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Support of free software in public institutions: the KiCad case

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KiCad [1] is a tool to help electronics designers develop Printed Circuit Boards (PCB).

CERN's BE-CO-HT section has been contributing to its development since 2011 [2]. These efforts are framed in the context of CERN's activities regarding Open Source Hardware (OSHW), and are meant to provide an environment where design files for electronics can be shared in an efficient way, without the hurdles imposed by the use of proprietary formats.

The talk will start by providing some context about OSHW and the importance of using Free Software tools for sharing design files. We will then move on to a short KiCad tutorial, and finish with some considerations about the role public institutions can play in developing and fostering the use of Free Software, and whether some of the KiCad experience can apply in other contexts.

[1] <http://kicad-pcb.org/>

[2] <http://www.ohwr.org/projects/cern-kicad/wiki>

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