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IBC ANNOUNCES EIGHT ACCELERATOR MEDIA INNOVATION CHALLENGES PLUS A SPECIAL INCUBATOR PROJECT FOR 2024

Pioneering projects spotlight pivotal media industry trends, including artificial intelligence, sustainability, countering disinformation, digital talent provenance, live production advancement and much more.

London – 3rd April 2024 – IBC2024 has unveiled eight new projects selected for the **IBC Accelerator Media Innovation Programme**, through which a mix of world-leading and new industry players from across the global media, entertainment and technology communities collaborate to explore potential solutions to critical challenges the industry faces today. This year's Accelerator Programme will also include a **"Special Incubator Project"** that builds on innovative live production technologies established by projects in previous years. The programme provides an agile, fast-track framework for initiating and developing innovation in the media sector to create achievable, hands-on solutions that address common pain points. Final Proof of Concepts (POCs) will be demonstrated at the dedicated Accelerator Zone and also presented live on the **Innovation Stage** at **IBC2024**, taking place at the **RAI Amsterdam** from **13th-16th September**.

"The IBC Accelerator Media Innovation Programme has built huge momentum since its inception in 2019, and we have seen more major media players from around the globe than ever coming to pitch ideas this year," says **IBC Innovation Lead Mark Smith,** who is also **Chair of the IBC Council**. "The feedback on the latest round of projects that were pitched as concepts has been overwhelmingly positive. There's a huge buzz around this year's programme tackling industry-critical issues such as sustainability, responsible artificial intelligence (AI), the verification of news and countering disinformation, live production workflows, connectivity and more. Bringing together dynamic media and technology pioneers to address the critical industry challenges of today and tomorrow and explore innovative solutions is at the core of everything IBC stands for."

The eight new challenges announced by the Accelerator Programme and the additional incubator project were chosen following the **IBC's Kickstart Day** on 6th March at the Institute of Engineering and Technology (IET). Prospective project **Champions** and **Participants** from around the world joined the event to present and hear pitches on the challenges they proposed to tackle in 2024, then discuss synergies and interest in joining various teams. Project teams are comprised of Champions, which are media and entertainment companies looking to steer, support, trial, and make use of the innovations resulting from the Accelerator work, while the Participants are tech innovation vendors and suppliers working with these brands to create and execute the breakthroughs that will be showcased at IBC this year.

IBC Kickstart Day also saw the **2023 Accelerator Project of the Year Award** presented to the **Responsive Narrative Factory** team, which developed a solution for delivering personalised narratives, tailored by consumers in real time via a metadata-powered content selection interface. The team demonstrated a new component-based approach to quickly and cost-effectively creating multiple versions of content from a single master to enable precision targeting of programs to different demographics, regions or groups. Champions were **BBC** and **IET**, and Participants included **CuVo, EZDRM, Infuse Video, JPB Media Solutions** and **Metarex**.

For this 2024 cycle, the projects selected for development are:

ECOFLOW: Energy-Conserving Optimization for Future-ready, Low-impact Online Workflows – a project proposed by **Humans Not Robots** and **Accedo** and supported by Champions **ITV** and **BBC.** This project tackles the environmental impact of media consumption by developing consolidated metrics for energy consumption at major steps of the end-to-end technology supply chain, aligning best-of-breed energy-saving features into a unified user experience. It will essentially determine and demonstrate opportunities to make processing, streaming and media consumption more measurable and sustainable.

Connecting Live Performances of the Future with ULL-AVLM (Ultra-Low Latency Audio, Video, Light and Media Data) – a project proposed by **d&b Solutions** and Championed by the **University of Strathclyde**, plus others. It aims to develop a solution for delivering data between venues in sync and with private 5G to unlock ultra-low latencies. In a world where live performances include dynamic visual canvases powered by real-time engines, spatial/object-based audio, and complex lighting and tracking data, this project will recreate the experience of a live performance in multiple locations or bring together remote performers into a seamless and immersive live experience.

Solving the IP (Internet Protocol) Identity Crisis – A project proposed by **Eviden** and supported by Champions **BBC, EBU, IMG,** and **Solent University**. This project looks to address challenges around IP infrastructure within broadcast facilities created by the orchestration of media flows – namely, how to find the correct device, sender or receiver when there might be thousands in a facility. The team will gather data from across the industry to establish current obstacles and utilise it to test and implement solutions incorporating IS 13. Dynamic routing for orchestrated infrastructure will then take place. A collaborative group will include key industry standards movements working toward an accelerated approach to this industry challenge.

Design Your Weapons in the Fight Against Disinformation is a project proposed by Champions **BBC** and **CBS News and Paramount Global**. The goals of this project are to develop an industry-wide understanding on the challenges and abuses being faced today by all media outlets in identifying disinformation and helping audiences identify trustworthy news and information. It aims to build support around how media companies work together to address the issues and the question of communicating this work to new audiences. Through the resources of the BBC, CBS/Paramount and other Co-Champions, the team will look to establish an initial premise on the most effective interventions and how news organisations can collaborate on making them work and understood.

Evolution of the Control Room - Leveraging XR, Voice, AI & HTML-Based Graphics Solutions – Proposed by Champions **TRANSMIXR, ITN**, **BBC** and **TV2 Denmark** with support from Champions **HSLU, TCD, TG4, TUS** and the **University of Strathclyde**. The project combines two original Accelerator challenge proposals into a transformative, overarching project exploring the evolution of live production workflows – with two key streams of development – the Evolution of the Control Room, leveraging XR, Voice, AI and HTML Based Graphic Solutions. This new project aims to optimise the workflow using XR technology and AI solutions, enabling production teams to realise their creative vision without advanced technical expertise. The POC will aim to showcase Democratize Media Production using Automation, Generative AI, Voice Commands, Distributed Studios and shared resources across regional and local hubs – using any device in any location to meet audience needs, with easier, faster, cheaper and more sustainable solutions. The HTML Based Graphics project stream aims to develop a modular graphics solution that supports multiplatform delivery, as well as real-time end-device rendering and playback. It aims to use industry-standard graphics and programming tools for graphics development along with common off-the-shelf web components for storage and visualisation – essential elements to achieve the desired modularity.

Digital Replicas and Talent ID: Provenance, Verification and New Automated Workflows – Project proposed by **HAND Human & Digital** with Champions to be confirmed. This challenge addresses the evolving disruption within the media and entertainment industry in the authentication and management of talent in today's digital landscape. Specifically, it addresses issues tied to the authentication of AI-generated content, virtual world representation, and talent provenance. By offering a distinct and standardised identification framework, this project aims to streamline the authentication process, ensuring reliable verification of real individuals, virtual avatars and fictional entities. This exploration will respond to the urgent need from the media and entertainment industry for an agile solution to automate provenance, thus verifying the authenticity of digital personas and protecting against unauthorised virtual representations.

Scalable Ultra-Low Latency Streaming for Premium Sports – Proposed by Champion **Comcast**, this project seeks to achieve Twitter-equivalent latency and near-instant playback start using standard HTTP streaming technical stack and infrastructure. The areas explored will be the use of low-latency encoding and segment-based ingest, the latest low-delay extensions to MPEG DASH, and possible uses of MV-HEVC video codec and the QUIC protocol. The goal is to achieve a sub-2 second glass-to-glass delay with standard adaptive streaming, enabling premium sports experiences.

AI MEDIA PRODUCTION LAB: In an IBC Accelerators first, the 2024 Programme will feature very special challenges under an umbrella theme of 'AI Media Production Lab', which sets out to explore a series of specific AI concepts in various production scenarios. This encompasses researching and developing learnings around the various AI tools and techniques in terms of how to improve creativity, bias and efficiency in this fast-moving, disruptive area of media and technology. These case studies are:

1) **Generative AI in Action –** Proposed by Champions **RAI** and **EBU**, this strand looks at how content creators can leverage AI in creative storytelling and production, using several AI platforms to make a pilot. Exploring AI as a powerful tool with the potential to transform traditional production workflows, the project will also aim to deliver in-depth analysis of existing Generative AI tools and their best practice applications in the creation of scene, script, voice and virtual characters.

2) **AI Audience Validation Assistant (AAVA) –** Proposed by Champion **Zwart** and **Evangelische Omroep (EO)** and supported by Co-Champions **BNNVARA**, this challenge has a core focus aimed at the entire industry and audience perceptions, utilising AI as a tool to combat bias detection, AI hallucinations and promote inclusion and diversity for audiences and focus groups at early content production and development stages. Overall, the project will embrace the needs of the industry and aim to explore ways to turn passive viewers into active contributors through AI-driven personas that reflect society's complexity.

3) **Changing the Game: Predictive Generative AI –** Proposed by Champion **Verizon**, this case study will look at AI as a production tool for Live Sports and Live Events to assist directors and production teams to potentially predict next frames and next moves for swifter edits, content detection, and better workflows. The challenge will also aim to evaluate which datasets are needed to accurately predict live video outcomes and how far into the future the predictive video and audio can remain authentic to the actual video and audio.

SPECIAL INCUBATOR PROJECT: Connect and Produce Anywhere, Phase II – Proposed by Champions **BBC, BT Media & Broadcast,** and **TV2 Denmark,** with others to be confirmed. This special project follows the build and development of an all-IP, edge-first, multi-cloud, multi-software test bed environment that was created in the 2023 Accelerator Programme. The project will look to push further innovation through experimentation in the following areas: environmental monitoring and measurement; orchestration; deployment (including containerisation) observability; other transport elements and business case and licence options.

To date, more than 180 organisations have participated in the Accelerator Programme since 2019, delivering POCs for 35 projects. Alumni Champions have included **Aardman Entertainment, Al Jazeera, BBC, BT Sport, DAZN, Fox Sports, ITV, NBC Universal, the English Premier League, Pixar, Production Park, Thomson Reuters, RTÉ, Sky, Universal Pictures, Unity, Unreal/Epic Games, Paramount, Warner Bros. Discovery**, and many more. Projects have addressed challenges in areas such as 5G, AI, CG Animation, live cloud production, immersive audio and sound, next-gen news studio, cloud localisation, sustainability, volumetric video and VFX workflows, IP transition and many others.

The final results and demonstrations of all the Accelerator projects this year will be showcased in the Accelerator Zone on the Innovation Stage in Hall 3 each day at IBC2024. Each POC presentation will provide a full overview of a project's challenges, demonstrate its findings, and answer visitor questions.

More details of IBC's 2024 Accelerator Programme **can be found here**.

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About IBC

Delivering innovation and empowering people, IBC is where the future of the global Media and Entertainment industry is redefined. Energising the market, enabling content everywhere and inspiring new conversations, IBC brings the creative, technology and business communities together to collaborate, learn and unlock new opportunities.

At IBC 2023, exhibitors and speakers from around the globe will showcase game-changing innovations and tackle the media sector's most pressing trends and issues – changing perceptions and meeting the needs of the world-leading broadcasters, content owners, rightsholders, service providers and others attending the four-day conference and trade show.

With a focus on inclusivity, IBC propels change – driving thought leadership, sparking discussion, shifting expectations, accelerating creativity and enabling real business outcomes. IBC's mission is to empower our 250,000-strong global community to explore new opportunities, build knowledge, and play an active role in the technological transformation and broader change sweeping the industry worldwide.

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