



OSPO Explainer Transcript: What is Open Source?

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Slide 1: Hello, and welcome to the Johns Hopkins University Open Source Programs Office Explainer Series, a collection of bite-sized videos tackling a variety of open-source essentials. New topics are added monthly, check out ospo.library.jhu.edu to see what's coming up, or drop us a line at ospo@jhu.edu to make a request. Today's explainer? What is Open Source?

Slide 2: Open-source software is software with publicly available source code that is licensed to allow use, inspection, modification, and distribution by anyone.

Slide 3: Source code is the human readable instructions that tell a computer what to do. Source code is written in a programming language, such as Python, Java, or C++.

Slide 4: Examples of open-source software include the Linux operating system, the Firefox Web browser, and the WordPress content management system.

Examples of proprietary or closed source software include the Windows operating system, the Safari Web browser, and the Adobe creative suite.

Slide 5: Research software, the collection of tools, code, or libraries that allow a researcher to generate new data or analyze and make meaning of existing data, can also be open source.

Making your research software open source can lead to greater transparency and collaboration opportunities.

Slide 6: The rights to use, inspect, distribute, and modify code are defined by the open-source license, an intellectual property license and legal agreement.

Slide 7: There are distinct types of open-source licenses.

Some are “copyleft” or “reciprocal” and require users to release any modifications made to the software under the same license. Examples include the GPL and AGPL licenses.

Some are “permissive” and allow users to do almost anything they'd like, including using the software in commercial products. Examples include the Apache and MIT licenses.

Slide 8: For many, open source is not just a license, but also a set of core values including collaboration, transparency, and community.

Slide 9: Open-source projects often:

- Share their code and ideas with others
- Have a transparent development process
- Support strong communities of contributors
- Have participatory governance (also known as decision-making)

Slide 10: Open-source software is a powerful tool that can be used to create innovative solutions to a wide range of problems.

There are many ways to contribute to open-source software projects, regardless of your skills or experience.

Contact the OSPO (Open Source Programs Office) to learn more about open-source software and to find ways to contribute to open-source projects that you are interested in.

Slide 11: If you'd like to learn more about open-source, there are many great resources out there to help, including Open Source Guides, the Open Source Initiative, the Open Source Way, and the book Producing Open Source Software.

Slide 12: Questions about anything you've just learned? Get in touch with the OSPO at ospo@jhu.edu, or visit our website at ospo.library.jhu.edu.