

Connecting

Newsletter Highlights & Achievements from 2024–2025 | Activity Report

WELCOME

to the first issue of the CONNECTING Project Newsletter. This issue provides an overview of key project milestones, events, demonstrations, and recognitions from 2024 to 2025. Stay up-to-date with our progress in digital cultural heritage, geospatial technologies, and collaborative research activities.

Official Kick-off Meeting of CONNECTING



The official kick-off meeting of the CONNECTING project took place, marking the formal launch of this strategic initiative. The project logo was officially unveiled, and implementation procedures began. CONNECTING was integrated into the University's Strategic Goals, emphasizing its importance for the institution's research excellence and innovation capacity in the field of Cultural Heritage Engineering.



Strategic Research Infrastructure for Engineering in Cultural Heritage

CONNECTING Logo is out!

The CONNECTING logo is now officially launched! Design options were presented to partners at the December 6th kick-off meeting, where consortium members offered feedback. The new logo, a product of constructive discussion, embodies the CONNECTING knowledge centre's vision for sustainable heritage. The colour transition from yellow to blue symbolizes the project's diverse demonstration activities on land and underwater.

2024 - Project Activities

First GeoAI Symposium for Remote Sensing Data Analysis

The first symposium on GeoAI for Remote Sensing data analysis was organized in collaboration with IEEE-YSIN/IEEE GRSS. The event focused on cutting-edge artificial intelligence technologies for geospatial analysis, bringing together researchers and professionals to discuss the latest developments in AI-powered remote sensing applications for cultural heritage documentation.



Internal CUT Meeting on Procurement Procedures

A thorough internal meeting took place regarding procurement procedures for acquiring the CONNECTING infrastructure. The infrastructure includes a comprehensive array of components such as drones, cameras, laser scanners, software packages, and other essential tools. The team meticulously outlined detailed steps for the submission process, ensuring transparency and compliance with all procurement regulations.



CONNECTING at CAA Conference in Serres, Greece

The CONNECTING project was presented at the international CAA (Computer Applications and Quantitative Methods in Archaeology) Conference held in Serres, Greece. This participation enhanced the project's international visibility and fostered networking opportunities with leading experts in archaeological computing and digital heritage.

1st Webinar on Defining Paradata, Metadata & Data for DCH

The first webinar focused on defining Paradata, Metadata, and Data for documenting 2D/3D Digital Cultural Heritage (DCH). The online event provided comprehensive guidance on documentation standards and best practices, targeting researchers, heritage professionals, and students interested in digital heritage documentation methodologies.

Time (EST)	Topic	Speaker
14:00-14:15	Join the webinar and get your M5 Tokens!	Harry Vervaeke, IR, European Foundation, NL
14:00-14:15	Opening remarks	Harry Vervaeke, IR, European Foundation, NL
14:15-14:30	Paradata, Metadata & Data for a digital Memory/Arch	Marinos Ioannides, et al, IASRI/IR, et al, at Cyprus University of Technology, CY
14:30-14:45	Validation of archaeological archiving and the preservation of what?	Isis Horta, Digital Heritage, BE
14:45-15:00	Paradata and metadata in an immersive digital heritage experience	Lucia Amorati, et al, University of Rome, IT
15:00-15:15	Usable, Useful, Renewable and Reusable Metadata	Erik Champion, University of South Australia, AU
15:15-15:30	Building Reliable and Reusable Complex Digital Representations: The Digital Lab Metadata	Carla Soliman, et al, Cultural Heritage Agency of the US, US
15:30-15:45	3D Heritage in Heritage, we should treat it as such	Daniel Patschke, Herodotus, DE
15:45-16:00	Challenges of 3D Digitization of Cultural Heritage	Yany Cao, et al, Heritage, CN
16:00-16:15	Blockchain Technology for Enhanced Documentation and Management of Built Heritage in Historic Cities	Sheng Yin, et al, Columbia University, US
16:15-16:30	Three Dimensional Reconstruction of an Egyptian Temple: A Computational Approach to Preserving Cultural Heritage and Urban Management Systems	João Baptista Barreira, Universidade dos Açores, PT
16:30-16:45	Making the European Data Model a better fit for documentation of 3D objects	Antoine Sadek, et al, European Foundation, NL
16:45-17:00	Hybrid quality information model to manage resources, ontologies, data and transformations into paradata. The metadata of Carlo Marini and the Capriani Centers	Raffaella Brancati, et al, Politecnico di Milano, IT
17:00-17:30	Discussion Session & Closing Remarks	

Participation at CUT Summer Academies

CUT team members participated in the first Summer Academies event organized by the Cyprus University of Technology for students aged 14-17 years old. CONNECTING results and outcomes were demonstrated during this period, providing young students with a unique opportunity to explore scientific fields and professions related to engineering, geoinformatics, and cultural heritage preservation.

COASTLINE Webinar

CONNECTING participated in the COASTLINE webinar, addressing critical issues related to coastal heritage preservation and the challenges posed by climate change and sea-level rise. The webinar facilitated knowledge exchange on coastal vulnerability assessment methodologies.



December 2024

1st Annual Meeting

The first annual meeting of CONNECTING took place on **December 5, 2024**, at the Cyprus University of Technology in Limassol. The meeting included discussions on strategies for external user access to equipment and data, as well as rules for intellectual property protection. Progress reports from all work packages were presented, and future action plans were established.

CONNECTING at EUROMED Conference

The CONNECTING project was presented at the international EUROMED conference, strengthening international collaboration and visibility of the project in the digital cultural heritage community. The conference provided an excellent platform for disseminating project outcomes and networking with international stakeholders.



2025 - Project Activities

New Year Celebration and Vasilopita Cutting at the Connecting Project

On January 13, 2025, the traditional cutting of the Vasilopita took place at the Strategic Research Infrastructure facility of the Connecting project, located on the 2nd floor of the Dorothea Building at the Cyprus University of Technology in Limassol. The event brought together members of the project team, led by coordinator Athos Agapiou, fostering a spirit of unity and celebration for the New Year 2025.



February 2025



Presentation of Equipment to Undergraduate Students

CONNECTING project equipment was presented to undergraduate students of the Department of Electrical Engineering and Computer Engineering. Joint presentations highlighted the interdisciplinary nature of the project. Signage was also installed for the CONNECTING Project Infrastructure, improving visibility and accessibility.

1st Experimental Development Activity at Mavrokolympos Reservoir

The first Experimental Development and Demonstration Activity was conducted at Mavrokolympos Reservoir. A successful aerial survey using UAV technology was completed and delivered to the Water Development Department. An interactive web application was subsequently developed showcasing the aerial survey results in both 2D and 3D formats, demonstrating the practical applications of the CONNECTING infrastructure.



First Assessment of SLAM CHCNAV RS10



The first survey using the SLAM CHCNAV RS10 was conducted to evaluate its indoor and outdoor performance

at the Cyprus University of Technology (CUT). PhD candidate Kyriakos Michaelides and postgraduate student Giorgos Kafataris carried out the survey. This initial assessment aimed to examine the SLAM CHCNAV RS10's accuracy, efficiency, and adaptability in mapping indoor and outdoor environments. This evaluation is particularly important for understanding the system's performance in different conditions, including areas with limited GPS signals and complex structural layouts.

CRDP Workshop on Coastal Heritage Vulnerability

A specialized workshop was organized focusing on Coastal Heritage Vulnerability and Risk Assessment. Dr. Athos Agapiou delivered a presentation on the potential of space-based observations for cultural heritage during the Honor Frost Foundation Workshop at the University of Cyprus in Nicosia. His talk, "Earth Observation and Its Potential for Landscape Monitoring," showcased how satellite sensors and advanced image processing support the documentation, preservation, and monitoring of heritage sites. He emphasized the role of multi-temporal satellite imagery in tracking environmental changes—such as urban growth and climate impacts—underscoring how Earth Observation technologies can safeguard cultural landscapes.

The CONNECTING project was featured on Kanali 6 Radio Broadcasting, reaching a wider public audience and raising awareness about the importance of engineering applications in cultural heritage preservation and documentation.

Joint Presentations to Undergraduate Students

Prof. Dimitrios Skarlatos, together with Assistant Professors Apostolos Papakonstantinou and Athos Agapiou, presented their research to undergraduate students of the Department of Electrical Engineering, Computer Engineering, and Informatics at the Cyprus University of Technology. Held under the UNESCO Chair in Digital



Heritage (Prof. Marinos Ioannides), the session showcased ongoing research and real-world applications of advanced technologies in digital heritage, emphasizing interdisciplinary collaboration and innovation in the field.

SLAM CHCNAV RS10 Demonstration for CUT Students

As part of the Monument Documentation (GEO 436) course, 4th-year Civil Engineering and Geoinformatics students at the Cyprus University of Technology took part in a hands-on demonstration of the SLAM CHCNAV RS10.

Conducted by Prof. Dimitrios Skarlatos, PhD

candidate Marino Vlachos, and postgraduate student Giorgos Kafataris from the CONNECTING Project, the session introduced students to high-precision 3D mapping and advanced geospatial data acquisition through real-world fieldwork.



Aerial Survey of Mavrokolympos Dam

A team from the Cyprus University of Technology (CUT) carried out a high-precision

aerial survey of the Mavrokolympos Dam in Paphos using the DJI Matrice 350 RTK equipped with Zenmuse P1 and L2 LiDAR sensors. The survey generated a detailed orthophoto and elevation model aligned with the Water Development Department's reference data. A follow-up survey is planned to evaluate sediment removal and support ongoing water management efforts.



CONNECTING at MSc in Geoinformatics and Earth Observation

MSc students of the Geoinformatics and Earth Observation program were introduced to the CONNECTING Project during the "Earth Observation for Environmental Monitoring" course. The session offered an overview of the project's goals, methodologies, and applications, highlighting its role in advancing geospatial technologies and promoting data-driven approaches to environmental sustainability.

Interactive Web Application Showcasing Mavrokolympos Dam Aerial Survey Results in 2D and 3D

CONNECTING team developed a web application in ArcGIS Online to publicly showcase the survey results in both 2D and 3D views. The web application includes all the processed data, allowing users to explore the dam's topography, DEM, DSM, contour lines and orthomosaic interactively. You can view the app through the provided link, where all the detailed findings and visualizations are accessible to the public for further research and analysis. This survey plays a crucial role in advancing water management efforts and environmental research, and a follow-up survey will be conducted post-sediment removal for more detailed assessments.

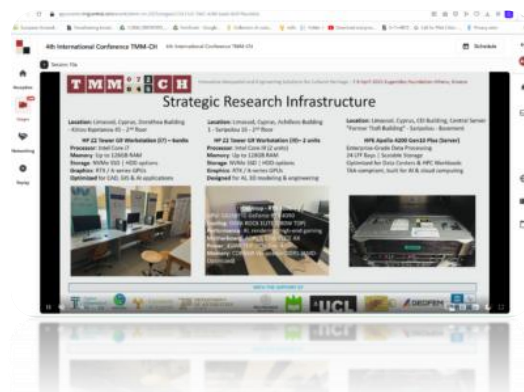
Web Application Link: [Mavrokolympos Dam Web App](#)



April 2025

Participation at 4th International Conference TMM-CH 2025

CONNECTING project was presented at the 4th International Conference on Transdisciplinary Multispectral Modeling and Cooperation for the Preservation of Cultural Heritage (TMM-CH 2025), enhancing international recognition and academic collaboration in digital heritage preservation.



RIF Assessment of CONNECTING

The Research and Innovation Foundation (RIF) conducted an assessment of the CONNECTING Project's progress, reviewing achievements, infrastructure acquisition, and implementation of planned activities. The assessment confirmed the project's alignment with strategic objectives.

1st Experimental & Demonstration Activity – Agios Neophytos Monastery, Paphos

CONNECTING Project, in collaboration with another Horizon Europe initiative and the Digital Cultural Heritage Lab of the CUT, conducted a field activity at the Holy Monastery of Saint Neophytos the Recluse near Paphos. Using the DJI Matrice 350 RTK with Zenmuse P1 and L2 sensors, along with a CHCNV handheld laser scanner, the team carried out detailed external and internal 3D documentation of this 12th-century UNESCO tentative site. The activity supported the digital preservation of one of Cyprus's most significant cultural landmarks.



Promotion at ETEK Event on Engineers' Role in Research

The CONNECTING project was promoted at an ETEK (Cyprus Scientific and Technical Chamber) event titled "Engineers and Their Role in Research and Innovation." The project was also featured in ETEK Journal #300, reaching engineering professionals across Cyprus.

May 2025

CIPA Summer School 2025

The CONNECTING project participated in the CIPA Summer School 2025, providing training and demonstrations of cutting-edge technologies to an international audience of professionals and researchers in heritage documentation.



3rd Experimental Activity at Petouda, Larnaca

The third Experimental & Demonstration Activity was conducted at Petouda in Larnaca, continuing the practical applications of the infrastructure and demonstrating the versatility of CONNECTING technologies across different heritage site types and geographical locations.



44th EARSeL Symposium

The CONNECTING project was promoted at the 44th Symposium of the European Association of Remote Sensing Laboratories (EARSeL), showcasing remote sensing capabilities and fostering connections with the European remote sensing community.



CONNECTING Equipment Used in ENGINEER Horizon Europe Project

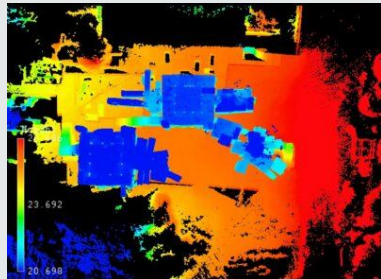
CONNECTING equipment was utilized as part of ENGINEER Horizon Europe Project activities, demonstrating the infrastructure's versatility and contribution to broader European research initiatives. A final event showcased technical equipment demonstrations.



Results of the Tombs of the Kings, Paphos

A 3D

documentation of the Tombs of the Kings, Paphos using a SLAM scanner provided by the CONNECTING project.



Service Catalogue Submission at Eurisy Dashboard

CONNECTING's service catalogue was officially submitted to the Eurisy dashboard, making the project's services accessible to a wider European audience and facilitating collaboration with space and Earth observation stakeholders.

SLAM Scanning at UNESCO World Heritage Site - Tombs of the Kings

Participation at CUT Summer Academies 2025

For the second consecutive year, CONNECTING participated in the Cyprus University of Technology's Summer Academies,



inspiring young students and introducing them to innovative technologies in engineering and cultural heritage.

KICKING OFF A NEW ERA IN DIGITAL CULTURAL HERITAGE

The CONNECTING Project proudly participated in the kick-off event of the Mnemosyne Research Center in Nicosia — a key initiative shaping the future of digital cultural heritage in Cyprus and beyond. CONNECTING and Mnemosyne in promoting cultural preservation through digital innovation. The team looks forward to future partnerships and knowledge exchange.





July 2025

Educational Program: Digital Cultural Heritage Data Collection with UAS

An innovative educational program was launched titled "Kicking Off a New Era in Digital Cultural Heritage Data Collection and Processing with Unmanned Aerial Systems." The program provided comprehensive training on UAS applications for heritage documentation.

First Test of ROV CHASING M2 PRO MAX

The first test and evaluation of the underwater Remotely Operated Vehicle (ROV) CHASING M2 PRO MAX was successfully conducted, expanding CONNECTING's capabilities to underwater archaeological documentation and coastal heritage assessment.



August 2025

CIPA 2025 Symposium in Seoul Promotion

The CONNECTING project was promoted at the CIPA 2025 Symposium in Seoul, South Korea, strengthening international partnerships and showcasing Cyprus's contribution to global heritage documentation initiatives.



September 2025

Participation in Research Night 2025



CONNECTING participated in the European Researchers' Night 2025, presenting the project to the general public and inspiring future scientists. The interactive demonstrations showcased the exciting applications of technology in cultural heritage preservation. The event took place on September 25, 2025.

Visit of Professors from Zhejiang University

On September 25, 2025, a delegation of professors from Zhejiang University, China, visited the Strategic Research Infrastructure of CONNECTING at the Dorothea Building, Faculty of Engineering and Technology, CUT, Limassol. The visit included presentations and demonstrations of the research infrastructure, fostering international academic collaboration.



Highlights

Top 2% Scientists Worldwide 2024



Prof. Phaedon Kyriakidis and Asst. Prof. Athos Agapiou have been included in the latest Stanford University report, which lists the top 2% of the most highly cited scientists globally. This ranking reflects their contributions to research and the impact of their work within their respective fields. Stanford University recently updated its comprehensive database, which identifies the top 2% of the most-cited scientists across various disciplines. The report was compiled by a team of experts led by Prof. John Ioannidis, a renowned scholar at Stanford University. The database provides standardized data on key metrics such as citations, h-index, co-authorship-adjusted hm-index, and a composite indicator that includes citations based on authorship position.

More details and the complete list can be found at: Ioannidis, John P.A. (2025), "August 2025 data-update for "Updated science-wide author databases of standardized citation indicators"", Elsevier Data Repository, V8, doi: 10.17632/btchxktzyw.8

MSc Graduation Award

CONNECTING project member Kyriakos Michaelides was honored during the MSc in Geoinformatics and Earth Observation graduation ceremony, highlighting the project's contribution to academic excellence and student achievement.



Presentations at MSc Programs



CONNECTING was presented at the MSc in Geoinformatics and Earth Observation program and communicated during the Two-Day Online Informational Seminar for Master's Level Postgraduate Programs 2024-25, attracting prospective students and researchers to the field.

CONNECTING officially added to the Research Infrastructures Platform of Cyprus, recognizing its strategic importance for the national research ecosystem and facilitating access to its services by the broader research community.

Participation at Climate Crisis Conference

