

## ACCESS SERVICES EXPERTS MEETING 2018

8 – 9 NOVEMBER

Venue: RTS, Quai Ernest-Ansermet 20, 1211 Geneva, Switzerland ([map](#))

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## AGENDA

### DAY 1

#### THURSDAY 8 NOVEMBER: PRE-EVENTS AT RTS

- 16:45 REGISTRATION OF PARTICIPANTS**  
RTS, Quai Ernest-Ansermet 20, 1204 Geneva
- 17:15 WELCOME SPEECHES**  
RTS, Balcon Léman / 16th floor  
Philippe Hêche, Head of TV Continuity Planning, RTS, Switzerland  
Gion Linder, Head of SWISS TXT AG & chairman of the EBU Access Services Experts Bureau, SWISS  
TXT AG, Switzerland
- 17:20 PRESENTATION OF RTS ACCESS SERVICES**  
Results of a survey on the accessibility of connected TV  
Martin Spycher, Head of Innovation Multimedia, SRG SSR, Switzerland
- How we deal with efficiency  
Sascha Klement, Head of Digital Media Operations, SWISS TXT AG, Switzerland
- “Signes”, a new nationwide program for the deaf  
Stéphane Brasey, Producer, RTS, Switzerland
- 18:10 GUIDED TOUR**  
Visit of RTS studios & services
- 19:00 GET TO KNOW YOU**  
Networking session
- 19:30 TAPAS & DRINKS**

## DAY 2

### FRIDAY 9 NOVEMBER: ACCESS SERVICES EXPERTS MEETING

**08:30 REGISTRATION OF PARTICIPANTS**  
RTS, Quai Ernest-Ansermet 20, 1204 Geneva

**09:00 OPENING REMARKS**  
Pascal Crittin, Director General, RTS, Switzerland  
Jean Philip De Tender, Media Director, EBU, Switzerland

**09:20 SPECIAL FOCUS ON MEDIA ACCESSIBILITY IN FRANCE**  
Leader in TV captioning for the deaf and hard of hearing people in France, France.tv access (part of france.tv studio, formerly MFP, a subsidiary of the France Télévisions Group) will present the current situation regarding programme accessibility for the deaf and hard of hearing people in France and the specific case of France Télévisions. They will also broach the legal context in France related to making programmes accessible on television channels and give an overview of the various services provided. A more specific focus will introduce the methods implemented by france.tv access for France Télévisions programmes.

Eric Florence, Head of france.tv access, France.tv studio  
Diane Bessis, Project Manager, France.tv studio  
Rémy Dal Molin, Head of development, France.tv studio

**09:45 SESSION 1: ACCESSIBILITY EXTENDED**  
In the old (media) world accessibility was as linear as the TV programme. Just use the remote control. But in the non-linear world, we face new challenges. How do we make our services accessible on new platforms and devices? Parallel to this, we will discover new opportunities for new services addressing different target groups. For example, how can subtitles help immigrants learn a new language? Lastly, when we finally immerse ourselves in 360-degree experiences, how can we ensure that we do not leave a part of our audience behind?

Moderated by: Frauke Langguth, Head of ARD Text, Member of the EBU Access Services Experts Bureau, ARD, Germany

#### **Access Player: a france.tv studio project**

France.tv access will introduce the Access Player project developed by france.tv studio, an innovative and multi-access tool. france.tv access has since 2013 been researching and developing the process. A first video player, awarded the AccessiWeb Silver label, was released in early 2014. In 2017, france.tv access invented the AccessPlayer, the result of a four-year project. This multi-access, unique and innovative video player, available under free license, allows people with disabilities, (the deaf, hard of hearing, blind or visually impaired, or those with motor disabilities) to follow any type of video content broadcast on the web.

Eric Florence, Head of france.tv access, France.tv studio  
Diane Bessis, Project Manager, France.tv studio  
Rémy Dal Molin, Head of development, France.tv studio

#### **SVT Språkplay: A media integrated language learning app for immigrants**

SVT Språkplay is the newest app developed by SVT and Språkkraft. It uses TV programmes from PSB to help immigrants learn Swedish language and culture and understand society. The App offers SVT programmes with interactive subtitles that come with language support in 18 different languages.

Are Nundal, Strategic Digital Project Manager, SVT, Sweden  
Niss Jonas Carlsson, Chairman & Founder, Språkkraft, Sweden

#### **Immersive Accessibility (ImAc): One-year progress report**

ImAc, an H2020 EU-funded project, aims to provide an end-to-end system to create, distribute and display accessible content as part of omnidirectional video and virtual reality. The project partners have developed first versions of tools to create immersive and customizable services. So far, initial user tests have been conducted. Annette will present the project's progress and talk about what lessons have been learned.

Annette Wilson, Head of Innovation Projects, RBB, Germany

## 10:40 **ACCESSIBILITY IN THE EU: STATE OF PLAY**

In 2015 and 2016 the European Commission proposed two directives aiming, to a certain extent, at improving the accessibility of audiovisual services in Europe. The EU legislators are now close to completing the legislative process for these two proposals; namely the Audiovisual Media Services Directive (AVMSD) and the EU Accessibility Act (EUAA). Julie will present these two upcoming legislations and inform you about their implementation. She will then announce the forthcoming launch of the new EBU Funding Hub where members will easily find information on PSM-specific funding opportunities.

Julie Lenoir, European Affairs Assistant, Legal & Policy, EBU Brussels, Belgium

11:00 *Coffee break*

## 11:20 **SESSION 2: AUTOMATIONS**

Can automation help attain access services goals?

Moderated by: Erik de Snerk, Head of Production Facilities and Coordinator of Access Services, Member of the EBU Access Services Experts Bureau, VRT, Belgium

### **Human Language Technology: Applications at Deutsche Welle**

Human Language Technologies are becoming increasingly important for the production of broadcasting content in several languages. Automated transcription, translation, summarization and related technologies lead to automated analysis, subtitling and even voice-over. They allow us to make the workflow more efficient and to increase production in various languages.

Peggy Van der Kreeft, Language Specialist and Project Manager, DW, Germany

### **Will Automatic Speech Recognition ever be able to deliver broadcast quality subtitles? What is the impact of AI on subtitle production and quality control?**

Although Automatic Speech Recognition has improved significantly in recent years, the accuracy of its output still lags far behind the quality expectations that audiences have for broadcast television. While there are many things that can be done during integration to enhance quality and make the ASR output more closely resemble broadcast subtitling, fundamentally it risks a reduction in quality for live services and requires significant QC for pre-recorded files. In this presentation, Red Bee Media will cover some of the integration challenges that are faced, the trade-offs that can be made between cost and quality, and the potential opportunities for improvements to fully automated workflows.

Matt Simpson, Head of Portfolio for Access Services, Red Bee Media, UK  
Hewson Maxwell, Head of Technology Development, Access Services, Red Bee Media, UK

## 11:55 **CONTENT4ALL: LIVE REMOTE AVATAR PUPPETEERING**

Improving the accessibility of content for the deaf community is an essential goal for both national governments and broadcast industry regulators in Europe. Broadcasting companies are continuously seeking solutions to increase the number of programmes that can be translated into sign language. At the same time, the deaf community is carefully looking at these solutions to ensure optimum quality of interpretation and language purity. The Content4All project, funded by the European Commission, positions itself in between the needs of the broadcasters and the deaf community: the aim of the project is to help broadcasters reduce the cost of personalized sign-interpreted content creation and increase the accessibility of this media content for deaf users.

Robin Ribback, Head of Innovation Management & EU Projects, SWISS TXT AG, Switzerland

12:15 *Lunch*

## 13:45 **SESSION 3: “NOTHING ABOUT US WITHOUT US” - TESTING & COOPERATING WITH END USERS**

“Do’s” and “don’ts” when it comes to involvement of end users. This session will tackle the following questions: Why is it important for end users to be involved at an early stage with testing? What are the different methodologies and approaches? How can user involvement give us a better understanding of key needs? Will we create better results? And can it be done in simple ways?

Moderated by: Heidi Sivebaek, Editor Accessibility & Diversity, Member of the EBU Access Services Experts Bureau, DR, Denmark

## **How to cooperate with our most demanding audience? A source of inspiration and innovation**

Based on feedback from the NRK User Council, NRK started several projects to ensure accessibility of its content. Among these projects are spoken subtitles on the NRK Player, audio description of Snapchat from mobile screen casts and an accessibility button on the NRK Player.

Siri Antonsen, Strategic Head of Access Services, NRK, Norway  
Kristoffer Lium, User Interface Developer & Accessibility Expert, NRK, Norway

## **The hard of hearing people and broadcasters: bridging the gap**

Lidia will present diversity among deaf and hard of hearing viewers to provide a clearer view of expectations. She will share best practice examples and provide practical tips for involving hard of hearing people in the R&D process. She will also show how proper access is helping fulfil the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD), Article 30.

Lidia Best, Vice – President, EFHOH (European Federation of Hard of Hearing People), UK

## **End-user involvement: a developing concept or a reality**

Greater appreciation for access features and the role they play in social inclusion is changing the way media companies treat delivery. However, there is a risk if we start to assume that all the proposed solutions - technical and editorial - are going to work for the intended audience. Sonali will discuss how continued focus and user involvement in the development stages offer the possibility of pre-empting potential problems as well as drawing attention to benefits that were not originally considered.

Sonali Rai, Broadcast Relationships and Audio Description Manager, RNIB (Royal National Institute of the Blind), UK

### **14:40 LIGHTENING TALK: A UNIVERSAL SYMBOL FOR ACCESS SERVICES**

There are a variety of methods and systems that are used by broadcasters to inform their audiences what services are available on their programmes. Symbols/icons play an important role in today's communication on screen and are usually the most preferred communication method for access services. But what about the consistency and the universality of their understanding? Based on some examples, Heidi will engage the audience in a preliminary discussion on that topic to help evaluate if a common initiative on creating a universal symbol for all the access services in Europe could be considered.

Heidi Sivebaek, Editor Accessibility & Diversity, Member of the EBU Access Services Experts Bureau, DR, Denmark

14:50 *Coffee break*

### **15:20 SESSION 4: AUDIO DESCRIPTION & SUBTITLING**

Subtitling and audio description are the pillars of access services. And even though they have existed for a long time, they still continue to evolve. That's what this session will be all about.

Moderated by: Gion Linder, Head of SWISS TXT AG & Chairman of the EBU Access Services Experts Bureau, SWISS TXT AG, Switzerland

## **PART 1: AUDIO DESCRIPTION**

### **Audio description formats**

TV programmes come in all shapes, sizes and genres, and in order to make audio description work with them, it needs to change form and embrace new formats. The RNIB is working with content producers to explore some new formats for enhancing end-user experience. John's presentation will look at some of these formats that are on-air and some that are being currently tested as part of research projects.

John Paton, Innovation and Technology Officer (Media and Broadcast), RNIB (Royal National Institute of the Blind), UK

### **Seeing while speaking: Sport events with live audio description**

Visually-impaired people, like many others, love sports, especially big events like the Olympic Games or other world championships. Under certain conditions, live audio-description can open up these events to blind people. Georg will present some live-AD projects recently developed for sports events by MDR.

Georg Schmolz, Head of Access Services, MDR, Germany

### **Lightening talk: The W3C Audio Description Community Group - progress towards an open standard file format for AD**

Nigel will provide a status report on progress by the W3C Audio Description Community Group, which is aiming to produce an open standard file format to support audio description, all the way from scripting to mixing, using a profile of TTML2. He will also provide a short demonstration of audio description audio mixing in the browser using a prototype implementation created by the BBC.

Nigel Megitt, Executive Product Manager, BBC, UK

## **16:00 PART 2: SUBTITLING**

### **How DR will overcome the live subtitle delay**

How DR will implement close-to-synchronous live subtitles for all viewers, including live-stream viewers? Per Skou will demonstrate how simplifying the subtitle playout and transmission structure quite drastically and introducing a general video delay around 4 seconds in the transmission line can lead to good results in obtaining close-to-synchronous live subtitles.

Per Skou Nielsen, R&D Engineer and Project Manager, DR, Denmark

### **EBU-TT: NPO best practices specification**

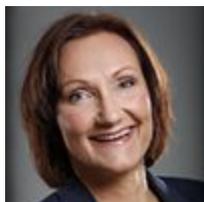
Marco will present the preparation for implementing EBU-TT in a multi-vendor system chain. Finger-pointing not allowed!

Marco Slik, Senior Policy Advisor Research & Development, NPO, Netherlands

## **16:30 END OF THE EVENT**

## 2018 SPEAKERS

### A



#### **SIRI ANTONSEN**

Strategic Head of Access Services, NRK, Norway

Siri is responsible for making NRK's content accessible for the entire NRK audience through subtitling, sign language, audio description, spoken subtitles, audibility, readability and user-friendliness. She has headed NRK's User Council since 2015. Previously she was head of NRK's Sign Language Department, from 2000 to 2014. She is trained in general management, project management and strategy and is also an officially approved sign-language interpreter.

### B



#### **DIANE BESSIS**

Project Manager, France.TV Studio, France

Diane Bessis has a master's degree from ISIT in Intercultural Communication and Translation (French, English and Spanish). After working as a translator in the Sustainability Department of Alcatel-Lucent, she became a linguist at Softissimo. In 2011, she joined the closed captioning department at france.tv studio (formerly MFP) as a subtitler, proof-reader and then channel manager. In 2014, she was involved in setting up the accessibility team, where she now is project manager.



#### **LIDIA BEST**

Vice-President, FHOH - European Federation of Hard of Hearing People, UK

Lidia Best is a Vice President of the European Federation of Hard of Hearing People (EFHOH). She has extensive experience in regard to policy development, consulting, standardisation and developing reports. Lidia is an editor of the ITU technical standard on remote captioning, which will serve as an international benchmark in minimum standards expected in remote captioning and eventually will benefit live subtitling quality expectations. As a member of EDF's ICT Experts Group she provided input in consultations on the European Accessibility Act (EAA) including latest round of the review of Audio-Visual Media Services Directive (AVMSD).

In the UK, as the Chairman of the National Association of Deafened People (NADP), Lidia has a long-standing collaboration with key stakeholders in both verbatim speech to text reporting, subtitling and broadcasting. She is an advisor in the Accessibility Work group of the Digital TV Group and the Consumer Forum for Communication at OFCOM representing her members.

Recently, she joined the Deaf Access to Communication (DAC) Special Interest Group of UK Council on Deafness as an executive member, where she provides input into UK policy development in telephone relay services and quality of subtitling.

## C



### **PASCAL CRITTIN**

Director General, RTS, Switzerland

Pascal Crittin has been Head of Radio Télévision Suisse (RTS) since 1 May 2017. He is also a member of the SRG SSR management board.

Radio Télévision Suisse (RTS) produces and broadcasts four radio stations (La Première, Espace 2, Couleur 3 and Option Musique) and two TV channels (RTS1 and RTS2), available throughout Switzerland. Its programmes are also accessible on digital platforms (including [www.rts.ch](http://www.rts.ch), [www.rtsinfo.ch](http://www.rtsinfo.ch), [www.rtssport.ch](http://www.rtssport.ch) and [www.rtsculture.ch](http://www.rtsculture.ch)), mobile applications and social media. RTS is the leading radio, TV and online broadcaster in French-speaking Switzerland. RTS programmes are also shown on TV5Monde, a global channel for French-speaking countries, as well as on other public French-speaking radio and television stations. RTS operates from its two main locations in Geneva and Lausanne, with offices in all French-speaking cantons, in German-speaking Switzerland (Bern and Zurich) and in Italian-speaking Switzerland (Lugano) as well as in various international capitals.

Pascal Crittin holds a master's degree in Humanities and Musicology from the University of Fribourg. His passion for music led him to work in choral conducting, composition and teaching. Later, as Managing Director of the publisher Editions St-Augustin, he became acquainted with the media industry and the field of communication. In 2002, he joined Radio Suisse Romande as Head of the Espace 2 radio station, where he developed its cultural and musical offerings.

From 2008 to 2009, he held the position of RSR General Secretary. In this role, he was jointly responsible for the operational merger plan. From January 2010 to March 2017, Pascal Crittin held the role of Director of the General Affairs department at RTS. This department combines the functions of central secretariat, legal services, coordination of strategic projects, and strategic and national affairs. Since 2014, he has been in charge of the installation of the future RTS site on the EPFL university campus and has co-managed the creation of the Alliance for Media Innovation along with a number of universities. At the same time, Pascal Crittin also holds positions at the following institutions: Swiss Solidarity (chairman), European Broadcasting Union (member) and Public Francophone Media (vice-chairman).

## D



### **RÉMY DAL MOLIN**

Head of Development, France.TV Studio, France

Rémy Dal Molin has joined france.tv studio (formerly MFP) in 2003. In 2013, he directs the creation of the digital accessibility department and currently supervises its development. His team manages the on- and off-line accessibility of audiovisual contents, especially for public and parapublic clients.



### **ERIK DE SNERK**

Head of Production Facilities and Coordinator of Access Services, Member of the EBU Access Services Experts Bureau, VRT, Belgium

The Production Facilities Department is responsible for post-production, translation, subtitling and access services. Erik started at VRT in 1995, on

the editorial staff of the teletext services, freelancing for the Subtitling Department. Since 1997, he has been a full-time member of the Subtitling Department, focusing on technical aspects. In his quest to find better solutions for live subtitling, he introduced speech recognition in 2001. In 2009, he became head of ProVO, a new VRT department that provides translating, subtitling and programme editing. Since 2011, he has been in charge of all access services, including signing, audio description and spoken subtitling for linear broadcasts and web content.



## JEAN PHILIP DE TENDER

Media Director, EBU, Switzerland

Since 2015, Jean Philip has been Media Director at the European Broadcasting Union in Geneva, overseeing strategy, management, networks and content-related representation. For more than 25 years Jean Philip De Tender worked for VRT, the Flemish public broadcaster in Belgium. He started his career as a journalist working on various television and radio programmes. Later on, as television programme manager, he became responsible for a wide range of programmes covering all genres, from fiction to entertainment, current affairs and reality.

From 2007 to 2013, he was the channel manager of Eén, the biggest television channel in Flanders. During his tenure, Eén grew to achieve enormous success, cornering a share of more than 33% and plotting a clear course for public broadcasting. During his last two years at VRT, he was in charge of all television channels (Eén, Canvas and Ketnet).

Jean Philip De Tender loves writing and sharing his ideas. Social media has become second nature to him. In 2010, he published his first book, *Alles is een verhaal* (Everything is a story). An inspiring personality, he often lectures internationally, both inside and outside the media world. He loves reading books and is inspired by everything that crosses his path. His motto in life is to “create order in the chaos and chaos in the order”.

## F



## ERIC FLORENCE

Head of France.TV Access, France.TV Studio

As an expert in closed captioning, Eric contributed to the development of the French standards in 2002. Following the entry into force of the Disability Act in February 2005, pursuant to which all TV programmes with audience ratings over 2.5% should be closed captioned, he developed the department so that it could manage entire public service mission of the France Télévisions group in the area of accessibility.

## H



## PHILIPPE HÊCHE

Head of Continuity Planning, RTS, Switzerland

An engineer by training, Philippe Hêche joined TSR in 2001, first as a project manager and subsequently as production project supervisor. In 2007, he moved to the multimedia unit, where he and his teams were responsible for managing equipment upgrading and new activities that would enable RTS audio and video content to be broadcast across all multimedia platforms. Since 2014, he has been managing the broadcast and continuity planning unit (Antennes TV) and cross-media traffic system, which involves organizing, structuring and managing multi-platform distribution of TV and livestreaming. He is responsible for the accessibility of all RTS content. He is also producer of the RTS TV show ‘Interface’.

## J



### **NISS JONAS CARLSSON**

Chairman & Founder, Språkkraft, Sweden

Niss Jonas Carlsson has been working for more than 18 years in the field of learning technology. Some of the solutions he has been involved in have won awards such as the Swedish E-learning Awards, the US CODiE Awards and Top Pick for Learning by Common Sense Education. He founded Språkkraft, a non-profit association, in 2015 with the aim of speeding up integration by refugees and other immigrants in Sweden using digital solutions, with a focus on language learning. The technology developed by Språkkraft and its business partners can be adapted to other languages; proof-of-concepts are in progress for English, German, French, Spanish, Norwegian and Italian.

## L



### **FRAUKE LANGGUTH**

Head of ARD Text, Member of the EBU Access Services Experts Bureau, ARD, Germany

Frauke Langguth, is a multimedia journalist with extensive experience in print and TV, radio and online media (Radio Fritz, ORB / rbb and ORBOnline / rbb-Online). Since 2008, he has headed up ARD Text at Rundfunk Berlin-Brandenburg in Potsdam. His responsibilities include the ARD Text newsflash service on the leading nationwide channel, DasErste, which has been the most successful German teletext service for more than eight years. Frauke is also an expert on accessibility. ARD Text provides subtitles for numerous programmes on the first and third ARD channels, with a focus on live subtitling. Other areas of responsibility include media development, social media, interactive television and smart TV (HbbTV).



### **JULIE LENOIR**

European Affairs Assistant, Legal & Policy, EBU Brussels, Belgium

Julie Lenoir is responsible for lobbying on copyright and accessibility-related issues. Before joining the EBU, she worked for the Impact Assessment Institute as Junior Research Associate. There, her job was to analyse pre-legislative studies conducted by the European Commission in the field of digital advancements. She also launched an EU communication platform called SHOWMEYUROPE, which every year organizes an artistic contest based on a specific European topic. Julie has master's degrees in Sociology/Anthropology and European Communications.



### **GION LINDER**

Head of SWISS TXT AG, Chairman of the EBU Access Services Experts Bureau, Switzerland

After studies in marketing, Gion Linder worked as a consultant for various new media projects in the 1980s. From 1992 to 1997, he was National Subtitling Coordinator at Swiss TXT. He then worked as content manager for a publisher, as product manager for a cable company and as a project manager for a mobile carrier. In 2007, he returned as head of the National Subtitling Coordination Service at Swiss TXT, where he is a member of the executive management team. Gion Linder is also chairman of the EBU Access Services bureau.



## KRISTOFFER LIUM

User interface Developer & Accessibility Expert, NRK, Norway

Kristoffer started at NRK on 1 May 2017. Before becoming a proud member of NRK's Web & Mobile Department, he worked as a consultant for the Norwegian Association of the Blind & Partially Sighted. He has a bachelor's degree in computer science. As a visually impaired computer developer, his unique combination of technical knowledge and user experience is sought by companies all over the country. In particular, he loves how the internet and smartphones make him an independent and integrated part of society. This is the reason why he is a technology enthusiast, and he loves making NRK's products more accessible to everyone.

## M - N



## HEWSON MAXWELL

Head of Technology Development, Access Services, Red Bee Media, UK

Hewson Maxwell is a technology expert with over fifteen years' experience in the Broadcast industry. He has worked for the BBC, Red Bee Media, and Ericsson supporting and developing a variety of broadcast systems, and during the last eight years has specialised in Access Services technology. Hewson's current role is "Head of Technology Development - Access Services" for Red Bee Media, an Ericsson company. The role involves leading Development and R&D teams in both developing next generation tools and incorporating ASR, Deep Learning and other cutting edge technologies into new products and existing production workflows.



## NIGEL MEGITT

Executive Product Manager, BBC, UK

Nigel Megitt is the BBC's Executive Product Manager with responsibility for Access Services technology. He co-chairs both the EBU Subtitles in XML group and the W3C Timed Text Working Group, having been active in the Access Services sector for over 5 years. Previously Nigel worked in enterprise architecture and at BBC Research & Development where he led a team of developers working on EPG schedule data systems.



## ARE NUNDAL

Strategic Digital Project Manager, SVT, Sweden

Are Nundal manages digital development at SVT as well as SVT Språkplay. He has also worked on the SVT:s news app and online TV-service, Play, for more than 12 years. He has also commissioned some of the more successful TV series as measured by online audience scores.

## P



## JOHN PATON

Innovation and Technology Officer (Media and Broadcast), RNIB - Royal National Institute of the Blind, UK

John Paton is an Innovation and Technology Officer at the RNIB and works with the UK government as well as manufacturers, regulators and industry bodies to improve the accessibility of television, radio and video-on-demand services. He is currently involved in a European project exploring how audio description can be applied to the media formats of the future.

John has a wealth of experience in accessibility issues. He previously worked for Action on Hearing Loss and Sense. He has a master's degree in Computer Systems Engineering.

## R



### **SONALI RAI**

Broadcast Relationships & Audio description Manager, RNIB - Royal National Institute of the Blind, UK

Sonali is a currently leads the work on media accessibility at the Royal National Institute of Blind People. She has substantial experience in supporting the implementation of solutions on access to content and reviewing end user experience. Sonali's recent work has included:

- Exploring user experience of personalised solutions for receiving audio description.
- Helping deliver the 2018 UK Audio Description Awareness Drive on UK Television.
- Helping develop and adapt traditional audio description for different formats/ content including Reality TV, VR, TV Commercials and 360 degree content.
- Publishing a paper comparing the different audio description guidelines that are used by describers across the world.
- For World Blind Union: authoring toolkit on Audio Description and User Requirements for Digital Television for People with Sight Loss.

Sonali has a Master's Degree in Communication and Broadcast Media. She started her career at CNBC - Business TV News Service and worked in the sector for eleven years during which she contributed to/ produced news magazine shows.



### **ROBIN RIBBACK**

Head of Innovation Management & EU Projects, SWISS TXT AG, Switzerland

Robin Ribback is Head of Innovation Management at SwissTXT AG, a fully owned subsidiary of the Swiss public broadcaster SRG-SSR. Swiss TXT is a central provider of OTT services and accessibility services such as closed captioning, subtitling, audio description and sign language for all channels in the SRG group. He is responsible for developing new access-service technologies and implementing an EU innovation project. He is co-founder and was previously CIO of VerbaVoice GmbH, where he developed "Beyond TV" access services. He has a long history in IT and the media services. As a board member of Media Professionals AG, he developed complex platforms for producing and transmitting television and radio programmes via satellite/cable and the internet. His career also includes Norcom AG, Munich, where as CIO he was responsible for the development and integration of newsroom systems.

## S



### **GEORG SCHMOLZ**

Head of Access Services, MDR, Germany

Georg Schmolz has been head of Access Services at Mitteldeutscher Rundfunk (MDR) since 2014. This public broadcaster, located in Leipzig, covers a wide range of programmes for three German federal states: Saxony, Saxony-Anhalt and Thuringia. Before that, he was a journalist, working for a variety of broadcasters such as ARTE, Antenne 2, Bayerischer Rundfunk and ARD.



## **MATT SIMPSON**

Head of Portfolio for Access Services, Red Bee Media, UK

Matt Simpson is Head of Portfolio for Access Services, Red Bee Media. In this role he is responsible for the commercial and technical aspects of customer relationships and driving the Access Services product roadmap to

deliver appropriate products for the market. Additionally, Matt guides the development of technology platforms and Research & Development projects used to provide live and pre-recorded captioning, audio description and sign language translation services around the world. Over the last few years he has been engaged in various speech technology research projects, both collaborative - such as EU-Bridge - and directly with academic partners. These projects have focused on speaker-independent automatic speech recognition technologies. Prior to joining Ericsson, Matt was Head of Technology, Access Services at Red Bee Media. Prior to this, he spent 13 years at Europe's leading entertainment company, Sky, in the UK, where he worked in live news and sports production, largely on the creation of systems for the manipulation and presentation of data on screen for news, weather, sports, elections and various virtual reality projects.



## **HEIDI SIVEBAEK**

Editor Accessibility & Diversity, Member of the EBU Access Services Bureau, DR, Denmark

Heidi Sivebaek completed her journalist training in 1987 and started working for Danish Broadcasting in 1988. In 2002, she became head of DR's regional radio in Copenhagen. In 2006, she was appointed head of DR's Innovation Department. In 2011, she became the first Accessibility Editor, with responsibility for strategies and communication in the accessibility sector. At DR, accessibility is defined as the task of securing everyone's access to DR's products and removing obstacles to hearing, seeing, reading and understanding. She sees working with accessibility as entailing universal design and making services available on all platforms.



## **PER SKOU NIELSEN**

R&D Engineer and Project Manager, DR, Denmark

Per joined DR back in 2001. Since then, a several projects has passed through his hands, many concerning subtitles from almost every conceivable angle from subtitle editing systems, live subtitling, speech recognition and speed typing to subtitle file formats, subtitle archives, subtitle playout systems, subtitle transmission formats and systems and spoken subtitles. Currently, Per is working on a project at DR to replace a 12-year-old playout system with a new channel-in-a-box solution. This solution will include playout of file-based and live subtitles.



## **MARCO SLIK**

Senior Policy Advisor, R&D, NPO, Netherlands

Marco has worked for NPO as Senior Advisor Technology & Innovation since 2010, following an extensive career in broadcast project management, consultancy and architectural design for systems integrators and managed-service providers. His primary field of expertise lies in TV playout and digital distribution, though he can find his way around audio and the connected world just as easily. He leads R&D and infrastructural change projects and advises on new technology.



### **PEGGY VAN DER KREEFT**

Language Specialist and Project Manager, DW, Germany

Peggy van der Kreeft is an Innovation Manager at the Research and Cooperation Projects Department of Deutsche Welle, the German world broadcaster. She is an applied linguist, specialized in bringing language technology applications, in particular speech-to-text, automated translation, subtitling, and voice-over into the media world. She is currently running the SUMMA H2020 project on multilingual media monitoring, and news.bridge, developing a platform for automated script translation, subtitling and voice-over in over 100 languages.



### **ANNETTE WILSON**

Head of Innovation Projects, RBB, Germany

Annette coordinates multimedia research and development in EC and RBB projects. She has extensive experience in the design, creation, editing and usability testing of innovative interactive digital communications. She initially worked on websites and location-based services but in recent years has extended her expertise to include interactive and mobile TV. She was group leader for subtitling in the accessibility project HBB4ALL and RBB project manager for various EC and European Space Agency co-funded projects.