SUCHO and NFDI4CULTURE coordinate donations of digitization equipment to Ukrainian libraries, archives and museums with partners from Germany, Sweden and Poland

Every day, Ukrainian libraries, archives and museums are being destroyed by the Russian Armed Forces. In order to preserve the country's cultural heritage, Ukrainian cultural institutions urgently require assistance to digitize as many of their holdings as possible. Over the last few months, the international volunteer initiative SUCHO (Saving Ukrainian Cultural Heritage Online) has been widely acknowledged as a vital fast-responder in the race to preserve Ukrainian digital heritage – websites, online publications and databases from the country›s numerous cultural, educational and other significant civic institutions. This rich trove of online heritage is now stored and cared for in a distributed manner by a large, international group of librarians, researchers and technologists. Starting this week, the SUCHO volunteers are focusing on a new goal: to coordinate aid shipments of digitization equipment, such as scanners, cameras and computers, to Ukrainian cultural institutions.

SUCHO are partnering with NFDI4Culture, a consortium for research data on material and immaterial cultureal heritage in the German National Research Data infrastructure, and the Swedish National Library to offer support to Ukrainian cultural heritage institutions in digitally preserving material heritage on the ground. The special focus of this new partnership is supplying digitization equipment directly to the institutions that need it. Additional conversations with representatives from Ukraine's Ministry of Culture and the Ukrainian Library Association, as well as UNESCO and the Polish National Institute for Cultural Heritage, are providing the logistical links to getting the equipment safely via various supply chains into Ukrainian territory.

Crucial in the process of connecting the institutions that require the equipment with those willing to donate is a process of matching and careful coordination. NFDI4Culture are joining up in this effort by building on their national cultural expertise and providing a dedicated Helpdesk service to match donors with those in need of donations as well as technical advice and training. The efforts are coordinated by NFDI's Task Area 1: Data capture and enrichment with special support by Dr Maryna Nazarovetz, visiting researcher at TIB from the Maksymovych Scientific Library, Taras Shevchenko National University of Kyiv.

SUCHO members Andreas Segerberg from the Society of Archives and Records Management in Sweden and Lars Ilshammar, Deputy National Librarian of Sweden, are providing additional support to these matching efforts in the development of a dedicated system for keeping track of equipment needs and availability.

SUCHO co-founder, Sebastian Majstorovic from the Austrian Centre for Digital Humanities and Cultural Heritage and lead organizer of this new digitisation equipment task force, says the following about the goals and intended outcomes of the efforts: "The digitization of cultural heritage is not a luxury, but an urgent necessity

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– especially in times of war. Ukrainian libraries, museums and archives need digitization equipment and training now. The task force formed by SUCHO and NFDI4Culture will seek to bring together the international partners, who have the means to donate equipment, time and money to safeguard Ukraine's national memory."

Ukrainian cultural institutions who need donations of digitization equipment and international partners who can offer donations should write to the NFDI4Culture Helpdesk or equipment@sucho.org. If you would like to support the digitization effort financially you can also do so directly via the dedicated OpenCollective page.

The Academy of Sciences and Literature I Mainz is an non-university research institution and academic society. As one of the eight Academies of Science in Germany that are united in the Union of Academies, its goal is both the cultivation of the sciences and literature and the preservation and promotion of culture. At present, the Mainz Academy supervises 35 research projects from all disciplines with a focus on long-term basic research. In addition, it is dedicated to the support of young academics, the digitisation of research data and results, and the promotion of international cooperations. The Academy is the leading coordinating institution of NFDI4culture, the Consortium for Research Data on Material and Immaterial Cultural Heritage in the National Research Data Infrastructure.

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