

# Introducing the Theia IDE

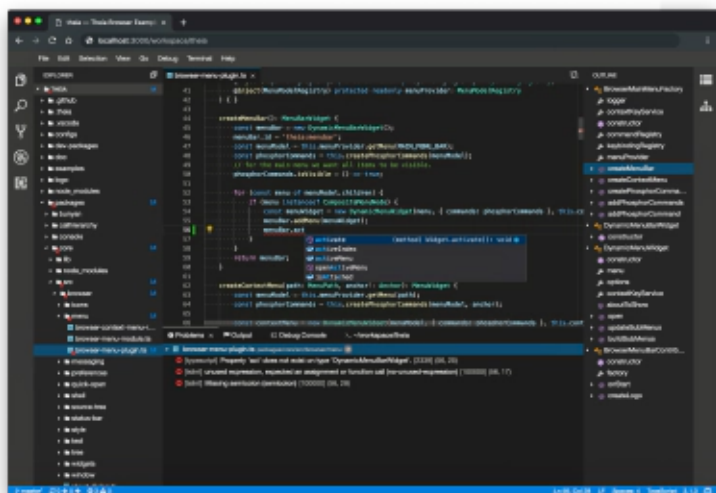
EclipseSource : 9-11 minutes

The official release of the Theia IDE opens a new chapter in the area of integrated development environments (IDEs) at Eclipse, moving beyond its beta phase in June 2024. Created based on the robust Theia Platform, which has been available since 2017, the Theia IDE now adds another important cornerstone to the Eclipse Cloud DevTools ecosystem. It is created for developers seeking a modern, open, and flexible tool for their coding pursuits. This blog post explores the [Theia IDE](#), the journey leading towards it, the vibrant community behind its ecosystem and ways for developers to use it and contribute to its success.



## What is the Theia IDE?

The Theia IDE is a state-of-the-art code development tool that stands out for its foundation on modern web technologies, enabling it to run seamlessly both on the desktop and in the browser. Leveraging latest standards such as the Language Server Protocol (LSP), the Debug Adapter Protocol (DAP), and the Monaco Code Editor, the Theia IDE offers cutting-edge coding experience.



## The Theia IDE

The Theia IDE provides a unique and comprehensive feature set out of the box. Furthermore, it is compatible with VS Code extensions, accessible via the vendor-neutral OpenVSX registry with its 3.600+ extensions. It can therefore be extended to serve almost any possible purpose in the field of coding and development.\

## Most popular extensions for Theia

Unlock limitless possibilities with Theia IDE's seamless compatibility with the VS Code extension ecosystem. From robust linting tools to interactive notebook editors, customize your development experience like never before. Explore **more than 3000 available extensions** for the Theia IDE at [open-vsx.org!](https://open-vsx.org/)



## Most popular extensions for the Theia IDE from [Open VSX](https://open-vsx.org/)

Finally with its fully vendor-neutral and open-source governance, and due to its powerful extensibility mechanisms, the Theia IDE can be adapted to almost any purpose, be it a highly optimized IDE for internal developers or a domain-specific tool even beyond coding.

## Why Choose the Theia IDE?

For developers in search of an IDE that combines flexibility, openness, and cutting-edge technology, the Theia IDE is a compelling choice. Distinctive features like an adaptable toolbar, detachable views, remote development support, and the forthcoming live collaboration mode set Theia apart from other open-source IDEs. Moreover, its commitment to privacy and its stance against incorporating telemetry by default reflect its respect for user preferences.

The Theia IDE is available as a [downloadable desktop application](#). However, it can also easily be deployed in the cloud and used within a browser. Therefore, the Theia IDE can be seamlessly integrated into existing infrastructures, such as online portals or company environments or even directly hosted on hardware devices. For these scenarios it comes handy that due to the modular and flexible architecture of the underlying [Theia Platform](#), you can enhance and adapt almost anything with ease in Theia, making it a perfect fit for your specific use case.

Last, but definitely not least, the Theia IDE is not only open, flexible and powerful from a technology point of view, but it is also created by one of the most successful and innovative ways of software development: a vendor-neutral open source community. Let's dive into this aspect in more detail in the next section!

## Vendor-Neutral Open Source: The Foundation of the Theia IDE

At the heart of the Theia IDE lies its open-source project, hosted by the vendor-neutral Eclipse Foundation; developed and maintained by an active community under the Eclipse Public License (EPL). This well-proven license not only ensures the freedom to use and distribute the software but also allows for commercial use, making the Theia IDE an attractive option for businesses and individual developers alike. Theia does not contain any proprietary or closed source components.

A diverse coalition of stakeholders, including industry giants and open-source contributors backs the development of the Theia IDE. Companies such as Ericsson, Red Hat, STMicroelectronics, EclipseSource and TypeFox, alongside smaller entities and independent developers, have all played a crucial role in shaping the Theia IDE. This collaborative effort ensures that the Theia IDE benefits from a wealth of perspectives, driving innovation and reliability.



## Adopters and contributors to Eclipse Theia

One of the most compelling aspects of the Theia IDE's open-source nature is the opportunity for adopters to directly influence the project through contributions. Whether it's by adding new features, improving existing ones, or participating in the decision-making process, every contributor can leave their mark on the project. This participatory approach fosters a sense of ownership and community among users, further enhancing the IDE's development and evolution.

This openness allows users to avoid a vendor-lock in for their development tooling, which is tremendously important, considering that development tooling is a very crucial piece of software, impacting essential aspects like IP protection, security, and flexibility. Theia's development process is entirely based on meritocracy: There is no single party, which decides on the fate of the project or may insert elements into the software that compromise your privacy. At the same time the community is free to customize and extend the IDE according to their specific needs without fear of being tied to the decision of single vendors or to proprietary technologies or platforms. This freedom encourages innovation and ensures that the Theia IDE remains a versatile tool that can adapt to the ever-changing landscape of software development.

In summary, the Theia IDE's open-source foundation, supported by a vibrant community and underpinned by a license that champions commercial use, sets the stage for a development environment that is not only powerful and flexible but also inclusive and forward-looking. By choosing the Theia IDE, developers and organizations are not just adopting an IDE; they are joining a movement that values collaboration, freedom, and the collective pursuit of excellence in software development.

## Journey of the Theia IDE

Since its inception in 2017, the initial focus of the Theia project has been on providing a platform for building web-based tools and IDEs. Over the years, the Theia platform has been successfully adopted for a wide range of products provided by a variety of companies (see adopters of Theia above). To ease the creation of custom products and to facilitate the adoption of the platform, in 2021, the community decided to create Theia Blueprint, a standard IDE product based on Theia serving as a template for building desktop-based products based on the Eclipse Theia platform, as well as to showcase Eclipse Theia capabilities. Over time, as developers adopted Blueprint for daily use, its quality surged, culminating in the decision to refine it into what is now available as the Theia IDE. This initiative began in summer 2023 and led to the beta release in December 2023.

The evolution of the Theia IDE from the Theia Platform's blueprint to a fully-fledged IDE highlights a journey of continuous improvement and community engagement. The Theia community expects mutual benefits between the underlying platform and the IDE. IDE users feedback, ideas and contributions will benefit the underlying platform. In turn, any improvement in the platform will enhance the IDE and serve its user base.

# Explore and Contribute

The Theia IDE provides downloadable installers for all major operating systems. Furthermore, you can try it online for free. See the [Theia IDE website](#) for more details.



The Theia community welcomes developers to not only explore the IDE's capabilities but also to contribute to its ongoing development. Whether through providing feedback, reporting issues, suggesting new features, or participating in the development, every contribution enriches the Theia IDE's ecosystem. The platform's open-source nature ensures that it remains a collaborative, inclusive, and evolving tool, inviting developers to be part of its growth story. You can even meet the people contributing to Theia, e.g. by joining the [open weekly dev call](#) and make sure to [join EclipseCon at OCX](#). More details on how to give feedback, ask questions or contribute can be found on the [Theia IDE website](#).

## Summary and Outlook

The Theia IDE represents a significant milestone in the development of modern and open-source IDEs, offering a blend of innovation, flexibility, and community-driven improvement. As it steps out of its beta phase, the Theia IDE is poised to become an indispensable tool for developers seeking a modern, extensible, and privacy-respecting development environment. Its journey from a blueprint to a full IDE demonstrates the power of community collaboration and the endless possibilities of open-source innovation. The Theia IDE story has just begun. In this very short time frame, we observe new innovative features emerging such as a new approach to collaborative editing or integrations of tailored and open source AI models. We encourage developers to delve into the Theia IDE, customize it to their liking, and join a forward-thinking community shaping the future of software development.

If you are interested in building custom tools or IDEs based on Eclipse Theia, EclipseSource provides [consulting and implementation services for Eclipse Theia](#) as well as for [web-based tools in general](#). Furthermore, if you want to extend Theia with features such as the toolbar, EclipseSource provides [sponsored development for Theia](#), too. Finally, we provide [consulting and support for hosting web-based tools in the cloud](#). [Get in contact with us](#), to discuss your use case!