

Digital libraries can support development and use of eMonuments

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Digital libraries support eMonuments by providing the technical, intellectual, and ethical framework needed to create, preserve, discover, and meaningfully use digital cultural heritage. They transform eMonuments from isolated digital objects into trusted, sustainable, and widely usable cultural resources. Digital libraries can play a central role in the development, preservation, and use of eMonuments (digital representations of cultural heritage such as 3D models, virtual reconstructions, and born-digital memorials). Their support can be grouped into several key areas:

1. Creation and Development of eMonuments

Digitization infrastructure: Digital libraries provide tools and workflows for high-quality digitization (3D scanning, photogrammetry, high-resolution imaging, audio/video capture).

Standards and best practices: They promote the use of metadata standards (e.g., Dublin Core, CIDOC CRM) and file formats that ensure interoperability and reuse.

Scholarly collaboration: Libraries act as hubs where historians, archaeologists, technologists, and artists can collaborate on creating accurate and well-documented eMonuments.

2. Preservation and Sustainability

Long-term digital preservation: Digital libraries manage secure storage, backups, format migration, and integrity checks to prevent digital decay.

Version control and provenance: They document how an eMonument was created, modified, and interpreted over time.

Authenticity and trust: Library curation ensures that eMonuments remain reliable scholarly and cultural resources.

3. Description, Discovery, and Access

Rich metadata and contextualization: Digital libraries provide historical, cultural, and technical context that helps users understand the meaning of eMonuments.

Search and discovery tools: Advanced search, browsing, and visualization tools make eMonuments easy to find and compare.

Open access platforms: Libraries often support open or controlled access, allowing global audiences to engage with cultural heritage.

4. Education and Public Engagement

Learning resources: eMonuments can be embedded into digital exhibitions, virtual tours, and educational modules.

Multilingual and inclusive access: Digital libraries can present eMonuments in multiple languages and accessible formats.

Participatory features: User annotations, crowdsourcing, and community storytelling enrich eMonuments with diverse perspectives.

5. Research and Reuse

Data reuse and interoperability: Libraries enable researchers to reuse 3D models, datasets, and annotations for new studies or reconstructions.

APIs and linked data: eMonuments can be integrated into other platforms, GIS systems, or virtual/augmented reality applications.

Citation and scholarly credit: Persistent identifiers (e.g., DOIs) allow eMonuments to be cited as legitimate research outputs.

6. Ethical and Legal Support

Rights management: Digital libraries manage copyright, licensing, and cultural sensitivity issues.

Responsible representation: They help ensure that eMonuments respect source communities and contested heritage.