European Cultural Heritage Online
- Charter -

Preamble

- ECHO is a collaborative research endeavour that provides active support for scientific and cultural institutions and projects in Europe that hold or enrich cultural heritage through new technologies and media.
- The ECHO Charter aims at defining the criteria for adequate exploitation of the new media's potential for archival preservation, scholarly and educational exploration, as well as public distribution of the shared cultural heritage of mankind.

ECHO values

- ECHO shall undertake all efforts to make cultural heritage accessible and understandable to the general public across national, cultural, and linguistic barriers.
- All ECHO content shall be made freely available on the Internet in the most technically adequate and feasible way possible.
- All ECHO tools shall be and remain freely available on the Internet.
- All standards that are used shall be fully documented in a freely accessible way.

ECHO goals

- ECHO shall support the preservation, exploration, and dissimination of content belonging to shared cultural heritage.
- ECHO shall provide the tools for accessing cultural heritage according to its context and semantic structures.
- ECHO shall take all measures to assure long-term archiving and accessibility for the content it includes.
- ECHO shall assure that all content is integrated and accessible through a common portal.
- ECHO shall make every effort to establish that interconnections within its content technically are possible .
- ECHO shall support existing open standards and their implementation, and, whenever appropriate, engage in the development of new standards.
- ECHO shall work towards the creation of a permanent network infrastructure that will provide upgrading and maintenance of the tools and outcome developed during the project.
- ECHO will actively support efforts to disseminate tools and outcome to both public and private content providers.

ECHO restrictions

- ECHO excludes any violation of intellectual property or person's rights.
- ECHO does not support work on content which, due to property right restrictions, cannot be made freely available on the Internet.
- ECHO does not adopt standards without providing the tools for their implementation.
- ECHO does not develop tools without using them to make cultural heritage accessible.

The Agora community

- All content, tools, and standards as well as all projects that comply with the above values, goals, and restrictions are viable for participation in the ECHO Agora.

Berlin, October 30th 2002