Embedded Camera API Exploratory Group FAQ

Why should my organization care about this Exploratory Group?
Embedded cameras and sensors are becoming increasingly prevalent throughout industries for uses such as automotive, robotics, retail, medical, and manufacturing. The Exploratory Group will be investigating whether interoperability API standards can help remove industry friction that slows adoption and deployment, expanding opportunities for all involved in making and using advanced embedded cameras and sensors.

Who should join the Exploratory Group?
Any camera, sensor and silicon vendor, together with system integrators, and software developers with an interest in sensor processing applications.

Why an Exploratory Group – why not start designing an API right away to save time?
We want genuine consensus on what we SHOULD do before we actually DO it. Also, producing a Scope of Work document does not need detailed design contributions, protecting participant's intellectual property, which in turn encourages a meaningful industry consensus through wider participation.

Who can join the Exploratory Group – and do they have to also join EMVA or Khronos?
Any entity willing to sign the Exploratory Group NDA is welcome. There is no cost and no obligation to join either EMVA or Khronos.

Why do you ask Exploratory Group participants to sign an NDA?
The Exploratory Group will be discussing materials that are publicly available, but ensuring discussions are kept within the Exploratory Group encourages a more open dialog. Any final Scope of Work documents produced by the Exploratory Group will be made publicly available.

Why are EMVA and Khronos doing this?
An increasing number of companies are asking for a standards-based solution to streamline use of cameras and sensors. Consequently, EMVA and Khronos have created a safe space for the industry to study this possibility. Both organizations see a growing willingness to consider cross-vendor standards - so we believe this may be the right time.

Are discussions limited to 'Embedded Camera APIs'? What about other sensors and markets?
Embedded Camera APIs are the anticipated primary Exploratory Group focus, but requirements for other markets, applications and devices such as Lidar and other depth sensors, camera arrays and ISP hardware are relevant if there is participant interest.

Will any resulting API specifications be created at EMVA or Khronos?
We don't know yet. If an agreed Scope of Work document is produced, whatever organization or open-source project that is best suited will be asked to host that work under their standard membership and IP frameworks. It may be EMVA, or Khronos or somewhere else entirely.

How is Exploratory Group participation organized logistically?
Once an organization signs the NDA, any employee with that email domain is able to register for an account to access the Exploratory Group portal. The portal facilitates communication by providing a

repository to share and archive documents and an email reflector. All meetings will be virtual - no travel is required.

How often and long will the Exploratory Group meet?

We will host weekly Zoom calls beginning March 25th, 2021. The number of calls will depend on how discussions progress. It is anticipated the Exploratory Group will meet for approximately 3 to 6 months. After the Exploratory Group reaches a recommendation, next steps will be determined.

With the diversity of participants, how will discussions be organized to achieve consensus?

Discussions will be in three broad phases:

1) Level Setting: All participants are invited to present on the current industry situation, pain points and key requirements;
2) Brainstorming: The Exploratory Group brainstorms on potential solutions to fill any identified standardization gaps;
3) Convergence - The Exploratory Group develops consensus and a Scope of Work document that would garner industry participation.

If the industry determines there is sufficient interest, how long would it take to get to an API specification?

It depends upon the Scope of Work, but historically standards industry associations typically need between 12 to 24 months to generate a V1.0 Specification.

What information should I share with the Exploratory Group?

Participants are welcome to share any background information that is relevant to the goals of the Exploratory Group - but it must be publicly available elsewhere to prevent any intellectual property issues.

May I invite colleagues from my company to the Exploratory Group?

Yes, any employee with an email address domain of an organization who has signed the NDA may join.