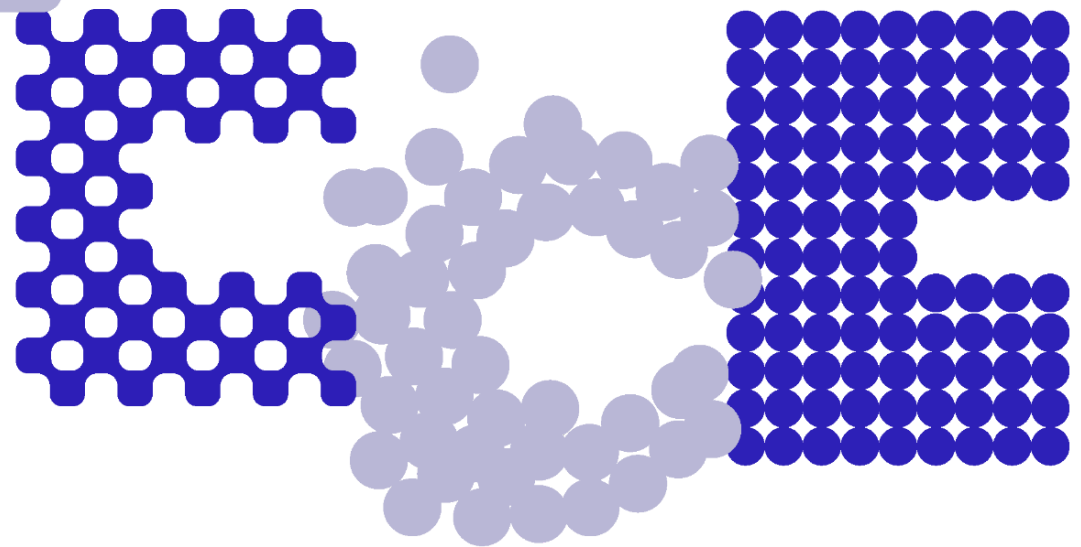




Open Heritage COMPANION



A Guide for the Journey
from Closed to Open



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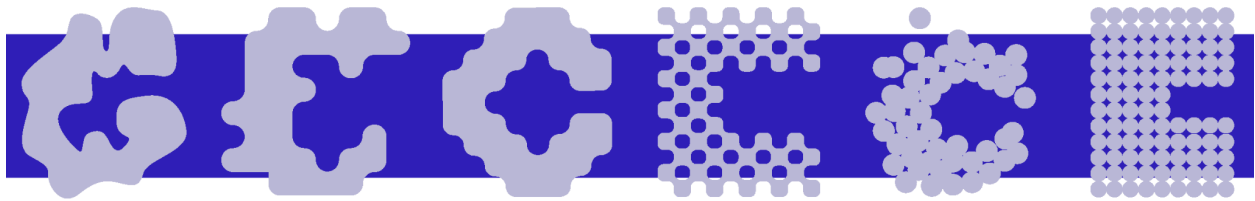
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Introduction

The Creative Commons Open Heritage Companion is a compendium of practical guidance based on best practices, existing tools from different sources, and a wide array of examples. It is designed to support institutions and communities as they navigate the transition from closed to open heritage and work to make collections more accessible, reusable, and meaningful for people. It does not aim to cover all of the myriad aspects that affect open heritage and rather focuses on the legal, policy, and ethical issues.

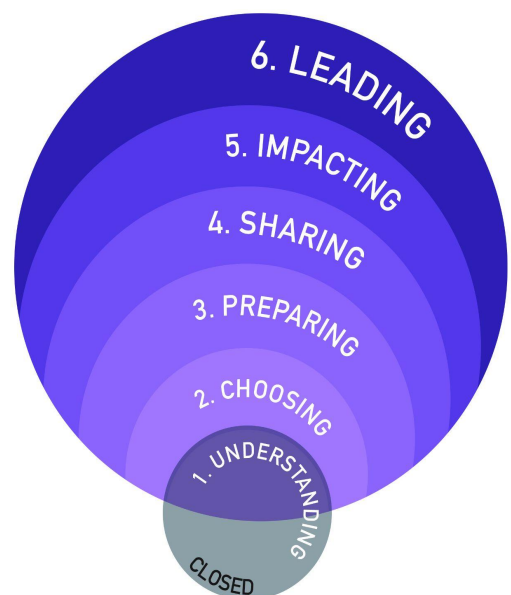
Opening heritage is not a single technical or legal step. It's an ongoing process and institutions begin from different starting points, move at different paces, and work within different constraints. Some may already have digitized collections, structured metadata, and a collection management system in place. Some may start with a pilot project sharing a small part of their collection and see where it goes. Others begin by setting out their goals in a policy before taking any other action. Many share their collections gradually as capacity and confidence grow.

This Companion is intended as a starting point and a source of practical orientation along the way. We hope it helps institutions find their footing, make informed decisions, and connect their work to a broader global community of people aiming for the same goal.

Six Stages, Closed → Open

Going from closed to open means taking the steps necessary to go from a to b, where (a) is holding a collection of digitized heritage and related materials that are not shared in ways that enable free and equitable access and reuse to (b) being a leader, inspiring others to harness the transformative power of open heritage.

This companion is organized into six stages that reflect common phases institutions experience when moving toward openness.



Each chapter highlights a different stage with curated resources linking to tools, guides, and examples. Institutions may enter at any stage.

1. **Understanding:** Discovering what open heritage makes possible and why it matters.
2. **Choosing:** Deciding about what to open and how to mark it.
3. **Preparing:** Making sure the collections and related data are ready for sharing.
4. **Sharing:** Putting openness into practice through platforms and engagement.
5. **Impacting:** Measuring and evaluating the value of open heritage.
6. **Leading:** Contributing to and shaping the global open heritage movement.

A Living Resource

This Companion is a living resource. Some resources appear in more than one section where they are relevant to multiple topics. While we made every effort to include the most useful resources, this Companion is not exhaustive. There will inevitably be gaps, particularly in terms of linguistic and regional diversity, as many existing resources are in English and reflect Western legal, policy, and institutional contexts.

We hope that this Companion will continue to grow over time. This PDF version reflects the work as it existed at the time of publication in 2026, but it may not include the most recent updates, additions, or revisions. For the most current version of the Companion, including newly added resources and examples, please visit the CC Open Heritage Companion on Meta-Wiki [https://meta.wikimedia.org/wiki/CC_Open_Heritage_Companion].

If you have a resource or tool that would strengthen it, you are invited to add it to the Meta-Wiki or suggest it on the talk page. If you are unable to contribute through Meta-Wiki, you may also share suggestions with Creative Commons at info@creativecommons.org.

A Note on Terminology

Throughout this guide, you will encounter several related terms – open, open culture, open GLAM, and open heritage. While there are links in [Chapter 1](#) that go into more detail, here is a brief explanation for immediate context and to help understand how “open” cuts across various areas of the cultural discourse. These descriptions are not prescriptive and in constant evolution.

The concept of “[open](#)” has served different purposes in a variety of fields, from software to scholarly communications, to research and education, to science and culture. Generally speaking, the notion of “open” in these fields often refers to “making something accessible” without financial, technological, or legal restrictions that limit reuse.

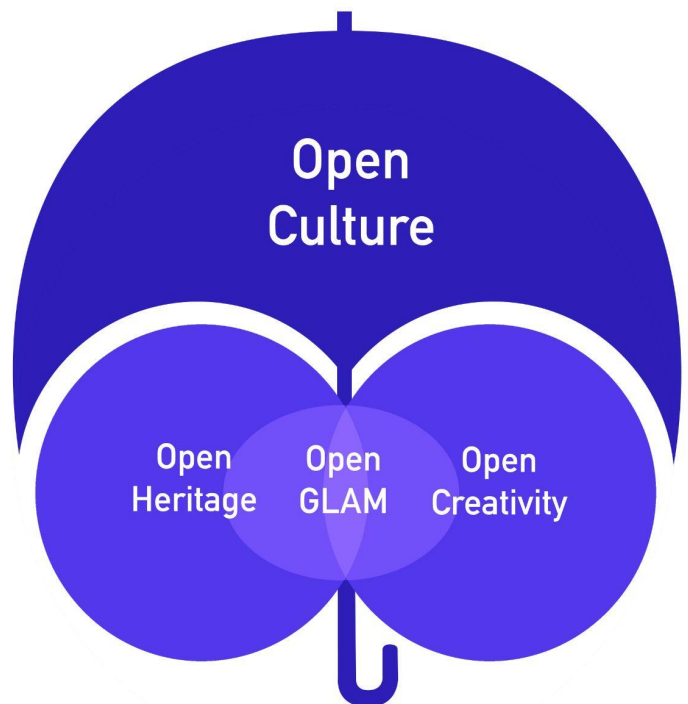
Open Culture (sometimes shortened to OC) refers to the set of ideals, principles, and values promoting open access to both contemporary creativity and heritage and the knowledge and culture they embody. It reflects a commitment to leveraging digital tools and open licensing to share culture on terms more permissible than the default copyright “all rights reserved.”

Open Creativity is not widely used but is helpful in the context of this guide to refer to forms of creative expression that are not yet considered heritage. This will often correspond to the contemporary creations of living artists who choose to share their works under open licenses. This may also include works that are created within cultural heritage institutions and shared openly.

Open Heritage refers to heritage that is made as openly accessible for sharing and reuse as possible and free from unfair and unnecessary copyright restrictions in the digital environment. The term encompasses all forms of heritage, including heritage held in the collections of cultural heritage institutions, heritage sites and monuments, natural heritage, and documentary heritage, and any associated metadata. In particular, a central tenet of open heritage is that digital reproductions of public domain works should be made available for free and without restrictions.

Open GLAM (Galleries, Libraries Archives, Museums) is a term used broadly across the sector as a quasi synonym for open heritage with the distinction that it foregrounds the types of institutions involved rather than the type of material being made open. The entity [OpenGLAM](#) (in one word) is the initiative behind the “[Declaration on Open Access for Cultural Heritage](#)” and has been associated with [Open Knowledge Foundation](#), [Wikimedia Foundation](#), [Creative Commons](#), and many other cultural organizations.

This guide is titled the Open Heritage Companion. This choice embraces a large spectrum of what communities and institutions choose to provide open access to.



Resource Categories

Each resource in this Companion is marked with an icon indicating its category so you can quickly find the type of resource most useful to you at any given stage.



→ **Tools and templates**



→ **Articles, guides, handbooks, reports, blog posts, PDFs**



→ **Platforms and interactive websites**



→ **Video and webinars**



→ **Podcasts**



→ **Policy and legal texts**



Chapter 1: UNDERSTANDING

Before an institution can open its collections, it's helpful to understand what openness means and why it matters. This chapter builds that foundation by exploring core concepts, real-world benefits, and common misconceptions.

Core Concepts and Key Terms

This section provides foundational language, glossaries, and introductory resources to help you navigate the concepts before diving into the practical guidance that follows.

-  **Open Culture/GLAM Glossary**
 - A Meta-Wiki, community-maintained glossary of key terms, developed by the CC Open Culture Platform.
 - https://meta.wikimedia.org/wiki/Open_Culture/GLAM_Glossary
-  **Back to Basics: Open Culture for Beginners**
 - A webinar from Creative Commons covering core open culture concepts for practitioners new to the field.
 - <https://creativecommons.org/2023/08/17/back-to-basics-open-culture-for-beginners/>
-  **Top Questions about Open Culture Answered in Short Videos**
 - A Creative Commons video series, *Open Culture Capsules*, featuring CC staff and Open Culture Certificate facilitators addressing common questions about open culture.
 - <https://creativecommons.org/2024/11/14/top-questions-about-open-culture-answered-in-five-short-videos/>
-  **Understanding Open Licenses**
 - A guide by the University of Edinburgh's Open.Ed program explaining how Creative Commons licenses, public domain designations, and CC0 work for sharing open educational resources.
 - <https://open.ed.ac.uk/how-to-guides/understanding-open-licences/>

-  **OpenGLAM Principles**
 - Foundational principles defining openness and the shared values of the OpenGLAM initiative.
 - <https://openglam.org/principles/>
-  **GLAM-E Glossary**
 - Technical and legal terms commonly encountered in open culture and GLAM.
 - <https://www.glamelab.org/products/glam-e-glossary/>
-  **Words Mean Things (A Glossary)**
 - An examination by Andrea Wallace on OpenGLAM of terminology in the open heritage space, highlighting contested and evolving language.
 - <https://openglam.pubpub.org/pub/the-glossary/release/1>
-  **The Benefits of Open Heritage in the Digital Environment - Creative Commons**
 - The second in a three-part series examining the social, creative, educational, and scientific benefits of open heritage, with a section defining what openness means in a heritage context.
 - <https://creativecommons.org/2025/09/18/the-benefits-of-open-heritage-in-the-digital-environment/>
-  **Open Culture Bibliography**
 - A living bibliography of key readings on open culture, open licensing, and digital heritage, developed by the CC Open Culture Platform.
 - https://www.zotero.org/groups/4612906/open_culture_glam_resources/library
-  **Open Access Made Easy: How to Open Your Collections for Greater and Better Sharing**
 - A Connecticut Humanities webinar featuring Creative Commons introducing open culture concepts and CC licensing for practitioners new to the field.
 - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mWK3NgRXEB4&t=711s>
-  **Glossary - United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) World Heritage Centre**
 - Official UNESCO definitions for cultural, natural, and mixed heritage as established by the 1972 World Heritage Convention.
 - <https://whc.unesco.org/en/glossary/>

Standardized Tools for Opening Access and Communicating Reuse Terms

The following contains information about the standardized legal and technical tools used to mark collections and communicate access permissions and reuse rights.

-  **Public Domain Mark 1.0 Universal - Creative Commons**
 - A tool for marking works that are free of known copyright restrictions and in the public domain worldwide.
 - <https://creativecommons.org/publicdomain/mark/1.0/>
-  **CC0 1.0 Universal - Creative Commons**
 - A public domain dedication tool that allows rights holders to waive copyright and related rights globally.
 - <https://creativecommons.org/publicdomain/zero/1.0/>
-  **Sharing Openly, Sharing Globally - Creative Commons Licenses**
 - Standardized licenses that allow rights holders to communicate specific permissions for reuse.
 - <https://creativecommons.org/cc-licenses/>
-  **Rights Statements**
 - Standardized statements for communicating the copyright and reuse status of digitized cultural heritage objects.
 - <https://rightsstatements.org/en/>
-  **Labels – Local Contexts**
 - Community-driven labels that communicate Indigenous cultural protocols and rights over heritage collections and data.
 - <https://localcontexts.org/labels/about-the-labels/>

Why Open Heritage Matters

Open access requires institutional commitment and that commitment is easier to build when the benefits are clear. These resources make the case for open heritage covering social, educational, economic, and cultural outcomes and can help practitioners communicate the value of openness to decision-makers and communities alike.

-  **Don't Be A Dinosaur or The Benefits of Open Culture**
 - A Creative Commons practitioner-focused resource making the case for open culture

and directly addressing common objections and institutional hesitations.

- <https://creativecommons.org/wp-content/uploads/2025/11/Dont-Be-a-Dinosaur-or-The-Benefits-of-Open-Culturev2.pdf>

- **Key Benefits of Open Culture**

- A Creative Commons summary of the key benefits of open heritage for institutions and communities.
- <https://creativecommons.org/wp-content/uploads/2024/04/Key-Benefits-of-Open-Culture.pdf>

- **The Impact of Open Access on Galleries, Libraries, Museums, & Archives**

- A study by Effie Kapsalis examining how open access policies have affected galleries, libraries, archives, and museums.
- https://siarchives.si.edu/sites/default/files/pdfs/2016_03_10_OpenCollections_Public.pdf

Barriers, Myths, and Misconceptions

Common concerns, misconceptions, and institutional hesitations often slow progress toward openness. This section can help you anticipate resistance and how to respond.

- **What are the barriers to open culture?**

- A Creative Commons community survey on the practical, legal, and institutional barriers to opening heritage collections.
- <https://creativecommons.org/2022/07/22/what-are-the-barriers-to-open-culture-heres-what-the-cc-community-has-to-say/>

- **Barriers to Open Access**

- A critical analysis by Andrea Wallace of the structural and systemic barriers that limit open access in the cultural heritage sector.
- <https://openglam.pubpub.org/pub/barriers-to-open-access/release/1>

- **Open Culture VOICES Archives**

- A Creative Commons archive of first-person accounts from practitioners on their experiences navigating open culture, including common barriers and institutional challenges.
- <https://creativecommons.org/tag/open-culture-voices/>

The Value(s) of Open Heritage

Economic sustainability is a frequent concern when institutions consider open access. The following explores business models, cost considerations, and how openness can align with, rather than undermine, institutional financial health.

-  **Democratising the Rijksmuseum**
 - A Europeana case study on how the Rijksmuseum approached open access, including lessons for institutional sustainability.
 - <https://pro.europeana.eu/post/democratising-the-rijksmuseum>
-  **Europeana at THE ARTS+ Fair: promoting new business models using digital cultural heritage**
 - A Europeana article on how institutions can use digital collections to support new and sustainable business models.
 - <https://pro.europeana.eu/post/europeana-at-the-arts-fair-promoting-new-business-models-using-digital-cultural-heritage>
-  **The Economics of Open: Can Open Licensing Be a Sustainable Strategy for Cultural Heritage Institutions?**
 - Published in the Creative Commons Medium blog, this article by Bartolomeo Meletti examines how open licensing can align with institutional financial sustainability.
 - <https://medium.com/creative-commons-we-like-to-share/the-economics-of-open-can-open-licensing-be-a-sustainable-strategy-for-cultural-heritage-305dfa7edbc>
-  **New Business Models in the Cultural and Creative Sectors (CCSs)**
 - A European commissioned research report examining business model innovation in the cultural and creative sectors.
 - <https://ec.europa.eu/assets/eac/culture/docs/eenc/eenc-2015-new%20business%20models%20cultural%20creative%20sectors.pdf>
-  **How much does Open GLAM cost? | Open Access on a budget**
 - A Museum Computer Network webinar taking a practical look at the real costs of open access implementation and how institutions can manage them.
 - https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RX7LVXIAw_Y
-  **The Economics of Open with the Authors of Open Licensing Models in the Cultural Heritage Sector**
 - A Creative Commons panel discussion with researchers on economic models for open licensing in the heritage sector.
 - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=csc1XyD8Jck&list=PLPDjhzarwzCgHXbWSznTpfkmLuJqh7sPc&index=7&t=11s>

Open Heritage Inspiration

Looking at how other institutions have approached openness can help you envision what's possible in your own context.

-  **The Sharing is Caring anthology**
 - A collection of essays and reflections from the National Gallery of Denmark in Copenhagen (Statens Museum for Kunst) on open sharing practices across the cultural heritage sector.
 - <https://www.smk.dk/en/article/the-sharing-is-caring-anthology/>
-  **Pioneers of Open Culture: A look back at how open access happened at three early adopters**
 - A Creative Commons article examining how three early-adopter institutions approached open access, with lessons for those following.
 - <https://creativecommons.org/2023/01/12/pioneers-of-open-culture-a-look-back-at-how-open-access-happened-at-three-early-adopters/>
-  **Eight case studies show opportunities, challenges, and needs of low-capacity and non-Western cultural heritage institutions**
 - A Creative Commons article presenting case studies from institutions with limited resources and from outside the Western heritage mainstream.
 - <https://creativecommons.org/2022/05/04/eight-case-studies-show-opportunities-challenges-and-needs-of-low-capacity-and-non-western-cultural-heritage-institutions/>
-  **Digital Community Heritage & Open Access**
 - Published in the Creative Commons Medium blog, this article by Ziku and Fabos explores community-led approaches to documenting and openly sharing digital heritage.
 - <https://medium.com/creative-commons-we-like-to-share/digital-community-heritage-and-open-access-7e3477ef2131>
-  **Archiving Emerging Cultural Heritage**
 - Published in the Creative Commons Medium blog, this article by Connor Benedict explores approaches to identifying and preserving emerging and at-risk forms of cultural heritage.
 - <https://medium.com/creative-commons-we-like-to-share/archiving-emerging-cultural-heritage-8665f1c2731c>
-  **Open GLAM Survey**
 - A sector-wide survey mapping the state of open access adoption among galleries,

libraries, archives, and museums.

- <https://www.glamelab.org/open-glam-survey/>

- **Open Licensing Models in the Cultural Heritage Sector**

- A research report from CREATE (Centre for Regulation of the Creative Economy, University of Glasgow) examining the range of open licensing approaches currently in use across heritage institutions.
- https://creativecommons.org/wp-content/uploads/2025/06/Open-Licensing-Models-Report_CREATE_CC.pdf

- **Open GLAM on Medium**

- A blog featuring perspectives, updates, and commentary from the open GLAM community.
- <https://medium.com/open-glam>

- **GLAM - Outreach Wiki**

- A community wiki tracking open GLAM activity and institutional participation worldwide.
- <https://outreach.wikimedia.org/wiki/GLAM>

- **Discover the Commons**

- A Creative Commons platform featuring organizations and projects that have built sustainable models using CC tools.
- <https://creativecommons.org/share-your-work/made-with-cc/>

- **Open Access al Museo | L'esempio del Museo Egizio**

- A Wikimedia Italia video on how the Turin Egyptian Museum implemented and benefits from its open access program.
- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wLYgwXB6E5I>

Open Heritage and Global Impact

Open heritage contributes to larger goals beyond individual institutional missions. These resources situate open access within broader global work.

- **Open Heritage Statement**

- A website holding the Open Heritage Statement, written by the Open Heritage Coalition, affirming shared commitments to open heritage and advocating for a standard-setting instrument through the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO).
- <https://openheritagestatement.org/>

-  **Europeana**
 - Europe's digital platform for cultural heritage, aggregating millions of openly accessible objects from institutions across the continent.
 - <https://www.europeana.eu/en>
-  **Dive into Heritage**
 - A United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) innovative online platform that leverages digital technologies to safeguard and promote World Heritage sites and its related intangible heritage, and transmit it to future generations.
 - <https://whc.unesco.org/en/dive-into-heritage/>
-  **Dive into intangible cultural heritage!**
 - A United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) Intangible Cultural Heritage dynamic and interactive space of vibrant intangible cultural heritage practices and expressions.
 - <https://ich.unesco.org/en/dive>

Open Heritage and Education

Open heritage can lead to more inclusive access to education. These resources point to the linkages between access to heritage and education.

-  **Bridging Open Culture and Education: Case Studies in Cultural Heritage Education**
 - A Creative Commons Open Culture Live webinar featuring case studies on how open heritage is being used in educational settings around the world.
 - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vo45ptzY3XM&list=PLPDjhzarwzCgHXbWSznTpfkmLuJqh7sPc&index=6&t=340s>
-  **Europeana for Educators**
 - A Europeana resource hub on using openly available heritage collections for educational purposes.
 - <https://www.europeana.eu/en/educators>

Open Heritage and Artificial Intelligence

Open heritage opens up new questions in the age of artificial intelligence. These resources help shed light on the emerging issues arising from these new technologies.

-  **Open Culture in the Age of AI: Concerns, Hopes, and Opportunities**
 - A Creative Commons Open Culture Live webinar on how AI is reshaping open culture practice and the opportunities and risks it presents.
 - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Oe8s42UTBG0&list=PLPDjhzarwzCgHXbWSznTpfkmLuJqh7sPc&index=5>
-  **Publishing cultural heritage in the age of AI**
 - A Europeana and Open Future report on considerations and approaches for releasing heritage data in contexts where AI use is prevalent.
 - https://pro.europeana.eu/files/Europeana_Professional/Publications/251202PublishingCulturalHeritageDataInTheAgeOfAI.pdf
-  **AI4Culture**
 - An exploration of how artificial intelligence can be used responsibly to enhance access to heritage collections.
 - <https://ai4culture.eu/>
-  **Artificial Intelligence for Libraries, Archives, and Museums (AI4LAM)**
 - AI4LAM is an international, participatory community focused on advancing the use of artificial intelligence in, for and by libraries, archives and museums.
 - <https://ai4lam.org/>



Chapter 2: CHOOSING

Understanding openness is one thing. Deciding what to do is another. This chapter covers the practical decisions institutions face: assessing copyright status, weighing ethical and cultural considerations, managing risk, and selecting the right tools.

Preparing to Open

Assessing institutional readiness, building leadership buy-in, and understanding organizational culture shifts are essential groundwork before making access and reuse decisions.

-  **Go Open with GLAM-E**
 - GLAM-E Lab introduction to their tools and approach for institutions beginning their open access journey.
 - <https://www.glamelab.org/products/go-open-with-glam-e/>
-  **Self-Assessment Tool**
 - A self-assessment tool from the Institute of Museum and Library Services (USA) to help museum and library leaders evaluate where their institutions stand on 21st century skills, operations, and programming.
 - https://www.imls.gov/sites/default/files/publications/thumbs/21stcenturyskills_matrix_print.pdf
-  **Bridging the gap: from no Open Access to some/all Open Access**
 - Published in the Open GLAM Medium blog, this article by Anne Young offers practical guidance for institutions moving from closed to partially or fully open collections.
 - <https://medium.com/open-glam/3-bridging-the-gap-from-no-open-access-to-some-all-open-access-d7d2d916e7d3>
-  **Open Licensing: A Digital Heritage Leadership Briefing**
 - A GLAM-E Lab briefing document commissioned by the UK National Lottery Heritage Fund designed to help senior leaders in the UK heritage sector understand and commit to open licensing.
 - <https://www.glamelab.org/products/open-licensing-a-digital-heritage-leadership-briefing/>

-  **Inside the Museum is Outside the Museum — Thoughts on Open Access and Organisational Culture | by Karin Glasemann | Open GLAM | Medium**
 - Published in the Open GLAM Medium blog, this reflective piece by Karin Glasemann examines how open access requires and drives change in institutional culture.
 - <https://medium.com/open-glam/inside-the-museum-is-outside-the-museum-thoughts-on-open-access-and-organisational-culture-1e9780d6385b>

Choosing *What* to Open

Strategic decision making about scope and priorities requires evaluating collections across multiple dimensions.

Copyright Assessment

-  **Copyright Assessment Framework Definitive**
 - A risk assessment tool for determining the copyright status of collection items and selecting the appropriate rights statement for faithful two-dimensional reproductions of literary, dramatic, musical, and artistic works.
 - https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/1f-89NuW1uWZxkdNIWXmqZO3YAM2C7HQQWmgel_oYZPJY/edit?gid=1238125246#gid=1238125246
-  **Interactive Copyright Tool**
 - A suite of interactive, US-specific tools from Library Futures to help institutions assess the copyright status of works in their collections. Originally developed as librarycopyright.net, the tools have been relaunched at this new address.
 - <https://copyright-tools.pages.dev/>
-  **Copyright Checker**
 - An interactive tool to help European institutions determine the copyright status of their collection items.
 - <https://copyrightuser.eu/>
-  **Diligent Search**
 - A tool supporting the diligent search process required before using orphan works under European legislation.
 - <https://diligentsearch.eu/>
-  **Copyright User**
 - Guidance on UK copyright law aimed at creators, media professionals, and the public, covering common questions about rights and permissions.
 - <https://www.copyrightuser.org/>

-  **Copyright management guidelines for cultural heritage institutions**
 - Europeana's guidelines for managing rights and communicating copyright status for digital heritage objects.
 - <https://pro.europeana.eu/post/copyright-management-guidelines-for-cultural-heritage-institutions>
-  **Guide to Managing Rights and Risks in Audiovisual Archives**
 - Sector-specific guidance on navigating the complex rights landscape for audiovisual heritage materials.
 - <https://fiatifta.org/vuc-guide-to-managing-rights-and-risks-in-av-archives/>

Ethical Considerations

-  **Beyond Copyright: the Ethics of Open Sharing**
 - Published in the Creative Commons Medium blog, this article by Josie Fraser explores ethical responsibilities that go beyond legal rights when deciding to share heritage materials, as developed by the CC Open Culture Platform.
 - <https://medium.com/creative-commons-we-like-to-share/beyond-copyright-the-ethics-of-open-sharing-a495bb95569d>
-  **Collaborate, Communicate, and Navigate Ethical Considerations with the Ethical Sharing Card Game**
 - This article by Isaac Oloruntimehin, published in Creative Commons Medium blog, introduces a card game developed by the CC Open Culture Platform for navigating ethical scenarios in open sharing decision making.
 - <https://medium.com/creative-commons-we-like-to-share/collaborate-communicate-and-navigate-ethical-considerations-with-the-ethical-sharing-card-game-20623d3f630b>
-  **Ethics of Open Sharing with Creative Commons & Wiki Loves Living Heritage**
 - A webinar from Creative Commons and Wiki Loves Living Heritage examining the ethical dimensions of sharing heritage collections openly, based on the work of the CC Open Culture Platform.
 - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=u9BF6g2jOXw>
-  **Whose Open Culture? Decolonization, Indigenization, and Restitution**
 - A Creative Commons Open Culture Live discussion on power, equity, and justice in open culture, with a focus on decolonization and Indigenous perspectives.
 - https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=_l3fIRfUX9A
-  **Respectful Terminologies & Changing the Subject**
 - A Creative Commons Open Culture Live session on updating harmful or outdated

language in collection descriptions and metadata.

- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=089z1qfSHcQ&list=PLPDjhzarwzCgHXbWSznTpfkmLuJqh7sPc&index=2>

Cultural Rights and Interests

Not all heritage can or should be shared in the same way. Indigenous peoples and local communities hold rights and interests in their heritage. Heritage materials may have been collected without consent, described in harmful language, or removed from their cultural contexts. This section covers the frameworks, protocols, and practices that guide institutions in approaching these questions, from Indigenous data sovereignty and respectful terminology to decolonization and privacy.

Indigenous Heritage and Traditional Knowledge

-  **Sharing Indigenous Cultural Heritage Online: An Overview of GLAM Policies**
 - A Creative Commons blog post about the intersections of open heritage with Indigenous heritage protection.
 - <https://creativecommons.org/2020/08/08/sharing-indigenous-cultural-heritage-online-an-overview-of-glam-policies/>
-  **The CARE Principles for Indigenous Data Governance**
 - Principles guiding respectful and rights-aware approaches to Indigenous data, emphasizing collective benefit, authority, responsibility, and ethics.
 - <https://www.gida-global.org/careprinciples>
-  **Australian Museums and Galleries Association (AMaGA) Indigenous Roadmap**
 - A roadmap by Terri Janke to improving Indigenous engagement and employment in the museums and galleries sector.
 - <https://www.terrijanke.com.au/mga-indigenous-roadmap>
-  **Local Contexts**
 - The organization behind the Traditional Knowledge (TK) and Biocultural (BC) Labels, supporting community-led access protocols.
 - <https://localcontexts.org/>
-  **Traditional Knowledge and Copyright Intersections**
 - Published in the Creative Commons Medium blog, this article links to a CC Open Culture Platform webinar with Jane Anderson, Erna Lilje, and Mehtab Khan exploring how copyright law interacts with Traditional Knowledge and Indigenous cultural rights.
 - <https://medium.com/creative-commons-we-like-to-share/traditional-knowledge-and-copyright>

[t-intersections-d8cb78375e40](#)

-  **Indigitization Toolkit**
 - A practical toolkit supporting Indigenous communities in digitizing and managing their own heritage materials.
 - <https://www.indigitization.ca/toolkit/>
-  **Indigenous Voices, Lives, & Issues Toolkit**
 - These guides at Georgetown University are resources for libraries working to center Indigenous voices in collections, description, and access.
 - <https://guides.library.georgetown.edu/indigenous>
-  **Cultural Protocols: A Framework**
 - A framework by Jane Anderson, prepared for the Australian Institute of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies, for developing culturally-appropriate protocols when working with Indigenous heritage materials.
 - https://sustainableheritagenetwork.org/system/files/atoms/file/Anderson_FrameworkForCulturalProtocols.pdf
-  **The First Nations Principles of OCAP**
 - Principles affirming First Nations' rights to own, control, access, and possess their cultural data.
 - <https://fnigc.ca/ocap-training/>
-  **Protocols for using First Nations cultural and intellectual property in the arts**
 - Creative Australia's protocols for respectfully engaging with First Nations intellectual and cultural property in creative contexts.
 - <https://creative.gov.au/first-nations-arts/protocols-for-using-first-nations-cultural-and-intellectual-property-in-the-arts>
-  **The Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Protocols for Libraries, Archives and Information Services**
 - Sector-specific protocols for Australian libraries, archives, and information services working with Indigenous materials.
 - <https://atsilrn.aiatsis.gov.au/protocols.php>

-  **Recognizing Indigenous Interests: Labeling DSI with Provenance Metadata - Policy Brief**
 - A policy brief led by Jane Anderson and Maui Hudson addressing equity for Indigenous communities in research and data governance frameworks.
 - <https://zenodo.org/records/13172148>

Respectful Terminologies

-  **Respectful Terminologies & Changing the Subject**
 - A Creative Commons webinar on strategies for updating harmful terminology in heritage collection descriptions.
 - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=089z1qfSHcQ>
-  **Decolonising the database**
 - A Collections Trust (UK) resource on removing colonial biases and harmful language from heritage databases and metadata.
 - <https://collectionstrust.org.uk/decolonisation/>
-  **Words Matter: An Unfinished Guide to Word Choices in the Cultural Sector**
 - An International Centre for the Study of the Preservation and Restoration of Cultural Property (ICCR) practical guide for heritage professionals navigating language choices in collections and communications.
 - <https://ocm.iccr.org/documents/words-matter-unfinished-guide-word-choices-cultural-sector>
-  **Reparative Archival Description Working Group: Recommendations**
 - Yale Library's practical recommendations for reparative redescription, including standardized notes, access to previous record versions, and handling harmful controlled vocabulary terms.
 - <https://guides.library.yale.edu/c.php?g=1140330&p=8381895>
-  **SABIO - The SociAl Bias Observatory**
 - A Dutch research project using AI and language technology to detect bias in the collection metadata of heritage institutions, with tools to help curators identify and address prejudiced or imbalanced descriptions.
 - <https://www.cultural-ai.nl/projects/post-2-4c8dm>

Decolonization

-  **Decolonising museums isn't part of a 'culture war'. It's about keeping them relevant**
 - A Guardian opinion piece by Dan Hicks arguing that decolonization of museum

collections is a matter of historical responsibility, not political controversy.

- https://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2021/may/07/decolonising-museums-isnt-part-of-a-culture-war-its-about-keeping-them-relevant?CMP=Share_AndroidApp_Other

Privacy and Sensitive Data

-  **Copyright Office Hours: Reconciling openness with data protection and privacy**
 - A Europeana session on how institutions can balance open access commitments with data protection and privacy obligations.
 - <https://pro.europeana.eu/event/copyright-office-hours-reconciling-openness-with-data-protection-and-privacy>
-  **SAA Privacy & Confidentiality Policy**
 - A Society of American Archivists resource on managing privacy risks when opening collections for public access.
 - <https://www2.archivists.org/privacy>
-  **Legal framework of European data protection**
 - A European Commission overview of the European's legal framework for data protection, including GDPR, applicable to heritage institutions in member states.
 - https://commission.europa.eu/law/law-topic/data-protection/legal-framework-eu-data-protection_en

Evaluating and Mitigating Risk

-  **Risk Management Toolkit for Open GLAM**
 - A toolkit developed as part of CC's Open Culture Platform helping institutions identify, assess, and manage legal and reputational risks associated with opening collections.
 - <https://oa2ch.gitbook.io/risk-management>
 -  **Risk Management Toolkit for Open GLAM v2.0 Is Here**
 - Published in the Creative Commons Medium blog, this article by Ilkay Holt announces v2.0 of the Risk Management Toolkit, summarizing new features.
 - <https://medium.com/creative-commons-we-like-to-share/risk-management-toolkit-for-open-glam-v2-0-is-here-d33cb2e32d18>
-  **Assessing and Mitigating Risk**
 - Practical guidance from the GLAM-E Lab on risk assessment processes tailored to heritage institutions.
 - <https://www.glamelab.org/products/assessing-and-mitigating-risk>

-  **Display At Your Own Risk**
 - A publication by Andrea Wallace and Ronan Deazley exploring how institutions have navigated risk in making sensitive or complex collections openly available.
 - <https://displayatyourownrisk.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/04/Display-At-Your-Own-Risk-Publication.pdf>

Choosing *How* to Open

Once you know what to open, the next decision is how to mark it. The right tool depends on copyright status: open licenses for materials where your institution holds rights, public domain tools where copyright has expired or been waived, and rights statements where status is unclear or restricted. This section covers each, plus attribution and policy resources.

Orientation

-  **Recommended Licenses and Tools for Cultural Heritage Content**
 - A Creative Commons guide on which licenses and tools are most appropriate for different types of heritage content.
 - <https://creativecommons.org/wp-content/uploads/2025/07/OC-Recommended-Licenses.pdf>
-  **Licenses, Rights Statements, Public Domain Tools**
 - A GLAM-E Lab orientation to the main tools available for communicating rights and permissions for heritage collections.
 - <https://www.glamelab.org/products/selecting-an-alternative-license-or-label/>
-  **Open Licensing for Cultural Heritage**
 - A practitioner guide by Gil Hamilton and Fred Saunderson on applying open licenses in cultural heritage institutions.
 - https://books.google.co.uk/books?id=JpgxDwAAOBAJ&printsec=copyright&redir_esc=y#v=onepage&q&f=false
-  **Open Science for Arts, Design and Music**
 - Developed as part of the "Open science for arts, design and music" project to cater to the unique needs of art and design schools in Switzerland, this is an analysis of licensing options applicable to arts, design, and music in open science contexts.
 - https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/0/0f/Open_Science_for_Arts%2C_Design_and_Music_-_Guidelines_for_Researchers%2C_Librarians_and_Practitioners_in_the_Humanities.pdf

Creative Commons Licenses

-  **CC License Chooser**
 - An interactive tool that helps institutions select the appropriate Creative Commons license for various types of content.
 - <https://creativecommons.org/chooser/>
-  **Licence Compatibility Checker**
 - A tool developed by Jan Ainali for checking whether two Creative Commons licenses are compatible when combining materials.
 - <https://aina.li/cc-compatability/>
-  **Reproductions of Public Domain Works Should Remain in the Public Domain**
 - A Creative Commons blog post clarifying that faithful digital reproductions of public domain works do not attract new copyright.
 - <https://creativecommons.org/2019/11/20/reproductions-of-public-domain-works/>
-  **Sharing Openly, Sharing Globally**
 - A Creative Commons introduction to how CC licenses work and how to apply them.
 - <https://creativecommons.org/share-your-work/cclicenses/>

Public Domain Tools

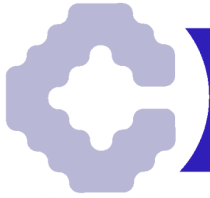
-  **Guide to using public domain tools**
 - Step-by-step guidance from Creative Commons on when and how to apply public domain tools including CC0 and the Public Domain Mark.
 - <https://resources.creativecommons.org/guide-to-using-public-domain-tools/>
-  **Public Domain Mark - Creative Commons**
 - A tool for clearly marking works that are already in the public domain, helping users understand they are free to use.
 - <https://creativecommons.org/public-domain/pdm/>
-  **CC0 1.0 Universal - Creative Commons**
 - The legal text and explanation of the CC0 tool for waiving copyright and releasing works into the public domain.
 - <https://creativecommons.org/publicdomain/zero/1.0/>
-  **Public Domain Tool**
 - A tool by the Flemish Institute for Archives (meemoo) that matches collection creators with Wikidata records to support public domain determination using a valid CSV file.
 - <https://meemoo.be/en/tools/public-domain-tool>

Rights Statements

-  **Rights Statements**
 - A set of standardized rights statements for cultural heritage institutions to communicate the copyright and reuse status of digital objects.
 - <https://rightsstatements.org/en/>
-  **Understanding the rights statements**
 - A Europeana explanation of the standardized rights statements used to communicate copyright and access conditions.
 - <https://pro.europeana.eu/page/available-rights-statements>

Attribution and Reference Tools

-  **Recommended practices for attribution**
 - Best practice guidance from Creative Commons on how to attribute openly licensed works correctly.
 - https://wiki.creativecommons.org/wiki/Recommended_practices_for_attribution
-  **Bulk Open Attribution Tool (BOAT)**
 - A tool by Nate Angell for generating standardized attribution statements in bulk for openly licensed heritage content.
 - <https://xolotl.org/boat-1-0/>
-  **Nudging Users to Reference Institutions when Using Public Domain Materials**
 - A multilingual Creative Commons guide on encouraging users to credit source institutions when reusing public domain heritage materials.
 - [français](#), [italiano](#), [日本語](#), [español](#), [العربية](#), [Nederlands](#), [Shqip](#)
 - <https://creativecommons.org/wp-content/uploads/2024/02/Nudging-Users-to-Reference-Institutions-when-Using-Public-Domain-Materials%E2%80%94Creative-Commons-Guidelines-1.pdf>



Chapter 3: PREPARING

Choosing what to open is just the beginning. This chapter covers the practical steps as you prepare to release collections: copyright clearance, metadata development, digitization standards, digital preservation, and staff training.

Copyright Clearance & Documentation

Conducting copyright clearance requires practical workflows and clear documentation systems. The tools in this section help you maintain records and make rights decisions.

-  **Copyright Checker**
 - An interactive tool to help institutions determine the copyright status of collection items under European law.
 - <https://copyrightuser.eu/>
-  **Diligent Search**
 - A tool supporting the diligent search process required before using orphan works under European legislation.
 - <https://diligentsearch.eu/>
-  **Copyright Clearance**
 - A GLAM-E Lab template for documenting copyright decisions and maintaining defensible records during the clearance process.
 - <https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/1ce9ypE6gZDWoCSpWKe42ibb0fl-V1V3WtfQqFlpCwCU/edit?gid=884319758#gid=884319758>
-  **Copyright Clearance Handbook for Public Domain Publications of Digital Collections**
 - A step-by-step handbook from GLAM-E Lab for conducting copyright clearance on digital collections intended for public release.
 - <https://www.glamelab.org/products/copyright-clearance-handbook-for-public-domain-publications/>

-  **Copyright management guidelines for cultural heritage institutions**
 - Europeana's guidelines for managing rights and communicating copyright status for digital heritage objects.
 - <https://pro.europeana.eu/post/copyright-management-guidelines-for-cultural-heritage-institutions>

Metadata & Collection Information

These resources guide the creation, improvement, and management of metadata that supports discovery, interoperability, and reuse.

-  **Sandbox Template for Wikimedia Commons Metadata Management**
 - A template from GLAM-E Lab for testing and refining metadata formatting before uploading collections to Wikimedia Commons.
 - https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/10Wj82iZ8XDkHJfVdKMwT0h_OMZnpGSLDIyq5VZHv9Q/edit?gid=1687830774#gid=1687830774
-  **Image and Metadata Handbook for Wikimedia Commons**
 - Practical guidance from GLAM-E Lab for preparing images and metadata to the standards required for Wikimedia Commons upload.
 - <https://www.glamelab.org/products/image-and-metadata-handbook-for-wikimedia-commons>
-  **Europeana's Publishing Framework**
 - Standards and recommendations from Europeana for structuring and managing data submitted to the platform.
 - <https://pro.europeana.eu/post/publishing-framework>
-  **Metadata on any Resource**
 - Guidance from the International Image Interoperability Framework (IIIF) community on applying IIIF metadata standards to make collection resources interoperable.
 - <https://iiif.io/api/cookbook/recipe/0029-metadata-anywhere/>
-  **Open Data Handbook**
 - A practical guide from Open Knowledge International covering the legal, social, and technical aspects of open data, including why to go open and how to do it.
 - <https://opendatahandbook.org/guide/en/>
-  **FAIR Principles**
 - The GO FAIR framework for making digital assets more useful to both humans and machines, covering Findability, Accessibility, Interoperability, and Reusability.
 - <https://www.go-fair.org/fair-principles/>

-  **CARE Principles for Indigenous Data Governance**
 - Principles for ensuring Indigenous peoples retain authority and benefit from data about them, including within heritage metadata systems.
 - <https://www.gida-global.org/careprinciples>
-  **Wikidata:Introduction**
 - A Wikimedia introduction to Wikidata's structure and how heritage institutions can contribute and link their collection data.
 - <https://www.wikidata.org/wiki/Wikidata:Introduction>
-  **Respectful Terminologies & Changing the Subject**
 - A Creative Commons Open Culture Live session on updating harmful or outdated language in collection descriptions and metadata.
 - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=089z1qfSHcQ&list=PLPDjhzarwzCgHXbWSznTpfkmLuJqh7sPc&index=2>

Digitization & File Preparation

Before collections can be shared openly, they need to be digitized to a standard that supports reuse. These resources cover practical workflows, technical standards, and low-cost approaches for institutions at different resource levels.

-  **Museu Portátil, Pocket Edition Manual**
 - A practical manual, available in [Portuguese](#) and [English](#), presenting low-cost digitization workflows using mobile phone cameras, designed for memory institutions with limited financial and human resources to digitize and license collection materials for digital platforms.
 - https://meta.wikimedia.org/wiki/Digitizing_and_Sharing_Cultural_Heritage:_A_Practical_Guide
 - https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Museu_Portatil_Edi%C3%A7%C3%A3o_de_Bolso_Manual_2022.pdf
-  **Europeana Digitisation Guidelines**
 - Europeana's practical standards and recommendations for digitizing cultural heritage materials.
 - <https://pro.europeana.eu/post/digitisation-guidelines>
-  **Guidelines for Digitization Projects**
 - International Federation of Library Associations (IFLA) guidelines for planning and executing digitization projects for public domain collections held by libraries and archives.

- <https://www.ifla.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/05/assets/preservation-and-conservation/publications/digitization-projects-guidelines.pdf>
-  **FADGI Digitization Guidelines**
 - Practical scanning and digitization standards from the Federal Agencies Digital Guidelines Initiative, widely adopted across cultural heritage institutions.
 - <https://www.digitizationguidelines.gov/>
-  **Doing digitisation on a budget: a guide to low-cost digital projects**
 - Practical guidance from The National Lottery Heritage Fund in the UK for institutions with limited resources seeking to digitize collections without specialist infrastructure.
 - <https://www.heritagefund.org.uk/funding/good-practice-guidance/doing-digitisation-on-budget>
-  **Wider Lens Podcast**
 - *Wider Lens* is a podcast from [Digital Transitions](#) dedicated to in-depth conversations about cultural heritage digitization. Episodes feature practitioners discussing topics and issues in cultural heritage digitization, and it launched in early 2026.
 - <https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLJhHTLkoBjUNcck2c37WNAQEfsgiHrrXa>

Digital Preservation & Collection Management

Keeping digital files accessible over time requires deliberate preservation strategies and sound collection management. These resources cover preservation frameworks, file format standards, and tools for ensuring long-term access.

-  **Digital Preservation Handbook**
 - A peer-reviewed reference from the Digital Preservation Coalition covering principles, strategies, and practical approaches for managing and sustaining access to digital materials over time.
 - <https://www.dpconline.org/handbook>
-  **Library of Congress Recommended Formats Statement**
 - Library of Congress guidance on preferred file formats for digital preservation across different content types, including still images, audio, video, and text.
 - <https://www.loc.gov/preservation/resources/rfs/>
-  **Levels of Digital Preservation**
 - A practical framework from the National Digital Stewardship Alliance for assessing and improving an institution's digital preservation maturity.
 - <https://ndsa.org/publications/levels-of-digital-preservation/>

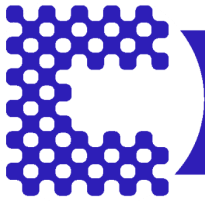
-  **Collections as Data**
 - Guidance on making digitized collections available for computational use and data-driven research.
 - <https://collectionsasdata.github.io/>

Staff Training & Institutional Capacity

This section identifies training opportunities, professional development programs, and community learning resources that build staff expertise.

-  **Creative Commons Certificate**
 - A Creative Commons professional training program on copyright, open licensing, and CC tools for cultural heritage practitioners.
 - <https://creativecommons.org/course/cc-cert-edu/>
-  **Europeana Academy**
 - Online courses and learning resources focused on copyright, digital transformation, and data reuse in the cultural heritage sector.
 - <https://pro.europeana.eu/page/europeana-academy>
-  **Wiki GLAM Training**
 - Wikimedia guides and workshops supporting institutions working with Wikimedia Commons, Wikidata, and open cultural collections.
 - <https://outreach.wikimedia.org/wiki/GLAM>
-  **Novice to Know-How: Online Digital Preservation Training**
 - Webinars and workshops from the Digital Preservation Coalition on preservation strategy, governance, and long-term stewardship.
 - <https://www.dpconline.org/digipres/prof-development/n2kh-online-training>
-  **IIIF Training and Community Resources**
 - Technical documentation, working groups, and community support from the IIIF community for implementing interoperability standards.
 - <https://iiif.io/community/>
-  **Local Contexts Information Sessions**
 - Training and guidance for institutions working with Indigenous data sovereignty, Traditional Knowledge labels, and community-led access models.
 - <https://localcontexts.org/events/info-and-hub-demo-sessions/>
-  **Open GLAM / GLAM-E Lab Workshops**
 - Leadership briefings and sector-focused workshops from GLAM-E Lab on open licensing and digital heritage strategy.

- <https://www.glamelab.org/>



Chapter 4: SHARING

This chapter covers the practical work of making collections publicly available: choosing platforms, implementing interoperability standards, designing accessible experiences, and building community engagement. It connects the technical side of sharing with the human work of creating meaningful public access.

Publishing Collections Online

Choosing the right publishing infrastructure ensures discoverability and long-term access.

-  **Europeana Publishing Framework**
 - A Europeana framework of standards and requirements for institutions contributing digital heritage content to the platform.
 - <https://pro.europeana.eu/post/publishing-framework>
-  **Resources for sharing data**
 - Europeana's technical and procedural guidance for sharing collection data with the platform and the broader digital heritage ecosystem.
 - <https://pro.europeana.eu/page/resources-for-sharing-data>
-  **Welcome - Wikimedia Commons**
 - A free media repository where institutions can upload openly licensed collection images for global reuse.
 - <https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/Commons:Welcome>
-  **Flickr Commons**
 - A Flickr program enabling heritage institutions to share public domain collections and engage with a broad public audience.
 - <https://www.flickr.com/commons>
-  **Digital Public Library of America**
 - An American aggregation platform providing open access to digital collections from

- libraries, archives, and museums across the country.
- <https://dp.la/>
-  **Internet Archive**
 - A digital library offering free public access to digitized content, with hosting options for heritage institutions seeking to share collections openly.
 - <https://help.archive.org/help/first-time-using-the-internet-archive-start-here/>

Collection Platforms and Infrastructure

This section introduces a selection of collection management systems that support open access publishing, community-based access, and culturally appropriate sharing frameworks.

-  **Mukurtu CMS (Community-Based Access Platform)**
 - An open-source content management system designed to support Indigenous communities in managing and sharing their own heritage.
 - <https://mukurtu.org/>
-  **Islandora**
 - An open-source framework for managing complex digital collections, widely used by libraries and archives with large or specialized holdings.
 - <https://www.islandora.ca/what-is-islandora>
-  **Omeka**
 - An open-source platform for creating online exhibitions and collections, popular with smaller heritage institutions and researchers.
 - <https://omeka.org/>
-  **CollectiveAccess**
 - A highly customizable open-source system for managing and presenting collections, designed for museums, archives, and libraries with complex cataloguing needs.
 - <https://www.collectiveaccess.org/>
-  **Curationist**
 - A platform aggregating openly licensed cultural heritage content from institutions worldwide for public discovery and reuse.
 - <https://www.curationist.org>
-  **AtoM: Access to Memory**
 - An open-source archival description application built around international standards, designed specifically for archives managing finding aids and records.
 - <https://www.accesstomemory.org/en/>

-  **CollectionSpace**
 - An open-source collections management system developed for museums and natural history institutions, including herbaria and biological collections.
 - <https://collectionspace.org>
-  **Tainacan**
 - A WordPress plugin for managing and publishing digital collections, developed in Brazil and widely adopted across Latin American institutions.
 - <https://tainacan.org/en/>
-  **Thoth**
 - An open metadata management platform supporting transparency in open access publishing, useful for heritage institutions with scholarly publishing outputs.
 - <https://thoth.pub>

Interoperability and Data Sharing

These resources explain technical standards that enable interoperability.

-  **IIIF: How It Works**
 - An introduction from the IIIF community to the International Image Interoperability Framework and how it enables consistent access to images across platforms.
 - <https://iiif.io/get-started/how-iiif-works/>
-  **Wikidata**
 - A free, collaborative knowledge base that institutions can use to publish structured, linked open data about their collections.
 - https://www.wikidata.org/wiki/Wikidata:Main_Page
-  **Linked Open Data FAQ | Europeana**
 - A Europeana FAQ addressing common questions about linked open data and how heritage institutions can participate in the linked data ecosystem.
 - <https://pro.europeana.eu/page/linked-open-data-faq>

User Experience and Web Design

This section provides guidance on helping audiences engage meaningfully with open collections.

-  **Easy ways to build a user-friendly website for your museum or archive**
 - A Europeana guide with practical, budget-conscious tips for heritage institutions on designing accessible, user-centered online collection portals.

- <https://pro.europeana.eu/post/easy-ways-to-build-a-user-friendly-website-for-your-museum-or-archive-on-a-budget>
-  **Europeana APIs**
 - Europeana's application programming interfaces for making heritage collections discoverable through search and third-party applications.
 - <https://pro.europeana.eu/page/apis>

Community Engagement & Participation

Opening collections creates opportunities for public participation. These resources cover strategies for engaging audiences in discovery, contribution, and co-creation with heritage materials.

-  **How Museums Use Collections to Connect to Audiences**
 - A MuseumNext article with strategies and examples for using open collections to build meaningful engagement with diverse public audiences.
 - <https://www.museumnext.com/article/7-ways-to-use-your-collection-to-connect-to-audiences>
-  **Crowdsourcing In Cultural Heritage**
 - A Europeana study on crowdsourcing approaches that engage the public in transcribing, tagging, and enriching heritage collection data.
 - https://pro.europeana.eu/files/Europeana_Professional/Projectpartner/EuropeanaCommonCultureProjectFiles/Crowdsourcing%20study%20report.pdf
-  **By the People**
 - A Library of Congress crowdsourcing platform for transcribing and reviewing digitized historical materials, widely used as a model for public participation.
 - <https://crowd.loc.gov/>
-  **GLAM-Wiki**
 - Wikimedia resources and guidance for heritage institutions seeking to engage Wikipedia communities with their open collections.
 - <https://outreach.wikimedia.org/wiki/GLAM>

Drafting an Open Access Policy

-  **A Ready-to-Use Policy Template for Launching Open Access**
 - Published in the Creative Commons Medium blog, this article by Lucy Moore provides a customizable policy template for launching or formalizing an open access commitment.
 - <https://medium.com/creative-commons-we-like-to-share/a-ready-to-use-policy-template-for-launching-open-access-85719a1a7c64>

-  **External Open Access Policies | GLAM-E Lab**
 - Examples of open access policies from institutions around the world, useful as models or benchmarks.
 - <https://www.glamelab.org/products/external-open-access-policies/>
-  **Takedown Policy Template**
 - A template developed as part of CC's Risk Management Toolkit for handling requests to remove content from open collections.
 - <https://oa2ch.gitbook.io/risk-management/templates/takedown-policy>

Encouraging Reuse

This section highlights initiatives, challenges, and platforms that foster reuse.

-  **Europeana Creative**
 - A Europeana program promoting creative reuse of openly licensed cultural heritage content, with examples and engagement tools
 - <https://pro.europeana.eu/tags/europeana-creative>
-  **Activating Smithsonian Open Access**
 - A Cooper Hewitt initiative inviting the public and creative communities to reuse Smithsonian open access collections in new way
 - <https://www.cooperhewitt.org/activating-smithsonian-open-access/>



Chapter 5: IMPACTING

Once collections are shared, the question becomes: what difference does it make? This chapter provides frameworks for measuring and communicating what openness achieves. This includes social, cultural, educational, and research outcomes; reuse and engagement; and economic and institutional value.

Measuring Impact

Measuring impact helps institutions make the case for open access and sustain it over time. These resources cover practical frameworks for evaluating social, cultural, educational, and research outcomes.

-  **Measuring Impact**
 - A set of resources by Europeana for planning and measuring the public impact of open heritage initiatives.
 - <https://pro.europeana.eu/page/impact>
-  **Open and reusable digital cultural heritage**
 - An overview by Ariadna Matas and Maša Škrinjar on how Europeana approaches open and reusable digital heritage, including licensing standards.
 - <https://www.dataspace-culturalheritage.eu/en/news/open-and-reusable-digital-cultural-heritage>
-  **Making impact on a small budget**
 - A Europeana guide for institutions with limited resources on practical, low-cost approaches to measuring open heritage impact.
 - <https://pro.europeana.eu/post/making-impact-on-a-small-budget>
-  **Discover the Europeana Impact Playbook**
 - A step-by-step framework from Europeana to help institutions plan and measure the impact of their digital heritage activities.
 - <https://pro.europeana.eu/page/europeana-impact-playbook>

-  **Approaches to Impact and Evaluation**
 - A Europeana overview of methodological approaches for evaluating the social, cultural, and educational impact of open heritage.
 - <https://pro.europeana.eu/page/impact-community-work-plan>
-  **Maximizing the Values of Open Access in Cultural Heritage Institutions**
 - A Creative Commons Open Culture Live discussion on how cultural heritage institutions can articulate and maximize the full range of value created by open access.
 - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZOLgBoFuusk&list=PLPDjhzarwzCgHXbWSznTpfkmluJqh7sPc&index=4>

Understanding Reuse

Understanding how collections are being reused, and by whom, can help institutions demonstrate impact, refine their open access programs, and build the case for continued openness. These resources offer data, examples, and tools for tracking and documenting reuse.

-  **Europeana reuse - be inspired**
 - A Europeana page with data and examples of how openly licensed collections are reused by researchers, educators, and creative practitioners.
 - https://pro.europeana.eu/page/europeana-reuse-be-inspired?utm_source
-  **GLAM Wiki Resources**
 - A Wikimedia resource hub documenting how GLAM institutions' collections are reused and enriched through Wikimedia platforms..
 - <https://outreach.wikimedia.org/wiki/GLAM/Resources>
-  **Smithsonian Open Access**
 - The Smithsonian's open access platform, with examples of how its openly licensed collections have been reused across research, education, and creative practice.
 - <https://www.si.edu/openaccess>
-  **Rijksstudio**
 - The Rijksmuseum's platform for exploring and downloading open collection images, one of the most cited examples of open access reuse in the heritage sector.
 - <https://www.rijksmuseum.nl/en/rijksstudio>

Measuring Audience Engagement

Knowing who engages with open collections, and how, helps institutions refine their approach and demonstrate value. These resources cover strategies and evidence for measuring and improving audience engagement.

-  **Crowdsourcing in cultural heritage**
 - A Europeana study on using crowdsourcing as both an engagement strategy and a source of audience participation data.
 - https://pro.europeana.eu/files/Europeana_Professional/Projectpartner/EuropeanaCommonCultureProjectFiles/Crowdsourcing%20study%20report.pdf
-  **How Museums Use Collections to Connect with Audiences**
 - A MuseumNext analysis of strategies museums employ to engage diverse audiences through their collections online and in person.
 - <https://www.museumnext.com/article/7-ways-to-use-your-collection-to-connect-to-audiences>
-  **Key Audience Engagement Strategies for Museums**
 - A Council of Europe study identifying effective strategies for audience engagement in museum contexts.
 - <https://www.coe.int/en/web/culture-and-heritage/-/new-study-reveals-key-audience-engagement-strategies-for-museums>
-  **Cultural Participation | Audience Answers**
 - An Audience Answers evidence hub gathering sector-wide data on the reach and quality of different heritage engagement modes.
 - <https://evidence.audienceanswers.org/en/evidence/topics/cultural-participation>

Economic and Institutional Value

A common concern about open access is that it undermines revenue. These resources make the opposite case, showing how openness can support financial sustainability, attract new audiences and partners, and create long-term institutional value.

-  **Making the Business Case for Open Access**
 - A GLAM-E Lab guide to articulating the institutional and financial value of open access to decision-makers and funders.
 - <https://www.glamelab.org/products/making-the-business-case-for-open-access/>
-  **The Economics of Open: Can Open Licensing Be a Sustainable Strategy for Cultural Heritage Institutions?**

- Published in the Creative Commons Medium blog, this article by Bartolomeo Meletti examines the findings of the CREATE report on open licensing models, exploring how open licensing can support rather than undermine the long-term financial sustainability of heritage institutions.
- <https://medium.com/creative-commons-we-like-to-share/the-economics-of-open-can-open-licensing-be-a-sustainable-strategy-for-cultural-heritage-305dfa7edbcbb>
-  **Democratising the Rijksmuseum**
 - A Europeana case study on how the Rijksmuseum approached open access, including lessons on revenue and institutional sustainability.
 - <https://pro.europeana.eu/post/democratising-the-rijksmuseum>
-  **New business models for Cultural and Creative Institutions**
 - Academic research by Slawomir Nikiel at the University of Zielona Góra on innovative institutional models that incorporate openness into their core operating strategy.
 - https://www.researchgate.net/publication/338142028_New_business_models_for_Cultural_and_Creative_Institutions
-  **New Business Models in the Cultural and Creative Sectors (CCSs)**
 - A European Expert Network on Culture (EENC) research report on business model innovation across cultural and creative institutions.
 - <https://ec.europa.eu/assets/eac/culture/docs/eenc/eenc-2015-new%20business%20models%20cultural%20creative%20sectors.pdf>
-  **Europeana at THE ARTS+ Fair: promoting new business models using digital cultural heritage**
 - A Europeana article on how digital heritage assets can serve as the basis for new and sustainable institutional business models.
 - <https://pro.europeana.eu/post/europeana-at-the-arts-fair-promoting-new-business-models-using-digital-cultural-heritage>

Sustainability and Long-Term Strategy

Sustaining an open heritage program over time requires more than good intentions. It requires institutional commitment, strategic planning, and attention to sustainability questions that sometimes include environmental impact. These resources address the long-term considerations that keep open access programs viable.

-  **GLAM Environmental Sustainability**
 - A University of Oxford GLAM research resource on environmental sustainability considerations for digital heritage, including the carbon footprint of digital infrastructure.

- <https://www.glam.ox.ac.uk/environmental-sustainability>
-  **Sustaining Digital Humanities**
 - A research project examining the long-term sustainability challenges facing digital projects, with findings and recommendations relevant to heritage institutions planning for continued open access.
 - <https://sustainingdh.net/>
-  **The Relevance of Aggregators**
 - A Europeana article on the role of aggregation platforms in sustaining open heritage infrastructure and ensuring long-term discoverability.
 - <https://pro.europeana.eu/post/the-relevance-of-aggregators>
-  **Digital Preservation Coalition: Sustainability Resources**
 - Guidance from the Digital Preservation Coalition on planning for the long-term financial and institutional sustainability of digital preservation programs.
 - <https://www.dpconline.org/digipres/champion-digital-preservation/sustainability>
-  **Building Open GLAM Community for Sustainable Open Licensing Practices in Nigeria/Overview**
 - A Wikimedia Meta-Wiki overview of a project building a sustainable open culture community and open licensing practices in Nigeria.
 - https://meta.wikimedia.org/wiki/Building_Open_GLAM_Community_for_Sustainable_Open_Licensing_Practices_in_Nigeria/Overview



Chapter 6: LEADING

Some institutions move beyond their own implementation to shape the broader ecosystem. This chapter is for those ready to advocate for policy change, mentor peers, contribute to global standards and infrastructure, and build coalitions for equitable access to heritage worldwide.

Advocacy and Policy Engagement

Advocacy and policy engagement are how institutions contribute to a broader shift toward openness across the sector. These resources provide guidance, strategies, and examples for engaging with open heritage policy at local, national, and international levels.

-  **Towards Better Sharing of Cultural Heritage: A Call to Action to Policymakers**
 - A Creative Commons guide outlining five key policy actions that enable better sharing of cultural heritage, useful for institutions engaging with policymakers.
 - [français](#), [Português Brasileiro](#), [español](#), [Hausa](#), [Nederlands](#), [Ελληνικά](#), [italiano](#), [Yoruba](#), [Shqip](#), [عربي](#), [汉语](#)
 - <https://creativecommons.org/wp-content/uploads/2024/11/English-%E2%80%93-Towards-Better-Sharing-of-Cultural-Heritage-%E2%80%94-A-Call-to-Action-for-Policy-Makers.pdf>
-  **Towards Better Sharing of Cultural Heritage: An Agenda for Copyright Reform**
 - A Creative Commons paper outlining a copyright reform agenda to enable better sharing of cultural heritage, with specific recommendations for policymakers.
 - [français](#), [Português](#), [Ελληνικά](#), [हिंदी](#), [italiano](#), [српски](#), [Igbo](#)
 - <https://creativecommons.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/04/Towards-Better-Sharing-of-Cultural-Heritage-%E2%80%93-An-Agenda-for-Copyright-Reform.pdf>
-  **Unifying the Open Heritage Community behind One Vision**
 - A Creative Commons article on the development of the Open Heritage Statement, affirming the value of open heritage and calling for global policy.
 - <https://creativecommons.org/2025/09/25/from-shared-vision-to-global-action-paving-the-road-to-the-open-heritage-statement/>

-  **Advocating for libraries**
 - An IFLA resource with guidance and examples on how libraries can engage in policy advocacy on behalf of open access and library rights.
 - <https://www.ifla.org/advocating-for-libraries/>
-  **Overview for 'policy'**
 - A Europeana hub covering the organization's policy engagement on copyright, data, and open access, with examples relevant to institutions seeking to engage at the European level.
 - <https://pro.europeana.eu/tags/policy>

Sharing Knowledge, Global Networks

Leading in open heritage means contributing to the broader community by sharing knowledge, building relationships, and engaging with the networks and coalitions working to advance open access. These resources are links to communities, professional bodies, and advocacy networks.

-  **African Digital Heritage**
 - A network and resource hub supporting digitization, documentation, and open access to African cultural heritage.
 - <https://africandigitalheritage.org/>
-  **Creative Commons Community on Zulip**
 - A global community of practitioners working with Creative Commons tools, with real-time discussion on the Zulip platform.
 - <http://forms.gle/MqAT9exPJzxNY2kh9>
-  **Cultural Heritage Open Scholarship Network (CHOSN)**
 - A network advancing open scholarship practices in cultural heritage, connecting researchers, institutions, and practitioners.
 - <https://openscholarship.gitbook.io/chosn>
-  **Europeana Network Association**
 - A membership organization connecting cultural heritage professionals across Europe committed to digital access and open data.
 - <https://pro.europeana.eu/europeana-network-association/sign-up>
-  **GLAM Wiki**
 - A community connecting cultural heritage institutions with the Wikimedia ecosystem

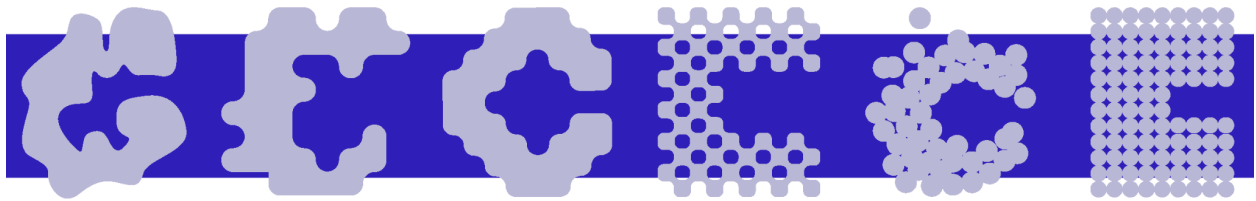
- to support open knowledge and collection sharing.
 - <https://outreach.wikimedia.org/wiki/GLAM>
-  **Ibermuseos**
 - A collaboration among museums across Latin America, Spain, and Portugal, including initiatives on digital access and heritage cooperation.
 - <https://www.iberMuseos.org/>
-  **International Council of Museums (ICOM)**
 - The global professional organization for museums, supporting policy, ethics, and best practice in museum management worldwide.
 - <https://icom.museum/en/>
-  **International Federation of Library Associations and Institutions (IFLA)**
 - The leading international body representing the interests of libraries and information professionals globally.
 - <https://www.ifla.org/>
-  **Open GLAM Initiative**
 - An international movement promoting open access to digital collections in galleries, libraries, archives, and museums.
 - <https://openglam.org/>
-  **Memory of the World | United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO)**
 - A UNESCO programme for preserving and providing universal access to the world's documentary heritage, including an international register of significant documentary collections.
 - <https://www.unesco.org/en/memory-world>

Contribution Tools, Research, and Good Practices

Leading institutions don't just adopt open practices. They help shape them. These resources connect institutions with the global communities, research initiatives, and preservation programs where active contribution advances the field.

-  **Endangered Archives Programme**
 - A British Library programme supporting archival digitization projects in Africa, Asia, Latin America, and the Middle East, often in collaboration with local institutions.
 - <https://eap.bl.uk/>

-  **Europeana Research**
 - A Europeana hub supporting research and experimentation using openly accessible digital cultural heritage collections.
 - <https://pro.europeana.eu/page/research>
-  **IIIF Consortium**
 - The home of the International Image Interoperability Framework (IIIF) community, developing open standards that enable interoperable access to digital images and cultural heritage collections.
 - <https://iiif.io/>
-  **The International Centre for the Study of the Preservation and Restoration of Cultural Property (ICCROM)**
 - ICCROM is an intergovernmental organization supporting the conservation and restoration of cultural heritage worldwide.
 - <https://www.iccrom.org/>
-  **Memory of the World Programme**
 - A United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) programme promoting the preservation of and access to documentary heritage worldwide.
 - <https://www.unesco.org/en/memory-worl>
-  **Open Knowledge Foundation**
 - A global network promoting open data and open knowledge infrastructure across sectors, including cultural heritage.
 - <https://okfn.org/en/>
-  **Wikidata: WikiProject Cultural Heritage**
 - A Wikimedia collaborative project connecting and enriching cultural heritage data through linked open data on Wikidata.
 - https://www.wikidata.org/wiki/Wikidata:WikiProject_Cultural_heritage



Conclusion

Opening heritage is more than a destination. It is a journey to enable everyone, everywhere to discover, experience, and enjoy our shared humanity. Cultural heritage institutions move at different paces, face different constraints, and serve different communities. What they share is a commitment to making collections more accessible, more reusable, and more meaningful for the people they serve.

The resources in this Companion are a starting point, not a checklist. We hope they help you find your footing, make confident decisions, and connect with the global community of people aiming for the same goal.

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We also thank the many institutions, practitioners, researchers, and advocates who have spent years building the open heritage field by creating tools, sharing experiences, and demonstrating the public value of open heritage. The resources gathered here are a reflection of their courage and foresight.

To the pioneers of openness, thank you. You were the pathfinders who took risks, shared what you learned, and made the path easier for those who followed.

Finally, to those who will be inspired by this Companion to take the next steps towards openness, thank you in advance. Every institution that opens heritage brings us closer to a world where heritage is equally accessible as a shared resource and culture can be enjoyed as a global public good.

This is a living resource. If you believe something is missing or should be updated, please visit our [Meta-Wiki \[https://meta.wikimedia.org/wiki/CC_Open_Heritage_Companion\]](https://meta.wikimedia.org/wiki/CC_Open_Heritage_Companion) or share suggestions with Creative Commons at info@creativecommons.org.

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