Hello and welcome to "Open GLAM now!", the Swedish National Heritage Board’s webinar series on open cultural heritage data and institutions. My name is Larissa Borck, I am working in the department of Digital Dissemination and I am glad that you have joined today to kick off the first of a total of nine sessions. Today, I am going to introduce you to the concept of the series, what open GLAM actually means and includes and what you can expect from the upcoming sessions.

A short reminder: Please mute your microphone so that we all can hear the speaker’s presentation – you can always ask questions in the chat and we’ll come back to them later.

So let’s start with the background of “Open GLAM Now!”. I am working at the Swedish National Heritage Board on a project called Europeana Common Culture. With my colleagues, I am working in the field of digital cultural heritage. We are supporting museums and other cultural heritage institutions in working with digital data and media. Amongst others, we manage SOCH (Swedish Open Cultural Heritage), a web service searching and retrieving data from any organisation holding information or media relating to Swedish cultural heritage. SOCH is also the national aggregator in Sweden for Europeana, which is an organization and database for Europe’s shared cultural heritage.

So why do we offer a webinar series on open cultural heritage data? Both SOCH and Europeana are based on principles of open data. Throughout the Europeana Common Culture project, we are working for a better metadata and data quality in the content we and our data providers in Sweden deliver to Europeana. Furthermore, we are looking for new cultural heritage institutions that want to share their data with us and new audiences. If that’s something you and your institution could be interested in, you’re welcome to get in touch!

In order to help our current partners in SOCH and those who are interested in learning more about open cultural heritage data, we set up this webinar series. The aim of “Open GLAM now!” is to help you work on your existing data or create better and more open data. This is not a goal in itself – open data are part of a bigger strategy and should help your institution and collections to reach new audiences, support researchers and follow your own mission.

So in order to make this webinar series the most helpful experience possible for you, let’s start with what you can expect from the eight meetings in English and Swedish. We have 24 both Swedish and international speakers in our program who will share their insights in very different subjects of digital cultural heritage with us. You will be able to ask questions and discuss your own institution’s possibilities and challenges with them. You can visit all the sessions or just those that seem helpful to you. If you’ve registered, it is possible to take part live or watch the recorded sessions. All the presentations will be shared under CC BY.

We’ll later dig deeper into the different topics that we will discover with our speakers during the next sessions. Right now, I’d like to introduce you to what Open GLAM actually means and includes. GLAM is short for galleries, libraries, archives and museums. And what does “open” exactly mean?

“A piece of data or content is open if anyone is free to use, reuse, and redistribute it — subject only, at most, to the requirement to give credit to the author and/or making any resulting work available under the same terms as the original work.” Open Definition by the Open Knowledge Foundation

Open GLAM also goes back to an initiative by the Open Knowledge foundation and “promotes free and open access to digital cultural heritage”. Just like this webinar series demonstrates, it is a truly global network of people and institutions that try to make cultural heritage available to everyone. Why is it important to open not only an institution’s physical doors but to make their collections both physically and digitally accessible to the public, too?
“Cultural heritage belongs to everyone. It was created by – and for – all kinds of people. The digitisation of physical heritage objects enables them to move out of storage rooms, library shelves, and file drawers, and land in the hands of the world’s citizens. When cultural heritage is digital, there is nothing standing in the way of sharing and reusing it. It can be sampled, remixed, embedded, it can illustrate new stories and move into new media, it can adorn books, posters, and public spaces, advance research and make ideas and creativity blossom. When cultural heritage is digital, open and shareable, it becomes common property, something that is right at hand every day. It becomes a part of us.” (Sanderhoff 2014: 9)

This quote from Merete Sanderhoff (who’s also going to join us in this series) demonstrates quite well the essence of Open GLAM: Enabling new connections between collections, objects, cultural heritage – and communities, researchers and creative industries. How can we achieve this? During the upcoming eight sessions, we will hear about different approaches how to tackle this. Let’s start with five principles that the Open GLAM initiative (and that includes everyone who wants to get involved) has continuously worked on.

**Release digital information about the artefacts (metadata) into the public domain using an appropriate legal tool such as the Creative Commons Zero Waiver.**

This means that you share the digitized knowledge your institution has about an object or an immaterial heritage practice with CC0. This is also a requirement to be part of Europeana and SOCH. The purpose is to make your data reusable and discoverable – and to help spread knowledge freely. Attention: This does not mean that you have to share the digital object itself, for example an image file, with an open license. This is just about the metadata, the information you for example have in your collection management system about the object.

**Keep digital representations of works for which copyright has expired (public domain) in the public domain by not adding new rights to them.**

When a painting’s copyright has expired, some museums add a new copyright statement for the painting’s digital image. From an open GLAM point of view, this is problematic as this practice prevents the possibility of sharing and reusing a cultural heritage that should belong to everyone. You will find more information and studies about this aspect in the documentation of this session.

**When publishing data make an explicit and robust statement of your wishes and expectations with respect to reuse and repurposing of the descriptions, the whole data collection, and subsets of the collection.**

What do you want your audience to do with your data? Several museums have released statements what they wish to see in reusing their collections’ data. Be transparent about what you expect – this is helping users to know what they can do with your data.

**When publishing data use open file formats which are machine-readable.** When your data is not stored in a machine-readable format such as XML, JSON or CSV as structured data, computers can’t read or process it. That makes it impossible for search engines to find or access it.

**Opportunities to engage audiences in novel ways on the web should be pursued.** Documentation is key – let users know transparently where they can find your data and services. Be open to having others work with your data – it might also help you learn more about your collection. At SOCH for example, we receive messages from users weekly who want to help by identifying places or people on photographs or enrich an object’s metadata.

So how can we work with these principles and achieve the goal of opening up cultural heritage collections and institutions by digital means? That’s where we turn to the upcoming eight sessions and our speakers.