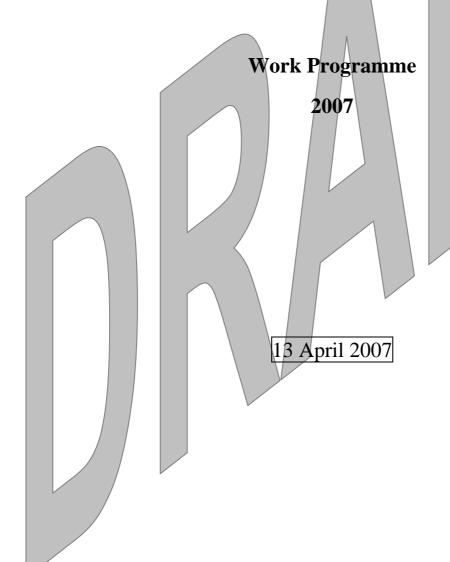European Commission
Directorate-General For Information Society and Media

Digital Content and Cognitive Systems

*e*Content*plus*

A multiannual Community programme to make digital content in Europe more accessible, usable and exploitable

(2005-2008)

Work Programme

2007

13 April 2007

Table of Contents

1. INTRODUCTION

This Work Programme covers the activities of the *e*Content*plus* programme (2005-2008), a multiannual Community programme to make digital content in Europe more accessible, usable and exploitable. It defines the priorities for these activities, in line with the decision of the European Parliament and of the Council establishing the *e*Content*plus* programme (the "Programme Decision")[1].

The programme is part of the Commission's policy announced in *"i2010 – A European Information Society for growth and employment"*[2]. In aiming to facilitate content access, use and exploitation and to stimulate content enrichment, the eContentplus programme will address two of the four main challenges posed by digital convergence for the creation of a single European Information Space, as identified by i2010, namely *"interoperability"* and *"rich content"*. More specifically, it will help achieve Objective 1 of i2010: *A Single European Information Space offering affordable and secure high bandwidth communications, rich and diverse content and digital services*. The actions in each target area of the programme respond to more specific thematic Commission policy initiatives which are indicated in the corresponding sections of this work programme.

2. OBJECTIVES AND OVERALL APPROACH

2.1. *e*Content*plus*, the overall aim

The overall aim of the *e*Content*plus* programme is *"to make digital content in Europe more accessible, usable and exploitable"*.

The programme has an **enabling role:** it will contribute to creating better conditions for accessing, using, reusing and exploiting digital material, based on which it will be possible to build added-value products and services across Europe. It will help **content stakeholders** (providers and users) realise the full potential of digital content: content *providers,* i.e. public and private organisations and institutions that create, collect or own digital content, who will be able to increase the use and re-use of their material; content *users,* including European citizens, students, researchers but also organisations and enterprises that reuse and/or add value to digital content, who will be able to find and use digital content, irrespective of location or language.

The programme addresses areas which have a public interest and which would not develop or would develop at a slower pace if left to the market. It aims to improve the **usability** and **quality** of existing digital content **in specific contexts of use** in order to create the **conditions** for the emergence of quality trans-European content-based services.

Multicultural and **multilingual** aspects of accessing, exploiting, using, and re-using digital content in Europe will be integral to all the actions.

Actions in the programme will use **proven state-of-the-art technical solutions**, and will be geared towards **innovation in organisation and in deployment**, as opposed to purely technological innovation.

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[1] Decision No. 456/2005/EC of 9 March 2005, OJ L 79, 24.03.2005, p.1 .

[2] COM(2005) 229, http://ec.europa.eu/i2010

2.2. Target areas, project types and actions open in 2007

The following **target areas** have been singled out, where the programme can have maximum impact with the available resources:

- geographic information

- educational content

- digital libraries

- reinforcing cooperation between digital content stakeholders.

The definition and objectives for each of these target areas are specified in the corresponding sections of the work programme.

There will be three **project types** for the 2007 Work Programme:

Targeted Projects (TP) are open for the areas "digital libraries" and "educational content". They aim to solve specific known problems by pooling together the resources of interested participants in a consortium. They address specific issues related to the achievement of one or more of the objectives identified in each target area. There is no requirement for clustering TP.

The Community funding for TPs is limited to 50 % of total eligible costs which include also indirect costs calculated as a flat rate of 30% of personnel costs[3].

A **Thematic Network (TN)** is open for the area of "Reinforcing cooperation between digital content stakeholders". The TN brings together relevant stakeholders, expertise and facilities with the objective of identifying best practices, building consensus, coordinating the development of specific approaches for improving the availability and usability of digital content and raising awareness on the approaches adopted.

The Community funding for TN is 100% of a limited set of direct eligible costs for coordinating and implementing the network. Eligible costs for network members other than the coordinator are limited to travel and subsistence..

Best Practice Networks (BPN) are open for the areas "geographic information", "educational content" and "digital libraries". Their objective is to promote the adoption of standards and specifications for making digital content in Europe more accessible and usable by combining the "consensus building and awareness raising" function of a Thematic Network with the large-scale implementation in real-life context of one or more concrete specifications or standards by its members. Each BPN will try out, on a sufficient mass of content, one or more of the implementation approaches discussed in the network in order to draw conclusions on their validity and if necessary to adapt them. More than one BPN is expected to be funded in each target area, each one dealing with different themes. The Commission will organise, as appropriate, "clustering meetings" for the BPNs in each target area, inviting all relevant stakeholders[4] in order to achieve broad consensus and create the conditions for the widest possible uptake of the recommendations of the networks. The final output of the BPNs should therefore reflect both the results of the large scale implementations and the results and recommendations of the clustering activities.

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[3] PE/2005/1615 of 14.9.2005.

[4] Including representatives of other relevant projects funded under eContentplus and other EU programmes, of relevant European and international bodies etc.

The Community funding for BPNs is limited to 80% of direct costs. No overheads may be claimed.

The following **actions** are open in 2007:

Geographic information

3.1   Best practice networks for geographic information

Educational content

4.1   Best practice networks for educational content

4.2   Targeted projects for educational content

Digital libraries

5.1   Best practice networks for digital libraries

5.2   Targeted projects for digital libraries

5.3   Targeted projects for scientific/scholarly content

Reinforcing cooperation between digital content stakeholders

6.1   A thematic network on language resources.

2.3.   Common requirements for targeted projects and best practice networks

All proposals must fulfil the common requirements in this section for the appropriate type of projects. Further information on the objectives, additional conditions and expected results of each action is provided in the corresponding sections of this work programme.

(I)   **Both** Targeted Projects and Best Practice Networks must fulfil the following requirements:

- The issues addressed and the way to tackle them should have a **European dimension**, i.e. they should contribute significantly to the Community policies relevant for each target area referred to in the corresponding sections of this work programme.

- As far as **content** is concerned:

  – The quality and quantity of the digital content (and related metadata) to be effectively contributed to the project by each content provider, as well as the criteria for its selection, must be clearly identified. The digitisation[5] of content is not funded by the programme.

  – The consortium and its members must ensure the necessary availability of the content to be contributed to the project. In particular, the input content should not depend on proprietary third-party rights or any other constraints, which would limit its use for the execution of the project.

  – The consortium and its members must agree on the necessary licensing or clearing arrangements for any Intellectual Property Rights (IPR) arising from the project to ensure wider use and dissemination of the project output.

  – The results of the project must be accessible by the target users beyond the end of the project.

(II) In addition to the common requirements mentioned under (I), **Targeted projects** must also fulfil the following common requirement:

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[5]   The process of creating a digital representation or image of an original through scanning or digital photography.

- The **consortium** must include <u>content providers</u>**.** It should also include <u>users</u>**.** In particular, where a commercial service is expected to be built on project results, the future commercial users must either participate in the consortium or be involved in the project, for instance through a project advisory board or a pilot user group, to be consulted by the consortium in order to provide advice and feedback on the results.

- As far as the expected **impact** is concerned:

  – The <u>target users and their needs</u>**,** also beyond the consortium participants, must be clearly identified. Proposers must present an analysis of demand based as much as possible on quantified evidence. Where relevant, gender issues will be taken into account.

  – Proposers should demonstrate that the underlying content constitutes the <u>critical mass</u> necessary to make a significant impact in terms of increasing access and use in the area concerned.

  – Specific and realistic quantified <u>indicators</u> should be provided to measure the envisaged improvements in availability, access and use — at different stages in the project lifetime.

  – A clear exploitation plan should be presented to ensure the **sustainability** of the proposed solutions, i.e. their capability of developing and surviving without Community funding after the end of the project. Sustainability comprises both economic and organisational aspects. This requirement may be translated into different practical measures and provisions, depending on the target users and the intended uses of the results of the projects, i.e. whether the content resulting from the project is to be made available through commercial services or through open-access services or services based on public-private partnerships.

  – A clear <u>dissemination plan</u> should be established to ensure optimal use of the project results, also beyond the participants in the project.

(III) In addition to the common requirements mentioned under (I), **Best Practice Networks** must also fulfil the following common requirements:

- The **consortium** must include <u>content providers</u>. It should also include <u>users</u> who will provide feedback on the results of the implementations and, where appropriate, <u>standardisation bodies</u> and relevant European and international bodies.

- As far as the expected **impact** is concerned:

  – The <u>target users and their needs</u>**,** also beyond the consortium participants, must be clearly identified. Proposers must present an analysis of demand based as much as possible on quantified evidence. Where relevant, gender issues will be taken into account.

  – Proposers should demonstrate the added value of the approach proposed compared to any existing or earlier attempts of implementing the specifications and standards on which they focus.

  – Proposers should demonstrate that the underlying content constitutes the <u>critical mass</u> necessary to draw valid conclusions from the implementations during the lifetime of the project.

  – Specific and realistic quantified <u>indicators</u> should be provided to evaluate the effectiveness of the solutions proposed, as well as its potential acceptance by its target public.

- – A clear dissemination plan should be established to ensure optimal promotion and use of the project results, contributing to the uptake of standards and specifications across Europe, beyond the members of the network.

- The network should demonstrate convincingly its **networking capacity.** It should be able to disseminate and promote the uptake of its results by stakeholders from the majority of the 27 EU Member States. It should be open and proactive in attracting new members who will be involved in the discussions around the themes it intends to cover.

- The network should be prepared to contribute actively to the **clustering activities** that the Commission intends to organise (including clustering meetings[6]) and foresee ways of taking into account their results and recommendations concerning the implementation of the specifications and standards it intends to cover, making any necessary adaptations.

3. GEOGRAPHIC INFORMATION

For the purpose of this work programme geographic information (or spatial data) means any data that directly refer to a specific location or geographic area.

The objective of *e*Content*plus* is to contribute to the wider use of spatial data by public sector bodies, private companies, including small and medium enterprises, and citizens in line with the Community policy to facilitate the re-use of public sector information. Collaborative projects that improve the conditions for the re-use of spatial data complement and support the measures of Directive 2003/98/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 17 November 2003 on the re-use of public sector information.

In this context the programme will also contribute to the INSPIRE initiative[7] which aims at making available relevant, harmonised and quality geographic information for the purpose of formulation, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of Community policy-making. The programme will specifically contribute to applying the following INSPIRE principles which are particularly relevant for increasing reuse: (a) it should be easy to discover which spatial data is available, to evaluate its fitness for purpose and to know which conditions apply for its use; (b) that it should be possible to combine seamlessly spatial data from different sources and share it between many users and applications

In 2007 best practice networks for geographic information will be funded.

3.1. Best practice networks for geographic information

Objective:
Increase the reuse of geographic information by improving the interoperability of spatial data sets and services. Identify issues and implement solutions for reducing the barriers to interoperability of spatial data sets and services related to one or more of the specific themes enumerated in annexes I-III of the INSPIRE directive. Only one network for each theme will be selected.

Conditions:
In addition to the common requirements for best practice networks, proposals should meet the following conditions:

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[6]   The Commission has the intention of organising up to 2 clustering meetings a year for each target area.

[7]   INSPIRE stands for INfrastructure for SPatial InfoRmation in Europe (http://www.ec-gis.org/inspire/)

- The consortium should demonstrate its capacity to achieve a broad consensus beyond the network beneficiaries on methods and standards involving all relevant stakeholders, including coordinating bodies.

- The implemented solutions should result in datasets that are easily accessible and re-useable through the use of open, non-proprietary standards that facilitate re-use, where appropriate. The intended pricing models and their effects on re-use by the target groups will be an important factor in choosing one proposal rather than another.

- The multilingual aspects of accessing, exploiting, using, and re-using the underlying content should be an integral part of the proposed implementation activities.

- Where appropriate, the use of open standards is recommended.

Expected results

Spatial information is aggregated to cover a significant part of Europe and data are accessible in a seamless way across borders in multiple languages, facilitating its re-use. Consensus is built on the strategy for improving the interoperability of spatial data sets and services and on further concrete actions required. A sustainable network of stakeholders is established around the best practice networks, which promotes dialogue and exchanges of information and best practice between stakeholders in view of implementing common solutions across Europe.

4. EDUCATIONAL CONTENT

For the purpose of this work programme, educational digital content is content that can be used for learning in different contexts: in formal education and training programmes, in non-formal general education and in continuing vocational training courses, as well as for self-learning.

The important role of education and lifelong learning for the achievement of the Lisbon objective for the development of the Community as an advanced knowledge-based society is widely acknowledged. The programme eContentplus aims to foster the efficient use of pedagogically sound digital educational content across borders.

Today, educational content abounds in multiple formats, on the web and in repositories, both public and proprietary. However, the availability of quality digital content for learning remains an issue. Production costs or lack of expertise are among the most cited barriers. In addition, there is an incoherent use of technological solutions, a lack of a comprehensive analysis of users' needs, demands and opportunities. Moreover, organisational and pedagogical frameworks are often inadequate to support multilingual and multicultural access to and use of digital content for learning while efficient brokerage mechanisms for educational content are still missing at the European level.

The actions of the eContentplus work programme will complement other Community activities like the action programme in the field of lifelong learning[8] which has includes among its objectives the support to the development of innovative ICT-based content, services, pedagogies and practice for lifelong learning.

In 2007 best practice networks and targeted projects for educational content will be funded.

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[8] Decision No 1720/2006/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 15 November 2006 establishing an action programme in the field of lifelong learning, OJ L 327 of 24.11.2006, p.45

4.1. Best practice networks on educational content

Objective

Implement existing specifications and standards of learning technologies on a critical mass of existing digital educational content, both user-generated and professionally produced, in specific contexts of use for education and learning and assess their suitability (fit for purpose). Contribute the results of these assessments to the process of building consensus on the adoption and promotion of specifications and standards across Europe.

Conditions:

In addition to the common requirements for best practice networks, proposals should meet the following conditions:

- Digital content stakeholders, technology providers and pedagogical experts should be represented in a balanced way.

- The process should involve both user-generated and professional content.

- Feedback mechanisms for end users, including teachers/trainers and students/learners as appropriate, should be provided on the usability of the content and on its quality, in terms of the effectiveness and efficiency of the learning process.

- The multilingual aspects of accessing and exploiting the content should be addressed in an efficient way appropriate for the educational use to be made of the underlying content.

- The multicultural aspects related to the use of the underlying content in different educational and learning cultures should be specifically addressed.

- The networks should demonstrate convincingly their potential of having a strategic impact on pre-standardisation activities and their capacity to submit and support their proposals at European and, where appropriate, international standardisation bodies.

Expected results:

Specifications and standards are assessed through their implementation on a critical mass of educational content in real contexts of use. The results contribute to building consensus on the implementation of pan-European specifications and standards for learning technologies. A cooperation structure emerges which will be facilitating interoperability in learning technologies in Europe, involving the projects funded under this call and other relevant thematic networks and projects.

4.2. Targeted projects for educational content

Objectives

The proposal should focus on one or more of the following issues:

– Facilitate the co-existence, the use and the exchange of existing professionally produced educational content and user-generated educational content in Learning Content Management Systems and in real context of use. Semantic interoperability and trust and management are the key issues to address. Solutions may require the development and implementation of innovative process and business models.

– Improve the semantic interoperability between digital libraries of content held by cultural institutions that has not been produced specifically for education and Learning Content Management Systems in order to facilitate the exploitation of cultural heritage material for education.

– Implement solutions that make it easier for users (both individuals and organisations, with special focus on SMEs) to find and use existing digital educational content that matches their learning and skills development needs, for example as these are specified in competency profiles.

Conditions:

In addition to the common requirements for Targeted Projects, proposals should meet the following conditions:

- Digital content stakeholders, both public and private, as well as technology providers and pedagogical experts should be represented in a balanced way.

- Feedback mechanisms for end users, including teachers/trainers and students/learners as appropriate, should be provided on the usability of the content and on its quality, in terms of the effectiveness and efficiency of the learning process.

- The multilingual aspects of accessing and exploiting the content should be addressed in an efficient way appropriate for the educational use to be made of the underlying content.

- The multicultural aspects related to the use of the underlying content in different educational and learning cultures should be specifically addressed.

- Where appropriate, the use of open standards is recommended.

Expected results:

There will be a significant increase in the use and re-use of the underlying educational content across borders for learning in multiple languages and in different learning environments. Both professionally produced and user generated educational content will be made simultaneously accessible, cultural heritage and scientific content will be accessible for education, while mechanisms for matching learning needs with targeted material will be in place.

5.   DIGITAL LIBRARIES

For the purpose of this work programme *digital libraries* are organised collections of digital content made available to the public by cultural and scientific institutions (libraries, archives and museums) and private content holders (e.g. publishers) in the EU Member States or other countries participating in the programme. They can consist of all kinds of "physical" material that has been digitised (books, audiovisual material, photographs, documents in archives etc) and material originally produced in digital format.

This material going digital and moving into the online environment, will allow Europe to be present in the cultural and creative industries of the 21st century. It will enable the development of new value-added services for research, learning and leisure. Above all, it will allow citizens to access this rich collective European heritage at the click of a mouse.

To stimulate and support this, digital libraries was made one of the flagships of the i2010 initiative. It presents the European strategy for digitisation, online accessibility and digital preservation, with a focus on cultural heritage, as well as for improving access to scientific publications and data.

As part of this, in August 2006 the European Commission issued a Recommendation[9] on digital libraries issues to Member States, which has led to Conclusions of the Culture Council in November 2006[10]. The Council endorsed the vision of a European Digital Library as a common

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[9]   http://ec.europa.eu/information_society/activities/digital_libraries/doc/recommendation/recommendation/en.pdf

[10]   OJ 2006/C 297/01

multilingual access point to Europe's distributed digital cultural heritage and which is expected to make available online at least six million books, documents and other cultural works by 2010.

Taking forward the statements of the Culture Ministers, the Commission has taken as a starting point The European Library (TEL) project[11] of the national libraries of Europe as the organisational nucleus for achieving this common, multilingual access point to Europe's distributed cultural heritage.

To signal the importance of and launch a policy process on access to and dissemination of scientific/scholarly information and strategies for the preservation of such information across the Union, the Commission further issued a communication on scientific information to the European Parliament, the Council and the European Economic and Social Committee[12].

The eContentplus programme will support the creation of the European Digital Library by achieving interoperability between national digital collections and services (e.g. through common standards) and ensuring that these will be accessible through the multilingual European Digital Library service as being developed by TEL. It further aims to improve the spread of European research results through experiments with open access.

For these purposes, best practice networks for digital libraries as well as targeted projects for digital libraries and for scientific/scholarly content will be funded in 2007.

5.1. Best Practice Networks for digital libraries

Objective

Improve the interoperability of digital libraries held by museums, archives and other institutions across a large number of EU Member States making them accessible through the common user interface of the European Digital Library. Address issues relating to the standards-based interoperability between digital objects and collections, the interoperability of systems for authorising the use of and/or the multilingual and cross-cultural search and retrieval of the digital content held by major cultural institutions.

Conditions:

In addition to the common requirements for best practice networks, proposals should meet the following conditions:

- The actual content should be accessible and not only catalogues of content.

- The consortium should demonstrate its capacity to contribute significantly to the achievement of the objective, especially in relation to museums and archives, and to contribute to the advancement of the European Digital Library.

Expected result:

Highly interoperable databases of content held by museums, archives and other institutions across a large number of EU Member States are made accessible through the common user interface of the European Digital Library. This will include an efficient *front office* providing access and services both to external users and to other cultural institutions wishing to join as well as a clear set of production standards and functional specifications for their compliance

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[11] http://www.theeuropeanlibrary.org/

[12] COM(2007) 56.

with the European Digital Library. Establishment of a cooperation structure involving the projects funded under this call and relevant thematic networks and projects funded under the previous calls of eContentplus.

5.2. Targeted Projects for digital libraries

Objective:

- The focus should be on <u>one or more</u> of the following issues:

    – standards-based interoperability between digital objects and collections held by **both commercial and non-profit cultural content holders**.

    – process and business models enabling **access to copyrighted works** through the European Digital Library

    – creation of databases and testing of clearance mechanisms for **out of print and/or orphan works**.

Conditions:

In addition to the common requirements for Targeted Projects, proposals should meet the following conditions:

- Public and private content holders should be involved in the consortium

- The proposed solutions must be sufficiently flexible to allow their inclusion in the future European Digital Library.

Expected results:

Digital cultural content held by both commercial content providers and non-profit cultural institutions will be made interoperable and is aggregated across borders. Access to the content will be significantly improved. The aggregated content is integrated in the European Digital Library through appropriate process and business models. Databases of orphan and out of print works are established facilitating the process of their inclusion in the European Digital Library.

5.3. Targeted projects for scientific/scholarly content

Objective:

Improve the spread of European research results through conclusive experiments with open access to digital libraries of scientific/scholarly content. The latter refers to organised collections of published results of scientists' or scholars' research work in the EU Member States or other countries participating in the programme and includes both articles, papers, conference proceedings, monographs, textbooks and other similar publications and the related underlying datasets.

Conditions:

In addition to the common requirements for Targeted Projects, proposals should meet the following conditions:

- Carry out conclusive experiments on new models and processes involving different types of relevant stakeholders, i.e. academic community, libraries, institutional repositories, scientific publishers and the funding bodies.

- The needs of the users (i.e. researchers) should be taken into account, ensuring the right balance between the desirable dissemination of research results and the equally necessary protection of IPR.

- The projects should build on existing experience at the national, European and international level.

Expected results:

Digital scientific/scholarly content held by different types of stakeholders is aggregated and made interoperable and available for open access across borders.

6. REINFORCING COOPERATION BETWEEN DIGITAL CONTENT STAKEHOLDERS

Language resources capture the knowledge of human language and its use over time. They encompass both written and spoken language, general vocabulary as well as domain specific terminology. Lexica, corpora and terminology databanks are the most widespread resources. Translation memories have gained growing popularity in recent years. Computational grammars and software tools such as parsers or taggers are often regarded as important resources as well.

While language resources come in different types and can be used for different purposes (e.g. for the production of dictionaries, as an aid for language professionals or learners, to support technical authoring), machine-processable resources are typically used for research purposes or to develop and/or operate computer applications than can analyze, process and – to some extent – understand human language. In particular, multilingual resources are a prerequisite for applications such as computer-aided translation, cross-lingual information retrieval and multilingual text generation.

Developing and maintaining sizeable language resources, however, is a formidable task with no immediate economic return (nor obvious academic incentives) for the institutions and research centres that are most often engaged in this work. While companies are interested in exploiting such resources to add value to their commercial offerings, they are generally unwilling to contribute directly to the production work. Thus, the long-term availability of quality language resources depends heavily on public support and presupposes a viable model ensuring that such resources do meet the requirements of public and private stakeholders, for a variety of purposes (scholarly work, R&D, ICT products and services).

Lastly, the widespread accessibility and interoperability of language resources crucially depend on the progressive adoption of common representation and exchange formats, the availability of effective means to assess their quality and suitability, and transparent ways to ensure access and fair remuneration.

In 2007 a thematic network will be supported in preparation of future actions under the ICT Policy Support Programme of the new Competitiveness and Innovation Programme (CIP)[13].

6.1. A Thematic Network on language resources

Objective

Investigate priority areas for action by the European Union and other relevant public and private stakeholders to improve the availability, usability, interoperability, cost-effectiveness and long-term sustainability of language resources in the European Union, with special emphasis on the languages

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[13] http://ec.europa.eu/enterprise/enterprise_policy/cip/index_en.htm; CIP will follow up the eContentplus programme as from 2009.

of new member states and on resources underpinning state-of-the-art ICT systems and applications.

Conditions

- The network should bring together leading experts from different backgrounds with an active interest and involvement in language resources, such as research managers, suppliers of language technology, digital content owners and providers of language services, together with representatives of institutions and other public or private organisations that either build or sponsor the development of language resources[14].

- The network members should contribute a thorough understanding of the current situation of language resources in Europe, and the challenge they prove for Europe's multilingualism and cross-border communication, also vis-à-vis the functioning of the European Institutions.

- Participants should represent the interests of public and private stakeholders from a sufficiently wide geographical area covering at least 14 Member States of which 6 new Member States, so as to have a significant potential impact at European level. The strategic needs of ICT vendors as leading "consumers" of language technology, should be adequately represented.

- The main aims and tasks are as follows:

  - provide an agreed classification and up-to-date chart of key language resources available in the different countries of European Union; identify the main players involved and related sponsors and government agencies;

  - examine the scientific methods and the organisational and economic models underpinning the construction and maintenance of such resources to draw lessons about possible ways to promote best practice and cross-border co-operation; consider where relevant similar initiatives and setups outside the Union;

  - assess which types of resources are self-sustainable in that there is sufficient demand and the market dynamic is such that their continuing development can be ensured without significant public intervention;

  - consider how the quality (e.g. linguistic breadth and depth, accuracy), ease of maintenance and suitability for the intended purposes (e.g. research, ICT systems) are or can best be assessed, in different contexts of use;

  - identify the main representation and exchange formats (online as well as offline) currently in use, and review pre-conditions and opportunities for their harmonisation, with a view to ensuring more widespread and cost effective access to such resources;

  - examine the technical, organisational and economic conditions for an effective reuse and interlinking of key resources, both within and across national and linguistic boundaries, also to ease the deployment of multilingual resources;

  - identify and examine technical methods to automate the collection and processing of language resources;

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[14]   Synergies should be sought with complementary actions supported by the European Commission, such as CLEF (http://www.clef-campaign.org/) or CLARIN (http://cordis.europa.eu/esfri/), for instance.

- summarize the outcome of the above analyses; investigate suitable strategies to achieve a more effective, balanced and sustainable "European" model, and how this could possibly map onto existing or upcoming national and cross-national activities, without distorting markets;

- provide a blueprint of the actions and infrastructures (e.g. clearing house(s) and associated referral services) that the European Union should consider implementing in the coming years, to enable and accelerate progress in this area, where appropriate taking account of existing or planned initiatives in other parts of the world.

- The network should raise the awareness of relevant stakeholders (producers and sponsors as well as corporate "consumers") on its objectives, findings and recommendations, and build consensus on proposed follow-on actions.

- Activities undertaken by the network may include physical and virtual meetings of its members, hearings of other relevant parties, telephone and face-to-face interviews of influential individuals, desk work to assemble and synthesize available information, surveys and working visits to fill gaps and acquire new contacts, the organisation of seminars and targeted conferences, the establishment of a directory (who's who) of the main players in the field, the regular exchange of information and experiences between members and other parties e.g. through virtual fora or electronic newsletters.

Expected results

A coherent and well-argued list of priority areas for action by the European Union and other stakeholders in the area of language resources, within the next 3 to 5 years. These priorities and the related implementation paths will result from a broadly shared vision and a common understanding of the function and purpose of language resources, in the medium to long term, and their enabling character vis-à-vis existing and emerging language technologies, including (multi-)language capabilities embedded in larger ICT systems.

6.2. Public procurement

Public procurement is planned in 2007 for the following **studies**:

Title and description	Launch date (quarter)	Budget (Budget line)	Duration (months)
Socio-economic drivers and impact of longer-term preservation of digital resources The preservation of digital resources is becoming a critical issue both for the traditional repository organisations (e.g. libraries, archives, museums) and for the corporate world, as a result of the widespread use of digital media as the native and sometimes exclusive format for documents, legal records, scientific data and cultural resources (notably audio and video). The systematic analysis of socio-economic factors affecting the development of digital preservation and its future economic impact, to be carried out for this study, should improve the understanding of the economic importance of this sector and provide input for defining the priorities of future research and non-research activities developed at EU level. (Work in support of the "i2010: Digital Libraries" initiative.)	1st	€200 000 (09 03 02)	9

Title and description	Launch date (quarter)	Budget (Budget line)	Duration (months)
Economic and social impact of the public domain in the information society Public domain content (i.e. material that is not or no longer protected by intellectual property rights) has a considerable potential for re-use thanks to the new tools of the information society. The study would be a first systematic attempt to map or measure the social and economic impact of the public domain. The results will be widely distributed among stakeholders that have an interest in public domain policies, for example cultural institutions, academic and scientific institutions, consumer organisations or publishers. (Work in support of the "i2010: Digital Libraries" initiative.)	2nd	€200 000 (09 03 02)	12
Impact of the Deposit of Scientific Publications in Open Archives. The study will make a systematic overview of the potential impact of a generalised policy by European research funding bodies requiring researchers to deposit articles in open archives. It will consider the issue by discipline and will carry out a sensitivity analysis of embargo periods of different lengths. It will also consider the effects of the implementation of a deposit requirement in relation to research co-funded by the Commission (Work in support of the "i2010: Digital Libraries initiative").	3rd	€400 000 (09 03 02)	12
The impact of the PSI Directive in the Geographical, Meteorological and Legal Information sectors - 3 independent sub-domain studies The sectors targeted by these studies are the most important sub-domains [15] in re-use of public sector information. In 2008, the Commission must present a review of the application of the Directive (article 13 of the Directive). Proper evaluation of the impact of the Directive requires direct access to detailed data on re-use in local Member States markets. All three studies will involve both public and private bodies as suppliers and re-users of information. (Work in support of the implementation of the PSI directive)	3rd	€120 000 (09 03 02)	5
Statistics on European Efforts and progress in the digitisation of culture The study to measure the investment in the digitisation of cultural resources and the growth and use of such digitised resources, in order to track the progress of effort made at MS and EU levels and to identify future needs for funding, research and coordination was **launched in 2006** as work in support of the "i2010: Digital Libraries" initiative. The **contract will be awarded early this year.**	-	€400 000 (09 03 02)	-

The criteria used in awarding contracts under a public procurement procedure are defined in the documentation relative to that specific procedure (notice of call for tenders published in the Official Journal, terms of reference).

7. PARTICIPATION IN THE *e*CONTENT*PLUS* PROGRAMME

The call for proposals under this Work Programme is open for participation to all legal entities (public and private) established in the Member States.

The call is also open to the participation of legal entities established in EFTA States which are contracting parties to the EEA Agreement (Norway, Iceland and Liechtenstein).

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[15] According to the taxonomy established by the MEPSiR Report.

It is furthermore open to legal entities established in Turkey, Croatia and the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia[16]. If grant agreements are concluded with consortia including legal entities from these countries, such legal entities will be eligible for funding only if the country concerned has effectively joined the Programme by means of a Memorandum of Understanding by the date of signature of the grant agreement. Up-to-date information on which countries are part of the programme is available on the programme website at http://ec.europa.eu/econtentplus.

Legal entities established in third countries and international organisations may take part in all projects at their own expense.

There are no formal minimum or maximum requirements for the number of applicants in proposals. However, the European added value of the proposal will have to be clearly demonstrated.

8. EVALUATION PROCESS

The evaluation of proposals will be based on the principles of transparency and equality of treatment. It will be carried out by the Commission with the assistance of independent experts.

8.1. Appointment of independent experts for evaluation and reviews

The Commission will appoint independent experts to assist with the evaluation of proposals and with the review of project results. The experts shall be identified on the basis of a current call for independent experts for the eContentplus and Safer Internet Plus programmes (2005-2008). Experts will be selected in consideration of the skills and knowledge appropriate to the tasks assigned to them, taking into account the thematic requirements of a call or project, and with consideration of geographical and gender balance.

8.2. Evaluation criteria

Each submission will be assessed on the basis of the evaluation criteria, which are divided into three categories: eligibility criteria, award criteria, and selection criteria. Only proposals meeting the requirements of the eligibility criteria will be evaluated further.

8.2.1. *Eligibility criteria*

On receipt, all proposals will be subject to an eligibility check to ensure that they conform to the requirements of the call and to the submission procedure.

The following checks will be carried out:

– Receipt of proposal by the Commission on or before the deadline (date and time) established in the call.

– Completeness of proposal. Proposals which are substantially incomplete — that is to say, the forms do not include sufficient information to identify the partners, their legal status and to evaluate the scope of the proposed project — will be excluded.

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[16] Stabilisation and Association Agreement between the European Communities and their Member States, of the one part, and the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, of the other part, OJ L 84 of 20.03.2004. Protocol to the Stabilisation and Association Agreement between the European Communities and their Member States, of the one part, and the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, of the other part, on a Framework Agreement between the European Community and the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia on the general principles for the participation of the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia in Community programmes, OJ L 92 of 22.7.2005, p. 23.

Proposers will also be excluded from participation if:

(a) they are bankrupt or being wound up, are having their affairs administered by the courts, have entered into an arrangement with creditors, have suspended business activities, are the subject of proceedings concerning those matters, or are in any analogous situation arising from a similar procedure provided for in national legislation or regulations;

(b) they have been convicted of an offence concerning their professional conduct by a judgment which has the force of res judicata;

(c) they have been guilty of grave professional misconduct proven by any means which the contracting authority can justify;

(d) they have not fulfilled obligations relating to the payment of social security contributions or the payment of taxes in accordance with the legal provisions of the country in which they are established or with those of the country of the contracting authority or those of the country where the grant agreement is to be performed;

(e) they have been the subject of a judgment which has the force of res judicata for fraud, corruption, involvement in a criminal organisation or any other illegal activity detrimental to the Communities' financial interests;

(f) following another procurement procedure or grant award procedure financed by the Community budget, they have been declared to be in serious breach of agreement for failure to comply with their contractual obligations.

Proposers **must certify that they are not in one of the situations listed above.**

Applicants making false declarations are liable to financial penalties or exclusion from grants and contracts.[17]

8.2.2.   *Award criteria*

This section of the Work Programme defines the award criteria, i.e. those applied to evaluate the relative merits of proposals received following a call for proposals, and the specific weighting of these criteria. One set of award criteria will apply to *Targeted Projects*. Another set of award criteria will apply to the *Thematic Networks*.

The award criteria are applied on the basis of the information supplied in the proposal.

Each criterion is marked from 1 to 10. A maximum score of 100 points can be given to a proposal. Proposals that do not receive **a mark of at least 6/10 for criterion 1 (Relevance, impact and European dimension)** will not be examined further.

Award criteria for Targeted Projects

1. Relevance and European dimension	*(Weighting = 2.0)*

- Contribution to achieving the <u>objectives</u> of the eContent*plus* programme and of the specific action as set out in the call.

- Clear description of the problems addressed and the solutions proposed and extent to which they contribute to achieving the <u>expected results</u> of the specific action.

- Fulfilment of <u>common requirements</u> for <u>European dimension</u>.

2. Content, impact and additional conditions	*(Weighting = 4.0)*

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[17]   Article 175 of Commission Regulation (EC, Euratom) No. 2342/2002 of 23 December 2002 (OJ L 357, 31 December 2002), as amended by Regulation (EC, Euratom) No 1995/2006 (OJ L 390, 30.12.2006, p. 1).

- Fulfilment of the <u>common requirements</u> for <u>content</u>.

- Fulfilment of the <u>common requirements</u> for <u>impact</u>.

- Fulfilment of the additional <u>conditions</u> for the specific action.

3. Quality of the technical part of the proposal *(Weighting = 2.0)*

- Adequacy of the methodology and work plan for achieving the objectives stated in the proposal.

4. Resources and management *(Weighting = 2.0)*

- Fulfilment of the <u>common requirements</u> for the <u>consortium</u>.

- Quality of the consortium in terms of relevance, competences and combination of complementary expertise.

- Extent to which the project provides for the resources (personnel, equipment, financial, etc.) necessary for success.

- Adequacy of the management, decision-making structures, communication flow and cooperation mechanisms within the consortium.

Award criteria for Best Practice Networks

1. Relevance and European dimension *(Weighting = 2.0)*

- Contribution to achieving the <u>objectives</u> of the eContent*plus* programme and of the specific action as set out in the call.

- Clear description of the problems addressed and the solutions proposed and extent to which they contribute to achieving the <u>expected results</u> of the specific action.

- Fulfilment of <u>common requirements</u> for <u>European dimension</u>.

2. Content, impact, networking and additional conditions *(Weighting = 4.0)*

- Fulfilment of the <u>common requirements</u> for <u>content</u>.

- Fulfilment of the <u>common requirements</u> for <u>impact</u>.

- Fulfilment of the <u>common requirements</u> for <u>networking</u>**.**

- Fulfilment of the additional <u>conditions</u> for the specific action.

3. Quality of the technical part of the proposal *(Weighting = 2.0)*

- Fulfilment of the <u>common requirements</u> for <u>clustering</u>**.**

- Adequacy of the methodology and work plan for achieving the objectives stated in the proposal.

4. Resources and management *(Weighting = 2.0)*

- Fulfilment of the <u>common requirements</u> for the <u>consortium.</u>

- Quality of the consortium in terms of relevance, competences and combination of complementary expertise.

- Extent to which the project provides for the resources (personnel, equipment, financial, etc.) necessary for success.

- Adequacy of the management, decision-making structures, communication flow and cooperation mechanisms within the consortium.

Award criteria for the Thematic Network

1. Relevance, impact and European dimension *(Weighting = 4.0)*

- Contribution to achieving the objectives of the eContent*plus* programme, of relevant Community policies referred to in this work programme and of the specific action as set out in the call.

- Clear description of the problems addressed and the solutions proposed and extent to which they contribute to achieving the expected results of the specific action.

- European dimension of the issue(s) addressed, and extent to which the proposed action would contribute to tackling them at European level.

2. Quality of the technical part of the proposal *(Weighting = 2.0)*

- Adequacy of the methodology and work plan for achieving the objectives stated in the proposal.

3. Quality of the proposed network and management *(Weighting = 4.0)*

- Fulfilment of the additional conditions for the specific action.

- Quality of the partnership in terms of relevance, competences, combination of complementary expertise, and resources available.

- Quality of the coordinating team (good complementarities between participants) and adequacy of the organisations participating in the network to ensure the coordination envisaged.

- Adequacy of the management, decision-making structures, communication flow and cooperation mechanisms within the network.

- Adequacy of the measures and indicators for monitoring progress and assessing results and impact.

8.2.3. Selection criteria

The selection criteria are intended to ensure that the proposers possess the resources to co-finance the project and the professional competences and qualifications required to complete the work successfully.

Selection criteria are applied on the basis of the information supplied in the proposal. Where cases of weak financial capacity or professional competence are identified, compensating actions such as financial guarantees or other actions may be required. Successful proposals called to negotiations will be the subject of a formal legal and financial validation as a requirement for the issuing of a grant agreement.

The selection criteria are divided into two parts:

Financial and operational capacity to carry out the project

– Capacity to co-finance the proposed project as demonstrated by the applicant's accounts;

– Capacity to allocate adequate human resources to carry out the project in question.

Professional competences and qualifications

– Documented relevant experience in the field of the proposed action.

9. IMPLEMENTATION PLAN AND BUDGET

9.1. Call for proposals 2007

An **indicative amount** of €46.5 million is available for the 2007 call on the budget line 09 03 02.

9.2. Indicative allocation

The **indicative budget breakdown** by target area is as follows:

Geographic information	30%
Educational content	28%
Digital Libraries (cultural and scientific/scholarly content)	40%
Reinforcing cooperation between digital content stakeholders	2%

The following table presents the Community contribution and indicative funding for each project type, the indicative duration, the number of countries on which the proposed action is expected to have an impact.

Project type	Community contribution	Duration *(in months)*	Number of Countries *(impact)*	Funding *(in € million)*
Best Practice Networks	80% of **direct** eligible costs	typically 18-24 (up to 36)	14-27	€4-6 m
Targeted Projects	50% of **total** eligible costs	typically 18-24 (up to 36)	7-16	€2-3m
Thematic Network	Up to 100% of a limited set of direct eligible costs for coordinating and implementing the network. Costs for network members other than the coordinator are limited to travel and subsistence.	Up to 36	14-27	€0.4-1m

9.3. Indicative calendar

The indicative calendar for the activities is as follows:

Date	Event
May 2007	Adoption of Work Programme and text of call for proposals
May 2007	Publication of call for proposals
4 October 2007	Call closure
November 2007	Evaluation
December 2007	Evaluation report approved by Authorising Officer
January 2008	Draft Implementation Plan approved by Authorising Officer (DG)
February 2008	Committee Meeting – presentation for opinion on call results European Parliament – Right of scrutiny
March 2008	Opening of negotiations
May 2008	Completion of negotiations, award decision, signature of grant agreements

9.4. Project reviews

The indicative operational budget for the review of projects funded under the budget line 09 03 02 (via appointment letters) in 2007 is €149 320.

Outside experts who assist the Commission with project reviews may claim, in addition to the reimbursement of travel and subsistence expenses, a payment of €450 in the form of a lump sum for each full working day.

9.5. Administrative expenditure

The planned administrative expenditure for 2007 is:

Publications & other expenses	€94 364
Evaluation of proposals (appointment letters)	€350 000
Electronic Proposals Submission System	€150 000
Evaluation Service Provider	€50 000

A commitment for the evaluation of proposals will be made in the third quarter on budget line 09 01 04 02, while publications & other expenses will be committed as required throughout the year.

Outside experts who assist the Commission with the evaluation of proposals may claim, in addition to the reimbursement of travel and subsistence expenses, a payment of €450 in the form of a lump sum for each full working day spent assisting the Commission's services.

Commitments for the Electronic Proposal Submission System and the Evaluation Service Provider might be made in the second quarter based on existing service contracts (FP7-EPSS/2006-1 and FP7-ESS/2006-1). The commitment for the evaluation of the call for proposals will be made in the third quarter. Appropriations for publications and other expenses will be committed throughout the year, as they occur.

10. FURTHER INFORMATION

For further information relating to this programme, please refer to the *e*Content*plus* web site at http://ec.europa.eu/econtentplus.