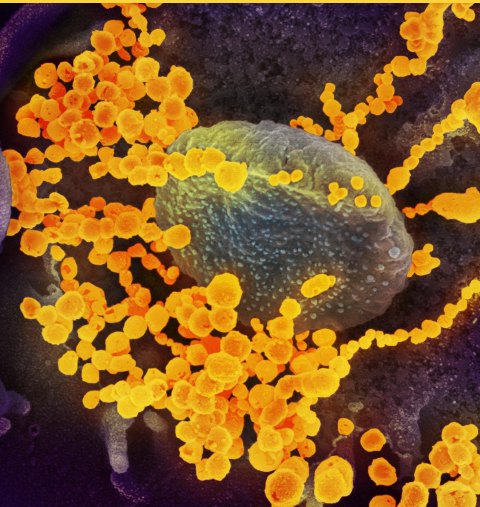


# OPENING UP CULTURAL HERITAGE COLLECTIONS ONLINE

COPYRIGHT POLICY, LICENSING & ETHICS

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**Creative Commons**

ICOM-UNIGE Conference: *When Museums Go Online* - December 11, 2020



## **Open Access to Cultural Heritage** — Open GLAM

Sharing cultural heritage online for open and free access, use and reuse.

Creative Commons supports museums in fulfilling their mission of making their collections accessible to the public — on site and online.



# Creative Commons drives policy change



## Copyright Law Must Enable Museums to Fulfill Their Mission

Today is International Museum Day and we at Creative Commons (CC) are thrilled to celebrate the institutions that curate, care for, and provide access to the world's rich diversity of cultures, ideas, and forms of knowledge. This year's theme, dedicated to the universal values of equality, diversity, and inclusion, is a testament to museums' ability ...

[READ MORE](#) ►

POLICY / ADVOCACY / COPYRIGHT REFORM

# Creative Commons advocates for open access to cultural heritage

Digitized cultural heritage material should be held for **preservation** purposes but should also be made **accessible** online in the broadest way possible to gain visibility, bring collections to a wide range of users, encourage creative use and reuse.

**Digitized** public domain works must **remain in the public domain**.



# Creative Commons provides guidance to museums to “open up”

## Paris Musées Releases 100,000+ Works Into the Public Domain



Victoria Heath  
January 10, 2020

The Paris Musées [recently released](#) more than 100,000 works under Creative Commons Zero (CC0), putting the works into the public domain. They also released their collections' Application Programming Interface (API), allowing users to “recover, in high definition, several royalty-free images and their records from cross-searches on the works.”

Users can scroll through the collection via the museum's [portal](#), discovering hidden gems like [this photograph](#) of French feminist Caroline Rémy and [this beautiful illustration](#) from an early edition of *Les Misérables*. This collection is a unique treasure trove for anyone interested in French history, art, and culture.



A portrait of Caroline Rémy (1800-1805), a French feminist journalist. Photo by Paul Carlier.

This announcement by the Paris Musées is a cause for celebration as it marks the continuation of a growing trend among [GLAM](#) institutions, including the Metropolitan Museum of Art and the Cleveland Museum of Art, that are recognizing the importance of open access to artistic and cultural artifacts.

**We applaud the Paris Musées for this great contribution to the public domain, and we encourage other GLAM institutions to follow suit!**

*If you are affiliated with a GLAM institution and would like guidance on using [CC0](#), or any of our [CC licenses](#), please email us at [info@creativecommons.org](mailto:info@creativecommons.org). We're here to help!*

## Smithsonian Releases 2.8 Million Images + Data into the Public Domain Using CC0



Victoria Heath  
February 27, 2020



The Smithsonian—the world's largest museum and research institution—[announced](#) yesterday [Smithsonian Open Access](#), an initiative that removes copyright restrictions from 2.8 million digital collection 2D and 3D images and nearly two centuries of data.

**This major initiative uses CC0—Creative Commons' [public domain dedication tool](#)—to make millions of images and data freely available to the public.**

## The Rijksmuseum Open Data Policy

**Our collection is for everyone. That's why the Rijksmuseum makes its digitised collections and metadata available in the highest quality. And we don't ask for anything in return.**

The Rijksmuseum operates an Open Data Policy to connect the treasures in its collection — as well as its knowledge about them — with as large and diverse an audience as possible. We provide digital images of objects from the collection, descriptive object information (metadata) and bibliographic data via our [data services](#) without restrictions on reuse.

### Public domain

Many of the objects in the Rijksmuseum are in the public domain. This means that copyright is no longer applicable and that the objects are public property. The public must be able to reap the benefits of that. You can therefore use digital reproductions of public domain objects made available by the Rijksmuseum without permission being required. For commercial purposes too.

All the digital reproductions and data that we currently publish via our data services were made by the Rijksmuseum. To the extent that copyright and database rights apply to these digital sources, the Rijksmuseum waives these rights by using the [Creative Commons Zero \(CC0\) Public Domain Statement](#).

When collections objects are free of copyright, this is explicitly stated in the corresponding descriptive metadata. In these cases, the copyright notice states “Public domain”, with a reference to the CC0 Public Domain Statement.

If a copyrighted person or organisation is listed with the copyright notice, copyright does still apply.

# **Creative Commons provides tools to support Open GLAM**

CC tools are the easiest and simplest means to communicate to the public what uses can be made of digital cultural heritage online.

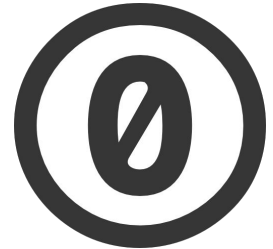
They are the standard for GLAMs that are “opening up” their collections on the internet, helping overcome barriers erected by copyright law and enabling broad reuse.

# Creative Commons Public Domain Tools

**Public Domain Mark:** used with works that are believed to be in the worldwide public domain.



**Public Domain Dedication Tool** (waiver): to release related rights in digital reproductions everywhere.



# Cultural heritage in museums torn between three ties

- an property ownership tie with the institution that “owns” it
- a right ownership tie with the author or copyright holder
- a stewardship or custodianship tie with the community that “holds” it

How can these three ties be reconciled? Especially in the digital world?





# Three Key Takeaways

1. Museums fulfill the mission of making cultural heritage accessible to the public. They play an instrumental role in preserving and allowing the public to access, use and recreate cultural heritage. They are entrusted with our collective memory — sharing that memory should be their highest priority.
2. Sometimes, that mission can conflict with the rights and interests of the holders of the cultural heritage – this is often the case for Indigenous and culturally-sensitive heritage – one big concern is that “sharing” can open the door to cultural appropriation, i.e. uses that are offensive and cause harm.
3. Museums are at a pivotal place where communities and users meet around the collections. They have an important role to play to ensure their cultural heritage is used respectfully and according to the wishes of their holders.



# THANK YOU!

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Brigitte\_Vezina



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