



**European Holocaust Research Infrastructure
Preparatory Phase
H2020-INFRADEV-2019-2
GA no. 871060**

Deliverable 5.3 – Training concept for users and staff

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Start: November 2019 [M1]

Due: September 2022 [M34]

Actual: October 2022 [M35]



EHRI is funded by the European Union

Document Information

Project URL	www.ehri-project.eu
Document URL	[www.....]
Deliverable	D5.3 Training concept for users and staff
Work Package	WP5
Lead Beneficiary	5 - IfZ
Relevant Milestones	
Dissemination level	Public
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Abstract (for dissemination)	This DL details already available and potential future training offerings for users as well as staff of the EHRI-ERIC. It is based on addressing gaps in current provision identified in WP6 and on a thorough understanding of current and likely future user needs which has been established by the previous work of WP5.
Management Summary	(required if the deliverable exceeds more than 25 pages) [Max. 500 words]

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1. Introduction

Already as a project, EHRI has played a central role in training the next generation of people active in the field of Holocaust research (including researchers, archivists, curators, cataloguers, people working in reference services, educators, and more). As EHRI-ERIC, we will continue to offer and develop cutting-edge training possibilities in various sub-disciplines, upgrading the professional skill sets of Holocaust experts, and training the EHRI staff itself.

This DL provides an outline of the currently existing training EHRI provides and will continue to provide as an ERIC. Key aspects of the EHRI training are presented, including specific offerings for EHRI users as well as staff. Lastly, the DL focuses on organisational aspects of the training offering once the EHRI-ERIC is established.

This DL is based on a number of surveys, expert interviews and group discussions conducted in WP 5, WP 6 Research and Innovation Strategy, and WP 2 Governance and Legal Work. Its findings are closely connected to the results of the two currently available foresight studies (D6.1 and D6.2), the action plan for keeping EHRI users engaged (D6.3), the User needs analysis (D5.1) and the User strategy and access policy (D5.2).

2. Types of Training

Two types of training EHRI offers can be distinguished along the lines of access that EHRI grants: physical and online. Currently, the in-person, physical training of EHRI consists of the Conny Kristel Fellowship Programme (EHRI Kristel Fellowship), Seminars and Workshops. The Access mode is excellence-driven: Access to the EHRI Kristel Fellowship is granted based on the excellence of the proposed research and/or professional development project and its merit (as evaluated through external peer review). Participants for Seminars and Workshops are chosen based on how well their research profile and/or professional development ambitions fit the topics of the Seminar or Workshop (which is evaluated by an internal EHRI-ERIC peer review).

The online training EHRI offers are self-guided Online Courses as well as guided Online Courses (including Massive Open Online Courses). The access mode is unrestricted (“wide”), free and open to anyone. One exception to this rule are guided online courses, which are interactive and a tutor guides participants through the syllabus. Since only a certain number of participants can join such a Course at the same time, quotas are needed and an “excellent driven” access policy would be applied. Excellence-driven in the case of the online courses would be dependent on the professional fit of the participant with the course.

2.1 Physical

Kristel Fellowships

The EHRI Kristel Fellowship Programme grants users trans-national access to facilities, resources, and expert knowledge available at EHRI partner institutions as well as cooperating partners which constitute the most important Holocaust-relevant collection-holding institutions and centres of excellence. It allows users to access the geographically dispersed resources and expertise they need to complete high-quality research. Each fellowship lasts between 1 and 6 weeks and can include stays at multiple hosting institutions. Through regular Fellowship Calls, researchers, archivists, curators, and other people in the field of Holocaust research have the opportunity to apply for an EHRI Kristel Fellowship. Successful applicants are assigned a contact person at the institutions they visit. The contact person ensures that the Fellow has access to sources and material and introduces the Fellow to colleagues and other

researchers who might provide relevant input to their research. During the stay, the Fellow has the possibility to take part in the institution's activities and (training) offerings (i.e. seminars, conferences, lectures, and discussion groups). Therefore, EHRI Kristel Fellowship is designed not only as a research opportunity but also as a wholesome experience to engage in a research environment different from one's own. In addition, virtual meetings with all Fellows of one cohort are organized to introduce them to additional EHRI Training and other activities of the RI. During these meetings, Fellows are also given the chance to present and discuss their research.

Methodological Seminars

EHRI Seminars last up to a week and take place in different parts of Europe (mostly Eastern and Southern Europe) and in Israel.¹ Depending on their thematic focus, they are addressed to different audiences. Mostly, however, they are aimed at PhD students and early postdocs as well as early-career positions related to Holocaust research (i.e. archivists, curators). Despite the difference in audiences, the EHRI Seminars share essential aspects: a thorough presentation of the activities and tools the EHRI RI provides, including a concise overview of current methods and research trends, source types, digital humanities tools, and new approaches to the study of the Holocaust. These presentations are regularly given by acclaimed scholars in the field of Holocaust Studies as well as local archivists and librarians, who offer unique insights and the possibility to work hands-on with rare sources. Close cooperation with local archivists and activists allows the participants unique insights into archival collections and holdings of Holocaust-relevant material as well as into the state of Holocaust commemoration and memory politics on-site. Most importantly, the Seminar schedule leaves enough time for the participants to present their own research, thus encouraging a new generation of Holocaust scholars to share their findings as well as discuss potential obstacles within their research and professional life. Feedback shows that the expert knowledge provided during the Seminars as well as the networking possibilities offered turn the Seminars into excellent opportunities for career advancement.

Workshops

EHRI Workshops, which usually last up to two days, offer trans-national, interdisciplinary training aimed at a diverse audience at different stages of their careers. They take into account the fact that the study of the Holocaust is a transnational endeavour, fostered by the diversity of disciplines and professions involved. Once a topic is set, attention is paid to composing diverse participation, including a variety of geographical, disciplinary and professional backgrounds. Participants have found this approach particularly helpful, since it opens new vantage points, synergies and room for cooperation and professional development. A special focus of EHRI is the presentation, discussion and usage of approaches and tools in the Digital Humanities relevant for Holocaust research. This is also reflected in the preparation and implementation of EHRI Workshops.

¹ During the Covid-19 pandemic, a number of Seminars were conducted online. Ideally, however, they take part in-person, especially due to the networking aspect of the training.

2.2 Online

Self-guided EHRI Online Courses

The goal of the self-guided EHRI Online Course is to provide especially teachers, lecturers and students with source material and background information and to provide an overview of recent trends in the Holocaust historiography. As of now, EHRI has developed a course consisting of five units whose topics are selected representative examples relevant for comprehending the European dimension of the Holocaust. Each of these topics is used to focus on a critical analysis of sources within the context of the current state and methods of Holocaust research. The goal of the self-guided Online Courses is to provide easy access to basic research and trends in Holocaust research. In addition, it familiarizes users with the diversity of sources (including texts, photographs, sound and video sources) necessary and available to research - and teach about - the Holocaust. Since the Online course is self-guided and freely accessible it can help a broad range of users to familiarize themselves and to deepen their knowledge regarding Holocaust historiography. In addition, the Online Course can be used for teaching as a whole or in part.

Guided Online Courses / MOOC

While the self-guided EHRI Online Course focusses on basic research on the Holocaust, the guided Online Course offers scholars the possibility to enlarge their knowledge on various groups of sources frequently consulted in the study of the Holocaust. More importantly, however, it also offers assistance in reading and assessing them – and in this way establishing essential skills for a scholarly approach to any Holocaust-related topic. Next to the already established usage of pictures, original documents and audio-visual survivor testimonies, the units are intersected with short interviews by acclaimed scholars in the field of Holocaust research. They offer insight into their own research and reflect on the importance – and pitfalls – of the various source types. All units are accompanied by written assignments and members of EHRI are engaged in any question or discussion arising. This engagement, however, has led to the need to monitor the Online Course regularly and resulted in the need to limit participation. To expand the learner base, the Online Course is developed into a MOOC (Massive Open Online Course).² As such, the Online Course will reach a substantially wider global audience. In addition to the already existing course material, the MOOC contains additional lectures and source material and introductions to specific collections.

2.3 Hybrid formats

While the EHRI project used to be able to distinguish training offerings by their physical or online format, developments in recent years (first and foremost the Covid-19 pandemic) have brought about the necessity to rethink some of our well-established training offerings. To be able to continue our training offerings to users, it was unavoidable to move some of our physical training offers online – this applied to Workshops, Methodological Seminars as well as to the Kristel Fellowships (in cases where online access to archives was available). The shift this causes regarding the general dynamic of an event, the possibilities for networking, engaging with one another and getting to know a (new) place are significant. However, at the same time, it means easier access to training offerings and, e.g., a limited amount of travel logistics. Monitoring these events closely and assessing the feedback from participants will help us make informed decisions about the advantages and challenges of providing training in

² We currently foresee that the MOOC “It must all be recorded without a single fact left out.’ The Holocaust through the Perspective of Primary Sources” will be available in early 2023.

a hybrid form and by making previously exclusively physical training events (in part) available as online offerings.

In the future, we foresee more of these physical, online and – if necessary and warranted - hybrid training activities being established and becoming available on the central as well as the national level. The following section provides an overview of core topics and approaches on which future EHRI-ERIC training offerings will also be based.

3. Training concept

3.1 Topics and approaches

The goal of the EHRI training programme is to offer Holocaust researchers and other professionals working in the field of Holocaust studies ways to engage with the newest developments in research, archiving and commemorating. To stay abreast, EHRI continuously monitors the field of Holocaust studies with the help of surveys, expert interviews and literature landscape scans. Current findings suggest that the training offerings should take one or more of the following elements into consideration when continuing or creating new offerings within the framework of the EHRI Training³:

- **Basic research:** While the events of the Holocaust are well researched in some countries, large gaps remain in others due to destroyed sources or limited access to them as well as the lack of a tradition of (institutionalized) Holocaust research. EHRI training will support scholars conducting basic research into the unfolding of the Holocaust by familiarizing them with elementary issues such as identifying relevant sources as well as source criticism.
- **Trans-national/comparative research:** As a European Research Consortium, EHRI is ideally suited to encourage and foster research on the Holocaust as a European event. To ensure this, knowledge of the unfolding of the Holocaust in various countries needs to be conveyed, together with analytical frameworks and theoretical considerations which lay the foundation for researching and writing a European history of the Holocaust.
- **Methodological trends and turns:** The field of Holocaust research is ever-changing. EHRI takes these developments into account by continuously analyzing the research landscape. Subsequently, EHRI draws on a network of experts inside and outside of EHRI, who convey new trends and developments to users and help them to make these usable for their respective research.⁴
- **Multi- and interdisciplinarity:** Research into the Holocaust is inherently interdisciplinary in nature. One goal of the EHRI Training is to overcome disciplinary boundaries to investigate synergies and add value for Holocaust studies. We aim to bring people from various disciplinary backgrounds with an interest and/or professional background in Holocaust studies together and offer opportunities for discussing projects from multi- and interdisciplinary perspectives.⁵
- **Digital Humanities:** Although Digital Humanities approaches can also be attributed to multi- and interdisciplinary approaches as well as methodological trends, it is worth mentioning them separately. From surveys, we know that there is still a large gap between a general interest in using DH approaches and tools in Holocaust research

³ See, i.e., D5.1 User needs analysis, D5.2 User strategy and access policy, D6.1 Foresight Studies 1, D6.2 Foresight Studies 2.

⁴ For an overview of topics and trends identified, see D6.1 Foresight Studies 1, p. 8-11.

⁵ For more information on the relevance of multi- and interdisciplinarity, see D6.2 Foresight Studies 2.

and the lack of experience and knowledge for doing so.⁶ As an infrastructure rooted in digital approaches to Holocaust research, EHRI is ideally suited to provide its users with introductory knowledge as well as hands-on working experiences to familiarize themselves with the usability of DH offerings.

- **Diversity of sources:** The scattering of relevant sources is one of the main challenges to Holocaust research. EHRI is actively helping to overcome this obstacle by making information on archives and collection descriptions available in the EHRI Portal. The Portal holds information on various materials, and it is a goal of the EHRI Training to promote to users this variety of sources (i.e. official documents, diaries, letters, post-war testimonies, trial proceedings, photographs, newspapers). Using them, however, often requires a specific source criticism, which will be an essential part of looking at all kinds of material which might be used for research.

As stated above, these are training suggestions based on the current trends and developments in Holocaust studies. Therefore, this overview will have to be updated regularly. In addition, future EHRI Training offerings designed by the National Nodes might take the developments regarding Holocaust research in their own countries more into account. Nonetheless, it is recommended here that Training offerings deal with at least one of the above-mentioned topics to underscore the connections with EHRI.

Apart from the content-related aspects, the Training offerings also share some common features associated with EHRI. These include

- **An introduction to the EHRI network, activities and other offerings:** Each Training, physical as well as online, will include an introduction to EHRI as a whole and promote other activities and offerings. This should raise awareness of the variety of contributions EHRI makes to the field of Holocaust studies.
- **Multimedia and perceptivity:** To underscore the diversity of the field of Holocaust studies, EHRI Training is characterized by the varied use of multimedia elements and opening up numerous perspectives through a diverse group of users and activities (i.e. visits to memorial sites, movie screenings, round-table discussions, hands-on sessions with DH tools).
- **Networking opportunities:** A central aspect of all EHRI Training is the possibility of engaging with peers, receiving feedback from established scholars and developing sustainable networks which can advance research as well as careers.
- **Alumni Groups:** The establishment of Alumni groups allows for continued and long-term contact among participants of a specific EHRI Training. In order to enable continued discussion, Basecamp will be used as a platform to facilitate communication. The users (former participants in physical, online or hybrid training offerings) can easily map their network and contact each other directly, participate in discussions, send links to their studies, etc. This also means connecting the alumni more permanently with EHRI.

Overall, EHRI Training offerings enable users at different career stages to expand their networks, acquire the skills they need to excel in the digital world, and open up new interdisciplinary, trans-national and other innovative research avenues.

⁶ This was reflected for example in the group interviews conducted by EHRI-3 WP10 Thematic Layers across Collections with researchers and archivists interested in using DH Tools. See also D6.1 Foresight Studies, p. 14-15.

3.2 EHRI Training offerings for staff

Scientific and technical staff of the EHRI-ERIC will be encouraged to make use of all EHRI Training offerings.⁷ This will help them to familiarise themselves with the network and profile of EHRI's users, as well as keep them informed about cutting-edge developments in the field of Holocaust research. Depending on the level of their seniority and experience, they will also have the opportunity to contribute their own expertise to the Training offerings, which will encourage knowledge exchange with users, foster (future) cooperation and heighten their visibility in the EHRI user community.

Other measures which will be available to EHRI staff include

- **General introduction:** An initial introduction to EHRI, with information on its structure, division of labour and areas of activity, will be available to every new member of EHRI-ERIC's staff.
- **Mentoring:** Starting to work for a distributed RI, especially for employees without prior experience in this field, can be overwhelming. A mentoring programme will be of great assistance in the onboarding process. Each new colleague will be paired with a senior staff member who will guide them through their first months of employment with EHRI. The programme will allow new colleagues to familiarise themselves with EHRI-ERIC quickly and ensure that they are supported when they have questions and encounter uncertainties along the way.
- **Staff exchange:** Staff exchanges will allow employees at the Central Hub to gain wider insights into EHRI-ERIC's activities and operations on the level of the National Nodes. In addition, they acquire new skills and engage in a professional exchange in a setting different from their usual work environment. The exchange could be organised following the general procedure of the EHRI Conny Kristel Fellowship for EHRI users.⁸ In a similar manner to Kristel Fellowship applicants, employees who are interested in undertaking a staff exchange will be required to submit an application. No matter the background of the staff member taking part in the exchange – whether it be scientific, administrative or managerial – the exchange would have three significant benefits. For the staff members, it grants insights into EHRI-ERIC's partner institutions, current projects and ways of working. This can benefit them when planning future career steps within EHRI-ERIC as well as help them gain expertise as RI-professionals in general. For the partner institution, a visit from a staff member of the Central Hub can strengthen the connection between the Central Hub and the partner institutions at the level of the National Nodes (as could visits from members of the National Node to the Central Hub). For EHRI-ERIC, it ensures the continued exchange of scientific, administrative and managerial expertise throughout the distributed RI.⁹
- **Participation in external training offerings:** EHRI-ERIC ensures that staff 'at any stage of their career, regardless of their contractual situation, are given the opportunity for professional development and for improving their employability through access to measures for the continuing development of skills and competencies'.¹⁰ Staff will be

⁷ Though, in case of physical events with limited space available, they will have to apply like other users interested.

⁸ See for example the Mobility Grants offered by CLARIN: <https://www.clarin.eu/content/clarin-mobility-grants>.

⁹ See also D2.7 HR Policy, p. 17.

¹⁰ Directorate-General for Research, 'The European Charter for Researchers, The Code of Conduct for the Recruitment of Researchers', p. 12, https://euraxess.ec.europa.eu/sites/default/files/am509774cee_en_e4.pdf.

encouraged to participate in external training offerings made on the European and national level. Special attention will be paid to training with a focus on distributed infrastructures.

4. Organisational aspects

4.1 Role of Central Hub and National Nodes

Training activities of the EHRI-ERIC will be managed by the EHRI Central Hub. Access to physical Training, like the EHRI Kristel Fellowship, Seminars and Workshops will be distributed among National Node partners which coordinate, organize and conduct the events in close cooperation with the Central Hub. The User and Access officer as well as the Training officer at the Central Hub will have a particularly important role to play here.¹¹ Access to all online Training will be enabled through a single-entry point for access which will be hosted and maintained by the Central Hub.

If National Nodes would like to offer EHRI Training on a national level, the Central Hub verifies whether the event complies with the content and organizational standards of an EHRI Training offering. If so, the event can be labelled and advertised as an EHRI Training offering.

The Central Hub will host the virtual services provided through the EHRI Virtual Observatory. All online services will be centralized and accessible. In addition, all technical capacities to maintain the services will be managed by the Central Hub as will any inquiries made through the help desk. The services offered physically will be centrally managed by the Central Hub. The application process for access to services offered in person will be administered by the Central Hub while access to the services themselves will be distributed among partner institutions. In the case of Trans-national Access Programmes, partner institutions will offer Fellowship places at their institutions and Training Seminars/Workshops will be hosted by partner institutions.

4.2 Planning, conducting and evaluating EHRI Training

This section focuses on both physical as well as online Training. However, since physical access will have to be limited to selected participants and because from experience, these events afford more planning and conducting than online Training with unrestricted access, the emphasis here is on physical Training offerings.

Preparation

Planning an EHRI Training starts with considering the main aspects of the event: *What will be the topic and scope? Which format is ideally suited? Who is the envisioned audience? Where and when will it be hosted? How to align the event best with common features of EHRI Training? Who are suitable partners within and outside of EHRI who could join cooperation for the event?* Once the event is outlined and (potential) cooperating partners identified, a call for applications will be shared via the EHRI website and Social media channels, as well as via the websites of the National Nodes, partner institutions and other relevant channels. This outreach is coordinated by the Dissemination and Outreach officer. Both the National Node partner hosting the event as well as the Central Hub (represented by the User and Access officer as well as the Training officer) will evaluate the applications and choose participants based on available space and the best fit for the Training in question (different criteria are described

¹¹ For more information on the roles of the User and Access officer and Training Officer, see D2.7 HR Policy, p. 8-9.

further above, see 2. Types of Training). Successful participants will be notified. In the case of online Training, with unrestricted access, the application process is omitted, and the focus is on identifying and reaching an adequate audience with our advertising and outreach activities.

Conducting

The implementation of the EHRI Training depends on the type of training. It should comply with the corresponding specifications and recommendations set forth for the respective training form, yet leave enough flexibility to be able to respond to changes in format and style.¹²

Evaluation and follow-up

Evaluation is a key element to improving all aspects of the EHRI Training offerings. Upon completion, participants will be asked to evaluate the Training through a dedicated survey. The survey results will be used to examine the Training and allow for improvement and revision, where necessary.

To ensure continued engagement among participants as well as a sustainable connection with EHRI, participants are invited to join the EHRI Alumni network via the Basecamp platform and become recipients of the EHRI Newsletter (with an opt-out option).

4.3 Managing resources

There are resources for EHRI Training seminars reserved at the Central Hub to reimburse external speakers and to cover the travel and subsistence of participants. National Node partners who organize and conduct EHRI Training on behalf of EHRI-ERIC will undertake this work as an in-kind activity. Training offerings planned at the level of the National Node can be supplemented by European or national funding, partnerships with other institutions or in-kind contributions.

4.4 Training cooperations

EHRI encourages cooperation with partners within and outside the EHRI network when it comes to organizing and conducting EHRI Training. Apart from additional input for the Training, these cooperations also allow exploring the potential for other, potentially long-term collaborations within the framework of National Nodes. Furthermore, they can help secure additional funding for EHRI Training.

5. Conclusion

The Training concept for users and staff for the EHRI-ERIC builds on the experience and expertise which was developed and promoted during the EHRI project. Training offers and concepts will be continuously evaluated and advanced, based on the assessment of the needs of users in the field of Holocaust research – as well as staff working for the EHRI-ERIC. While the Central Hub will play a pivotal role in organizing and managing resources for the various training offerings, the National Nodes will be crucial for conducting and shaping the EHRI-ERIC cutting-edge training possibilities in the future.

¹² This was for example the case, when EHRI Seminars, planned as in-person events had to be moved online due to the Covid-19 pandemic.