

## FLAME University of Southampton Press Release

### **University of Southampton launches EUR 7 Million programme to develop urban-scale internet ecosystems**

The University of Southampton is at the heart of a major collaboration to develop next-generation Internet ecosystems using new technology and platforms to provide flexible service delivery technologies to revolutionise personalised, interactive, mobile and localised media services.

The newly-launched EUR 7 million FLAME project brings together leading industrial players such as Disney, Atos, InterDigital Europe along with smart city operators in Bristol, Barcelona and beyond to carry out new urban-scale experimentation of media products and services using adaptive infrastructures. The project is funded by the European Commission's Horizon 2020 framework programme.

The project's coordinator Prof Michael Boniface, Technical Director at the University of Southampton IT Innovation Centre, UK, said: "FLAME provides a unique opportunity to explore the viability of new media ecosystems building on mixed reality, augmented reality and highly-localised content which can be efficiently delivered using adaptive software-defined infrastructures in urban environments.

"Multimedia will dominate the next generation of Internet systems driven by citizens increasing participation and use of pervasive technologies to have fun, learn and understand the world," Professor Boniface continued. "Success depends on establishing transformative media ecosystems that benefit everyone from consumers and content providers through to the operators of communications, transport and building infrastructures.

"Consumers are increasingly watching audio-visual content through on-demand online services delivered in individual streams, and new multimedia applications such as immersive and mobile gaming are stretching the current network infrastructure and management systems beyond their limits," he emphasised. "Our approach aims to improve experience for consumers, reduce the complexity of media service development, reduce the cost of delivering personalised on-demand content, whilst allowing infrastructure providers to become creators of digital innovation driving local socio-economic growth."

The new platform emerging from FLAME will initially be deployed in the smart-cities of Bristol and Barcelona with advanced network access points located across the cities and will later be rolled out to three further cities in Europe through a competitive open call.

Between 2018 and 2020, FLAME will invest over EUR 2 million in a programme of open calls to grow media ecosystems in cities around Europe. The programme will allow players from the creative industries, telecommunications industries and smart cities to run trials in urban scale environments delivering new forms of experience and social interaction.

The consortium is led by the University of Southampton IT Innovation Centre, UK and includes Atos Spain SA, Spain; InterDigital Europe Ltd, UK; Fundacio Privada i2CAT, Internet I Innovacio Digital a Catalunya, Spain; University of Bristol, UK; Nextworks, Italy; Martel GmbH, Switzerland; De Vlaamse Radio En TelevisieomroeporganisatieNV, Belgium; The Walt Disney Company (Switzerland) GmbH, Switzerland; Eidgenoessische Technische Hochschule Zuerich, Switzerland; and the Institut Municipal d'Informàtica de Barcelona, Spain.

For more information:

Michael Boniface, University of Southampton, email: [mjb@it-innovation.soton.ac.uk](mailto:mjb@it-innovation.soton.ac.uk)

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**Notes for editors:**

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<>, Media Relations, University of Southampton, Tel 023 8059 3212, email <>, Twitter: <>

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