

## Ctrl+S Culture: AI and Heritage in a Digital World

### Digital is a continent

Vast, evolving, and accessible to anyone, anywhere. In a world where digital is the new domain, expansive, ever-shifting, and accessible to all<sup>1</sup>—Our cultural heritage faces both unprecedented opportunities and urgent challenges. It is a realm where heritage is not only preserved but continuously created and reimaged. In this dynamic space, Artificial Intelligence (AI) emerges as a powerful tool that can transform how we safeguard, interpret, and share our cultural heritage.

**Ctrl+S Culture** is more than a conference—it is a **collective call to protect, activate, and reimagine cultural heritage in the age of artificial intelligence**. We invite researchers, practitioners, and professionals to submit abstracts for the international online workshop “AI and Cultural Heritage”, which will take place on.

Conceived by ICCROM’s Sustaining Digital Heritage ([SDH](#)) initiative, in close collaboration with the First Aid and Resilience for Cultural Heritage in Times of Crisis ([FAR](#)) and Youth.Heritage.Africa ([YHA](#)) programmes, this two-day online event is organized in partnership with VAIA (the Flemish AI Academy) and CIFAL York (part of UNITAR’s global network of training centres). It brings together visionary thinkers, creators, and practitioners at the intersection of AI, culture, and heritage protection. brings together visionary thinkers, creators, and practitioners at the intersection of AI, culture, and heritage protection.

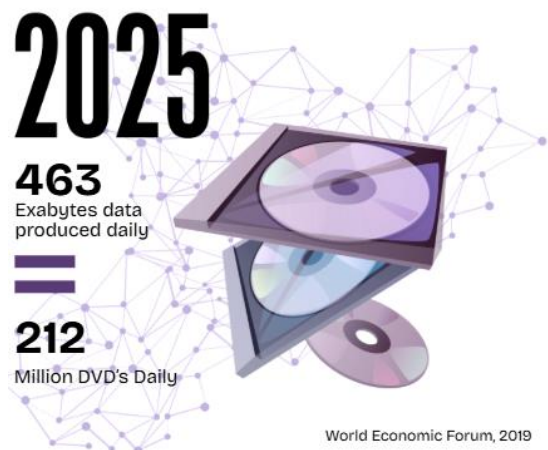
This is an invitation to learn, share, and co-create solutions that keep culture alive and resilient in a rapidly changing world.

We live in a digital world where technology increasingly shapes how we connect socially, professionally, and creatively. The arts, media, and culture sectors are no exception. They not only rely on digital tools but also generate vast and growing volumes of digital content. Yet, our ability to preserve and provide access to this expanding cultural record remains limited.

<sup>1</sup> Van Malssen, K., Tandon, A., & Hazejager, K. (2021). The digital imperative: Envisioning the path to sustaining our collective digital heritage. ICCROM. <https://www.iccrom.org/publication/digital-imperative-envisioning-path-sustaining-our-collective-digital-heritage-summary>

In 2025, an estimated 463 exabytes of data will be produced globally each day—the equivalent of over 212 million DVDS daily. While not all of it may be deemed digital heritage, the scale highlights the immense challenge we face. Digital obsolescence, intellectual property rights, and uneven access to technology further complicate preservation efforts.

ICCROM's [SDH](#) programme offers a strategic response, developing tools and methods that support both the long-term preservation and creative reuse of digital heritage.



At the same time, ICCROM's [FAR](#) programme is exploring how digital tools and AI can help protect heritage before, during, and after crises. Moreover, ICCROM's [YHA](#) programme explores how emerging technologies can empower youth across Africa to safeguard heritage, support livelihoods, and drive innovation in the cultural and creative industries.

Building on the success of the [2023 Digital Storytelling workshop](#) and the 2023–2024 [Sustainable Digital Heritage course](#), this two-day online event will bring together practitioners, researchers, and thought leaders to examine the potential of AI in documenting, interpreting, protecting, and sharing cultural heritage.

Open to a wide audience, the event offers a collaborative space for knowledge exchange, critical debate, and future-focused dialogue.

Key outcomes will be captured in an accessible online resource, ensuring ideas, tools, and reflections reach the broader heritage community.

### **Ctrl+S Culture: AI and Heritage in a Digital World will:**

- Highlight cutting-edge applications of AI for creating, documenting, interpreting, reimagining, and safeguarding heritage;
- Provide a critical space to examine the opportunities, ethical dilemmas, risks, and AI presents.
- Inspire through real-world case studies, creative practices, and community-led innovations
- Address overlooked or emerging issues in AI and heritage, including digital rights, linguistic diversity, and heritage-related data gaps.
- Create an open-access resource for heritage professionals, youth, and learners worldwide

Through keynotes, interactive Q&As, panel discussions, and peer-led presentations, we'll uncover what's working, what's emerging, and what deserves greater attention in the evolving relationship between AI and heritage.

## Framing the Dialogue

Throughout the event, we'll engage with some of the most pressing and thought-provoking questions at the intersection of AI and heritage:

- How can we use AI responsibly and ethically in heritage practice?
- What hidden biases are embedded in the tools and data we rely on?
- Can AI help make heritage more inclusive, more accessible, and more connected to people?
- What frameworks do we need to ensure AI serves communities and respects cultural values?

## Target Audience

This workshop is open to a broad and dynamic audience: heritage professionals, AI researchers, digital humanists, cultural policymakers, archivists, technologists, artists, educators, and youth—anyone curious about the role of AI in shaping the future of cultural memory.

Our goal is to spark inclusive dialogue across disciplines and geographies, and to equip the heritage field with the tools, strategies, and ethical foundations needed to navigate the AI age with creativity and integrity.

## Expected Impact

Participants will leave with:

- A deeper understanding of current and emerging uses of AI in heritage
- A toolkit of real-life examples, practices, and ethical considerations
- A contribution to building a globally shared framework for responsible AI use in culture
- New connections within a growing, interdisciplinary community dedicated to future-oriented heritage practices

The outcomes of the workshop will be captured in an open-access publication, ensuring that insights, tools, and reflections remain available and in circulation long after the event concludes.

