

## EHRI-ERIC in a nutshell

### 1. Introduction

The [European Holocaust Research Infrastructure](http://www.ehri-project.eu) (EHRI) has been active since 2010. It advances trans-national Holocaust research, remembrance and education by addressing the field's hallmark challenge, which is the wide dispersal of sources and expertise across Europe and beyond.

To this end, EHRI brings together the most important Holocaust collection holders and research institutions as well as specialists in the digital humanities. Since its beginning, EHRI has been coordinated by the NIOD Institute for War, Holocaust and Genocide Studies, Amsterdam.

Following its adoption on the ESFRI Roadmap 2018, EHRI is currently establishing itself as a permanent European organisation in the form of a distributed European Research Infrastructure Consortium (ERIC). At present, nine countries have expressed a serious interest in becoming founding members of EHRI-ERIC, and conversations are underway in several others to secure their commitment and long-term support. EHRI-ERIC will be an open organisation and is seeking involvement from additional research institutions, funding bodies and national ministries.

This paper provides concise information on EHRI for both stakeholders that are already actively involved in establishing EHRI as an ERIC and for those with an interest to join the effort. It outlines EHRI's overall mission and value proposition; explains the ERIC's future governance structure and funding model; presents a timeline for its establishment; and provides details about the structure and activities of National Nodes.

### 2. Mission of EHRI

The vision of EHRI is to secure seamless access to all sources and expertise from across Europe and beyond that are relevant to the study of the Holocaust. EHRI thereby highlights the relevance of Holocaust research for free and open societies with shared democratic values.

Since its inception in 2010, EHRI has approached this vision by overcoming the geographical fragmentation of sources and expertise and by setting standards for excellence in transnational Holocaust research, documentation, education and remembrance. As such, it continually develops and maintains a distributed, digital and human infrastructure that provides access to archival resources and services to a diverse community.

EHRI has developed a range of digital and in-person tools and services to implement this vision.



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The **EHRI Virtual Observatory** is an expanding integrated online platform that provides free, online access to (i) information about dispersed collection holding institutions and their collections via the [EHRI Online Portal](#); (ii) scholarly digital editions of Holocaust sources via the [EHRI Edition Platform](#); (iii) visualisation, enhancement and contextualisation of Holocaust sources via the [EHRI Document Blog](#); (iv) self-study and guided training on Holocaust sources and their interpretation via the [EHRI Online Training Course](#).

The [Conny Kristel Fellowship Programme](#) is a competitive scheme that provides researchers, collection specialists and other users trans-national in-person access to the sources and expertise available at the most important Holocaust-relevant collection holding institutions in Europe, Israel and the United States.

[Trans-national training seminars and methodological workshops](#) offer extensive training and networking opportunities to researchers, collections specialists and other users at different career stages and facilitate the exploration of innovative digital methodologies.

In addition to providing comprehensive research services, EHRI also pursues a social mission. Through its dissemination and outreach activities, it plays a vital role in the fight against Holocaust denial and distortion, racism and antisemitism, and ensures that Holocaust research keeps on informing a societal discourse on issues such as tolerance, cultural diversity and human rights.

### 3. Value proposition of EHRI-ERIC

EHRI-ERIC will be the first trans-national organisation that brings together key institutions in the inherently interdisciplinary domain of Holocaust documentation and research. EHRI-ERIC member countries play a prominent role in this unique pan-European effort to provide access to dispersed archival sources, promote innovative research and education, and protect a shared European legacy for future generations.

Members set impulses in an interdisciplinary collaboration that drives innovation in Holocaust research and documentation, advances service integration, promotes common standards, knowledge and expertise transfer, and facilitates networking opportunities across professional and geographic divides. Such collaborative efforts ensure that existing knowledge and expertise is pooled at the start of development processes, synergies are quickly identified and exploited, and new services and methodologies are deployed faster and more effectively.



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This level of close-knitted collaboration is particularly important in light of the challenges, and opportunities, of our digital age. Digital maturity varies greatly in the field of Holocaust

documentation and research, where small and micro collection-holding and research institutions constitute a significant proportion and where levels of digitisation are uneven. EHRI-ERIC members enhance the visibility of important national assets by supporting a concerted effort to accelerate digitisation and internationally promote holdings that otherwise may stay hidden within regional or national boundaries. This has an immediate effect on the resilience, reach and sustainability of Holocaust-relevant institutions.

EHRI-ERIC members are directly involved in the decision-making of the infrastructure through representation in its governance. As such, they set the strategic direction of EHRI-ERIC, decide on development priorities and benefit from synergies with other cognate Research Infrastructures and major initiatives such as the European Science Cloud.

Last but not least, the murder of millions of Jews, Sinti and Roma and other groups considered inferior by the Nazi occupies a central role in Europe's collective memory. The Holocaust is a shared history of barbarism, racism and antisemitism that must never be forgotten. The importance of state-of-the-art Holocaust documentation and research for contemporary societies has also found powerful expression in international agreements and policies such as the Declaration of the Stockholm International Forum on the Holocaust (2000), the IHRA Ministerial Declaration (2020) or the European Union's Strategy on combating antisemitism and fostering Jewish Life (2021). EHRI-ERIC plays a key role in turning such high-level political declarations and commitments into reality.

## 4. Towards a permanent European Holocaust Research Infrastructure: EHRI-ERIC

### 4.1 Governance structure of EHRI-ERIC

EHRI will be implemented as an European Research Infrastructure Consortium (ERIC). An ERIC is a consortium of states (EU member states, associated countries and third countries). These states, represented by ministries or national research funds, are the Members and Observers of an ERIC and form its General Assembly, the decision-making body. Institutions situated in a country which is not a Member or Observer can opt to participate as a cooperating partner.



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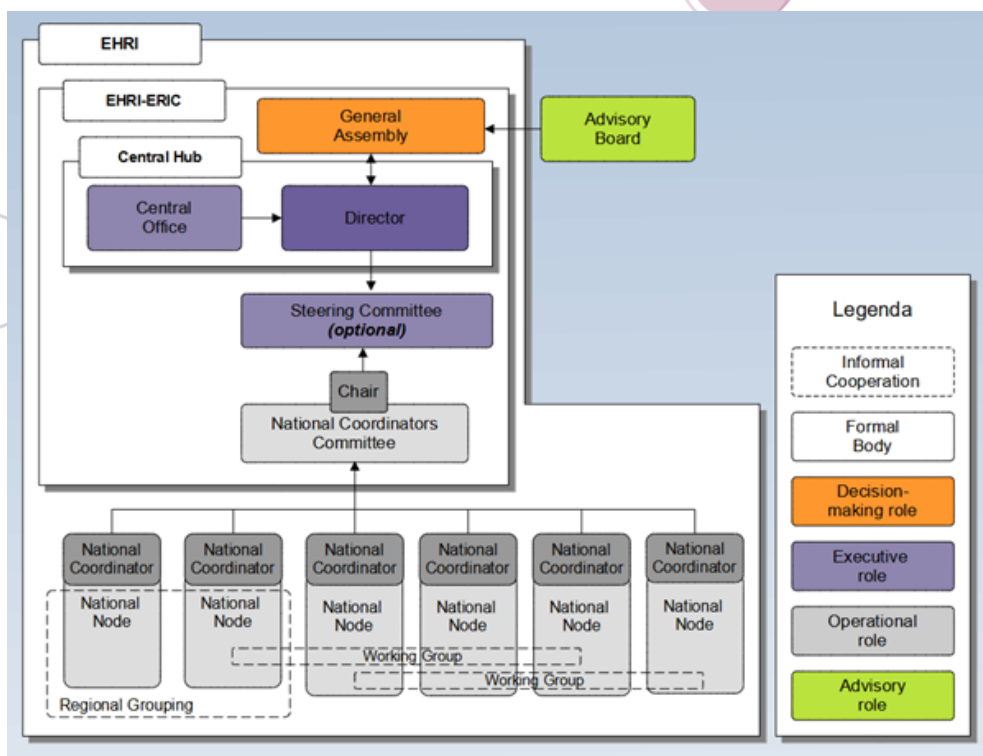
The future EHRI-ERIC will be set up as a distributed research infrastructure, consisting of a Central Hub and linked National Nodes.

The Central Hub, which is to be located in the Netherlands, is the coordinating layer of the ERIC and will be represented by the Director, supported by a Central Office.

Each member or observer of the ERIC commits to set up a National Node, a consortium of research institutions, archives, museums, libraries and memory institutions with relevant expertise. These National Nodes advance EHRI's mission at the national level. They are anchored in EHRI-ERIC's governance through their representation in the National Coordinators Committee.

In order to guarantee high quality standards, an Advisory Board will monitor and evaluate the activities of EHRI-ERIC.

The basic governance structure of EHRI-ERIC can be represented schematically as follows:



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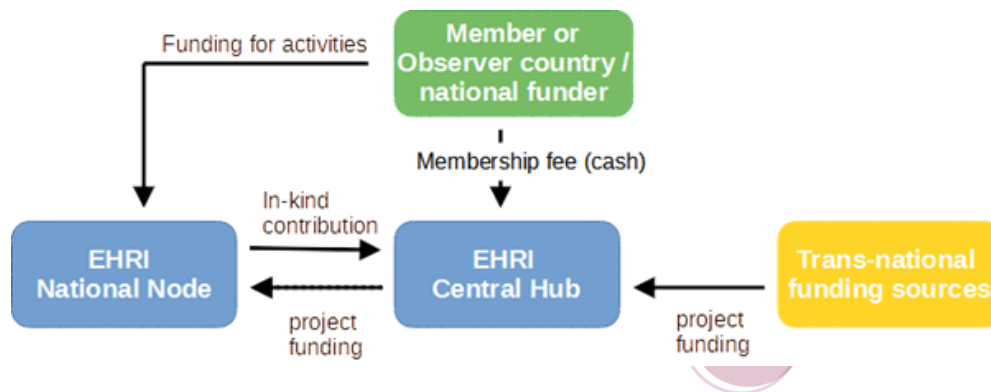


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#### 4.2 High-level funding model of EHRI-ERIC

EHRI-ERIC strives to be financially balanced and sustainable with its costs covered by long-term national funding sources.

As illustrated in the high-level funding-model below, Members and Observers will commit to the financing of EHRI-ERIC, both at the level of the Central Hub and that of the National Nodes.



**Central Hub:** the fixed costs associated with running the Central Hub will be covered through the collection of an annual fee to be paid by all Member and Observer countries. The precise formula to calculate this fee is currently under discussion. It is expected to consist of three parts: a hosting premium to be paid by the country where the Central Hub is located, a flat-rate base fee that is the same for all countries and a variable, GDP-dependent part.

**National Nodes:** Institutions that form national nodes typically possess stable, structural funding from national sources. Such existing funding covers activities that are relevant to EHRI-ERIC’s mission, for instance providing in-person access to archival sources and expertise, making such sources available digitally, or undertaking research, training and dissemination activities. Activities undertaken within the framework of EHRI (such as trans-national access provision to national resources) will be accounted as a national in-kind contribution to EHRI-ERIC. Integration into EHRI-ERIC will enhance these existing funding sources by opening up supplementary funding possibilities for the national nodes; for instance, funding from national Research Infrastructure Roadmap schemes to further enhance their capacity and operations.

Apart from national funding, EHRI-ERIC will also actively seek to secure significant trans-national funding for project-based activities including grants through the EU’s Horizon Europe programme.



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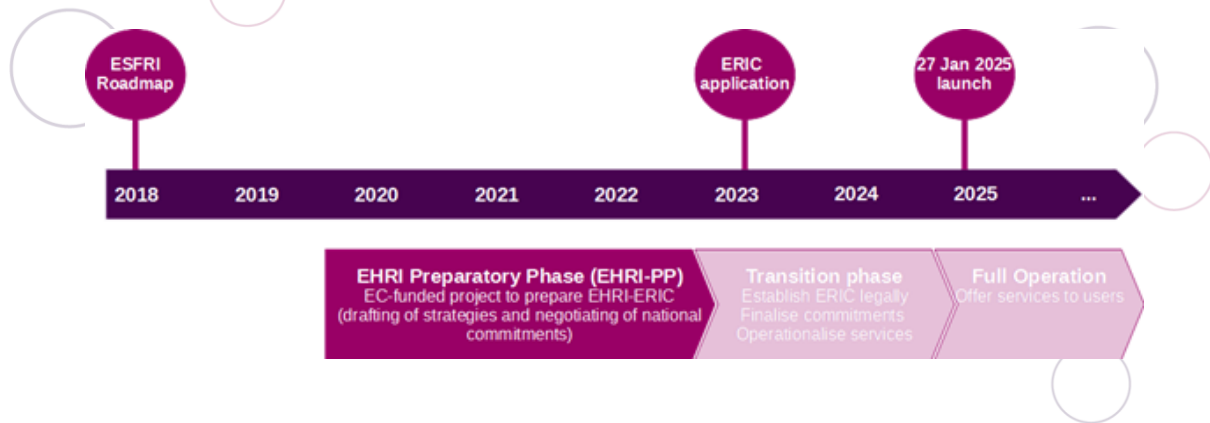
Such grants will benefit both the Central Hub, which may act as coordinator of future trans-national projects, and national institutions participating in their implementation.

### 4.3 Timeline for the establishment of EHRI-ERIC

The EHRI Preparatory Phase (EHRI-PP) project is currently preparing all the necessary legal, financial and strategic documents required to establish an ERIC, including the formal application to the European Commission (EC). At the same time, it negotiates firm commitments from prospective founding member countries of EHRI-ERIC. It has established a Board of Governmental Representatives (BGR), composed of representatives from relevant ministries and funding bodies from all those countries that have shown a serious interest in supporting EHRI long-term.

The ERIC application is expected to be submitted in 2023. EHRI will then enter a transition phase of approximately two years, during which the ERIC will be formally established and the EHRI services will be readied for long-term operation. The BGR will then become the interim General Assembly of EHRI and, once ERIC status is granted, the General Assembly.

We therefore anticipate that EHRI-ERIC will start full operation in early 2025, with a formal launch date currently scheduled for 27 January 2025, the 80<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the liberation of Auschwitz.



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## 5. National nodes

National Nodes are responsible for the implementation of the mission and activities of EHRI at the national level and thus form a key component of EHRI-ERIC. Organisationally, they consist of one or more public and/or private institutions of the respective Member or Observer countries. The participation within a National Node is agreed upon by the partner institutions in compliance with national laws and regulations. Each National Node appoints one institution as National Coordinator which will represent the National Node in the National Coordinators Committee.

As National Nodes integrate the national Holocaust archive and research communities and operationalise EHRI-ERIC's mission, they will undertake a wide range of different activities, including:

- Participate in the governance of EHRI-ERIC
- Synthesize and report information about relevant national developments via the National Coordinators Committee
- Contribute to the development of EHRI-ERIC by feeding knowledge and expertise into relevant strategies, policies and guidelines
- Participate in the development of trans-national projects in conjunction with the Central Hub and other National Nodes
- Act as a national contact point for potential users of, and contributors to, EHRI-ERIC
- Grant in-person access to relevant collections and expertise to trans-national users via the CK Fellowship Programme
- Facilitate the integration, digitisation and enhancement of relevant collections and resources (i.e. source identification; digitisation; metadata creation and enhancement; creation of digital editions; development of domain vocabularies and knowledge systems, creation of national platforms for access to Holocaust collections, etc.)
- Facilitate the continuous integration of information about relevant collection holding institutions and their collections and resources into the EHRI Portal
- Contribute content and expertise to other EHRI Online Services such as the Document Blog, Editions Platform, Online Training Suite
- Engage in research and development work to further enhance the EHRI online services or to develop new services
- Host EHRI transnational in-person training seminars and methodological workshops
- Undertake training and networking activities at the local, regional or national level
- Undertake outreach, dissemination and impact activities to increase knowledge about EHRI among potential user and contributor groups, and to heighten appreciation of its social, cultural and political relevance
- Any other research, development, networking or dissemination activity that may help EHRI achieve its mission



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