On March 23 and 24, 2018, the pan-European Digital Research Infrastructure for the Arts and Humanities (DARIAH-EU) and Josip Juraj Strossmayer University of Osijek, with the Department of Cultural Studies and the Academy of Arts as its units, organized an initial Forum for the Application and Establishment of a Working Group on Theater Studies and Theater Resources Digitization (WG Theatralia) in the Great Hall of the Rector’s Office and in the foyer of the Croatian National Theater in Osijek, itself a DARIAH member. The Institute for the Scientific and Artistic Work of the Croatian Academy of Sciences and Arts in Osijek, Croatian National Theater in Osijek, the Osijek-based Branko Mihaljević Children’s Theater, ASSITEJ Croatia, Croatian Center of UNIMA, the Osijek-based Faculty of Economics, Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences, and the Faculty of Civil Engineering, City and University Library in Osijek, Catholic Faculty of Theology in Đakovo and the Museum of Fine Arts in Osijek have supported the Forum as co-organizers.

The two-day Forum and a possibility to establish an international working organ has evoked an interest not only in Croatia but also in Austria, Bulgaria, Denmark, Germany Hungary, Poland, Rumania, Serbia and in the United Kingdom, having gathered over one hundred domestic and foreign experts in Theater Studies and practitioners from the DARIAH Member States to debate on the necessary elements for the application and establishment of the aforementioned Working Group, thematically unique within the consortium, through keynote lectures, workshops, and presentations of experiences in Digital Humanities and Theater Studies.

The Working Group would serve as a necessary platform for collaboration and further development and application of international projects to the DARIAH’s and other calls, thus opening a great area of the forthcoming digitization of theatrical holdings. Such an approach and an advanced computer technology facilitate and alleviate the development of collaborative, networked research platforms and projects in the so-called “European open science area.”

Having combined the invited interdisciplinary scientific lectures, workshops, personal experience demonstrations and debate recommendations and conclusions, the Forum has seen the exposes by the academia representatives from Copenhagen and Aarhus, the 2017 European Capital of Culture, the former and current managerial dignitaries of theater institutions, and the participants who might be of a great assistance to the new esthetic and perceptual contemplations by the archivist, digitization, dramaturgical, informatological, librarian, multimedia and theatrical experiences of their own. Therefore, their creative examples have demonstrated the cooperation aspects and the state-of-the-art modalities to preserve the culture and arts from the tooth of time.

Subsequent to a closing discussion, the Forum participants have adopted the proposed recommendations and passed a Conclusion on the establishment of a 21-member international Elaborate-Drafting Commission. The Commission’s task in the following months is to prepare the necessary substrata in the English language, as to devise a submittal and apply for the establishment of the aforementioned Working Group.