



## SWOT ANALYSIS

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Recovery of cultural heritage through  
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Abstract:	Provide a guideline for the development of OIP (Open Innovation Project) driven by Higher Education Institutes (HEIs) for the benefit of Cultural Heritage Organisations (CHOs). The outcome to be expected is the definition of a cooperation framework that could enhance and optimise the collaboration between HEIs and CHOs
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## Consortium

The project is represented by a wide range of expertise, as four Higher Education Institutions and one university library (NTNU, Scuola Superiore Sant’Anna, Sofia University ST Kliment Ohridski, University of Tartu) join hands with a web education specialist (Web2Learn) and an NGO comprising 16 cultural associations, OSYGY. This mix of knowledge, skills, experiences and networks guarantees a layered approach toward a diverse range of stakeholders.

	Name	Short Name	Country
1	<b>Norwegian University of Sciences and Technology</b>	NTNU	Norway
2	<b>Scuola Superiore di Studi Universitari e di Perfezionamento Sant’Anna, Pisa</b>	SA	Italy
3	<b>Web2Learn</b>	W2L	Greece
4	<b>Sofia University St Kliment Ohridski</b>	SU	Bulgaria
5	<b>University of Tartu</b>	UT	Estonia
6	<b>Federation of Women Association “Kores of Cyclades”</b>	OSYGY	Greece

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**Disclaimer:**

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## List of Abbreviations

The following table presents the acronyms used in the deliverable in alphabetical order.

Abbreviations	Description
OI	<b>Open Innovation</b>
OIP	<b>Open Innovation Project</b>
CHOs	<b>Cultural Heritage Organisations</b>
HEIs	<b>Higher Education Institutions</b>
HEIs	<b>Higher Education Institutions</b>

## 1. List of partners' projects

Each participating party has committed to actively monitor, oversee and execute six Operational Improvement Plans (OIPs) throughout the duration of PR4. The table below provides details of the proposed initiatives, each of which is synchronized with a corresponding report; the deliverable that includes all of them can be found in D3 (PR4A6 - Activity Report Finalized).

### Overview of all OIPs

	Institution	OI type
1	NTNU	P1 - Gaming for cultural heritage P2 - Hybrid Objects Exhibition P3 - Chemistry lab P4 - Archiveathon P5 - Gameathon P6 - Pilgrim Routes P7 - Gaming in school classes
2	SA	P1 - Immersive Museum for Virtual Archive P2 - OcuLeO Lab P3 - VR Lab in Museum P4 - Kea OI Event for Community: IND HER NET "Immersive mining of memory" P4b - Kea OI Event for School: IND HER NET "Immersive mining of memory" P5 - Kythnos Event with OSYGY P6 - Milos Event with OSYGY P7 - Antiparos OI Event for School P8 - Paros Event with OSYGY P9 - Andros Event with OSYGY



3	SU	<p>P1 - Troyan Museum Video                  P2 - Troyan Museum at Researchers' Night                  P3 - Troyan Museum 3D realisation with GLADA BG                  P4 - Cherni Osam natural history museum at Researchers night                  P5 - Historical newspapers in Plovdiv Library                  P6 - Users and Digitalisation Varna Library</p>
4	UT	<p>P1 - Heritage flower bed                  P2 - Sockathon                  P3 - Heritage cooking club                  P4 - Social media campaign for heritage craft                  P5 - Workshop on making bio-waste boxes                  P6 - Heritage Festival on Muhu island</p>
5	W2L	<p>Introduction to crowdfunding; for cultural heritage: possibilities, aims and examples.                  Crowdfunding made simple: a webinar in English and in Greek                  A crowdfunding campaign for OSYGY members</p>

## 2. SWOT ANALYSIS

### 1. Introduction

In today's dynamic environment, it is crucial to focus on strategic planning to maximise the use of all resources to achieve the desired results. A good balance in managing internal and external factors allows the organisation to grow and can lead to new partnerships.

SWOT analysis is a widely used framework to analyse projects, and evaluate the status of a project or company at a point in time through a brainstorming meeting. It contributes to the strategic planning of activities while trying to identify existing resources, internal and external, trends, and patterns that could influence the activities. It is noteworthy that this methodology is not free of faults, as it can prioritise some factors not so relevant or even create unreal scenarios.

Overall, it is an interesting analytical tool that can identify strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats and can be applied either to a previous situation, when the project is being created, or when a project is already completed. It is not only a diagnostic tool but also a shield against risks. In addition to initial strategic formulation, organisations use the SWOT framework to help mitigate risk.

The SWOT analysis can be used in many different fields and contexts such as marketing, education, and academia. It is seen as an opportunity to optimise an organisation. Critical to this is the selection and collection of data and feedback, which can be done in many ways (surveys, interviews, algorithms).

## 2. Definitions

This post-project SWOT analysis evaluates the overall success and effectiveness of the project, while also highlighting critical aspects. As a reference for a better understanding of this document, these are the definitions of the four main categories that comprise the SWOT analysis and some examples related explicitly to CHO (Cultural Heritage Organizations) and HEI (Higher Education Institutes).

The first two analyses depend on internal factors:

- A. Strength: “an internal enhancer of competence, valuable resource or attribute”

An organisation's internal landscape is analysed to uncover its strengths, which are the internal attributes and positive elements that made the completed project a success.

A Cultural Heritage Organization (CHO) has many strengths; it can actively create engagement for the local community through initiatives that foster a sense of participation. A CHO can also benefit from a volunteer network of skilled artists, performers, and experts. In addition, it can also be linked to heritage preservation, as it often safeguards local traditions and cultural heritage.

On the academic front, a Higher Education Institute (HEI) is seen as important for excellence in teaching and research, offering a variety of programs to students from all over the world. The HEI usually provides modern facilities and laboratories.

- B. Weakness: “an internal inhibitor of the competence, resources, or attributes necessary for success ”

This refers to internal shortcomings or areas where the project has encountered challenges. These internal factors can limit the organisation's performance.

Both the CHOs and the HEIs might face different challenges. The CHO has often limited funding, older technology, fewer digital skills and may lack popularity among younger generations as an arena of participation.

On the other hand, the HEI can also face financial constraints with a limited budget, staff time availability, bureaucratic obstacles that can delay projects, and challenges in adapting quickly to community demands due to an outdated curriculum that is difficult to change.

The last two, on the other hand, depend on external factors.

- C. Opportunities: “an external enhancer of performance that can be pursued or exploited to gain benefit”

Opportunities represent potential positive situations that arise during the development of the project. These opportunities may include new collaborations, unexpected positive outcomes, lessons learned that can be applied to future projects, or opportunities for improvement and growth.

Both CHOs and HEIs have promising opportunities on their horizons. The CHO has the potential for a wide collaboration by partnering with other cultural organisations for joint initiatives. In addition, it can upgrade its digital presence through online platforms, and seek government or European support through grants and cultural initiatives, which could provide financial aid.

On the other hand, HEIs can create global partnerships with other universities and design joint internships to make students experience the real world. Access to government grants provides HEIs with opportunities for research and infrastructure development. In addition, HEIs today are seeking

greater dissemination of their academic achievements and societal impact. Engaging in open innovation activities is a very clear two-pronged opportunities pathway: first, demonstrating societal impact and second, identifying potential pilot adopters of novel tools developed within the academic environment.

Participation in innovative practices is also an opportunity for international leadership in both academic research and in developing professional practice in different CHO sectors.

- D. Threats: “an external inhibitor of performance that has the potential to reduce accomplishments”

These are external factors that create challenges to the project, such as unforeseen obstacles or factors beyond the organisation's control.

The CHO can face threats such as reduced funding, competition from other cultural institutions but also natural disasters, or public health crises.

Similarly, the HEI faces threats such as reduced enrollment rate, impact of new technologies on traditional teaching methods, and competition from other institutions and online education platforms.



### 3. Objectives

The objective of the post-project SWOT analysis conducted for the eCHOing initiative (2022-2023) is to comprehensively evaluate the collaborative efforts of the partners involved.

The eCHOing project, which focused on "Cultural heritage recovery through higher education driven open innovation", aimed to collect and use the diverse perspectives and expertise from partners in Italy, Greece, Bulgaria, Estonia, and Norway. The collaboration involved a wide network composed of people from CHOs, universities, and private agencies, including students, academics, IT developers, and experts.

The primary objective of the SWOT analysis is to assess the overall success and effectiveness of the project by identifying its strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats. By examining internal and external factors, the analysis aims to highlight insights from the results of the eCHOing project.

The open Innovation framework helped the project to overcome some challenges by adapting quickly and finding new solutions. One of the main goals is to create a place where everyone can share their knowledge and help with their expertise.

This evaluation could serve as the basis for future projects, facilitating the identification of areas for improvement, strategic planning, and the promotion of continued innovation in the field of cultural heritage recovery through higher education.



#### 4. SWOT: Table

The creation of this table serves as a visual representation of the SWOT analysis and summarises the key findings from the examination of the project's strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats.

Strengths	Weaknesses
Broad Participation: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Diverse Backgrounds</li> <li>- Multidisciplinary expertise</li> <li>- International collaboration</li> </ul> Strategic Use of Open Innovation Technological integration Educational Empowerment	Geographical distance Dependency on Online Meetings Limited resources Time constraints Technology dependency
Opportunities	Threats
Culture and language Collaborative learning Cross-Cultural exchange Networking and Partnerships Innovation in heritage recovery practices Public engagement and awareness	Culture and language Technological obsolescence Security risks

In the following chapters, there is an in-depth exploration of each element in the SWOT analysis. This comprehensive analysis will provide a better understanding of the internal and external factors that shaped the project's trajectory.

## 5. SWOT: STRENGTHS

We have been able to identify certain strengths within the various groups of participants of the eCHOing project, including students, collaborators, and staff.

- **Broad Participation:** The project has had a significant number of participants.
- **Diverse Backgrounds:** Every participant brings a diverse background, and this creates a good environment for ideas to flourish. Everyone can add their own experiences, skills, and knowledge from different fields of study and life perspectives.
- **Multidisciplinary expertise:** The expert team is made up of people with diverse skills and subject-specialties. This approach ensures a new way to communicate and enables innovative problem-solving.
- **Cross-cultural collaboration:** The inclusion of contributors from different countries enriches the project by incorporating global perspectives and fostering cross-cultural exchanges of ideas.

**Strategic use of open innovation:** Fostering a collaborative ecosystem that reaches beyond any traditional boundaries has helped increase the flexibility of the project in overcoming challenges.

**Technological integration:** Incorporating advanced technologies has helped to create new solutions and frameworks. The project aimed to improve the preservation, documentation, and accessibility of cultural heritage, and IT support is fundamental for that purpose.

**Educational Empowerment:** The project empowered students, educators, and professionals. It not only contributed to building the skills of participants but also enabled the organisation of several educational sessions in schools and community centers.

## 6. SWOT: WEAKNESSES

**Language Challenges:** The project faced some language barriers that made communication and collaboration often difficult. The diverse linguistic backgrounds of the participants have generated gaps that have impacted the flow of information and instructions. The potential outreach of events could have been broader if the lingua franca, English, had been more familiar to the local communities, enabling engagement in useful workshops and meetings; on the other hand, the project resources were not sufficient to offer translations to all languages for all events.

**Geographical Distance:** dispersion among project contributors introduces a challenge related to distance. This physical separation impedes face-to-face interactions and affects collaborations as it takes longer to establish a stronger framework of common goals.

**Dependence on online meetings:** Related to the previous point, online meetings face potential technical issues such as Internet connectivity problems.

**Limited resources:** The project faces financial resource constraints related to the budget allocations. For example, after the pandemic, travel across Europe became considerably more expensive. The allocations for trips do not cover the actual costs.

**Time Constraints:** Project timelines are challenging, especially when coordinating activities. The effort to meet deadlines and maintain a synchronized workflow creates critical events and misunderstandings among partners.

**Technology dependence:** The project is susceptible to disruptions due to technical issues during implementation phases or reliance on specific digital platforms. In some innovation types, it also depends on adequate equipment in CHOs which often was an issue, especially in Bulgaria.

## 7. SWOT: OPPORTUNITIES

**Collaborative Learning:** The diversity of expertise within the project provides a unique opportunity: participants benefit from exposure to different perspectives, skills, methodologies, and real-life challenges.

**Cross-Cultural Exchange:** This exchange is project-related and helps people connect with diverse cultures and traditions.

**Networking and Partnerships:** The strong network of partnerships established by the project creates opportunities for future collaborations.

**Innovation in Heritage Recovery Practices:** The project has the potential to pioneer innovative practices in heritage recovery.

**Public engagement and awareness:** The project aims to increase public engagement and awareness of cultural heritage. Through the use of various communication channels, the project can educate the public about the importance of heritage conservation.

## 8. SWOT: THREATS

**Potential Cultural Differences:** Diverse cultural and linguistic backgrounds among participants could lead to issues in approaches, priorities, or expectations.

**Technological Obsolescence:** Rapid technological advances can render project technologies or methodologies obsolete over time.

**Security risks:** Increased reliance on digital platforms and data storage introduces security risks, including cyber threats and data breaches that could compromise sensitive project information and disrupt normal operations.



### 3. Conclusions

The eCHOing project could serve as a valuable source of lessons for future initiatives in the field of cultural heritage recovery and university-driven open innovation. First, it was important to address at the beginning of the project possible challenges related to communication and languages. Finding a common language (lingua franca) and people in charge of the translation was needed and proved to be valuable when working with different languages.

In addition, it is important to have solid planning to avoid deadline problems. A strong structure with a clear division of tasks is essential for the smooth running of the project, it is also important to have a coordinator who checks everyone's workflow. The distance between partners overcome by online meetings can generate logistical issues related to the technology used and the internet connection.

The project's success in collaborative learning, cross-cultural exchange, and technology integration provides a blueprint for other initiatives in this area. Highlighting these aspects can enhance the educational impact of such projects. Using technology as a new way to approach students in the education sector can help to create a more inclusive environment.

In conclusion, the eCHOing project is a testimony to the potential of collaborative, multidisciplinary efforts in heritage recovery. The lessons learned pave the way for future efforts to overcome challenges, seize opportunities, and make lasting contributions to the preservation and appreciation of our rich cultural heritage.

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