PREservation FORMAts for culture information/e-archives

PREFORMA
Future Memory Standards

Project Identity Card

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

❑ **Start date**: 1 January 2014

❑ **Duration**: 48 month (end date: 31 December 2017)

❑ **Website**: www.preforma-project.eu

❑ **Contacts**

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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, Sweden

Pre-Commercial Procurement (PCP)

❑ Pre-Commercial Procurement (PCP) is a competition-like procurement method, which enables public sector bodies to engage with innovative businesses and other interested parties in development projects to arrive at innovative solutions that address specific public sector challenges and needs.

❑ These innovative solutions are created through a phased procurement of development contracts to reduce risk.

❑ Pre-Commercial Procurement is becoming more and more common within the public sectors of the European Union.

Project Concept

- ❑ 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 **implementation of standards** cannot be guaranteed:
  - The software used for implementing standards 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 preservation**. Data objects meant for preservation, passing through an uncontrolled generative process, can jeopardise the whole preservation exercise.

Project Aim and Objectives

❑ **The aim:** to address the challenge of implementing various good quality standardised file formats for preserving data content in the 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 and deploy an open source software licensed reference implementation for various file format standards, aimed for any memory institution (or other organisation with a preservation task) that wish to check conformance with a specific standard.

Challenge Brief

☐ Develop an **open source conformance checker** that:
- checks if a file complies with standard specifications
- checks if a file complies with the acceptance criteria of the memory institution
- reports back to human and software agents
- perform simple fixes

☐ Establish an ecosystem around an **open source reference implementation** that:
- generates useful feedback for those who control software
- advances improvement of the standard specification
- advances development of new business cases for managing preservation files

Open Source approach

❑ PREFORMA is following an **open source approach**, with the aim of establishing a sustainable research and development community comprising of a diverse selection of contributors and users from different stakeholder groups.

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

❑ Licenses
  – All **software** developed during the PREFORMA project will be provided under the two specific open source licenses: "GPLv3 or later" and "MPLv2 or later".
  – All **digital assets** developed during the PREFORMA project will be provided under the open access license, i.e. Creative Commons CC-BY v4.0, and in open file formats (SOU 2009:86).
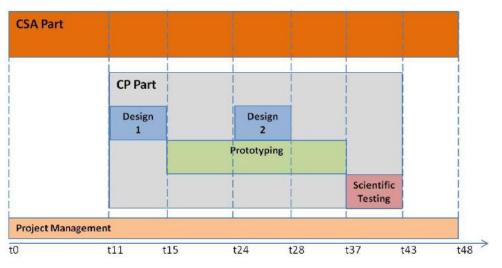
Target users and stakeholders

- ❑ **Memory institutions** and cultural heritage organisations coordinating or representing them, that are involved in (or planning) digital culture initiatives.
- ❑ **Developers** contributing code for the PREFORMA tools as well as developers implementing the reference implementations in production software.
- ❑ **Research organisations** providing technical and expertise 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 culture, e-Infrastructures and policy arenas.

Project implementation schedule

- ❑ **Total budget for the procurement**: 2.805.000 EUR
- ❑ **Design phase** (4 months): November 2014 – February 2015
- ❑ **Prototyping phase** (22 months): March 2015 – December 2016
  - – First prototypes: March 2015 – October 2015
  - – Re-design: November 2015 – February 2016
  - – Second prototype: March 2016 – December 2016
- ❑ **Testing phase** (6 months): January 2017 – June 2017

Main public events

1. A **Training event for Open Source companies** that will take place in Stockholm in December 2015, in connection with the first Prototype Demonstration.

2. An **Experience Workshop** that will take place in Berlin in December 2016, in connection with the second Prototype Demonstration, where the PREFORMA partners will share with memory institutions their experiences of working with suppliers under R&D services agreements.

3. A **final conference** that will take place in Stockholm in December 2017 to present the results of the project.

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PREFORMA Website

www.preforma-project.eu

PREFORMA Blog

www.digitalmeetsculture.net/projects/preforma/