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UNESCO add support to INRIA's Software Heritage

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Unesco, the UN's education, science and cultural organisation, is throwing its weight behind the Software Heritage project. Unesco will help the project become more widely-known, by (co)organising debates and conferences, and with other promotion activities.

The Software Heritage project started in 2016 by Inria - France's national computer science institute. The institute is a public organisation which promotes the collaboration of scientists on computing sciences and mathematics.

Software Heritage aims to archive the source code of all the software around the world to preserve them and make them accessible. More than 3,2 million source files among the 58,197,272 projects are already archived. To date, Software Heritage made accessible source code accessible on the Internet and that are, essentially, free software. Code was collected from Github, the Debian project, and the GNU project. Software solutions that are developed by the Software Heritage project are all open sourced, [the project mentions on its website](#).

The initiative is funded and supported by the French National Institute. Some private companies funded the project, including Intel and Huawei. The project is also assisted by academic organisations such as the University of Bologna.

Some common public interventions


UNESCO and Software Heritage intend to organize common public interventions. A debate on the role of software in accessing knowledge in the digital age will be organised in June as the first step of their collaboration. UNESCO said that an international conference on the preservation and access of source code will also be held in September.

[In an interview published on the french website NextInpact.com](#), Roberto Di Cosmo, director of Software Heritage, said that this partnership is a recognition of the mission of Software Heritage at an international level and gives "a political and societal dimension" to it.

UNESCO already committed to digital preservation

In 2003, UNESCO created a Charter on the Preservation of the Digital Age pushing members states to develop "strategies and policies to preserve the digital heritage", by taking into account "the level of urgency, local circumstances, available means and future projections." The world's digital heritage is at risk of being lost to posterity, the Charter mentioned.

In 2015, UNESCO adopted [a recommendation](#) concerning the Preservation of, Access to, Documentary Heritage in the Digital Era. Digital assets and software are part of this recommendation.

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