PREservation FORMAts for culture information/e-archives

PREFORMA
Background and Context
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PREFORMA is a **Pre-Commercial Procurement** project co-funded by the European Commission under the FP7-ICT Programme.

- **Start date**: 1 January 2014
- **Duration**: 48 month (end date: 31 December 2017)
- **Total budget for the procurement**: 2.805.000 EUR
- **Website**: [www.preforma-project.eu](http://www.preforma-project.eu)
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Project Partners

- **RIKSARKIVET**, Sweden **Project Coordinator and memory institution**
- **PROMOTER SRL**, Italy **Technical and Communication Coordinator**

**Technical partners**
- PACKED EXPERTISECENTRUM DIGITAAL ERFGOED VZW, Belgium
- FRAUNHOFER-GESELLSCHAFT ZUR FOERDERUNG DER ANGEWANDTEN FORSCHUNG E.V, Germany
- HOGSKOLAN I SKOVDE (University of Skovde), Sweden
- UNIVERSITA DEGLI STUDI DI PADOVA, Italy

**Memory institutions**
- STICHTING NEDERLANDS INSTITUUT VOOR BEELD EN GELUID, Netherlands
- Koninklijk Instituut voor het Kunstpatrimonium, Belgium
- GREEK FILM CENTRE AE, Greece
- LOCAL GOVERNMENT MANAGEMENT AGENCY-AN GHNIOMHAIREACHT BAINISTIOCHTA RIALTAIS AITIUIL, Ireland
- STIFTUNG PREUSSISCHER KULTURBESITZ, Germany
- AYUNTAMIENTO DE GIRONA, Spain
- Eesti Vabariigi Kultuuriministeerium, Estonia
- KUNGLIGA BIBLIOTEKET/National Library, Sweden
Memory institutions are facing increasing transfers of electronic documents and other media content for long-term preservation.

Data content are normally stored in specific file formats for documents, images, sound, video etc., and these files are usually produced by software from different vendors.

Even if the transferred files are in standard formats, the correct implementation of standards cannot be guaranteed:

- The software used for the production of the electronic files is not in control, neither by the institutions that produces them nor by the memory institutions.
- Conformance tests of transfers are done by memory institutions, but are not totally reliable; different software for testing could end up in different results.

This poses problems in long-term digital preservation. Data objects meant for preservation, passing through an uncontrolled generative process, can jeopardise the whole preservation exercise.
The Layers of a Digital Object

- Authenticity, interpretability: "How to understand/interpret the data?"
  - Conceptual object
  - Semantic Preservation

- Object formats: "How to open/render the file?"
  - Logical object
  - Logical Preservation

- Bit rot: "How to keep the 1s and 0s?"
  - Physical object
  - Bit Preservation
Project Aim and Objectives

- **The aim:** to implement good quality files in various standard formats for preserving digital content long term.

- **The main objective:** to give memory institutions full control of the process of conformity tests of files to be ingested into archives.

- **The main objective of the PCP launched by PREFORMA:** to develop an open source software for the management of the whole conformance test process, supporting a range of standards, addressing the needs of any memory institution or other organization with a preservation task.
PREFORMA is following an **open source approach**, with the aim to establish a sustainable research and development community comprising a wide range of contributors and users from different stakeholder groups.

The open source nature **ensures long-term availability of the software**, beyond the memory institutions and suppliers involved in PREFORMA.

**Licenses**
- All **software** developed during the PREFORMA project will be provided under two specific open source licenses: “GPLv3 or later” and “MPLv2 or later”.
- All **digital assets** developed during the PREFORMA project will be provided under Creative Commons CC-BY v4.0, and in open file formats.
Target users and stakeholders

- **Memory institutions** and cultural heritage organisations, which are involved in (or planning) digital culture initiatives.
- **Developers** contributing code for the PREFORMA open source tools.
- **Research organisations** providing technical advice to cultural stakeholders.
- **Standardisation bodies** maintaining the technical specifications of the preservation formats covered in PREFORMA.
- **Funding agencies**, such as Ministries of Culture and national/regional administrations, that own and manage digitisation programmes and may endorse the use of the PREFORMA tools in the digitisation process.
- Other **projects** in the digital cultural heritage domain.
Thank you!