OSOR Event: Sustainability of Open Source Communities

18 May 2021

Some house rules for today

- Please '**name'** yourself. You can do so by clicking on the three dots icon at the bottom right of the screen

- Please use the **chat** at the bottom left to ask any questions during the webinar

- Please **mute** yourself to avoid background noise, unless you are speaking

- Please **turn off your video** to avoid any network issues

- '**Raise your hand'** if you want to speak, to avoid several contributions at once

- Please note that **today's webinar will be recorded**. If the quality allows, you will receive the recording afterwards

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Agenda

About OSOR and our speakers

Introduction to the Guidelines

Insiders' view on sustainability

Discussion on OSS community sustainability

Today's objectives

Get acquainted with…

…different experiences of and challenges to fostering OSS community sustainability

Hear about…

…creating healthy and sustainable open source communities

Discuss…

…your experience with your peers from various sectors

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About OSOR and our guest speakers

Our guest speakers

Koos Steenbergen, Project Manager Open Source at the Department of the Interior of the Ministry of the Interior, the Netherlands.

Johan Linåker, Postdoctoral Researcher at Lund University with a focus on Open Source Software. Founder at OpenHackC4H.

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Meet the Guidelines team

Monika SOWINSKA
European Commission

Federico CHIARELLI
Wavestone

Maha SHAIKH
King's College London

Barbora KUDZMANAITE
Wavestone

Chloe DUSSUTOUR
Wavestone

Vivien DEVENYI
Wavestone

Corinna VETTER
Wavestone

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The role of OSOR

Observatory providing FOSS expertise and information for public administrations across and beyond Europe since 2007

Open source platform promoting OSS and helping European public administrations with its adoption by sharing guidelines and best practices

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The role of OSOR

Actively connects European **public administrations** with other stakeholders and provides them with useful resources such as news, case studies, guidelines, and newsletters

Nurtures an active **community** by bringing OSOR users together through regular webinars and events

OSOR's offer

Log in

Add content

Monthly Newsletter

Case studies

Knowledge Centre

OSOR and other OSS events

News

eTranslation tool

eTranslation is an automated translation tool integrated into Joinup.
It is one of the Building Blocks provided by CEF Digital.

Thanks to the integration of eTranslation with Joinup, you can translate the OSOR content pages into over 24 languages

OSOR Knowledge Centre

Country intelligence on OSS policies in Europe

OSS COUNTRY INTELLIGENCE

Guidelines for creating sustainable open source software communities

GUIDELINES

Case studies on the use of OSS in public administrations

CASE STUDIES

List of **associations, competence centres,** and **points of contact**

SPECIFIC RESOURCES

Link to the **European Commission OSS Strategy** (2021-2023)

OSS STRATEGY

List of **OSS repositories**

OSS REPOSITORIES

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Guidelines for Sustainable Open Source Communities in the Public Sector

Motivation behind the Guidelines

01
Currently, there is a varying level of OSS uptake by public administrations in Europe.

02
Public administrations in the EU may face challenges to join and/or maintain a sustainable OSS community.

03
Public administrations need to correctly assess their needs and capacities to join or build an OSS community.

04
The information about online resources for OSS communities needs to be more readily available to public administrations.

These have led OSOR to investigate factors behind the sustainability of public sector open source communities in order to produce dedicated Guidelines.

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Objectives of the Guidelines

Guidelines
for Sustainable
Open Source Communities
in the Public Sector
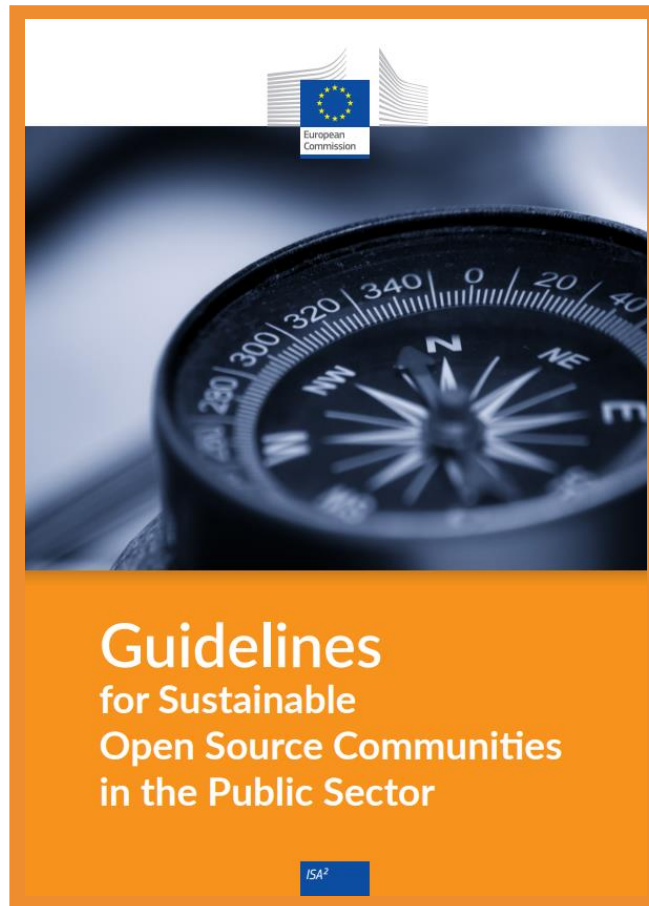
The Guidelines for Sustainable Open Source Software Communities in the Public Sector offer recommendations, best practices, and resources for anyone looking to adopt and create open source software in the public sector.

They provide users with step-by-step solutions and best practices to foster the sustainability and success of their projects, regardless of whether they create a new community or join an existing one.

Methodology

01

Literature Review

Academic literature review

02

Survey

Survey sent out to OSS communities in the public sector

.

03

Interviews

Conduction of a series of interviews with OSS community members

04

**Case Studies**

Analysis of five case studies

Key Findings

Our research identified **five key factors** contributing to the sustainability of open source communities, which helped us to shape the Guidelines

Community vibrancy

Clear governance structure

Public sector adoption incentives

Sustainable funding

Technological maturity

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Sustainability Case Studies

Based on our survey, we selected and developed **five case studies** looking at the sustainability of public sector OSS projects:

- Participatory Democracy in Groningen through **CONSUL**

- **Integreat** platform for new arrivals' integration used in Germany

- **Developers Italia** community launched by the Italian government

- **Lutece** software launched in Paris and used across France

- **OSKARI** geospatial platform in Finland
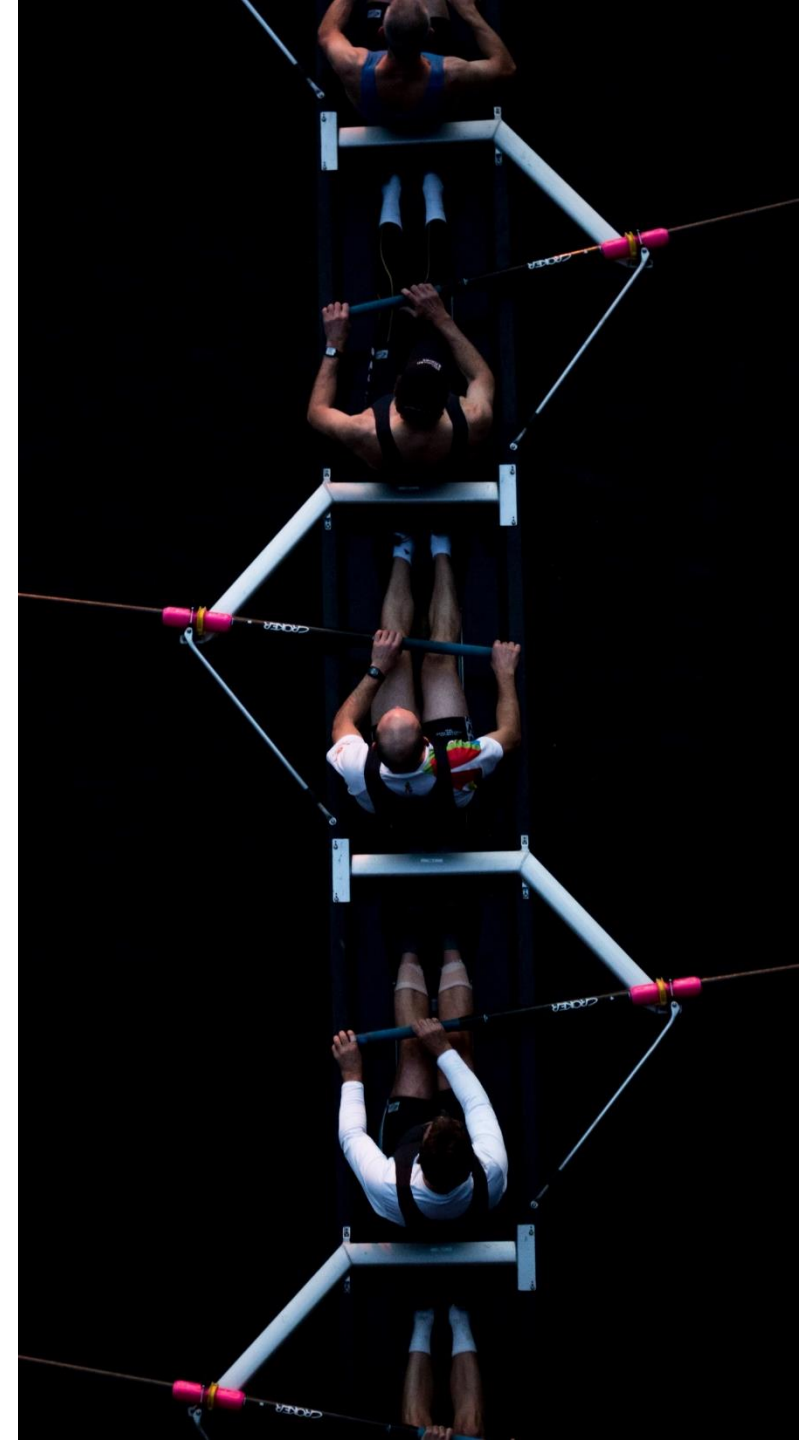
Content

The Guidelines provide recommendations on how to build a foundation for sustainable OSS engagement and for two scenarios a user may encounter when attempting to do so.

Setting the foundation for sustainable OSS projects in the public sector: how to assess your needs, make the project 'official', and secure funding.

Joining an existing OSS community: how to understand the community behind the software, facilitate collaboration, and contribute.

Building a new public sector OSS community: advice on organising the community, keeping it active, and ultimately expanding it.

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Key recommendations

Setting the foundation for sustainable OSS projects in the public sector

Assess your needs and capabilities

- ✓ Define your software needs
- ✓ Assess your IT capabilities
- ✓ Explore the OSS solution market
- ✓ Identify potential project partners

Formalise your OSS project – make it 'official'

- ✓ Onboard key partners within your public administration
- ✓ Make your community part of public administrations' planning

Secure project funding

- ✓ Define project budget
- ✓ Secure project funding
- ✓ Assess whether you might need to onboard additional resources

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Key recommendations

Joining an existing OSS community

Understand the community behind your OSS

- ✓ Understand the community's structure and governance
- ✓ Assess the community's maturity
- ✓ Decide what are the best ways for you to work together

Facilitate sustainable collaboration

- ✓ Adapt procurement processes to facilitate collaboration with OSS communities
- ✓ Decide if your public administration will host the software or rely on the community to do so
- ✓ Identify your strengths that could be useful for the community

Contribute to the OSS in the long run

- ✓ Promote the community to other public administrations
- ✓ Become an 'ambassador' for the community

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Key recommendations

Building your OSS community from scratch

Understand how the public sector works

- ✓ Build a relationship between your community and its partner public administration
- ✓ Balance public sector processes with the horizontal nature of OSS communities

Focus on the software

- ✓ Choose the appropriate license and programming language
- ✓ Release code
- ✓ Prepare and publish quality documentation

Organise your community

- ✓ Set up transparent and supportive management
- ✓ Set the community's vision and mission
- ✓ Produce community guidelines

Keep the community active

- ✓ Facilitate communication between community members
- ✓ Ensure members' motivation

Grow your community

- ✓ Promote your community among other similar public administrations
- ✓ Participate in and organise events to attract new members

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Ongoing update of the Guidelines

As the Guidelines are an open and living document, they are currently open for your feedback.

Some of the feedback received so far

"Include more information on good practices when procuring OSS"

"Translate the Guidelines into other languages than English"

"Recommendations on the approach for transitioning from a closed-source product to OSS"
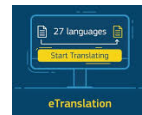
Current status

A recommendation on procurement practices and a reference to the Italian *Guidelines on the acquisition and reuse of software for public administrations.* We would like to hear about other examples and resources!

The Guidelines can now be accessed in 24 languages thanks to the eTranslation tool on Joinup.

This is high-level feedback, and we would appreciate hearing about some experiences and examples from you on the subject!

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Ongoing update of the Guidelines

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Some of the feedback received so far

Current status

"Share advice on how to build competences needed for OSS projects in public administrations"

The Guidelines talk about the importance of setting up an Open Source Program Office (OSPO), whose role is to oversee the use of OSS. A lot of OSPOs are also responsible for capacity building in this domain.

"More examples of OSS public sector communities"

The Guidelines detail five case studies, and we have more communities identified through our survey. Let us know if you have other examples of sustainable communities worth highlighting!

"Guidance when it comes to the possible legal issues (e.g. IP claims)."

The Guidelines offer advice on choosing the most appropriate license. Let us know if you would like to see any other specific legal aspects covered.

What else should be referenced and highlighted in the Guidelines?

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Insiders' view on sustainability

Johan Linåker

Johan is a postdoctoral researcher at Sweden's Lund University with a focus on how to enable the public sector to share and collaborate on Open Source Software and open data. Johan holds a passion for health and sustainability of Open Source Software projects, researching challenges experienced by maintainers, their impact, and how they may be addressed.

Presentation topic:
Health and sustainability of Open Source Software projects - Why (and How to) care?

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Question time

Koos Steenbergen

Koos is an Open Source Project Manager at the Netherlands Ministry of Interior and Kingdom Relations. He advises his department on policy issues related to open source, and he is advancing the use and development of Open Source Software government-wide. Recently, he started an online learning community on Open Source.

Presentation topic:
Advancing the (re-)use of Open Source in the Dutch public administration

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Question time

Let's go back to the Guidelines

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Please join us on Retrospected

Retrospected

Join us through the link provided in the chat or scan the QR code

Feel free to log in anonymously

OAUTH	PASSWORD	ANONYMOUS LOGIN

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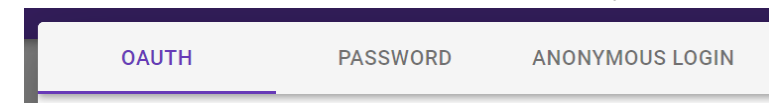
Community Café

What are **the challenges** that you face personally which were not addressed in our presentation on the Guidelines?

Looking at the feedback received so far, what are some good practices and resources when it comes to **procuring OSS** that we should add to the Guidelines?

In addition to OSPO detailed in the Guidelines, what else can be done to **build OSS competences** in the public sector?

What are some good practices to **transition from a closed to an OSS** project/community?

What **good practices** in the interaction between OSS communities and the public sector have you come across?

Is there anything else that you would like to see **reflected in the Guidelines?**

Conclusions

Your feedback on the Guidelines

Share your feedback on Sustainability Guidelines

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You can still share feedback and input to the Guidelines after today's webinar.

Have a look at the OSOR website to learn more about how to contribute, or contact our team.

We welcome your **contributions**!

Reach out at EU-OSOR@ec.europa.eu

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Next steps

❑ Publishing the results of this webinar and using your input to revise the Guidelines

❑ Gathering further feedback

❑ Publishing the updated Guidelines on the [OSOR Knowledge Centre](#) in the summer

Get involved & stay informed

Become an OSOR community member

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Reach out at EU-OSOR@ec.europa.eu

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Thank you

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