

# Open Access to Cultural Heritage - Ethical Issues

Brigitte Vézina, Creative Commons

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Girl With A Pearl Earring Fashion GIF By GIF IT UP

What is Creative Commons?



## The power of open culture



## Creative Commons' top 4 benefits of open culture

1. Dynamize **research, education and learning** to solve the world's biggest problems
2. Enliven **arts, culture and creativity** to help us live richer lives
3. Promote **diversity, inclusivity and equity** to sustain democratic and resilient societies
4. Propel institutions into the digital world to ensure their continued **relevance, mission alignment and service orientation**

Should *everything* be shared *openly*?

# Better sharing and the CC Strategy

“open sharing practices can also be marred by **ethical concerns**... To ensure everyone can enjoy the benefits of the full open sharing cycle, we must embrace a multifrontal, coordinated, broad-based approach that transcends copyright.”

*Better* sharing is:

- inclusive, just and equitable
- reciprocal
- sustainable
- contextual
- ethical
- purposeful
- prosocial



**CREATIVE COMMONS  
STRATEGY 2021-2025**





**CC Open Culture Voices Series**

Nicole Kang Ferraiolo - Head of Digital Strategies, Smithsonian American Women's History Museum

# #BeFAIRandCARE



FAIR Guiding Principles for scientific data management and stewardship can be [accessed here](#)



# What is Creative Commons doing in this field?

## Sharing Indigenous Cultural Heritage Online: An Overview of GLAM Policies



Brigitte Vézina and Alexis Muscat  
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*This post was co-authored by CC's Open Policy Manager Brigitte Vézina and Legal and Policy Intern Alexis Muscat.*

Tomorrow is [International Day of the World's Indigenous Peoples](#), a day that seeks to raise awareness of and support Indigenous peoples' rights and aspirations around the world. We at Creative Commons (CC) wish to highlight this important celebration and acknowledge that, internationally, measures need to be taken to protect Indigenous peoples' rights and interests in their unique cultures. One measure, which intersects with our policy work at CC on [Open GLAM](#), addresses the open, online sharing of Indigenous cultural heritage cared for within cultural heritage institutions.



Logo for the International Day of the World's Indigenous Peoples by the United Nations. Access of here

### Creative Commons and the Open GLAM movement

Many galleries, libraries, archives, and museums (known collectively as “GLAMs”) work hard to make cultural heritage collections available to the public. For these institutions, providing access to knowledge and culture is a core aspect of their duty and public interest [mission](#). Many institutions are digitizing and making [cultural heritage](#) collections available online in an effort to both preserve and openly share cultural heritage materials. The Open GLAM movement acknowledges this mission and actively promotes this premise, helping GLAMs make the most out of CC licenses and tools to communicate what users can do with digitized material. At CC, we strongly advocate for open access to public domain material held in GLAM collections for the benefit of all. CC firmly believes that digital reproductions of public domain material within these collections should [remain in the public domain](#) and be accessible online as openly as possible.

## THE ETHICS OF OPEN SHARING – Playing cards



This card deck was developed by the Creative Commons working group on the Ethics of Open Sharing (2022-2023) and is inspired by the [MOI playing cards](#). The design was made by KRUT Collective.

The goal of the working group was to create an inspirational card game as a conversation starter in cultural heritage organisations. It can be used during:

- Team meetings, where people from different departments and/or with different functions come together.
- Coffee breaks, lunch discussions.
- Strategic brainstorming sessions about the organisation's position, vision, ethics and so on.

The cards are divided into 2 card types. Each card covers one or multiple (sub)topics of the ethics of open sharing.



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It can be phrased as:  
The Ethics of Open Sharing Card Game © 2023 by CC working group on the Ethics of Open Sharing and KRUT Collective is licensed under CC BY 4.0.

## Concluding thoughts

“Over the past 30 years, things have changed drastically in the sense that now museums are considering more and more the fact that they are stewards of these collections and not only owners. So, we try very much to get away from this idea of appropriation, the proprietiveness of collections. One way of doing it is building this trust. And in a way, to build this trust, we need to make sure that we change our way of working practices from ownership to stewardship.”

— Carine Ayélé Durand, head curator, Musée d’ethnographie de Genève, [WIPO Visits the Ethnographic Museum of Geneva](#), WIPO Magazine, July 2021