

# The Warsaw Statement on Spatial Data in Cultural Heritage

DOI: 10.5281/zenodo.6459161

## Preamble

This statement intends to present significant points to guide the preparation and maintenance of spatial data in cultural heritage institutions. The main points are:

- Importance of spatial data in cultural heritage
- Importance of cultural heritage institutions in leading developments
- Importance of technical standards for aligning developments
- Importance of organisational exchange for ensuring excellence
- Importance of open infrastructure institutional practice and research to sustain capabilities - Importance of capacity building for enhancing digital and computational skills

You have in this document a revised draft with our perspective (23.3.2022) on these issues in the context of the “Cultural Heritage Geodata: Polish Perspectives” Workshop at the University of Warsaw on 23.-25.3.2022. The workshop was supported by the Europeana Research program (grant: OSS3.1 10). The statement is non-binding and is open for future revision. The aim for the statement is to help meet needs and requirements of various actors, including researchers, general public, and institutions. The statement is a collection of principles to support work with cultural heritage spatial data in all institutions and settings.

## Overview

The draft statement is divided into three sections:

- 1) Citizen science as a guiding concept;
- 2) The importance of institutional infrastructure;
- 3) Spatial data in institutions and research.

At the end of the three sections follows a list of signatories (Appendix A) from the Warsaw workshop and a section with additional sources of information.

To keep the document brief and understandable, methods and technologies of data creation, maintenance, curation, analysis, storing, classification, access are only mentioned in passing. The list of resources (Appendix B) points interested readers to more detailed information.

## Section 1: Citizen science as guiding concept

Science involves more than providing results of the research. It also includes the processes of opening science. The many ways to collect, distribute and even maintain digital data for cultural heritage

institutions and research can benefit in various ways from citizen science approaches, including crowd-sourcing. Therefore citizen science principles serve as a guiding concept for individuals in various situations and roles working on spatial data in cultural heritage. Spatial data is perhaps no different from other types of digital data, but citizen science can constantly enhance its relevance in many areas. Cultural heritage institutions and their activities play a key role in society's capacity building—knowledge and data from the past for questions of today. Belonging to this is the importance of assuring access to spatial data. Foremost among the reasons for adopting citizen science principles is the creation of possibilities for research and social engagement. There are, of course, many different approaches, and this is why institutional infrastructure becomes crucial.

## Section 2: The importance of institutional infrastructure

The alignment of institutional goals with citizen science principles provides an essential framework for all involved. Its many forms should speak to curation and metadata issues related to spatial data while providing a clear framework for organisational matters and sustainability. Institutional infrastructure has a responsibility and has centrality for the long term stability and presence of cultural heritage data related to places in geography and history. Part of the relevant concerns finds their expression in data management plans; other institutional factors can find their relevance in additional guidelines. Here, broader engagements with the potential uses and best practices for institutions and research can help institutions find the best ways to fulfil their requirements. Technical issues connected to systems of stable identifiers, ontologies, APIs, Linked (Open) Data, etc are complex and clear channels of communication in addition to accessible documentation are essential. The capacity of the institutions rests on people, data, and infrastructures, and therefore the responsibility includes both these aspects: to sustain the availability of data and to provide the infrastructure by developing institutional know-how. FAIR (Findable, Accessible, Interoperable, Reusable) data principles are guidelines for many facets of institutional interoperability.

## Section 3: Spatial data in institutions and research

The breadth of potential for spatial data raises several questions that benefits from an ongoing exchange among cultural heritage institutions. Humanities and scientific research are crucial to developing capacities and maintaining institutions at the highest levels. Here standards hold an essential place. Institutions and individuals should be cognisant of related legal frameworks, cultural heritage institutions and society's spatial activities, e.g., INSPIRE, the Common European Cultural Heritage Data Space, European Open Data, and PSI directive etc. Standards are critical in helping guide and inform a broad range of individual and institutional activities to ensure technical compatibilities open up interactions and assure the economical allocation of resources. Support for infrastructures and exchanges for sharing experiences and developing best practices helps ensure institutional excellence. The corresponding relationships and activities can help institutions and researchers through complex technical matters. Experiences and best practices can help guide established and new users in matters related to methods and technologies of data creation, maintenance, curation, analysis, storing, classification and access. The

general aim is making data stable and available, therefore the data is the core. The appendix to this statement lists additional resources. Along with these points, the provision of metadata and adoption and implementation of FAIR principles can help negotiate related complexities in an economically efficient way (e.g., avoiding a duplication of efforts) and guide data collection and provision. Communication of these principles can prepare users from institutions and research for successful activities. Enhancing digital literacy is an important ongoing activity in all institutions.



# Appendix A - 25.3.2022 Warsaw Statement Signatories

Wiesława Duży

Michał Gochna

Francis Harvey

Jakub Kuna

Marta Kuźma

Elżbieta Kwiecińska

Tomasz Panecki

Bogumił Szady

Tamara Zaninović

# Appendix B - Additional Resources

EU Open Data and PSI directive

<https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/HTML/?uri=CELEX:32019L1024>

EU Recommendation for a Common European Cultural Heritage Data Space

<https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/HTML/?uri=CELEX:32021H1970>

Geocoded Digital Cultural Heritage Report

<https://www.indicate-project.eu/getFile.php?id=402>

Europeana Pro

<https://pro.europeana.eu>

Europeana Data Model

[Europeana Data Model](#) | [Europeana Pro](#)

INSPIRE

[INSPIRE Directive](#) | [INSPIRE \(europa.eu\)](#)

The Collective Wisdom Handbook: Perspectives on Crowdsourcing in Cultural Heritage

<https://britishlibrary.pubpub.org/the-collective-wisdom-handbook-perspectives-on-crowdsourcing-in-cultural-heritage---community-review-version>

FAIR Principles

<https://www.go-fair.org/fair-principles/>

OGC

[www.ogc.org](http://www.ogc.org)

“Cultural Heritage Geodata: Polish Perspectives” Workshopp website

<http://historia.uw.edu.pl/cultural-heritage-geodata/>

Website of the PPE Project (People, Places and Events: Innovative Spatial Humanities Research to support Interpretation and Explanation) Faculty of History, University of Warsaw

<http://historia.uw.edu.pl/ppe/>

Website of the Institute of History, Polish Academy of Sciences

<https://ihpan.edu.pl/>