

OpenWIS Forum Development

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What we want and don't want (proposed)

- We want the forum to be a place of discussion and the development of ideas.
- We currently do not want to encourage specific code-development discussions, as that would be better suited to kanban/github.
- We also want to have anything that reaches "Final draft" status (such as official installation instructions, FAQ) as pages on the website instead of forum threads. We also want to have major news/announcements as website pages. The forum should be for the exchange and development of ideas, instead of official documentation (that belongs on the website as static pages)

Platform Software Comparison

Browser Notes

Currently, there are bugs rendering icons in both Discourse and NodeBB for Internet Explorer / Edge. It is recommended that users use either Chrome or Firefox to use the forums.

Discourse vs NodeBB

Both are adequate software for our forum purposes. Both operate on categories, topics (threads) and posts. Both are capable of including tags at the topic level to increase information (or link across categories). Both are mobile-friendly.

Discourse	NodeBB
<p>Approach: Package. Most features are included with the main program (although some plugins exist).</p> <p>Main Languages: Ruby/Rails, Docker</p>	<p>Approach: Modular. Main program install with most features created via plugins</p> <p>Main Languages: Node.js, Redis</p>

Feature Comparisons:

Discourse	NodeBB
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Better for administrators (especially system-administrators) • Permissions set at the user/site level • Administrators control the look/feel of the site • - Only one configuration for the site look/feel (but custom css is allowed) • - Email is relied on for account creation • - Has fewer options for building out features • - One subcategory <i>level</i> only • - Whole-package has less flexibility in features • + Features tested with core code before distribution • + Administration is much more straight-forward and fluid • + Integration with GitHub webpages possible with base package (can be used for comments on 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Better for users • Permissions set at the category level • Users can control look/feel of site (to some extent) • + Polished look, with multiple Themes available to completely change look/feel, Skins for color changes (custom css is allowed as well) • + Can be set up to quickly allow users to create accounts (no email needed) • + Can (theoretically) create plugins to increase functionality • + Multiple subcategory <i>levels</i> allowed • + Plugin system allows for a great deal of features to be added • - plugins can be incompatible with the core version, creating problems • - code has so many pieces, it can get confusing • - No GitHub integration (cannot be used for comments on github-hosted website [that I

<p>github-hosted website)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • + Login possible with many different accounts, including github • + Data backups (and restores) controlled on the gui - no code manipulation required • + Documentation is good, and features are clearly explained in the gui. • + Community response was good when we had questions 	<p>found])</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • - Linked accounts possible but complicated (plugins) • - Backups are complicated and must happen at the database code level • - Documentation can be out of date, and no explanation of features in gui • - Community did not respond to multiple attempts asking questions
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A Note on Disqus

Disqus is only a commenting system for existing webpages. Therefore, it was not included in the comparison. If we go with Discourse, the github plugin makes Disqus redundant. If we go with NodeBB, we would still use Disqus if we wanted to have comments directly on the GitHub pages.

Proposed Categories and Subcategories

- **In Discourse**, each major category can have 1 level down of subcategory, but subcategories CANNOT have subcategories of their own (i.e. you can have OpenWIS-Association/Government but you cannot have OpenWIS-Association/Government/TechnicalCommittee). Remember, you can have as many TOPICS (i.e. threads) inside of a category or category/subcategory as you want. You can then use tags to better key users to specifics in each topic.
- **In NodeBB**, you can have multiple nested categories, but only 1 level down shows at a time (you have to keep clicking to see deeply nested subcategories). The main categories page only show the major categories and their first-tier subcategories.

I have the following Categories and subcategories made to start the Forum. These were generated through a combination of what information currently exists on the github-hosted webpages, and what categories were found on many popular forum sites (including the community pages for both Nodebb and Discourse). Please let me know what you think. **(Note that those categories marked with a ** would be intended to have restricted access.)** Main Categories are underlined; their subcategories follow and are not underlined.

Announcements [Staff edits only]

Announcements regarding our community

Staff** [Staff group only]

Private category for staff discussions. Topics are only visible to admins and moderators.

OpenWIS Association (association)

This category is for discussion about the OpenWIS *Association* - an International Non-profit Organization (Association Internationale Sans But Lucratif, or abbreviated AISBL) that aims to facilitate collaboration on the development, promotion and sharing of open source software for the exchange of global meteorological information.

(<https://openwis.github.io/openwis-documentation/>)

Discussion about the OpenWIS *product* should be discussed under the OpenWIS Project.

Governance (for board-member discussions) [BoardMember / Staff groups only]**

An area for members of the [governing board](https://openwis.github.io/openwis-documentation/structure/board.html), [steering committee](https://openwis.github.io/openwis-documentation/structure/steering-committee.html), and [technical committee](https://openwis.github.io/openwis-documentation/structure/technical-committee.html) to have discussions concerning the governance of the organization.

Rules and Standards (rules)

Discuss the rules and standards that apply to the OpenWIS Association. (Suggestions are welcome.)

Goals

Discuss how well the OpenWIS Association is meeting its current goals, and propose new goals for the association. The official list of goals and metrics for the association can be found at:

<https://openwis.github.io/openwis-documentation/metrics/>

Meetings

Discuss and make plans for upcoming meetings for the OpenWIS Association. Official meeting minutes can be found at: <https://openwis.github.io/openwis-documentation/minutes/>

OpenWIS Project (project-openwis) (each project to have its own category and subcategories similar to this)

This area is for discussing OpenWIS software. OpenWIS is an implementation of WMO Information Systems (WIS) and aims to perform the tree functions required by the WIS,

i.e. GISC, DCPC, and NC. The official page for the OpenWIS project can be found at:
<https://openwis.github.io/openwis-documentation/projects/openwis/>

Releases

Discuss current and future official releases of OpenWIS. These conversations should be about established versions (current and future). For brand-new developments, see the Development category.

Installation / Deployment (install)

Instructions and tips on the installation/deployment of OpenWIS software. Discuss techniques and pitfalls of deployment on different systems. Official downloads of OpenWIS software can be found at: <https://openwis.github.io/openwis-documentation/projects/openwis/#download>

Support

Talk about how to configure and use OpenWIS once it is installed. Share tips and tricks about using the software.

Technical Problems / Bugs (bugs)

Discuss any bugs or technical challenges users and admins are having with the OpenWIS software. These discussions may be used to create tickets for software improvements.

Features

Talk about specific features of OpenWIS. Discuss how well current features are working, or suggest new features.

Development (dev)

Discuss the future development OpenWIS software. Talk about ideas and new techniques here. We encourage code to be developed using the OpenWIS GitHub code repository (<https://github.com/OpenWIS/openwis>). Information and instructions on using the GitHub repository can be found at: <https://openwis.github.io/openwis/>

Standards

Talk about the development of international standards for data and software used and promoted by the OpenWIS association.

ISO

Discuss ISO standards.

Data formatting (data)

Discuss data formatting standards.

Software Development Tools (tools)

Discuss software and tool suites that are available for the development of software and standards. (One example is the GitHub code repository, <https://github.com/>).

Website (Github Pages) (website)

Give feedback about the official OpenWIS website. (The home page is: <https://openwis.github.io/openwis-documentation/>). Discuss website content and layout. What is working well, and what else is needed?

Page Comments (comments)

Talk about specific pages in the official website. Any topics created by interaction with a web page on the official site will be in this category.

Community

Introduce yourself to other users, talk about your interests or special skills you have. Learn how to get involved with OpenWIS use or development.

Forum Feedback (feedback)

Discussion about this forum, its organization, how it works, and how we can improve it.

Testing

Test features and configurations of the forum or related OpenWIS websites.

Uncategorized

Topics that don't need a category, or don't fit into any other existing category

Tags

Tags are used for people to be able to find topics of interest easily. Tags are used at the topic-level (for both Discourse and NodeBB), not the post-level. Each topic can have multiple tags, and the same tag can be used in multiple topics. **You can edit the tags in a post by editing the first**

post in the topic (for both). Additional editing of tags (such as limiting their use) can be set in Admin settings.