



OSPO Explainer Transcript: What is Open Source Software?

URL:

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 Software?

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

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: There are two primary types of open source licenses.

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

“Permissive” licenses allow significant freedom to use the software for a variety of purposes, including within commercial products. Examples include the Apache, BSD, and MIT licenses.

Slide 7: For many, open source is not just a license, but also a set of core values including collaboration, transparency, and community.

Slide 8: 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 9: 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 10: 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.

- Open Source Guides, <https://opensource.guide/>, a collection of resources for individuals, communities, and companies who want to learn how to run and contribute to an open-source project
- The Open Source Initiative, a non-profit that educates about and advocates for the benefits of open source: <https://opensource.org/>
- The Open Source Way, a guidebook for open source community management best practices: <https://www.theopensourceway.org/>
- Karl Fogel's (free) book, Producing Open Source Software, available via: <https://producingoss.com/>

Slide 11: 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.