

Project aims to store publicly available software

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- 06 July 2016
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- Published in [Open Source](#)

A French organisation dedicated to computational sciences has started a project to collect, organise, preserve, and make easily accessible the source code of all publicly available software.

Inria has dubbed the project [Software Heritage](#) and says it will adopt distributed infrastructure in order to ensure long-term availability and reliability.

The initiative has already collated source code from more than 20 million software projects, a total of 2.5 billion unique source files.

Two early partners of the project are Microsoft, and DANS, an institution of the Royal Academy of the Arts and Sciences and the Netherlands Organisation for Scientific Research.

Inria chief executive Antoine Petit says the decision to create the project was taken more than a year ago. "In order to scale up worldwide, the time has now come to open it up to the widest, national and international contributions."

Software Heritage has invited companies and individuals from around the world to join and help the project.

The goal is to build a modern "library of Alexandria" of software, "a unique reference database of all source code, a tool for new software projects and a research instrument for computer science: a societal, technical and scientific challenge".

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