Press release

Contact:
Dr. Klaus Ceynowa, Director General
Bayerische Staatsbibliothek
Ludwigstr. 16, 80539 Munich, Germany
+49-89-28638-2201
direktion@bsb-muenchen.de

Global consortium forms to standardize and improve sharing and displaying of image-based scholarly resources on the web

Leaders from eleven research libraries, national libraries, and nonprofit image repositories met at Oxford University to form the International Image Interoperability Framework Consortium.

Access to image-based resources is fundamental to research, scholarship and the transmission of cultural knowledge. Until now, much of the Internet's image-based resources have been locked up in silos, with access restricted to custom-built applications. The International Image Interoperability Framework (IIIF) supports uniform display of images of books, maps, scrolls, manuscripts, musical scores and archival material from participating institutions for display, manipulation, measurement and annotation by scholars and students working individually or in groups around the world.

The IIIF initiative was conceived on the back of a napkin at a Cuban restaurant in Palo Alto, California at a dinner of technologists from the Bodleian Libraries at Oxford University, the British Library and Stanford University Libraries. Yesterday, eleven institutions committed resources and officially formed the International Image Interoperability Framework Consortium (IIIF-C), which will oversee the ongoing development of the IIIF technology as well as the growth of the community.

Joining Oxford, the British Library and Stanford as part of the IIIF-C are ARTstor, Die Bayerische Staatsbibliothek (The Bavarian State Library), Cornell University, La Bibliothèque nationale de

France (The National Library of France), Nasjonalbiblioteket (The National Library of Norway), Princeton University Library, Wellcome Trust and Yale University (Yale Center for British Art, Beinecke Rare Book & Manuscript Library).

"The International Image Interoperability Framework provides the Bavarian State Library with a range of state-of-the-art toolsets for contextualizing our vast digital collections in future virtual research environments especially in the field of digital humanities" said Dr. Klaus Ceynowa, Director General of the Bavarian State Library. "This is not only about displaying content in a comfortable way via the web, but comparing digital collections from cultural institutions worldwide in one single user-interface, allowing for comments, annotations and collaboration by globally distributed research groups."

The IIIF-C aims to reduce inefficiency and needless redundancy born from incompatibility in the current image delivery ecosystem. The framework includes two application program interfaces (APIs). The Image API provides access to the image content and technical descriptions. The Presentation API gives just enough structural and descriptive information about the image's context to appropriately render it in an arbitrary, web-based, viewing environment.

While IIIF's origins are in libraries, the community is rapidly expanding to include museums, archives and image services of all types, creating new opportunities for exchange and collaboration across sectors. In addition to the founding IIIF-C members, 20 other institutions are contributing to discussions on specifications for interoperability and providing both open source and commercial implementations of the APIs currently available.

By adopting the IIIF and becoming part of the community, institutions gain access to well supported and sustainable technologies, and enrich scholarly use of their materials. For more information, visit http://iiif.io.

About Bayerische Staatsbibliothek | www.bsb-muenchen.de

The Bayerische Staatsbibliothek, founded in 1558 by Duke Albrecht V, is of world-wide renown as international research library. With its holdings of 10 million volumes, 63.000 current periodicals in printed or electronic format, and about 97.000 manuscripts, it ranks among the most important knowledge centres world-wide. With more than one million digitised works, the Bayerische Staatsbibliothek holds the largest digital data stock of all German libraries. A large variety of services is offered in the field of innovative digital use scenarios.

About IIIF | http://iiif.io

The IIIF is driven by a group of research libraries, national libraries, and nonprofit image repositories committed to opening access to cherished image resources. IIIF (International Image Interoperability Framework) has the following goals:

- To give scholars an unprecedented level of uniform and rich access to image-based resources hosted around the world.
- To define a set of common application programming interfaces that support interoperability between image repositories.
- To develop, cultivate and document shared technologies, such as image servers and web clients that provide a world-class user experience in viewing, comparing, manipulating and annotating images.

###