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To Whom it may concern:

PREservation FORMAts for culture information/e-archives: MediaArea Proposal

I am delighted to offer my wholehearted support for MediaArea's proposal to develop a modular and open-source conformance checker for the Preforma project.

The tools described in this proposal are of enormous value to the field and with this team I would be assured that the tools developed would fully deliver against the brief. Tate recently led the community of practice core expert group on video art for Presto4U, a European funded co-ordinating action. In this capacity Tate worked with a number of institutions across Europe and the United States who are engaged in moving their video art collections from tape based to digital video file based storage and delivery. The challenges presented by lack of conformity between wrappers and data streams was identified as one of the most significant risks associated with sustaining consistent playback of video.

As part of our work at Tate and also within the context of the European funded project Pericles, Tate is actively involved in research related to playback consistency, the documentation of technical environments, quality control, and conformance checking. These interests align directly with the objectives of the Preforma project.

Tate has worked directly with Dave Rice on two projects in the past year. Firstly, during the summer of 2014, Dave Rice delivered training on the use of FFMPEG and QCTools. Tate hosted this training predominantly for staff and members of the community of practice engaged in the preservation of video art from across Europe. In addition we also welcomed representatives from the British Library and a commercial company offering post production facilities. The training was extremely well organised and clearly delivered. The set up was expertly planned and supported; enabling trouble free hands on sessions. The feedback on the evaluation forms was overwhelmingly positive. This provided us with first-hand experience of the effective and efficient delivery of a toolset developed by members of this team. BAVC QC

tool set is now being used at Tate as part of the standard toolset for conservators and archivists working with video.

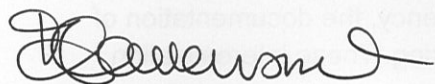
Secondly, Tate commissioned Dave Rice to produce a report on the challenges of sustaining consistent playback. In preparation for this Dave attended a meeting in London. Throughout the process Dave has listened carefully to members of the user community, enabling him to target the report effectively to their needs. Dave Rice delivered an excellent paper which will shortly be published on Tate's website and is set to have a significant impact.

There is valuable cross over between those who are members of the team involved in the development of this conformity checker and those who delivered the BAVC QC tool set. The BAVC QC Tool set is perhaps the most significant recent tool development for those working in the preservation of video. This tool set has provided a means of examining video material that previously would not have been possible for the majority of conservators and archivists. It therefore now forms an essential cornerstone to ensuring that the new generation of those who are caring for our collections are equipped with the skills and training to respond to a file based environment. This large project was expertly managed and delivered, with team members often going the extra mile to ensure that the tool was as accessible as possible to a broad group of potential users. Having worked with a number of technology providers and software developers I was particularly impressed by this team's close understanding of the target communities, their commitment to training and outreach as well as their excellent technical knowledge. The project team have a proven track record in producing tools of real and lasting value to the community and in genuinely supporting the community to access them.

I have no hesitation in personally endorsing the work of the MediaArea team and have complete confidence in their ability to meet the objectives of the Preforma Challenge Brief through software development, training, community involvement, standardization, and collaboration.

If you require any further information please do not hesitate to contact me.

Yours sincerely



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