Questionnaire to Analyze Internet Art
— Second Step – External Dependencies

This questionnaire is intended to serve as a secondary tool for the preliminary analysis of an internet artwork by professionals in cultural heritage who might not necessarily have a technical background. It addresses client-side analysis versus server-side, which refers to the examination of those elements of the website that are accessible via the browser without any further permissions being required. This form is the second of two parts and meant to be filled out if more information is required after filling out the first. It provides information on how to analyze a work's sustainability based on whether it has external dependencies and if so, how these external dependencies can affect the work's long-term preservation. Further, provided with this form is supplemental information that can provide insight in case anything about these forms is unclear. All questions compiled here are based on the part of the website that is publicly accessible.

In composing this form a number of assumptions have been made. These are the following:

- We assume that the website is online and that it is accessible via its URL.
- We assume that you do not have access to the web server at this moment.

External dependencies

External dependencies make a website vulnerable. There are several ways to check for external dependencies. Some dependencies can be recognized immediately, for instance if the URL of a link leads to an external domain. Others are less obvious. There are several tests you can conduct:

- Check whether the web page still runs, after the internet has been switched off.
- Save the whole website and then test, whether it runs without internet (s. following questions).
- Open the website with Google Chrome and go to more tools / developer tools in the menu and select the "network" tab. Then click on "all" and "3rd-party requests". If you then navigate to the page on the left, the external links will be visible in the list (if there are any). Further, the Fetch/XHR tab indicates whether the webpage uses APIs.

Using Web Browser Inspector

What it can do:

- It helps to analyse external dependencies and APIs
- It finds and helps to analyse errors (missing sources, mixed content, etc.)

What it cannot do:

- It is not able to analyse the versions of the software used, be it HTML, CSS, Javascript or server-side languages.

It is unable to identify all the external dependencies. External dependencies may be coded server-side, coming up only if the right page and interaction has been triggered.

1) Can you discover any external dependencies? If yes, which ones?

_____

Questionnaire to Analyze Internet Art
— Second Step – External Dependencies

2) Can you discover any errors? If yes which ones? Do they correspond with any dysfunctionalities already noted with the website?

_____

READING THE SOURCE CODE OF A WEB PAGE

In the web browser, open the website you want to check and press **Ctrl**. U to view the source code. This can also be done using the web browser menu (see **Checking the metadata such as artwork title and artist**).
If the developer tools are used to read the source code, be aware that the web browser can add code to the code of the website.

What it can do:

- Helps in recognising obsolete media formats. For this, additional knowledge is necessary regarding which media formats are obsolete
- Gives indications to whether server-side code is to be expected.

What it cannot do:

- Recognise which media formats are obsolete.
- Recognise commands, in particular which commands used for embedding media files are obsolete.
- Give insight into server-side code

1) What file formats do you come across (besides HTML and CSS)?

_____

2) Do the files listed above work? Can you play them back?

_____

CHECKING THE WEBSITE IN DIFFERENT WEB BROWSERS

Different web browsers might render the website differently, especially if the website is a few years old. Rendering the website with web browsers that date from the year the website was made are important in viewing the website as it was intended to be. Further, current web browsers do not allow for the install of plugins. To address this problem, you would ideally have a set of different browser emulations (emulations of old computer systems with old versions of web browsers installed) at hand. Alternatively, one could try the Rhizome service: http://oldweb.today

* See Questionnaire to Analyze Internet Art – Second Step and Supplemental Information for more information.