

September 10, 2018

Dear Honorable Members of the European Parliament,

As Internet platforms committed to creating online spaces where creators can share their content, we understand the importance of ensuring creators are compensated fairly for their work. Current legal frameworks have allowed us to build creative online communities that have enabled musicians, writers, artists, developers, designers, and filmmakers throughout Europe to access a global online market. We are concerned that proposed changes to the European Copyright Directive, specifically Article 13, will threaten the existence of these vibrant online communities and deprive our user-creators of the means to profit from their work. Any reform of copyright laws must consider the impact it will have on small Internet platforms like ours and the creators that depend on us.

Our companies are different from other user-generated content platforms in that our sites are designed to allow creators to upload and share their own creative work rather than content created by others. Users do not come to our platforms to consume and share known third party content—they instead seek out original works made by creators which cannot be found elsewhere. Because our users generally share their own content through our platforms, copyright infringement is uncommon on our sites. As such, requiring sites like ours to deploy expensive content moderation tools will only make it more costly and difficult to run our businesses without any meaningful impact on copyright infringement. Filtering tools do not even exist for many common types of content shared through our sites, such as 3D files or software. And, for the subset of content for which filtering is technically possible, the inaccuracy of many content moderation tools will also result in non-infringing, original content being blocked from view.

European creators currently make up a significant part of our user bases, relying on our sites to create and share their work. Article 13 will have a negative impact on the ability of those creators to access new audiences, customers, and supporters. This lack of access will increasingly disadvantage EU users and companies and will have a negative impact on the overall EU creative economy.

Article 13 threatens this vibrant community of creators. Filtering technologies are expensive, limited in the types of content they can identify, and error-prone. The cost of these tools in terms of both economic expense and censored expression makes little sense in light of the minimal copyright infringement on our sites. Larger platforms will be better equipped to bear these costs, giving them an inherent advantage over platforms like ours and cementing their marketplace dominance.

Ultimately, Article 13 will hurt creators in Europe and make it harder for our companies to compete with the dominant incumbents. We ask that you recognize this proposal's negative impact on EU creators and reconsider imposing an ill-fitting filtering mandate on Internet platforms like ours.

Sincerely,

Automattic
Bandcamp
Kickstarter
Medium
Patreon
Shapeways

AUTOMATIC

Automattic Inc. is a company with a singular mission: make the web a better place. All of Automattic's products and services are designed to democratize online publishing so that anyone with a story can tell it.

Automattic is best known for WordPress.com. WordPress.com allows anyone, from bloggers, to photographers, plumbers, doctors and restaurant owners, to easily create a website on the web platform that powers more thoughts, musings, and businesses than any other in the world.

The code behind WordPress is open-sourced, meaning that anyone can download, use, and modify the code, for free, and that the code is developed, supported and maintained by a broad community of users. Automattic happily and actively contributes to the WordPress open source project.



Bandcamp is an online record store and music community, where hundreds of thousands of creators in the EU share and sell music directly to their fans, and where fans can discover and support the artists they love.

KICKSTARTER

Kickstarter is a Benefit Corporation with a mission is to help bring creative projects come to life. Artists, musicians, filmmakers, designers, and other creators come here to find the resources and support they need to make their ideas a reality. To date, tens of thousands of creative projects — big and small — have come to life with the support of the Kickstarter community. Since launching in Europe in 2012, approximately 20% of Kickstarter projects have launched in the EEA.



Medium provides an online publishing platform where people can read, write, and discuss the ideas of the day. Medium's ecosystem champions thoughtful discourse and a network that

connects users with long-form writing by leaders, thinkers, entrepreneurs, artists, and journalists. More than 60 million people visit Medium each month and Medium grows by more than 140,000 new posts each week. Since 2012, tens of millions of people have spent more than seven millennia reading together on Medium.



Patreon funds the emerging creative class. Patreon is funding over 100,000 active creators by providing the tools and know-how to run membership businesses for their biggest and most loyal fans. Creators directly connect with more than 2 million monthly active patrons. In 2017, Patreon paid out \$150 million to creators and is on track to send \$300 million to creators in 2018.



Shapeways is a platform that enables the full creator experience through design, making, and selling—born out of the largest consumer 3D printing service in the world. Shapeways has a community of over one million creators creating over 10 million products. The company supports these creators via its design tools and services, access to advanced production technology starting with 3D printing and services to build a business. Printing in over 40 different materials and finishes, Shapeways has factories and offices in New York, the Netherlands, and partners around the globe. It is a spin-out of the lifestyle incubator of Royal Philips Electronics.