



Framework for a EU-wide Audiovisual Orphan Works Registry

What is FORWARD?

FORWARD is a three-year EU funded project (2013-2016) aiming at creating a EU wide, automated system to assess the rights' status for all types of audiovisual works, including orphans. The system will search, harvest and process the information that is necessary to define the rights status of an audiovisual work. This way, cultural institutions, commercial entities and all potential users will get a clear indication whether a work is in public domain or in-copyright, and in this case, whether it is orphan, and under which conditions it can be used across Europe. FORWARD will take into account all national legislations deriving from the application of the Directive 2012/28/EU on Orphan Works.

Why FORWARD?

A hundred thousands of audiovisual works preserved in European archives are inaccessible because their rights status is not clear. These audiovisual works cannot be used neither for commercial distribution, nor for educational and cultural purposes, for example in the context of large digitisation projects. Rights clearing for AV works is a complex process while, at the same time, the resources of archives in identifying and locating rights holders are limited. The most relevant problem is the lack of structured and reliable EU wide information resources. FORWARD will provide an innovative solution to respond to this need.

The Partnership

FORWARD will be implemented through a collaboration of 13 institutions from 11 EU countries, among them 11 Film Heritage Institutions (FHI) and commercial AV libraries. Europe's FHI play a crucial role in the process of rights clearing, because they provide the most extensive information resources. Thanks to the direct involvement of ARROW partners that have created a comparable system for the book sector, both the FORWARD and the ARROW system will be fully interoperable and accessible to queries from all users across the EU.

FORWARD is coordinated by the Cinémathèque Royale de Belgique and cofunded by the Community programme ICT-PSP.



FORWARD goals are to

- Analyse existing information resources (filmographic databases, catalogues etc.) that can be used to define the rights status of an AV work
- Harmonize the rights' status definitions across Europe
- Design and implement a technical platform to perform the data harvesting and data processing
- Create a registry of audiovisual orphan works and of the diligent searches performed
- Support Europe's Film Heritage Institutions to implement the Directive 2012/28/EU on orphan works
- Establish a network of 10 national clearance centres across Europe
- Ensure the interoperability of the FORWARD system with ARROW
- Develop a sustainable business model

Project partners



Contact

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