STUDIO RADAR

studioradar.org

Accessible Digital Exhibition Environments

An introduction by Studio Radar

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What is an Accessible Digital Exhibition Environment?

An Accessible Digital Exhibition Environment is not a virtual tour.

It is a living digital space that grows with a project and opens it to audiences beyond the gallery walls.

An ADEE is a digital container. All existing content such as links, films, photographs, archival material, oral histories and collection records can be stored inside a single accessible online environment. Everything a heritage organisation has already produced can find a home there, alongside new material created specifically for the project.

Unlike a virtual tour, which shows you a space, an ADEE gives you an experience. It preserves not just how something looked, but what it meant: the objects, the stories, the voices, the knowledge embedded in a place and its community.

What an ADEE delivers:

- **Educational resource:** accessible learning material for schools, universities and researchers
- **Preservation:** a permanent digital record that outlasts the physical exhibition or space
- **New audiences:** reaching people who cannot visit in person, nationally and internationally
- **Living document:** information and content can be updated and expanded over time
- **Flexible tool:** not locked to a completed version; it grows with the project

> ***"I would highly recommend Studio Radar to others looking to produce an immersive, high quality, and accessible online exhibition."***
> Emily Shepperson, Exhibition and Interpretation Officer, Suffolk Archives

Studio Radar has built ADEEs for:

- Bristol Museum & Art Gallery
- Suffolk Archives
- Hastings Museum
- Pitt Rivers Museum, Oxford
- National Railway Museum, York
- Barnsley Museum
- Barbican Art Centre, London
- Whitechapel Gallery, London
- University for Creative Arts
- Maison Dieu, Dover

What an ADEE brings together

An ADEE can gather everything a project produces into a single layered environment. The list below shows what can be incorporated. Every project is different: some elements will be central, others added over time as the work develops.

What an ADEE integrates:

- **360-degree environments:** photographed on location, or built entirely in 3D software
- **Photography:** high resolution, archival quality documentation
- **Video:** oral histories, testimonies, documentation of skills and practices
- **Links and existing content:** any digital material already produced can be embedded
- **3D models:** objects, spaces and artefacts digitally modelled and explorable
- **Text and interpretation:** contextual meaning embedded throughout the space
- **Ambisonic sound:** spatial audio capturing the acoustic environment of a place
- **Accessibility tools:** BSL video, audio description, adaptive text, screen reader support
- **Maps, contacts, credits:** a complete and permanent institutional record

Three approaches to building an ADEE:

1

Document the physical space

360-degree photography and video documentation of the space as it exists, with embedded oral histories, object stories and accessibility tools built in.

2

Build a digital environment from scratch

We build a complete 3D environment in Blender with no physical scan required, incorporating 3D models of objects, artefacts and spaces from the collection.

3

A hybrid approach

Combine documentation of the physical space with digitally-built environments, adding historical layers, archival imagery, contemporary voices and future updates.

Live Examples

Open each environment directly from this document. All are accessible from any device.

HERITAGE AND ACCESSIBILITY

1

Beyond Labels: Celebrating Disability in Suffolk

Suffolk Archives | National Lottery Heritage Fund

Community-led heritage exhibition. BSL, audio description and adaptive text built in.

360studioradar.com/360/BeyondVT/tour/index.html

2

Resistance Through Making and Community

Barnsley Museum | 3D Blender-built, no physical scan required

Built entirely in 3D in Blender with 3D models of objects from the collection.

360studioradar.com/360/BarnsleyVT_new/intro.html

3

Concealed/Reveal at Bristol Museum & Art Gallery

Accentuate UK / Curating for Change | Paul Hamlyn Foundation

Flagship accessible ADEE. BSL video, audio description and 8 built-in accessibility tools.

360studioradar.com/360/BristolVT

CONNECTIONS AND MAJOR INSTITUTIONS

4

Wormhole of our Formation

Screen South | Catherine Hoffmann | Kent-based production

Ambisonic sound, 360-degree video, immersive soundscape and sculptural elements.

360studioradar.com/360/WormholeVT/index.html

5

Sculpting Conversations at Whitechapel Gallery

Whitechapel Gallery, London | Sarah Marsh and Stephanie Jefferies

Scribble sculptures, tactile shapes and scented objects at Whitechapel Gallery.

360studioradar.com/360/whitechapel23/index.html

6

Carolee Schneemann: Body Politics, Barbican

Barbican Art Centre, London | First major exhibition since 2019

Major retrospective at the Barbican, one of the UK's most significant ADEE environments.

360studioradar.com/360/CaroleeVT/index.html

Hosting and Maintenance

A question that comes up in every conversation about ADEEs is: who hosts it, who maintains it, and for how long? Studio Radar offers three models depending on the needs and resources of each project. All three give the client full ownership of the files.

1

Studio Radar hosted

Studio Radar builds and hosts the environment on its own infrastructure for an agreed period, typically 2 to 3 years, included in the project fee.

After that, a small annual fee covers continued hosting. Updates and new content are quoted separately. Files always belong to the client and can be migrated at any time.

2

Client hosted

Studio Radar builds and delivers the complete package of files. The client hosts on their own server or through their own provider of choice.

Studio Radar's involvement ends at handover, or continues on request at an agreed rate. Full ownership and independence from day one.

3

Hybrid (most often recommended)

The client hosts on their own infrastructure; Studio Radar retains access for maintenance, technical updates and content additions.

The client owns the asset and controls the server. Studio Radar continues as an ongoing collaborator, on a retainer or per project as needed.

> Model 3 positions the ADEE as a long-term asset owned by the organisation and supported by its maker. It is the model that best reflects the idea of a living digital space that grows with a project over time.

Next Steps

Studio Radar works collaboratively with each organisation to understand what a project needs before any proposal is developed. Every ADEE is built around the specific heritage, community and ambitions of the people involved.

We are happy to meet, discuss and advise at any stage, whether a project is at an early exploratory stage or already has funding in place.

Getting started could include:

- A site visit to meet the team and assess the space or collection
- A meeting to discuss the specific needs and ambitions of the project
- Reviewing existing content to identify what can be brought into the environment
- Creating a timescale and phased development plan
- Discussing funding options and budget framework
- Comparing existing Studio Radar environments to identify the best approach

> **Watch: What is an Accessible Digital Exhibition Environment?**
> www.studioradar.org/digital-environment

Get in touch

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