



6 October 2011

Letter of Intent
from Disney Research Zurich in support of FuturICT

I am writing this letter to express Disney Research Zurich's (DRZ) support of the flagship project "The FuturICT Knowledge Accelerator – Exploring and Managing our Future." DRZ is an industrial research laboratory located in Zürich, Switzerland and established on May 1st, 2008 as a research partnership between The Walt Disney Company and Eidgenössische Technische Hochschule Zürich (ETH Zurich). The mission of our lab is to perform advanced application-oriented research that is of critical interest to the core businesses of The Walt Disney Company. Topics include computer graphics, visualization, animation, computer vision, wireless and mobile computing, physically-based simulation, video technology, virtual environments, interactive entertainment, and non-photorealistic rendering. Although the lab is backed financially by Disney, it operates as an independent Swiss company, The Walt Disney Company (Switzerland) GmbH.

DRZ has an open, community-oriented policy with regard to research and aims to publish results in respected academic journals and conferences. We actively foster collaborative relationships with academics at European institutions and are already involved as a consortium partner in several EU projects, including FI-CONTENT, REVERIE, and CALIPSO. The FuturICT project is an ideal candidate for further EU collaboration and would be mutually beneficial for all participants. Especially, core FuturICT topics related to data visualization, data mining, and data-driven simulation are of critical importance to Disney's social media gaming business, such as our Playdom division which has 47 million monthly active users. Our strategic interest in augmented-reality gaming technology connects directly to data visualization and social simulations. FuturICT research related to the Living Earth Simulator could connect to our existing work in virtual worlds. Disney already operates several online virtual environments, such as Club Penguin, Pixie Hollow, Pirates of the Caribbean Online, World of Cars Online, Toontown Online, and the Virtual Magic Kingdom. These environments might provide interesting testing opportunities for the FuturICT platform, and the research results would likely contribute to more compelling Disney environments.

If the FuturICT project is funded, DRZ will be an active participant and is willing to take part in research and offer advice, guidance, and real-world industrial experience throughout the project's duration. Since FuturICT encompasses novel research areas that are of critical interest to DRZ and the greater business initiatives of The Walt Disney Company, DRZ is interested in participating in the development of prototype demonstrators and related work.

Best regards,



Prof. Dr. Markus Gross
Director, Disney Research Zurich