for all, etc.]”
- “We [in the cultural sector] are just one big company.”
- **External links**
 - “[Let’s explore our relationships with citizen initiatives.]”
 - A participant noted that to fulfill the promise we need the “[creation of strong networks (cultural ecosystems) that allow collaboration and the alignment of processes to share common goals, that leads to sustainable digital infrastructure and content.]” The aim should be a sustainable and performative digital ecosystem.

Moving forward

- Collaboration is only meaningful if it serves a purpose, and a sense of purpose drives collaboration. Participants identified many clear purposes for collaboration throughout the sense-making process, such as working with audiences, the values and culture of the sector, and defining social impact and relevance.
- Urgency and the social influence of peers can also increase the drive to collaborate. Europeana has many tools at its disposal to raise and sustain a sense of urgency and spread the habits and know-how of successful collaborators.
- When exploring any of these questions or themes, Europeana may see this as an opportunity to invite more organisations from outside of the sector in order to stimulate networking and new relationships.

Theme 9: Individual growth and learning

With all the demands placed on GLAMs, participants talk about their professional roles and responsibilities changing rapidly. Collectively, we need to build our capacity not only in terms of knowledge and skills but also in terms of attitudes and behaviors. We need to develop ways to invite new and talented people from other sectors to our work and help them develop careers that are fruitful and fulfilling. Participants asked for support to help older generations of colleagues and users alike to update their skills so they can fully participate in the digital age.

Headlines

- When asked specifically, many participants recognise that their role is changing or should change, and therefore that they and/or their colleagues need to learn new things, as well as learn to learn.
- Some participants mentioned that learning opportunities are not spread out equally over the sector, and some people are excluded from personal and professional development, exacerbating existing inequalities.
- Participants discuss a range of topics for training and development, including ethics, intellectual property, storytelling, advocacy and activism, societal issues, audience engagement, digital tools, and networking.

What we heard

- **Career challenges**
 - A participant asked, “How do we deal with topics that we are not an expert in?”
 - “We have to build the capacity to learn.”
 - “We need downtime!”
 - “[I commit to improving my language and digital skills.]”
- **Training and development**
 - A participant noted that to keep everyone learning, everyone needs to have access to the right equipment, for example, laptops and WiFi.
 - “[On the training menu there should be: ethical collecting, creating narratives, building and activism mindset, and technical skills.]”
 - “We need to help each other feel secure about learning new digital tools.”
 - “I need to get better at advocating: I need to network more and tell better stories.”
 - “[Support employees to be entrepreneurial.]”
 - A participant noted that to fulfill the promise, we need training on several topics, including intellectual property rights, digital tools, 3D, opportunities of social media for GLAMs.
 - A participant said that Europeana should work on “[Promoting and teaching digital literacy, including topics such as the impact of the use of electricity by diverse platforms and channels, fake news, racism, inclusivity, power, and behavior of the big digital platforms, and how to debate and communicate.]”

Moving forward

- This and other themes create a long list of topics around which Europeana may choose to establish capacity building efforts, for example, by creating an online academy building on what the education sector has learned about remote teaching.

- Europeana can work with partners to create a network of knowledge exchange and peer-to-peer learning aimed at updating the capacity of people working in the sector, as well as teachers educating the next generation of digital GLAM professionals.
- Europeana may choose to develop the concept of *the soft commons* as a way of unifying the effort to establish the full spectrum of human and technological capacities needed to spark, support, and sustain digital transformation in the European cultural sector.

Theme 10: Space for innovation and experiments

There is an almost unanimous agreement among participants that we do not have all the answers to the challenges that lie ahead for digital cultural heritage. Also, some participants stress that we cannot rely entirely on innovations from outside the sector either. To create a resilient and successful cultural sector, not one that stagnates and falls back into the past, we need to create space for innovation and experiments; learn from each other's failures and successes; and allow for playful and creative engagement with the big ideas that will define the future.

Headlines

- By and large, participants recognise that because of COVID-19, the sector has tried many new things, but question whether these are really new or merely digital versions of traditional activities.
- Many participants feel we need to get more creative and innovative to overcome the challenges the sector faces.
- Some participants asked for an 'innovation platform' or R&D center for the sector, operated by Europeana or others, to take risks and experiment with new approaches collectively.
- It seems that participants feel that although 'innovation' has been a value of the sector for quite some time, we haven't lived up to our own expectations to do something radically different from what we've been doing in the physical world.

What we heard

- **Innovation?**
 - "All the new things we did are additional to the old things we do."

- “[Our creativity in digital formats is limited, what have we done beyond a virtual exposition?]”
- “We need to be more responsive to what happens in the world.”
- A participant noted that the challenge in our sectors would be to innovate, not to turn physical activities to digital ones.
- **Innovation capacity**
 - “We need more people who take risks.”
 - “I want more creative freedom!”
 - A participant said that Europeana should focus much more on research and development, with an R&D focused platform. “Europeana should always show the 'next' thing, instead of focusing on exhibitions, websites, and social media.”
 - A participant said that the sector needs more innovation capacity. “We need to be more adaptable to change. It shouldn't take another pandemic or closing off entire countries for the GLAM sector to change.”
- **Europeana**
 - A participant said that Europeana should “act as an incubator for innovative ideas in the cultural domain, really promote innovative ideas, and make it simpler for people who have ideas to share them. a platform for ideas exchange.”
 - A participant noted that Europeana could be “a motor to drive innovation and digital developments by task forces, collaborations and exchange with partners so that new possibilities in digital become accessible for [GLAMs.]”
 - A participant noted that to fulfill the promise, we need the “establishment of a framework for innovation (R&D) for the cultural sector,” which includes upscaling, room for experimentation, a focus on the user, funding schemes, and more.

Moving forward

- There is a reasonable possibility that ‘real’ innovation happened in the sector because of COVID-19, but that it happened beyond the immediate reach of the Europeana network — e.g., in cultural citizen initiatives of small institutions. It may pay off to identify such cases of innovation and share them with the network.
- Europeana can continue its work as an innovator in the digital GLAM sector and expand upon it to become a full R&D center, possibly in collaboration with universities and other partners.
- However, many GLAM labs, consultancies, and innovation studios have underperformed or failed in the past. It may be that a new model must be found to catalyse and spread new ideas into the established mainstream of cultural practice.
- The sector may want to ‘pool’ innovation resources, lessons learned (including failures), and other experiences and resources to ensure we learn from each other and can build on each other’s successes.

III. Additional perspectives

The workshops have been designed to create a broad landscape of ideas. We invited participants not to look for consensus, but to share all ideas that might be useful to someone depending on their particular values, experience, or goals. To do justice to that end, in this part, we share ideas that stood alone in this process or resisted easy categorisation.

1. Capacity-building around change processes

The topic of “change” has been an omnipresent theme throughout the workshops. Participants have repeatedly stated that this is a moment that has great potential to create or enable many kinds of lasting change, and change has been a hallmark of digital cultural work for the last 30 years (see theme 1). At the same time, this change is often externally driven by new technologies or other processes beyond our immediate control.

Change processes, including how to approach behavioral change or policy change within an office or an organisation; how to change standards and practices across many organisations in a sector; or how large-scale societal changes can be sparked or supported seem to be topics that have not been studied or mastered by many in our field. We tend to think of ourselves as *recipients* of change, rather than creators or architects of it.

If more digital cultural professionals can become more knowledgeable about change, and more expert at *making change* — envisioning, leading, and managing successful change strategies at a variety of levels (policy, behavioral change, institutional, sector-wide) — we can likely accomplish more of the positive transformations participants have imagined for themselves and for the sector.

Europeana should consider what, if any, role it can play in capacity building around change processes for its members.

2. Small organisations

A few participants expressed the desire to have Europeana focus more on supporting the work of small, local, and community organisations, grassroots initiatives, and individual collectors (private citizens).

Other participants noted an overall trend towards thinking about small, local, or hyperlocal organisations and audiences. The COVID-19 crisis and ensuing lockdowns and restrictions on travel and group gatherings put a new emphasis on this trend, especially for organisations dependent on income from tourism.

It was also asserted that it could be difficult for those *outside* the Europeana network to understand what the network *is* and what it takes to begin contributing data.

These conversations raised interesting questions about the potential opportunities and challenges of working with small or local organisations, and what techniques or strategies might be employed.

We recommend that Europeana include the perspective of these small organisations and the subject of working with them into its strategic planning processes.

3. Reevaluating in-person meetings

Many workshop participants observed that competence and confidence with videoconferencing have become so widespread within the cultural sector that the need for in-person meetings can be reevaluated. One participant remarked, “Traveling is not really an environmentally friendly practice. It [is not wise] to move 30-40 people across Europe for one day of work. I will be an ambassador for this change.”

Others mentioned that being free from their daily commute into the office freed up time and energy to focus on more useful activities, as well as being more carbon friendly.

Reevaluating in-person meetings does not necessarily mean putting a stop to them altogether. Several participants stated that in-person meetings were essential to them in some circumstances (such as building rapport with new collaborators, and during certain phases of creative development) and for some job functions (such as recruiting new members to a network). However, the range of activities that seem possible now, through only videoconferencing, seems to be larger than most people had previously anticipated. New, blended models for meeting seem to be a way forward.

Europeana staff are almost certainly reevaluating their in-person and video conference strategies at the current moment, and it may be beneficial to Europeana and the sector (not to mention the environment) for Europeana to take a leadership position in this area.

4. New skill in remote working opens up new kinds of collaboration

Many participants noted newfound confidence with remote work (staff working from home) and online meetings in all sectors of society. While not perfect, participants (and, as reported, their teams and management) have expressed surprise at how productive and efficient this way of working can be for a wide variety of tasks, including complex collaborations and creative development — though some expressed frustration with the limits of remote working for certain creative tasks.

This sudden acceptance for fast, inexpensive, and efficient online collaboration opens up a new realm of possibilities. New kinds of partnerships and collaborations are possible now, where previously the expectations for travel and face-to-face meetings, and the uneven acceptance of videoconferencing and remote work, would have created barriers.

We should note that some participants also expressed a need for occasional face-to-face meetings, in the office and in Europe, and some said they look forward to once again having a clear dividing line between their home and their office.

Europeana should be aware that new kinds of partnerships and collaborations may now be possible, and Europeana should take this opportunity to reevaluate its strategies and practices regarding partnerships, collaborations, and project-development with these new online competencies in mind.

5. The Europeana Impact Framework

The Europeana Impact Framework was mentioned only once during the workshops, even though many participants appeared to be preoccupied with trying to create more impact and relevance in today's challenging environment.

Given Europeana's investments in the Impact Framework, Europeana should investigate what role the Framework could be playing now, and what efforts should be taken (such as marketing, training, case studies, support, pilot programs) to help cultural professionals use the tool. Also, the Foundation should assess what additional tools and practices could help cultural professionals to understand audience outcomes and impact.

6. Short-term action, relevance, and service to communities

The COVID-19 pandemic has seen the creation of numerous programs designed to address the economic, medical, and psychological costs of the crisis in communities. Although typically initiated by (local) governments, NGOs or citizen initiatives, there have been examples in Europe — especially in libraries — of cultural organisations playing a part in short-term action in service of communities.

What stood out to us was that we heard minimal language from the participants that suggests that this cohort or their organisations were focused on understanding and meeting the short-term needs of their communities in turmoil. This may be due to various reasons, including that the communities in question may not have had new or unusual needs, that our cohort of participants were not in relevant professional roles, or that building and maintaining direct relationships with audiences is not a core skill throughout the cultural sector.

However, given the attention given to the preeminent importance of audiences during the sense-making process, (see theme 4), we hypothesise that many European GLAM

professionals lack the training and preparation to turn to their audiences by default in a moment of crisis. If that is true, increasing the capacity of the sector and cultural heritage professionals to form and maintain close collaborative relationships with their audiences may be the key to increasing the sector's perceived *and actual* relevance in society.

7. The need for non-commercial civic platforms

When asked to imagine possible future scenarios for the digital cultural sector 6-12 months from now, one participant imagined that Europeana could become involved in efforts to create alternatives to the monopolistic control that Google (now known as the 'Alphabet' companies, including YouTube), Facebook and Instagram, Twitter, Amazon, and others have over the platforms of civic discourse:

“It's becoming apparent that we should take a more active role in the digital ecosystem so that Big Tech is not the only innovator and leading the way. Europeana will be an active voice in determining how the sector will develop.”

The issue of corporate influence over the digital public sphere has been on Europeana's radar since its inception, and these issues are well known to European lawmakers and regulators.

But it may be that the recent and unprecedented levels of public dependence on corporate digital platforms for work, healthcare, education, and to maintain social ties and community cohesion during COVID-19 shut-downs has opened up a new window of opportunity for Europeana and the cultural sector to become more, and more effectively, involved.

Europeana should explore new strategic positions through which it could advocate for, lead, or support efforts to reduce public dependence on corporate digital platforms and nurture the creation of alternative platforms that would advance the work of cultural institutions and the people they serve.

8. Resources and experimentation in a vicious cycle.

On occasion, we heard evidence that seemed to indicate that GLAM institutions were caught in a “catch-22”¹ — a paradoxical puzzle — regarding the relationship between digital transformation initiatives and the funding needed to create them.

On one hand, participants stated that funders and executives need evidence of successful digital transformation projects before they commit to supporting new digital projects. But at other times participants stated that institutions need funding *first* to create the kind of digital transformation projects that will be persuasive to funders and executives.

¹ [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Catch-22_\(logic\)](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Catch-22_(logic))

In practice, we have seen this same scenario play out many times, often creating an unnecessary barrier to experimentation and innovation that has kept some institutions on the sidelines of digital transformation for years, much to the detriment of audiences, stakeholders, and communities.

There are many well-proven techniques for breaking the deadlock between funding and innovation. Prototyping, partnerships, crowdfunding, resource reallocation, strategic planning and execution, *think big, start small, move fast* approaches², and good-old-fashioned leadership and persuasion can be used to spark the process of investment and experimentation when both funds and experience are in short supply.

We encourage the Europeana community to be alert for unnecessary blockages to the innovation and funding cycles for digital transformation and to build skills across the network for how to jump-start new initiatives when both money and know-how are scarce.

9. The big picture: Institutions and individuals in financial danger

For our colleagues who are fortunate enough to be still working and are still receiving an income, it is easy to forget the level of risk and hardship being felt across the cultural sector and in society at large.

Several workshop participants stated that their organisations were under severe financial stress or in existential financial danger.

“50% of our partner museums have been closed due to loss of income,” said one participant, “Local museums are approaching bankruptcy.”

Another spoke of a 70% budget cut planned for next year. Yet another, from an institution with a business model reliant on income from in-person visitors, told us, “We have [zero money] now. The entire staff is on furlough and forbidden by government policy to work. We are in survival mode.”

These financial pressures are present throughout the global economy, and they are not likely to go away soon. According to the United Nations, the COVID-19 pandemic has affected the livelihood of 4 out of 5 workers worldwide³.

Europeana, and everyone in the cultural sector, should keep the big financial picture in mind. We all need to think hard about how we can lead and support others, and those of us in command of resources and platforms need to be mindful of the tremendous financial cost of

² <https://www.slideshare.net/edsonm/think-big-start-small-move-fast>

³

<https://www.npr.org/sections/coronavirus-live-updates/2020/04/07/828778490/4-of-5-workers-are-affected-by-covid-19-worldwide-u-n-agency-says>

the COVID-19 crisis when we are working, developing strategy, allocating funds, or communicating with stakeholders or the public.

10. The big picture: a global pandemic

Though some workshop participants have friends, relatives, or colleagues who have contracted COVID-19 and become severely ill or died, for most participants, this pandemic appears to be more of a social and economic challenge than a medical crisis.

However, it should not be forgotten that the pandemic, to date, has killed over 500,000 people and sickened another 9 million people around the world, put a third of the world's population into a shutdown, and brought new levels of psychological distress and misery to hundreds of millions of people.⁴

As with the economic impact of COVID-19, mentioned above, it is crucial to keep the big picture of the global pandemic in mind when we consider our responsibilities as leaders, neighbors, citizens, and representatives of the global cultural community.

⁴ See <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-51235105>,
<https://www.bbc.com/news/world-51235105>,
https://www.un.org/sites/un2.un.org/files/un_policy_brief-covid_and_mental_health_final.pdf

IV. Europeana

The sense-making process was designed to achieve a series of goals for workshop participants, for GLAM networks and organisations, and for the Europeana Foundation as a representative of its Network Association, Aggregators, and community.

The section below focuses on the goals and outcomes for Europeana. Goals for participants, networks, and organisations are described in Designing Europeana's COVID-19 Sense-Making Workshops (19 June 2020)⁵.

The analysis and commentary below is intended to stimulate dialogue, debate, and the creation of strategic insight within the Europeana Foundation team and community.

Goal 1: Understanding the zeitgeist

Objective for Europeana: Understand the current needs, experiences, and state-of-mind of the network with regards to digital GLAM, collections, a sense of public needs, and institutional priorities.

Headlines

- Europeana members are seeing and experiencing a lot of new things in their personal and professional lives. For many, this is overwhelming.
- A few participants have experienced COVID-19 infections within their family, work, or social circles, but for most participants, COVID-19 is not a health crisis but an economic and social crisis.
- How participants are experiencing the crises, and the degree to which they can work and seize opportunities to innovate at this time, is highly dependent on their own individual circumstances, personality, learning styles, their organisational, regional and national context, and other factors.
- The cultural sector is in turmoil. While participants reported that many organisations are adapting to the crisis and incorporating new ideas and processes into their work in some areas, there is also a strong sense that uncertainty and confusion are making it difficult to make and execute plans, think strategically, make decisions, and ultimately create value for audiences and stakeholders.

Observations

- Needs

⁵

<https://medium.com/@Europeana/designing-european-as-covid-19-sense-making-workshops-f14eb8e2016d>

- Emotional support, community connections, friendly and collegial contacts outside of normal work environments
- The opportunity for reflection and time and space to think
- Learning from colleagues
- Suggestions and examples of how to contribute to positive change
- Relief from the tedium of Zoom meetings (balanced with enthusiasm for what remote meetings and conferences can achieve)
- Experiences
 - Seeing, experiencing a lot of new things
 - Not much spare time and bandwidth for new initiatives or complexity
- State of mind
 - Mixture of energised and exhausted
 - Mood, capacity, highly dependent on personal circumstances
 - Job, team, and organisation
 - Home life (childcare, eldercare, home schooling, home office)
 - National/regional policies (funding, economic stimulus/relief, funding for cultural organisations)
 - Concern over financial crisis for organisations and the sector, long term economic strain; imminent threat of failure for some organisations
 - Black Lives Matter has increased a sense of social obligation/opportunity
 - Some mentions of ‘climate’ as the next crisis
 - Pessimism, or resignation, about the sector’s level of preparedness before the crisis, or its capacity to act/react now and moving forward
 - A sense that change is possible now, but intervention will be needed to make it positive and permanent

What we heard

- The workplace
 - “Zoom conferences are quite stressful and tiring. You have to concentrate quite hard: a 4 hour conference is really at the peak of what you can cope with”
 - “I find that spending a day in front of the screen is exhausting.”
 - “My network is divided: university friends are stressed with how to work with students, human and practical issues. For scientist friends, field work is cancelled, but they are swept up in digital projects, busier than ever.”
- Personal/work balance
 - “We have young children at home, 2 adults working from home. I am overwhelmed.”
 - “When the crisis hit, I enjoyed it. I have a young child. This is the best time of my life, but I know a lot of people are suffering.”
- Experimentation, energy
 - “Meeting these basic [audience] needs in this way has been a learning curve for many, and the experiences of discovering something new that can give so much value is building confidence and willingness to explore and experiment with digital technologies.”

- “This time has been rewarding, stimulating. We had a lot of work to do: a mission.”
- Black Lives Matter
 - “Black Lives Matter, we have become consumed with that, with what institutions do to make a statement about what we can do against racism.”
 - “We are Influenced by Black Lives Matter, demonstrations, protest, anger. Thinking about what our sector has to do with this. Our sector has a role to play in creating narratives, in terms of white priorities, white privilege. What is Europeana doing in this? Where are people of color in our community?”
 - Going forward we should also address climate change, the fight against racism, and promote solidarity.
- Climate
 - What will change in the sector is that in order to save money and because of climate change, we will continue with Zoom meetings.
- Change
 - “It is tough to rethink everything we do...The virus has cancelled everything for us.”
 - “Change in our sector is necessary. I fear we will be going back to usual, as before. My ambition is I think we should aim higher.”
 - “During the lockdown we felt like everything is changing, opportunities, but my concern is that when all of this is over then nothing will be changed.”
 - “There is a belief that major challenges for humanity (inequality, climate change, lack of resources) have to be faced in collaboration.” (P52)
 - “In 2025, the GLAM sector will be a leading innovator in the use of virtual reality to enable and expand access to important collections to support a new era of international cooperation, especially one in which we have to address global problems like climate change and pandemic.” (P62)
 - “Changes have taken place, for sure, but for a transformation they have to be permanent. I wish I could be confident some will, but I have doubts.” (B52)
- Reflection and conviviality
 - “[This process] is helping me reflect on my situation; I have been using the things that have been coming out of these conversations in my writing and talks.”
 - “This [workshop] process gave me time to think and calm down. To think things through... It’s been very valuable to do this here.”

Hypotheses

- The individual experience of network members during the COVID-19 crisis is varied, and largely shaped by individual circumstances and factors outside of their immediate control.
- Members see the need for many types of changes, but many lack data and/or expertise needed to guide and accomplish change, and many have doubts about the likelihood that their organisation, sector, or society can make positive changes permanent in a strategic manner.

- There is great value in helping network members *help each other* to reflect and develop insights and know-how.
- While the sector is in flux and there is uncertainty about the future, there may be a tendency among some professionals to turn inward and isolate themselves (even further) from their audiences and society.

Questions for Europeana

- How can Europeana best support and learn from its members during a time of rapid change, when opportunities abound and speed is critical, but many members are busy, preoccupied, and have varied abilities to engage?
- How can Europeana develop high-impact initiatives if its members work in a multitude of unique circumstances, abilities, and skills?
- What role can Europeana play now, in the short-term future, to increase the likelihood that the kinds of positive changes identified by its members become permanent?

As a final note in this section, we were shocked when, during our analysis of this sense-making process, we realised the degree to which the climate crisis has dropped off the agenda of the cultural sector, government, journalism, and civil society during the COVID-19 crisis.

The fact that 2020 is likely to be the hottest year in European recorded history, with widespread droughts and heatwaves already in evidence, makes this realisation even more shocking.

Perhaps the absence of climate action news and campaigns during the pandemic is evidence that climate action is not yet truly a top-tier concern for the GLAM community. If so, we feel that this needs to be addressed and changed, as atmospheric carbon is an existential threat that will require all parts of society to take action with the utmost urgency.

Goal 2: Gauge aspiration and capacity

Objective for Europeana: Where are members in practical terms vis-a-vis digital aspirations (what do they want to do?) and digital capacity (what can they do?).

Headlines

- The COVID-19 crisis has put a spotlight on pre-existing challenges and opportunities within the cultural sector.
- There are widespread aspirations to create organisations, and a cultural sector, that are more efficient, inclusive, and impactful than they are now.
- By and large, participants are expert practitioners within their professional disciplines but have limited ability to shape the future of their organisations from a policy or strategic point-of-view. Entrepreneurial and change-making know-how are not abundant within the participant group.
- To be successful we will need to develop a new concept of “digital capacity” that includes both technical production capabilities and a full spectrum of soft skills needed to work with diverse teams and audiences, build and lead coalitions, and collaborate with a wide variety of stakeholders — sometimes in risky and uncertain environments.

Observations

- Most workshop participants have ideas about what they would change in their work and institutions and more widely across the sector. These changes imply a need to build capacities (practical know-how, technologies and platforms, leadership and managerial skill) that support change in the following areas.
 - Audiences and communities
 - More audience engagement, including globally
 - More curation, storytelling, and rich content
 - More digital marketing
 - Better clarity regarding the mission, seek a redefined purpose
 - Better community service and collaboration
 - More inclusivity
 - Working style
 - More collaboration with partners, “pooling resources”
 - More creativity and experimentation, “flexible and nimble”
 - “Flip” the learning environment (in the sense of blended and participatory learning; [flipping the classroom](#))
 - More flexible, efficient processes
 - Organisational change
 - More resilient infrastructure, platforms
 - Create more democratic institutions
 - Embed digital practices more fully in the organisation
 - More digitisation of collections

- More “gatekeepers” in the sense of establishing trusted content and “truth”
- Sector wide change
 - More diversity and inclusion
 - More impact
- Only a few of the desired changes listed above require technical capabilities per se. Most have to do with management practices, leadership, audience engagement and community development, and diversity, inclusion, and empowerment.
- The agency of participants to act upon these changes varies widely. Regardless of direct technical know-how, most participants have little or no direct authority to drive organisational change, make organisational policy, or commit resources to initiate or sustain change initiatives.

What we heard

- “Everybody belongs to a culture and shares experiences. I am thrilled by crowd-driven learning and social networking for social purposes.”
- “We have the possibility to do more with storytelling and to look at the world with a cultural lens.”
- “We always are reacting [rather than leading], because we lack diversity in our organisation. We have a distance to our societies and we don’t represent them.”
- “One of the most important things now is to embrace the diversity of society.”
- “Culture has potential to improve citizenship, but to do it some elements need to be in place. The issue of diversity, diversity of the cultural offer, of all segments and all minorities of the people living around here, that’s a real value.”
- “The sector was a failure after COVID-19, a huge amount of digital content was pushed to the public without really targeting, for who, for what, for why.”
- “We are forgetting that the GLAM sector is providing a public service. Private industry is getting support, but not culture and it is about the empowerment of the people. Culture is always left as one of the last resources.”
- “I usually have a budget that I can spend, but I have to wait for my CEO before taking any new actions.” (Paraphrase)
- “Middle management is afraid of uncertainty and risk taking and just wants to go back to how things were before COVID.” (Paraphrase)
- “People were not able to ‘run with’ their ideas because our bureaucracy and leaders were not allowing an agile, fast way of working.” (Paraphrase)
- “In my organisation I am not in a position for making decisions except for the projects I directly manage.” (Paraphrase)
- “We need more attention to resilience, recoverability, of the entire sector. Audiences and customers, knowing their needs, wishes, knowing how active they are.

Hypothesis

- Europeana members see many opportunities for positive systemic change, but do not have the decision-making or budgetary authority to make those changes directly, or by themselves, within their organisations.

- As stated in *Observations*, above, only a few of the desired changes mentioned by participants require technical capabilities *per se*. Most have to do with management practices, leadership, audience engagement and community development, and diversity, inclusion, and empowerment. This may be related to the professional specialisation of the participants, but it may also reflect larger forces at play.
- In addition to other factors, the focus on soft skills throughout the sense-making process reflects a natural step in the evolution of digital communication platforms from being “about the technology” to being about people, interactions, and social value. It may also indicate that we have reached a plateau in the acceptance of easier and more obvious transformations over the last 20 years, such as digitising collections, and are now confronting more difficult and complex questions about how those transformations are supposed to create positive outcomes for people. Not to minimise the difficulty of scaling and sustaining purely digital initiatives, but “build it and they will come” may be giving way to “who are they and how can we help?”

Questions for Europeana

- To what degree is the Europeana Impact Framework a tool that supports members in understanding and driving change?
- In what other ways can Europeana support the change agendas of its members (in other words, how can it drive digital transformation) when the direct authority to make policy/budgetary changes is not an option?
- Which areas of change and aspiration are within Europeana’s identity, and which are not?
- How can Europeana help to develop the soft skills that enable digital transformation across the sector?
- To what degree is facilitating change an existential priority for Europeana? In other words, can Europeana survive and thrive in a world where the cultural sector does not change very much?

Goal 3: Find meaning for digital transformation

Objective for Europeana: What does ‘digital transformation’ mean in the current environment, and what does it need to mean moving through and out of the pandemic environment? How can the term ‘digital transformation’ represent a useful, constructive, and actionable concept for the Foundation and its members and stakeholders?

Headlines

- *Digital transformation* is the centerpiece of Europeana’s 2020-2025 strategy and it is an important term among funders and policy makers, but there is no clear or shared sense of what it means to digital cultural practitioners.
- Definitions that incorporate a variety of phenomena — from ambitious, trail-blazing initiatives to pragmatic, small-scale interventions — are more likely to resonate with practitioners’ real-word experience than definitions that are narrow, bureaucratic, or monolithic.

Observations

- **Definition of digital transformation**
 - We did not hear clear definitions of the term “digital transformation.” Said one participant, “When I read the title of this workshop, ‘digital transformation’, our sector doesn’t really know what that means.”
 - Though participants were hesitant to use or embrace the term *digital transformation*, when asked to speak about examples of digital transformation participants told us of new kinds of services, capabilities, and behaviors they recognised. For example, using video conferencing platforms such as Zoom to attend concerts or yoga classes.
 - Our newly found ability to work from home, do meetings and conferences, and engage in online collaboration with distant colleagues were also cited as examples of digital transformation.
 - We also heard the word “transformation” used to describe dramatic, thorough, and long-lasting challenges to convention in the broadest sense. For example, the phrase “to transform society” or the phrase used in Europeana’s 2020-2025 vision statement, “Europeana empowers the cultural heritage sector in its digital transformation.”
 - We heard concern about people claiming symbolic victories rather than focusing on more difficult and impactful outcomes. For example: “What is truly digital transformation? It is not just sending emails,” remarked one participant.
- **What digital transformation needs to mean**
 - Europeana should work with its community to create a shared understanding of the term *digital transformation* and how the term can be used to gain insight, stimulate dialogue and behaviour, and create valuable outcomes in a variety of circumstances for all GLAMs and other partners .

- The term digital transformation, and the concepts it represents, should be thought of as a working tool that makes dialogue, collaboration, problem solving, and creativity easier.
- Europeana’s working definition of digital transformation — its use of the term in daily practice — should be broad and flexible, reflecting the wide variety of ways the term is used in the wild.
- **How the term digital transformation can become a more actionable concept**
 - What is “transformative” is, to some degree, in the eyes of the beholder.
 - The term digital transformation should be connected to the stories, purpose, and values of the community.
 - Europeana can help people be aware of how the term is understood and used by the European Commission, industry and the public sector. These entities may use the term very differently than GLAM practitioners in Europeana’s network.
 - Europeana can help people understand and make use of several different aspects of digital transformation as it seems to be used by workshop participants, namely, using digital tools to,
 - Make *modest tactical changes* to how things are done (for example, producing more online events for digital consumers).
 - Make *significant and lasting changes* to organisations and societies (for example, to create a more inclusive, equitable, and just society).
 - Make changes (modest or significant) that affect many people.
 - Make changes (modest or significant) that affect a few people.

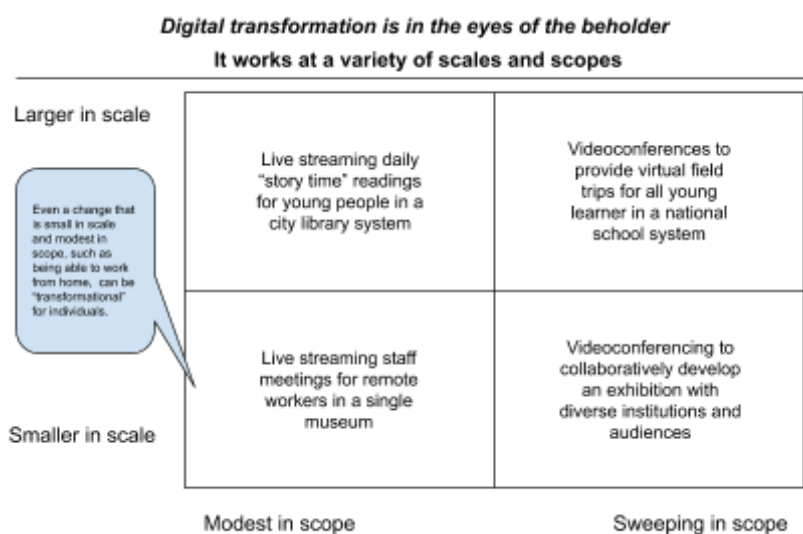


Figure 1. Europeana should develop an understanding of digital transformation that incorporates work across a variety of scope and scales. Even simple digital services such as access to email and WiFi can be transformational to many individuals.

What we heard

- “When I read the title ‘digital transformation’... we still really don’t know what we mean when we say digital transformation. Just because people answer email now they think we’ve done digital transformation.”
- “If it’s the new buzzword and we need to [explain what we do] to funders then I’m all in!”
- “Digital transformation is like a dog with a bone that we’ve chewed down to a stub.”
- “[For us, digital transformation is in] communications, marketing, new kinds of formats. We’ve now posted our content to Medium for the first time. [For us that is transformational.]”
- “Digital transformation can be bad. Imagine if the kids would homeschool forever. That would be a horrible transformation [because of the lack of physical social contact].”
- “Digital transformation is not ‘trivial digital stuff’.”
- “In faculty, transformation was much faster. In the library we saw use of digital materials rising. But not much of people changing. Our sector is not the fastest. Banking has been faster to change.”
 - Question: Was transformation faster in the university than in the library because of the presence of students and the urgency of having a product, audience, and deadline?
Answer: Yes, university teachers were giving people something they really need.
- “In [my country], the lockdown really showed how the digital transformation of the education sector cannot be delayed further!”

Survey responses showed examples of digital transformation from a variety of vertical markets and social activities, including,

- Goods and services
 - Banking
 - Healthcare (video consultation with your doctor)
 - Grocery shopping
- Organisational activities
 - Working from home / the home officer
 - Meetings
 - Acceptance of working from home
 - New forms of collaboration
 - Conferences and workshops
- Culture, sport, and entertainment
 - Yoga
 - New ways of maintaining personal connections (memes, etc)
 - museum visits
 - Festivals and events
 - Online socialising (hours parties, Zoom for quizzes)
 - Live / real-time content delivery (concerts, plays, etc)

- Renewed importance of digital collections
- The search for collective experiences (collective experiences once primarily thought of as in-person, have had to find ways to move online)
- Science communication (podcasts)
- Education
 - E-learning, home schooling, lifelong learning (“online courses for adults and home schooling...have changed how we think about school and learning.” Paraphrased)

Hypotheses

- Digital transformation is not one thing: it is a variety of activities, mindsets, and outcomes that improve people's lives by using technology in new and creative ways.
- Digital transformation is largely in the eyes of the beholder, and meaningful digital transformation can take place along a variety of scales and scopes.
- Confusion about the meanings of digital transformation, and doubt about the usefulness of the term, undermines the sector's ability to work deeply on positive change.
- A definition of digital transformation should include stories that reflect the work, values, and purpose of the Europeana network.

Questions for Europeana

- How can Europeana help to create an understanding of digital transformation that reflects the work and values of its community, and that is loved and embraced by its community?
- How can Europeana work with members and stakeholders to co-create such an understanding?
- What stories and values should digital transformation represent for the Europeana community?

Goal 4: New roles and actions

Objective for Europeana: How should Europeana support its members and strengthen its own capacity & reputation, given the crisis? What should it do? Where should Europeana invest directly and assume responsibility (the “line of accountability”), and where should it support or amplify the work of others?

Headlines

- The COVID-19 crisis and Europeana's members have noted that this is an important moment for digital culture, and that there seems to be an opportunity to take actions now that could have profound benefits in the future.
- Participants saw value in Europeana's customary areas of activity (or did not actively challenge current areas of focus) — but they also saw areas where Europeana could deepen or expand its commitments to existing lines of business, such as creating

social impact, increasing inclusion and diversity in the network, and increasing cross-sector collaboration.

- In general, there was a sense that Europeana could take a leadership position in the cultural sector at large, including in areas that go beyond the strictly ‘digital’, such as audience engagement and business models.

Observations

- How should Europeana support its members?
 - Responses and discussion with/from workshop participants seemed to fall under seven broad themes:
 - Being a convener
 - Strategy and innovation
 - Advocacy
 - Capacity building and training
 - Social impact
 - Alternative to Big Tech
 - Small organisations and regional collaboration
 - Some of the specific ideas or desires mentioned by workshop participants seem to fall within Europeana’s traditional scope (such as advocating generally for the value of digital access to collections), but some seem to indicate a desire for Europeana to become active in new areas (for example social impact, lobbying and advocacy) or a deepening of existing lines of business (shared infrastructure as an alternative to “Big Tech”, for example).
- How should Europeana strengthen its own capacity & reputation in response to COVID-19?
 - With one or two exceptions, workshop facilitators did not encourage participants to delve deeply into Europeana’s own strategic positioning within its unique “market.”
 - Participants noted or called attention to short-term opportunities for Europeana to build capacity or enhance its reputation during the crisis. Participants did see the value of Europeana providing opportunities and services, such as this workshop, to its members during the crisis.
 - Beyond networking and community building (maintaining social and professional bonds across the network), and the risks and opportunities noted above, participants seemed for the most part to be happy for Europeana to take a medium to long-term position vis-a-vis responding to the crisis: not super activist, but not entirely passive either. This is not to say that this is the best strategic path for Europeana, rather that workshop participants didn’t seem to expect or demand that Europeana take more active positions.
 - However, respondents did identify several urgent needs that could be within Europeana’s problem space, if it so chooses. These would include,
 - Advocacy for the sector
 - Workshop participants noted that the sector seems to lack people or organisations that are dedicated to advocating for

- the value and importance of cultural institutions in society in the same way that corporate industry groups do. (For example, the fossil fuel industry.)
- Helping to increase the chances that positive and permanent changes will result from opportunities opened up by the crisis (such as gains in the digital literacy of organisational teams).
 - Helping the sector address diversity and inclusion.
 - Increasing the diversity of the Europeana network itself.
 - *Based on participant comments and the potential costs of inaction, we recommend that Europeana should be proactive — should take action now — to formulate a strategic position and take necessary action regarding the perceived lack of diversity in its network.*
 - Where should the “line of accountability” be? What should Europeana do itself? What should it help others to do (or leave alone entirely)?
 - To be determined through strategic conversations and dialogue. However,
 - To some degree the decision depends on how Europeana wants to be held accountable for its own mission statement: “Europeana empowers the cultural heritage sector in its digital transformation.”
 - For any of the programmatic areas suggested above, Europeana could take the strategic position that it will *enhance* the sector’s capacity for digital transformation through activities such as coaching, training, webinars, and awareness raising — without holding itself directly accountable for achieving deep and significant outcomes.
 - Europeana must be accountable for its own strategic position regarding diversity and inclusion in its own network and in the cultural sector in general.
 - Europeana is in a challenging strategic position in that its primary funder (the European Commission) and its membership (individual participating individuals and institutions) may have agendas that are not 100% aligned. Alignment and collaboration between these two stakeholder groups will determine, to a large degree, where Europeana can invest its resources and where it can “spend”, or accrue, trust and reputation.

What we heard

From the surveys, we heard responses in 10 general areas, grouped into 4 broad themes, regarding things Europeana could do to help the GLAM sector succeed in the coming years.

Being a convener and advocate

1. **Advocacy, lobbying, and “storytelling”**: help advocate for the value of culture, focusing on raising awareness in mass media and governmental forums; be the voice of Europeana GLAM institutions.
2. **Facilitating wider discussions**: bring more and more diverse voices and perspectives to discussions about the potential of digital culture and the role of

culture in society; include small, and mid sized organisations and organisations with low technical capabilities at the table.

3. **Collaboration:** help to encourage and support collaborations across the GLAM sector and between GLAM institutions, audiences, and partners from other parts of society (for example, business, education, journalism).

Technical support and know-how

4. **General training (skills):** improve skills in the GLAM community, including technical, management, leadership, and change-management skills.
5. **Audience engagement:** help to develop and implement practices that increase the GLAM sector's ability to understand, connect with, and co-create with audiences through digital platforms.
6. **Marketing:** help GLAM institutions to conduct better market research and to better market their products to audiences; improve marketing of Europeana itself, which is virtually unknown outside of the heritage sector.

Strategy and innovation

7. **Digital strategy:** help organisations to develop and implement digital strategies that make sense to the local organisations and are locally "owned", and which are also heedful of broader values, trends, practices, and opportunities in digital culture.
8. **Innovation capacity / R&D:** help to build the ability of GLAM institutions to be more entrepreneurial, creative, and nimble; develop new digital business models and sources of revenue; drive innovation and be a creative hub for actions and initiatives, including diversity, inclusion, and social impact.
9. **Digital Divides:** Help to reduce and eliminate digital divides, such as those that exist within organisations in terms of access to technology, expertise, ability to hold productive conversations across departments.

Infrastructure

10. **Infrastructure:** develop and advocate for the development of shared platforms and infrastructures to support digital growth; take an active role in defining and advocating for non-commercial platforms (for example, not Google, Facebook, Amazon).

Notable statements from workshop discussions about Europeana's potential role include,

- **Advocacy**
 - "There is no equivalent of the 'coal lobby' for cultural institutions: no one to make the case that cultural institutions play an important role in society."
 - "I always hope that Europeana as a network becomes a leadership actor not only representing cultural organisations but taking a leadership role."
- **Social impact**
 - "My dream for Europeana is that we could be doing much more with societal projects. We have COVID, the environment, and now Black Lives Matter. We

- are always thinking from a 'heritage' perspective, but it's not yet heritage, [digital culture and its values are always] in the slipstream of others.”
- “We have to bring people into the network of more colors, more ages, more representative of the world. We're still living in the post-colonial moment. We can't change this in our own institutions, but we can change it in Europeana.”
- “I would like to see more courage on societal issues; Europeana taking a stance. I don't have tools or recipes to do that. It could be good to see this big organisation and this big network taking a stance.”
- Alternative to Big Tech
 - “It's becoming apparent that we should take a more active role in the digital ecosystem so that Big Tech is not the only innovator and leading the way. Europeana will be an active voice in determining how the sector will develop.”
 - “The KLM in-flight magazine had an article about digital culture and it cited the Google Cultural Institute. Not Europeana.”
- Small organisations and regional collaboration
 - “Getting into the Europeana ecosystem is not easy [for small organisations]. Many things that are obvious to us are not apparent to [people not in the network].”
 - “Europeana has a space where they could help small institutions build their presence, build up those skills.”
 - “One of the tasks for aggregators is to have smaller, mini, micro archives online, like photo collectors, who would like to explore this idea of 'moving to the digital'... Europeana needs to be inclusive of smaller organisations.”
 - “Maybe Europeana could be more present in my country. And in non-EU countries.”

Hypothesis

- This is a moment-of-opportunity for Europeana to challenge its own thinking about its role in the sector and the value it provides to members, institutions, and society at large.
- There is a rising awareness of the importance of “soft skills” such as leadership, communication, and the building of audiences and communities to the overall success of Europeana's mission.
- Because of Black Lives Matter and the social and economic cost of the COVID-19 crisis, and because of the values of Europeana network members, Europeana should be proactive regarding inclusion, diversity, and equity issues and social impact.
- Europeana can pursue many of the new opportunities brought to light by the COVID-19 crisis if it carefully evaluates where it will take direct responsibility for outcomes, where to rely on partners, and where it will support and enhance the creative capacity of its network.

Questions for Europeana

- What actions can be taken now to increase the diversity, inclusion, and equity of Europeana as an organisation, network, and movement? Who should be involved, beyond “the usual suspects”?
- How do participants’ understandings of digital transformation align with those commonly used by the European Commission and other funders and stakeholders?
- What do these themes of interest, stated by participants, say about Europeana’s current and future portfolio of initiatives?
 - Being a convener
 - Strategy and innovation
 - Advocacy
 - Capacity building and training
 - Social impact
 - Alternative to Big Tech
 - Small organisations and regional collaboration
- Given the changing needs and interests of its community, where should Europeana place its own “line of accountability”? What new strategies can Europeana use to have an impact in broader or deeper areas of commitment?
- How “fit” is Europeana’s own capacity to take on challenges such as the ones identified in this process? Are other ways of organising, collaborating, needed to seize opportunities in the next 6-12 months?
- What, if any, changes does the Europeana Foundation imagine for itself in 6 months time? Should the Foundation have new strategic positions by the end of 2020?

V. Next steps and recommendations

This sense-making process was conceived to be the first phase of Europeana's 2020 campaign to involve its community in an investigation of digital transformation of cultural heritage and the building of capacity. In broad outlines, a second and third phase have been planned, which conclude at the Europeana annual conference in November 2020.

This section outlines suggested steps that the Foundation can take in the short-term future to amplify the effects of the workshops, include new perspectives and ideas, and lay the foundation for the next phases of the digital capacity/digital transformation campaign.

1. Building on the results of phase 1

As mentioned in the reading guide, this report is a working document. It is meant to be used and discussed to give it more meaning and to interpret its findings. To support this, we recommend the following next steps:

1. **Review and distribute** — Review this report within Europeana, then distribute it to participants and get their input.
2. **Guest blogging** — Guest blogs by participants can keep the conversation going until the next phase of this project. 11 workshop participants have volunteered to write blog posts for the purpose of contributing their own perspectives to broader and deeper conversations about the themes of the workshops and surveys. Europeana should continue to support these guest bloggers and bring their articles to completion throughout the summer.
3. **Internal deep dive** — To stimulate internal discussion and policy/strategy development, the Europeana team should do a series of workshops to investigate and debate the substance of this report. Teams and individuals should force themselves to form their own opinions, hypotheses, and questions regarding what was said in the workshops and surveys and what they mean for Europeana.
 - Which recommendations, statements or themes resonated with you?
 - What is missing from the conversation? What patterns do you see?
 - What new questions do you have? What would you like to know more about?
 - Where can Europeana be most effective, and where can it play a supporting role (or no role at all)
 - How do these findings affect your understanding of, and implementation of, your 2020-2025 strategy?

2. Directions for phase 2

Our overall recommendation for phase 2 is to repeat a more targeted version of the conversation with a much larger group of people to deliver both more insights into the sector and its development and to strengthen participants, the network, and the sector. We recommend the following directions for phase 2:

- **Activate Europeana's network and a significant part of the (digital) GLAM sector in a process of collective envisioning, storytelling, and surveying**, focusing on the 'open ends' (topics that demand more conversation) from phase 1:
 - A working vision on digital transformation and the role of digital within cultural heritage (theme 2).
 - Clarifying the culture and values of the sector (theme 5), especially with regards to audiences (theme 4), the digital divides (theme 6), and the organisation of our sector (themes 7, 8, and 9).
 - Use this process to gather stories and evidence to support the social impact and relevance of (digital) cultural heritage.
- **Support the 64 participants to repeat the sense-making work in their own organisations**, in a way that works for them, and collect the results for additional sense-making around the topics outlined above.
 - Create a manual to repeat the process within organisations and communities and support participants and others to do this.
 - Set up data collection procedures to learn from the outcomes of these distributed conversations in a structured way.
- Throughout, **ensure a focus on peer-to-peer coaching and learning**, so further conversations lead to immediate outputs in terms of developing new capacity and setting up new activities.

These three activities can be aligned in a bottom-up, large-scale sense-making and vision-creation process with a run-time of three to four months. It may be tied directly to new activities Europeana may want to set up to support the capacity building of the sector, such as the mapping of successful case studies or an innovation platform.

3. Directions for phase 3

Phase 3, which we understand to be the delivery phase of this process, with as a high point Europeana's annual conference in November of 2020, can broadly take the following direction:

- **“Show, don’t tell”** Any delivery activities, from webinars to the annual conference itself may and will serve as a new template for meetings in a “post-COVID-19” world. Choices Europeana makes in terms of delivery and platform, representation and diversity, values and culture, and all other topics from this report are an important step towards establishing a ‘new normal’ for digital GLAMs.
- **Advocacy** — Train and support employees everywhere in the sector to build their ability to be advocates for cultural heritage. Advocacy workshops can be part of the annual conference’s offering and be integrated in other activities. A separate network of ‘advocates’ can help to deliver some of the platforms mentioned in this report, such as the research portal on social impact and relevance and overviews of best practices from the digital GLAM sector.
- **Other strategic level capacity** — The same applies to capacities such as change management, lobbying, and other strategic level capacities.
- **Digital transformation** — Present the results of the various conversations about a definition for digital transformation in a manifest or shared statement to claim a specific part of this agenda.
- Kick-off of longer term research and implementation projects to fulfill the promises in this document.

4. Options to create additional value

In addition to the recommendations outlined above, we recognise some additional options to add value, build on what has been done, or prepare for the next phases:

1. **Consider publishing this report as a visual explainer** — Comic-style visual interpretations of the themes and statements from the workshops could help people understand and experience the richness of the workshops, and the importance of the ideas and recommendations coming out of them, in a way that this written report cannot convey. (For example http://www.blackshapes.com/live_drawing.htm)
2. **Consider producing a guest panel webcast** — Europeana could webcast a group panel discussion of the workshop outputs to make the discussion feel more vivid and accessible to more people and to bring different perspectives to the sense-making process. This would also have the effect of modeling, for the community, what a deeper and more intense strategic dialogue can look like.
3. **Consider organising “deep dive” workshops in July/August** — Europeana could organise a series of small-group workshops to “go deep” on some of the ideas, questions, and strategic challenges that were exposed, but not resolved, during the

sense-making process: For example, to co-create a community definition of digital transformation, or develop a better and more actionable understanding of the digital divide. This would be in addition to the activities outlined under phase 2 and would need to be designed in parallel.

4. **Consider organising “action design” workshops** — Catalysing action was one of the goals of this sense-making process. Many workshop participants expressed the desire for positive changes, but are not sure how to spark, catalyse or sustain those changes in their daily work. A series of *action design workshops* could help build change-making skills within the Europeana network and could help bring new change initiatives to life. These workshops could also serve as a research-and-development test bed for similar activities at the annual conference in November.
5. **Consider improving Wikipedia’s Digital Transformation page** — The current Wikipedia article about digital transformation could use improvement. A better definition here could help to develop a better shared understanding of digital transformation across Europeana’s networks, funders, and stakeholders.
6. **Consider creating a “digital transformation” members group** — A members group, similar to Europeana Communicators and other groups, could help to focus creative energy within the network and establish community ownership of this challenging strategic terrain.

Appendices

Methodology

This sense-making process was initiated by the Europeana Foundation, Europeana Network Association, and Europeana Aggregators Forum in May, 2020. Michael Peter Edson and Jasper Visser designed and facilitated the process.

Selection of the participants

The Europeana Foundation recruited participants through an email campaign and direct appeals to members in May 2020. Participants were selected by Europeana Foundation staff in consultation with the Europeana Network Association Members' Council and the Europeana Aggregators Forum. The selected participants are not a stratified sample of the community, but attempts have been made to include representatives from various countries, types of institutions, a gender mix, and experience with the network. Two groups were predominantly made up of elected members councillors and one group of aggregators. All selections were made based on the availability (scheduling) of the participants.

64 participants from 22 countries participated in the workshops. Participants were divided by Europeana Foundation staff into five groups of 12-14. Groups did not change throughout the process. Each group met once a week at the same day and time for three weeks (three meetings total). A volunteer captain was selected for each group. Captains from each group met together at the end of every week to discuss their group's main themes and topics.

Design of the process and data collection

The sense-making process consisted of three interlinked parts:

1. A series of surveys, presented digitally to the participants, one before and one after each workshop
2. A series of three workshops
3. This analysis

Part 1 and 2 gathered the data for part 3. The data that has been collected consists of:

- Survey responses, predominantly unstructured text
- Workshop transcripts and notes, predominantly unstructured text

The surveys and workshops together were designed following peer-to-peer mentoring and sense-making principles, including,

1. An Observe-Reflect-Interpret flow for each combination of surveys and workshops, with participants taking responsibility for part of the analysis of the results in the post-workshop “interpret” survey.
2. A transition from observing the past in week one, to the near now in week two, and the near (6-12 months) future in week three.

The workshops were designed around 10 principles and goals, summarised below and explained in greater detail in this Medium post (Designing Europeana’s COVID-19 Sense-Making Workshops, by Michael Peter Edson, published 19 June 2020.⁶)

Design principles:

1. Sense making, not strategy
2. Digital transformation and capacity building
3. Goals for participants; networks and organisations; and the Europeana Foundations
4. Simplicity and a manageable ‘ask’
5. Networked and bottom-up
6. Speed
7. The learning model and the narrative arc
8. The flow of things: 60 participants, 18 workshops, 3 weeks
9. More participants and perspectives through social media
10. Moving into action

Questions

ID	Description
1.1.1.x	Digital transformation — Please share 3 examples of digital transformation in society catalysed or caused by COVID-19. Describe them briefly (what is transformed, why, and how).
1.1.2.x	The COVID-19 learning curve — The COVID-19 crisis has challenged many people to do new things. Please share 3 new digital skills, knowledge, attitudes or behaviours that you have seen people adopt or develop.
1.2.1.x	You — How has your individual work changed since the pandemic began? In concrete terms, what new things are you doing, thinking, and feeling day-to-day?
1.2.2.x	Your colleagues and your organisation — How have the people you work with been affected? Talk about the people at every level in your organisation, the relationships between them and their priorities.
1.2.3.x	Your community and the people you serve — Tell us about a memorable interaction with someone in your communities, audiences or a member of the public. How are the relationships and expectations changing between your organisation and the people who can, or should, benefit from your work?
1.3.1.x	Changes — When you listen to your peers, what are 3 trends or developments in our sector in

⁶

<https://medium.com/@Europeana/designing-europeanas-covid-19-sense-making-workshops-f14eb8e2016d>

Europeana sense-making process findings and outcomes

	response to (or made apparent by) the COVID-19 crisis?
1.3.2.x	Challenges — Listening to your peers, what are 3 challenges the GLAM sector faces (within or outside the digital domain) in adjusting to the post-COVID-19 world?
1.3.3.x	The role of Europeana — What role could or should Europeana and its network play in this new reality?
2.1.1.x	Inspiration — Please share one example of a digital response to the COVID-19 crisis or a digital project inspired by it that stood out for you in the last months. Share the URL and tell us in a few words what you think we can learn from this response or project.
2.1.2.x	Audience — During ‘normal’ times, how closely do you work with or come into contact with your organisation’s audiences or customers?
2.1.3.x	How has this changed in recent months?
2.1.4.x	Audience satisfaction -- During the COVID-19 crisis so far, to what extent do you feel your audience or customers are satisfied with your organisation's performance and why?
2.1.5.x	Agency to take action — The COVID-19 crisis has influenced traditional hierarchies in organisations. How, if at all, has your decision-making power and budget authority changed throughout the crisis and do you feel that you, personally, have had the right agency to take action?
2.1.6.x	Personal experience — People’s individual experience during recent months is shaped by personal circumstances, working conditions, and by other factors. What are the factors that have shaped your experience and ability to be successful and satisfied in your job?
2.2.1.x	Lessons learned — Looking backwards, what do you know now that you wish you had known 3 months ago?
2.2.2.x	Inspiration from outside of GLAMs — What actions, programs, or strategies from outside GLAMs would you like to experiment with? Are there new aspects to digital practice that you would like to see become more prevalent or permanent after the pandemic?
2.2.3.x	Learning from each other — What actions, programs, or strategies are other cultural organisations employing that you would like to experiment with? Are there any failures or negative examples that you have learned from?
2.3.1.x	Toolkit — Based on what you’ve heard from your peers in the session, what skills, experiences, ideas and other things that have come up in the past months would you like to keep with you (“in your toolkit”) from now on in your organisation and career?
2.3.2.x	Opportunities — Reflecting on all you’ve heard so far, what are 3 opportunities provided or made apparent by the current situation for the digital transformation of cultural heritage?
2.3.3.x	Fulfilling the promise — What does the sector need beyond what is available in the network right now to make these opportunities come true? What do you need to make this happen? Give 3 examples.
3.1.1.x	Vision (edge prediction) — Extrapolating from everything that you know now and has happened in the sector, please make an edge prediction for our sector for the year 2025. An edge prediction is a prediction of something that might, but won’t necessarily, come true. (If you want you can start with “In 2025, the GLAM sector...”)
3.1.2.x	Europeana — Based on our conversations in the last 2 weeks, what does the GLAM sector need in this edge prediction? Write down 3 capacities that Europeana can help to develop in this scenario in the coming years.

3.1.3.x	Preparing for anything — Preparedness and being unprepared has been a recurrent theme in our conversations. COVID-19 is not the last crisis we - as professionals - will face. How do you or will you increase your preparedness in your work within your sphere of influence?
3.2.1.x	Values and culture — The COVID-19 crisis has put a spotlight on the values and culture of our sector. What have you learned about the values and culture of your organisation and the GLAM sector as a result of COVID-19? Do our values and culture need to change? Why, and how?
3.2.2.x	Learning and capacity building — Imagine that we meet at least 6 months from now and you tell us that your work has changed dramatically for the better as a result of the COVID-19 crisis. What does your work look like? What skills and capacities have you developed? Who benefits from the changes, and in what way?
3.2.3.x	Personal responsibility — What new actions or outcomes can you take responsibility for and / or commit to over the coming months to help create positive change in the sector and beyond? What help might you need, and how might you be able to help others?
3.3.1.x	Reflections — Looking back on our last 3 meetings, what ideas, concepts or words stand out to you as important for the (near) future of our sector? We're looking for a breadth of ideas, so don't overthink it: just share the first few things that come to mind.
3.3.2.x	Quotes — Thinking back to our meetings, what are some quotes or things your peers said that you have found yourself repeating since you heard them?
3.3.3.x	Last words — At the close of our sessions, has anything been left unsaid that you had planned to contribute? Please share your last words of advice.

The IDs of a question show when the question was asked:

- 1.##.## for week one; 2.##.## for week two, etc.
- #.1.## for before the workshop; #.2.## for during the workshop; #.3.## for after the workshop;
- ##.1.# for the first question; ##.2.# for the second question, etc.

Analysis and interpretation

To analyse unstructured data of the conversations and the surveys, we've followed the following procedure for each question:

1. Organising and harmonising the data
2. Categorising the data into themes and recurrent topics
3. Interpreting the data per theme, topic, and question

This resulted in a structured overview of all themes and topics discussed, which allowed for comparison and grouping of data to come up with the ten main themes and to query the data specifically for the four Europeana goals. After the ten main themes had been identified, we pulled a representative list of quotations and observations from the data to populate the "what we heard" part of each theme.

The analysis of the ‘additional perspectives’ followed a more subjective approach whereby the authors discussed topics that were not mentioned enough to make it to the top ten, but according to them still merited additional discussion.

Response rate

Out of 64 selected participants, three did not join a single workshop and did not complete a single survey. One participant only joined one session and did not complete any surveys. Six participants completed every survey and participated in all sessions.

Moment	Invited	Participated	Percentage
Week 1, pre-survey	64	43	67%
Week 1, workshop	64	59	92%
Week 1, post-survey	64	38	59%
Week 2, pre-survey	64	40	63%
Week 2, workshop	64	54	84%
Week 2, post-survey	64	24	38%
Week 3, pre-survey	64	36	56%
Week 3, workshop	64	48	75%
Week 3, post-survey	64	13	20%

Participants

Of 64 selected participants, 61 individuals from 22 countries attended one or more sessions and are listed below.

** indicates group captains*

Valentina Bachi, project manager, Photoconsortium, Italy

Stephan Bartholmei, Head of Product Development and Innovation, German Digital Library, Germany

Graham Bell, Director, Cultura Trust / Europa Nostra, UK

Cosmina Berta, project manager ECC, Deutsche Digitale Bibliothek (DDB), Deutschland

Ina Blümel, Professor, TIB & HS Hannover, Germany

Elisabeth Bohm, Project Lead "Transfer of Knowledge", Stiftung Historische Museen Hamburg (SHMH), Germany

Larissa Borck*, Swedish National Heritage Board, Communications Coordinator, Sweden

Tessa Bouwman*, Educator, Bergen-Belsen Memorial, Germany

Tamara Butigan, Head of Digital Library department, National Library of Serbia, Serbia

Maria Carlsson, Operations Developer, Swedish National Heritage Board, Sweden

Michal Čudrnák, Head of Digital Collections and Services, Slovak National Gallery, Slovakia

Caleb Derven, Head, Technical & Digital Services, Glucksman Library, University of Limerick, Ireland

Milena Dobрева, associate professor, Milena Dobрева, United Kingdom

Killian Downing, Archivist, Dublin City University, Ireland

Ellen Euler, Prof. Dr., FHP, Deutschland

Kate Fernie, Director / Operations manager, 2Culture Associates Ltd / CARARE, UK / Ireland

Alessa Gambardella, Conservation Scientist, Van Gogh Museum, The Netherlands

Tobias Golodnoff, CEO, FASTFORWARD International, Danmark

Laura Guindal, Head of Library Projects Area, Ministry of Culture and Sports (Spain), Spain

Susan Hazan*, CEO, Digital Heritage, Israel, Israel

Kerstin Herlt, EU projects manager, DFF - Deutsches Filminstitut & Filmmuseum, Germany

Loa Steinunn Kristjansdottir, history teacher, EuroClio, Iceland

Marian Lefferts, Executive Manager, CERL, UK/NL

Pepijn Lemmens, Online manager, Het Nieuwe Instituut, The Netherlands

Marie-Veronique Leroi, Project manager, Ministry of Culture, France

Nicolette Lodico, Director, Information Management, Ford Foundation, USA

Marianna Marcucci, Digital Media Curator, Invasioni Digitali, Italy

Flavia Massara, CulturalItalia Content Manager, ICCU, Italy

Maja Minoska-Pavlovska, international cooperation and communications, NI Museum of the Macedonian Struggle, Macedonia

Marta Musso, Research Manager, Archives Portal Europe Foundation, United Kingdom

Maria Teresa Natale, Project Manager, MCA, Italy

Radka Neumannova, Head of Project management office, National gallery Prague, Czech Republic

Johan Oomen*, Head of Research and Heritage Services (and Europeana aficionado), Netherlands Institute for Sound and Vision, Nederland

Lisa Peter, European Projects Manager and Senior Lecturer in Shakespeare Studies, The Shakespeare Birthplace Trust, United Kingdom

Rugile Puodziuniene, Chief Officer of the Memory Institutions Policy Group, Ministry of Culture of the Republic of Lithuania, Lithuania

Kristine Racina, Director, Expatriate Archive Centre, the Netherlands

Conxa Rodà, Co-Director of Postgraduate on Digital Strategy for Cultural Organisations, Universitat Oberta de Catalunya – Museu Nacional d'Art de Catalunya, Spain

Dáire Rooney, Content and Engagement Coordinator, Digital Repository of Ireland, Ireland

Merete Sanderhoff, Curator / Senior advisor, SMK - Statens Museum for Kunst, Denmark

Antje Schmidt, Head of Digital Strategy, Museum für Kunst und Gewerbe Hamburg, Germany

Kristian Schneider, President, ARI Associazione Restauratori d'Italia, Italy

Ragnar Siil, Managing Partner, Creativity Lab, Estonia

Jennifer Siung, Head of Education, Chester Beatty, Ireland

Peter Soemers, Information specialist, Netherlands Enterprise Agency (RVO.nl), the Netherlands

Adam Sofronijevic, deputy director, University library Belgrade, Serbia

Marco Streefkerk, Owner, Cultuur Impact Digitaal, NLD

Jo-Anne Sunderland Bowe, Director, Heritec, United Kingdom

Corinne Szteinszneider, Coordinator, Michael Culture, Belgium / France / Italy

Dafydd Tudur*, Head of Access and Public Programmes, The National Library of Wales, United Kingdom

Aleksandra Uzelac, Researcher / Head, Culture and Communication Department, IRMO - Institute for Development and International Relations, Croatia

Olivier Van D'huynslager, Digital Strategy - data manager, Design Museum Gent, Belgium

Hans Van der Linden, policy advisor, Flemish government. Dept for culture, youth and media, Belgium

Victor-Jan Vos, Head of Collections and Services, NIOD Institute for War-, Holocaust and Genocidestudies, The Netherlands

Liam Wyatt, WikiCite project manager, Wikimedia Foundation, Italy

Katerina Zourou, Director, Web2Learn, Greece