UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA

Open Source Program Office

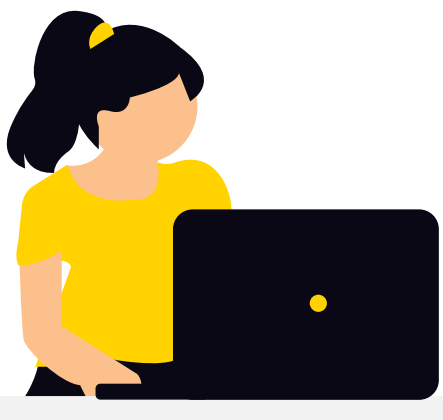
The University of California Open Source Survey 2025

Brought to you by the UC OSPO Network

In May 2025, the UC OSPO Network surveyed 294 experienced or aspiring open source software contributors. Respondents included students, faculty, and staff from ten UC campuses. This study aims to characterize challenges faced UC's by open source contributors and identify opportunities for increased support.

KEY RESULTS

92% of students and **93%** of researchers report that open source software is important for their work



58% of UC open source contributors are project maintainers*

*A maintainer is someone who takes responsibility for the open source code. There are many ways to contribute to a project.

WHO CONTRIBUTES TO LARGE PROJECTS?

Academics		27%
Non-research staff		43%

#1 CHALLENGE

Finding time for documentation

Most frequent challenge for experienced contributors

TOP 3 SOLUTIONS

selected by

Experienced contributors

Grants for open source sustainability

Access to free, feature-rich computing environments

A learning community

Nearly 1 in 3 experienced contributors said **sustainability grants** would be the most helpful solution the university could offer.

Aspiring contributors

Access to free, feature-rich computing environments

A learning community

Educational materials

2 out of 3 aspiring contributors said **accessible computing environments** would help them get started contributing.

CULTURE CHANGE

suggestions from survey participants

Personnel
Centralized maintenance help

Careers
Education on OS careers

Guidelines
Clear rules for UC employees

Code review
Communities of practice

Read the full paper at https://doi.org/10.31235/osf.io/p8bx6_v1
Want to learn more? Check out our website at https://ucospo.net
Images from https://undraw.co

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