

Microsoft donates cloud computing 'worth \$1 bn'

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Microsoft CEO Satya Nadella, seen on December 2, 2015 in Bellevue, Washington, announces the move to help ensure the benefits of cloud computing are universally accessible

Microsoft said Tuesday it will put a billion dollars' worth of cloud computing power in the hands of non-profit groups and university researchers free of charge.

A philanthropic arm of the US software colossus will make the donation

during the coming three years to 70,000 non-profit groups and researchers, chief executive Satya Nadella said while attending the World Economic Forum in Davos, Switzerland.

Cloud computing lets people use the Internet to tap into processing or data storage capacity at huge data centers.

"Among the questions being asked in Davos are these: If cloud computing is one of the most important transformations of our time, how do we ensure that its benefits are universally accessible?" Nadella said in an online post.

"What if only wealthy societies have access to the data, intelligence, analytics and insights that come from the power of mobile and cloud computing?"

The philanthropic move comes as Microsoft continues adapting to a trend of people economically renting software as services in the Internet cloud instead of buying and installing programs on their machines.

"Last fall, world leaders at the United Nations adopted 17 [sustainable development goals](#) to tackle some of the toughest global problems by 2030, including poverty, hunger, health and education," Nadella said.

"A careful read of those goals reveals the central role that data and [cloud computing](#) must play for analysis and action."

Microsoft chief legal counsel Brad Smith said the massive computing power available in the cloud can help researchers mine insights and secrets from data.

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