



Free Libre Open Source Software

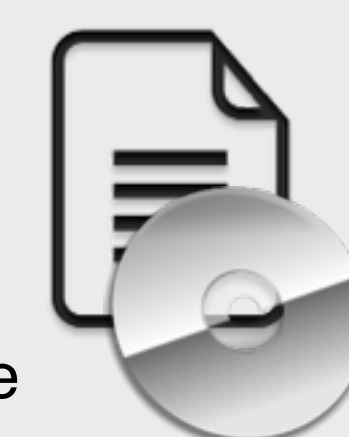


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What is Free/Libre software?

Free software is licensed with the user in mind in the following way:

- Freedom to run the program for any purpose
- Freedom to redistribute copies to whoever requests one
- Freedom to study how the program works and to modify it for any purpose
- Freedom to redistribute modified copies for the benefit of others



What is Open Source software?

Open source is a more marketable approach to free software based on a development methodology (shown below). While the Open Source movement shares many of the same ideals as the free software movement, its focus is more practical than philosophical. Note that open source is not the same as source available.



A developer has a great idea for an exciting new FLOSS project.

He or she chooses an approved
Open Source software license.



A public version control repository is typically created as the home for project source code.

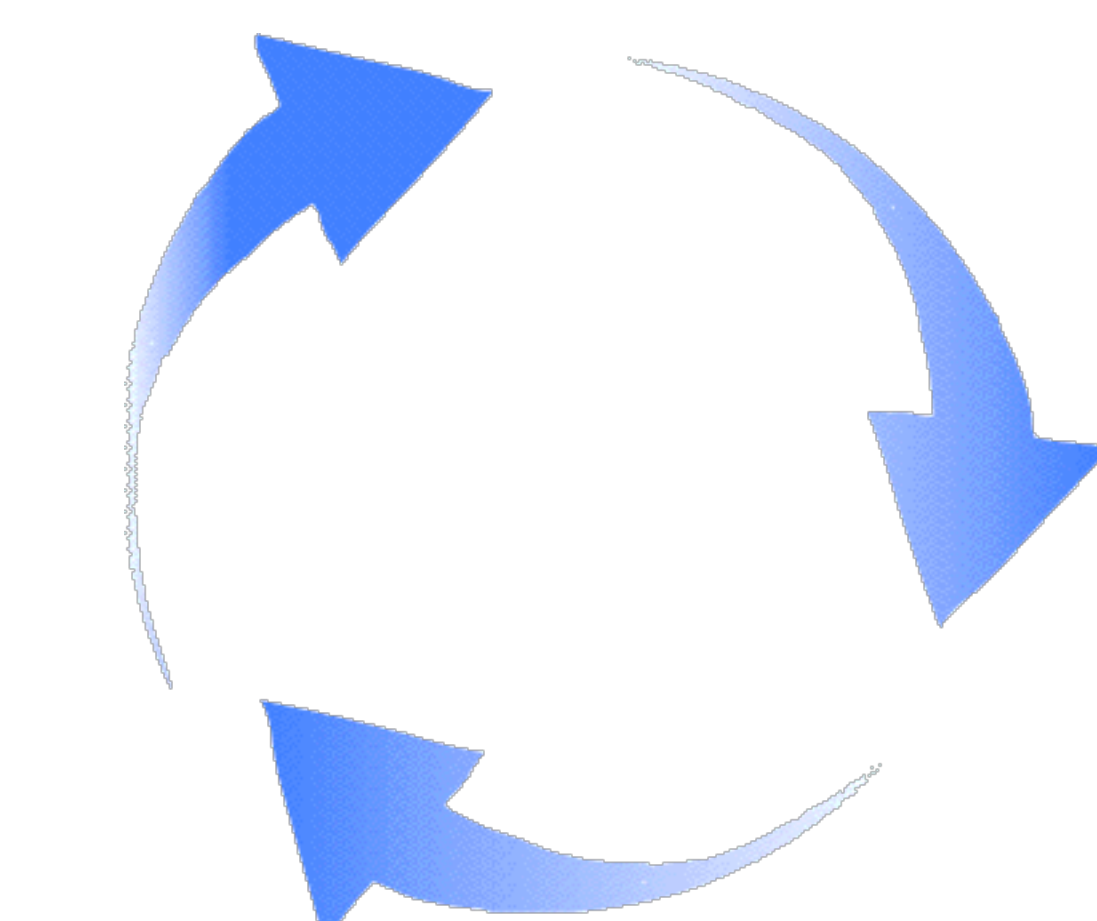
Users deploy and test more
stable versions of the code.



Users enjoy strong support from an
open community willing to help.



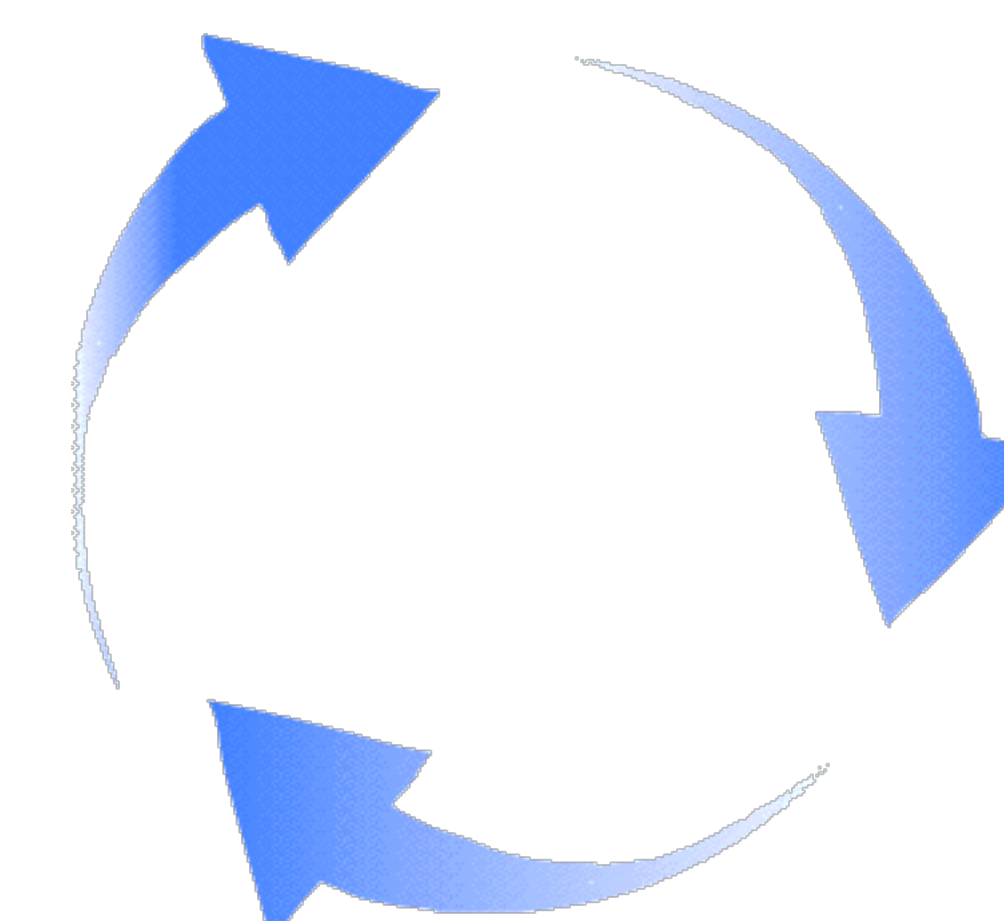
The collaborative effort of many great minds
results in a better end product for everyone.



Strong interest perpetuates
participation in the project.



Other developers who also find the project
interesting contribute improvements and repairs to
the latest (more unstable) versions of the code.



Bugs are tracked in a central
location so anyone may fix them.



More project participation results in
fewer bugs that get found more quickly.



The open source development model promotes inclusive and non-discriminatory environments that everyone can participate in. Anyone has the potential to alter the course of the project or create a fork of the project that heads in a new direction. The communities supporting these projects are self-governing, self-sustaining, and self-promoting. This kind of approach to progress has the potential to affect many other important aspects of our lives as software becomes more ubiquitous and technology becomes more integrated in all areas of modern society.



Allowing anyone to study source code and participate in software development has more benefits than simply expediting innovation. Open source communities can act as great educational mediums for learning computer languages and architectures as well as other technologies in general. The improved reliability of open source code makes it ideal in security-critical environments. Also, the natural transparency inherent in open source software makes it suitable for use in government and other public establishments.