

Open Source Workshop: presentations now online!



[PREFORMA](#) is a project in which a team of scientists, librarians and archivists jointly invited proposals for open source applications to be funded - with support from the European Commission. The open source tools created would have to help archival and museum collections check whether the files that enter or are present in their collections adhere to specific format standard specifications. As a main requirement, the standards the tools are developed for had to be available under open licenses. Not every domain can count on the availability of such open standards, and thus the project also supports the development of such standards.



Demonstration booth at the Open Source Workshop. credit: Erwin Verbruggen CC BY-SA

Three groups of developers have been working for the past year. **MediaArea**, the developers of the popular MediaInfo application, develops the MediaConch application for Matroska mediafiles that make use of FFv1 video. **EasyInnova**, together with the University of Basel, works on the DPFManager toolset and an archival application of the TIFF photography format. And a consortium that includes the Open Preservation Foundation, called **VeraPDF**, works on the puzzle of getting 1000+ pages of PDF/A standards to a coherent set of rules.

After some introductory talks from invited speakers, the three projects were presented and demo'ed to an international audience on April 7, 2016 at the **Open Source Workshop**, an event hosted by the **National Library of Sweden**. The event was a great success with **more than 100 registered attendees** from all over Europe.

>>> All presentations and demos are now available for download on the [event website](#)! <<<



Audience during the workshop presentations. Image credit: Erwin Verbruggen CC BY-SA.

Peter Bubestinger from Austria sung the praise and pointed to the pitfalls of Open Source development. Many people misunderstand the 'free' in free or open software: While it offers you the freedom to tinker with it (much as your bathroom offers you the freedom to tinker with its design and set-up once it's yours), it needs support from users to be developed further. Support can exist in terms of funding for developers, but also in help on creating documentation or doing user testing and reporting back.

Till Jaeger then dove in the complex world of open licenses and how lawyers can spent months and months on picking apart the different varieties of restrictions that exist within. Simply said: Some licenses require all subsequent usage to adhere to the open license model as well. Others don't have that requirement and its code can then be reused on (more) closed projects. The solution in PREFORMA is to make sure all projects adhere to two licenses to be maximally compatible.



Demo of the DPFManager application. Image credit: Erwin Verbruggen CC BY-SA.

Melanie Imming presented the LIBER Europe network and how it sees 'open' as a crucial aspect of science development: science relies on openness to move forward. She also stressed how important the efforts of the digital preservation community had been to improve the requirements for research projects: in the Horizon 2020 research projects funded by the European Commission, every project now is required to think in advance about how to manage the data it will generate in dedicated Data Management Plans.

The tools created in PREFORMA will hopefully prove useful for managing large collections of various formats. You are very welcome to take a look by downloading any of the tools and report your findings to the developers directly through one of the three GitHub environments.

More info

About the workshop: <http://opensourceworkshop.preforma-project.eu>

About the PREFORMA project and tools: <http://preforma-project.eu/open-source-portal.html>