



# Imperial College

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**Dr Stefan M Ruger**

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**Multimedia Information Retrieval**

To

Prof Charles Zukoski

Vice Chancellor for Research

University of Illinois at Urbana-Cham

420 Swanlund Admin Bldng, MC-304

601 East John Street

Champaign, Illinois 61820

USA

London, 30 Oct 2002

Dear Prof Zukoski,

This is to write in support of Stephen Downie's proposal of the **Creation of a Music Information Retrieval (MIR) Development and Testing Database**.

Leading a research group in multimedia information retrieval, I have witnessed the profound impact which evaluation testbeds have had in the last 10 years on the development and progress of the field of Information Retrieval, most notably through the open, metric-based TREC evaluation which NIST has offered in the past. The same is now happening with video retrieval, a more recent offspring within the TREC activity, in which my group is involved.

The field of music information retrieval has been denied a similar boost, where copyright issues have made the construction and dissemination of relevant collections difficult. The envisaged partnership with HNH, initiated by Stephen Downie, is very good news for the research community.

I am convinced that the challenges of housing terabytes of data, sharing them securely with a research community which creates imaginative new ways of accessing music are well worth tackling, and I cannot imagine a place better suited than the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign. In my opinion, it is not only the music retrieval research world which is going to benefit from this but also in a more generic way, this might become a proof of concept for new business models whereby a large body of users can share secure and certified access to new and imaginative ways of accessing music.

Sincerely,

Stefan Ruger