

Paris, 20 May 2024

Mrs Isabelle BLANC  
National chief Data and Software officer  
Ministry of Higher Education and Research - France

to

Mr Daniel Le Berre  
University of Artois

**Subject: National coordinator for Higher Education and Research Forges in France**

As part of your commitment to promoting, recognising, and encouraging best practices in the development of research software in higher education and research, you coordinated a review on the use of software forges. This work was carried out by the Source Codes and Software College of the Committee for Open Science.

This report, published in May 2023<sup>1</sup>, provides a comprehensive picture of the existing forges and practices in Higher Education and Research in France, and posits a number of observations and points of concern as regards the current situation. In November 2023<sup>2</sup>, a report about the production and valorisation of software from French public research indicated that the use of software forges was not systematic.

To encourage best practices in software development and the use of forges adapted to the needs of research communities, we are entrusting you, as part of your activities within the Source Codes and Software College, with the role of national coordinator for Higher Education and Research Forges in France.

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<sup>1</sup> Daniel Le Berre, Jean-Yves Jeannas, Roberto Di Cosmo, François Pellegrini (2023). Higher Education and Research Forges in France - Definition, uses, limitations encountered and needs analysis.  
<https://doi.org/10.52949/37>

<sup>2</sup> <https://www.enseignementsup-recherche.gouv.fr/sites/default/files/2023-12/-tat-des-lieux-de-la-production-et-de-la-valorisation-des-logiciels-issus-de-la-recherche-publique-fran-aise-30402.pdf>

As the national coordinator for higher education and research forges, your responsibilities will include :

- **As the national point of contact**, you will handle any questions related to software repositories, both inside and outside of the ESR. Knowledge sharing and collaboration within the software development community will be facilitated by your expertise and essential information. E-mail to contact the national contact point : [contact-national-forges@groupes.renater.fr](mailto:contact-national-forges@groupes.renater.fr) ;
- **The analysis of specific needs**: functionalities adaptations, especially for the promotion of open-source research software, are necessary for use in higher education and research. You will be responsible for identifying and reporting these specific needs as part of your mission ;
- **Collaborative development and personnel federation** are already taking place with many colleagues contributing to the use, maintenance, and development of open-source repositories. Your responsibility is to identify these key players and establish effective communication channels to promote a national dynamic of cooperation. The objective is to jointly comprehend future needs and actively participate in the development of features that are adapted to the higher education and research ecosystem within current forges;
- A budget will not be given to you for your functional role. The resources that have already been mobilized for this subject within the higher education and research ecosystem will be your main source of support.

You will carry out your mission in close collaboration with the Source Codes and Software College of the Committee for Open Science, to whom you will regularly report on the progress of this mission.

We thank you for accepting this mission dedicated to optimising research software development in France. We are confident in your commitment and expertise to ensure the full success of this mission.



Isabelle Blanc