

Report on the outcomes of a Short-Term Scientific Mission¹

Action number: CA23128

Grantee name: Hanna Sorsa-Sautet

Details of the STSM

Title: WG1 x Vienna: Digitization and Online Collection

Start and end date: 08/02/2026 to 06/03/2026

Description of the work carried out during the STSM

The main purpose of the STSM was to explore and assess the processes and best practices for digitisation and publishing archival materials of BOKU LArchiv on online catalogue and in kulturpool-database. BOKU LArchiv started the digitisation project answering to an EU-financed call, which was prolonged for a second year. LArchiv has digitised over 10 481 articles (plans, details, photographs or negatives), accessible either from LArchiv online catalogue or kulturpool. This represents 20% of the LArchiv archival collection.

As planned, the digitisation team, who already had two years of experience, explained in theory and in practice the workflow from the beginning until the end of the project which will be in March 2026. The topics studied were from digitisation tools and materials, existing state-of-the-art in digitisation process and handling the archival documents to space management, from donation and copyright to broad public accessibility issues, and compliance with national and European standards. The team also shared the challenges faced in terms of technical, human resources or acknowledgement of archival science in the context of the institution and its prior mission of teaching and research.

Through this STSM, ConnectLAA, and in particular Working Group 1 (WG1) can learn from and build upon this experience, exchanging knowledge and identifying practices that can be shared and applied in future projects at national and international level. The mission also provided new insights to stress out in future WG1 actions in coming years, notably for the manual toolkit content and training opportunities. The insights gained are directly relevant to ongoing initiatives such as Echoes and Horizon and can support the development of consistent and sustainable digitisation strategies within the network.

The results of the STSM will be shared with ConnectLAA members in the online presentation on March 13th and are intended to inform and be implemented in future digitisation projects related to landscape architecture archives in France or in Europe with our ConnectLAA partners.

¹ This report is submitted by the grantee to the Action MC for approval and for claiming payment of the awarded grant. The Grant Awarding Coordinator coordinates the evaluation of this report on behalf of the Action MC and instructs the GH for payment of the Grant.

Description of the STSM main achievements and planned follow-up activities

The research has two main outcomes. Firstly, the full digitisation workflow at BOKU LArchiv was studied and analysed; the selection of materials, technical preparation and requirements, quality control procedures, and the publication of digitised content across different databases. The STSM stressed the theoretical and practical framework, as well as institutional support for the HR and facilities management and the connections with the local and international cultural heritage units. Particular attention was given to understanding the rationale behind the choices made by BOKU LArchiv and to gathering feedback on the advantages and limitations of different technical and organisational choices made (choice of service providers, materials, team, digitised objects). The digitisation processes were observed and examined in close collaboration with technicians and digitisation staff. The results will enable to support the development of the small-sized organisation's digitisation projects and develop the online tools to promote the accessibility of the connections between the national and international archival collections.

The general framework and key challenges of digitisation were explored through existing databases and documentation not only in Austria, but also in France (*Cité de l'architecture et du patrimoine, Société nationale d'horticulture de France*) and in general European digital culture context (Europeana, Nemo, Echoes, Archives Portal). As the WG1 first year STSM mentioned, the first step for establishing and implementing an LA archive will be to create a digital collection. The project-financed initiatives seem to be the solution for the organisations to go forward, and it should be developed in the European context to achieve and progress in common initiatives such as Europeana storytelling or new Echoes digital heritage platform.

Secondly, the goal was to develop a roadmap for digitisation for a future WG1 manual. The roadmap on the digitisation process and the online collections are being produced for WG1 but can be used for larger community outside the archival science. The Vienna STSM experience will be shared with the practical toolkit manual in the purpose to be used by university or LA school's personnel without any or with few experience on the archival projects. The roadmap will be presented at a ConnectLAA WG1 online meeting on March 13th. The recording will be available after the presentation on Teams Channel. The STSM will participate to following deliverables:

- Deliverable 5: A multilingual glossary on archival terms (thesaurus implementation)
- Deliverable 8: Documentation of archival innovation and a concise analysis as an illustrated working paper (online collections as a way to connect)
- Deliverable 11: Handbook manual for archival producers and donors (how to archive that it is usable)
- Deliverable 12: Manual for archivists and archival institutions with landscape architectural records, offering guidelines for best practices on the archival process (digitisation process and tools to do it).

Boku published to articles about the STSM: <https://boku.ac.at/en/lawi/inla/newsitem/89505>

It's also available in German with a couple more photos here:

<https://larchiv.at/news/austausch-zur-vernetzung-europaischer-landschaftsarchitektur-archive-connectlaa/>