

# About CITATION files

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You can add a CITATION file to your repository to help users correctly cite your software.

## About CITATION files

You can add a `CITATION.cff` file to the root of a repository to let others know how you would like them to cite your work. The citation file format is plain text with human- and machine-readable citation information.

Example `CITATION.cff` file:

```
cff-version: 1.2.0
message: "If you use this software, please cite it as below."
authors:
- family-names: "Lisa"
  given-names: "Mona"
  orcid: "https://orcid.org/0000-0000-0000-0000"
- family-names: "Bot"
  given-names: "Hew"
  orcid: "https://orcid.org/0000-0000-0000-0000"
title: "My Research Software"
version: 2.0.4
doi: 10.5281/zenodo.1234
date-released: 2017-12-18
url: "https://github.com/github-linguist/linguist"
```

The GitHub citation prompt on your repository will show the example `CITATION.cff` content in these formats:

### APA

Lisa, M., & Bot, H. (2017). My Research Software (Version 2.0.4) [Computer software]. <https://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.1234>

### BibTeX

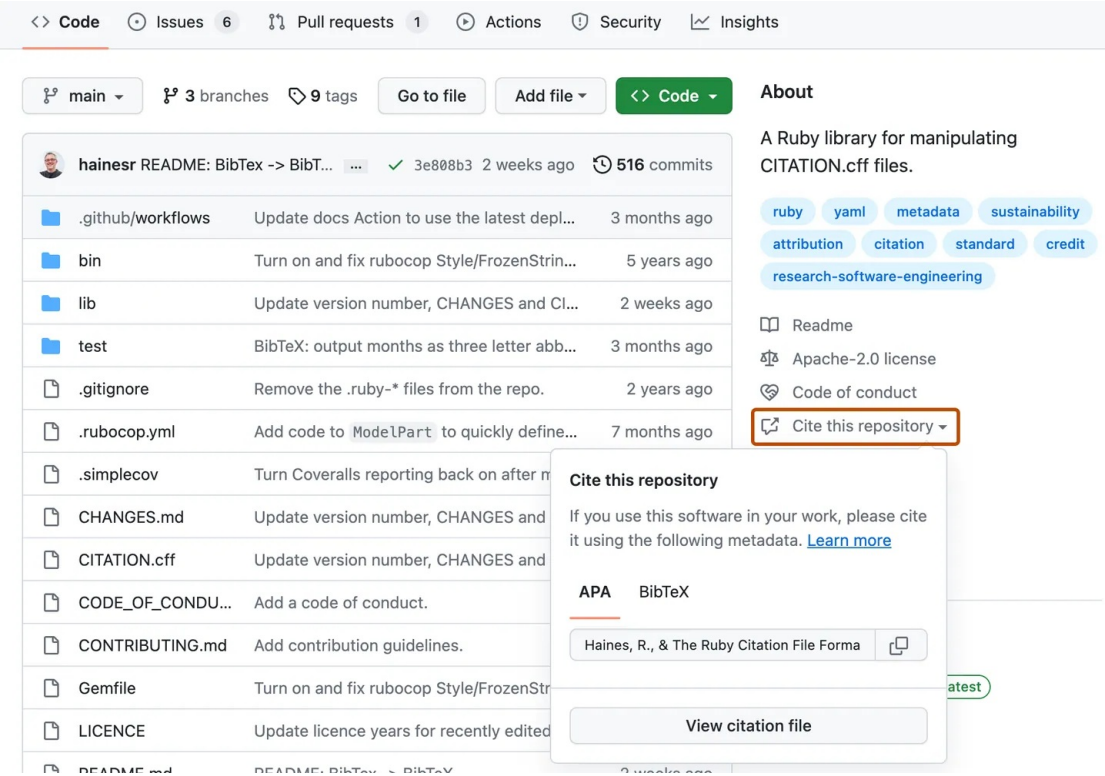
```
@software{Lisa_My_Research_Software_2017,
  author = {Lisa, Mona and Bot, Hew},
  doi = {10.5281/zenodo.1234},
  month = {12},
  title = {{My Research Software}},
  url = {https://github.com/github-linguist/linguist},
```

```
version = {2.0.4},
year = {2017}
}
```

Note the example above produces a *software* citation (that is, `@software` type in BibTeX rather than `@article`).

For more information, see the [Citation File Format](#) website.

When you add a `CITATION.cff` file to the default branch of your repository, a link is automatically added to the repository landing page in the right sidebar, with the label "Cite this repository." This makes it easy for other users to cite your software project, using the information you've provided.



## Citing something other than software 🔗

If you would prefer the GitHub citation information to link to another resource such as a research article, then you can use the `preferred-citation` override in CFF with the following types.

Resource	CFF type	BibTeX type	APA annotation
Journal article/paper	article	@article	Not applicable
Book	book	@book	Not applicable
Booklet (bound but not published)	pamphlet	@booklet	Not applicable
Conference article/paper	conference-paper	@inproceedings	[Conference paper]
Conference proceedings	conference , proceedings	@proceedings	Not applicable
Data set	data , database	@misc	[Data set]
Magazine article	magazine-article	@article	Not applicable

<b>Manual</b>	manual	@manual	Not applicable
<b>Misc/generic/other</b>	generic , any other CFF type	@misc	Not applicable
<b>Newspaper article</b>	newspaper-article	@article	Not applicable
<b>Software</b>	software , software- code , software- container , software- executable , software- virtual-machine	@software	[Computer software]
<b>Report/technical report</b>	report	@techreport	Not applicable
<b>Unpublished</b>	unpublished	@unpublished	Not applicable

Extended CITATION.cff file describing the software, but linking to a research article as the preferred citation:

```
cff-version: 1.2.0
message: "If you use this software, please cite it as below."
authors:
- family-names: "Lisa"
  given-names: "Mona"
  orcid: "https://orcid.org/0000-0000-0000-0000"
- family-names: "Bot"
  given-names: "Hew"
  orcid: "https://orcid.org/0000-0000-0000-0000"
title: "My Research Software"
version: 2.0.4
doi: 10.5281/zenodo.1234
date-released: 2017-12-18
url: "https://github.com/github-linguist/linguist"
preferred-citation:
  type: article
  authors:
  - family-names: "Lisa"
    given-names: "Mona"
    orcid: "https://orcid.org/0000-0000-0000-0000"
  - family-names: "Bot"
    given-names: "Hew"
    orcid: "https://orcid.org/0000-0000-0000-0000"
  doi: "10.0000/00000"
  journal: "Journal Title"
  month: 9
  start: 1 # First page number
  end: 10 # Last page number
  title: "My awesome research software"
  issue: 1
  volume: 1
  year: 2021
```

The example CITATION.cff file above will produce the following outputs in the GitHub citation prompt:

## APA

Lisa, M., & Bot, H. (2021). My awesome research software. Journal Title, 1(1), 1.  
https://doi.org/10.0000/00000

## BibTeX

```
@article{Lisa_My_awesome_research_2021,  
  author = {Lisa, Mona and Bot, Hew},  
  doi = {10.0000/00000},  
  journal = {Journal Title},  
  month = {9},  
  number = {1},  
  pages = {1--10},  
  title = {{My awesome research software}},  
  volume = {1},  
  year = {2021}  
}
```

## Citing a dataset [↗](#)

If your repository contains a dataset, you can set `type: dataset` at the top level of your `CITATION.cff` file to produce a data citation string output in the GitHub citation prompt.

## Other citation files [↗](#)

The GitHub citation feature will also detect a small number of additional files that are often used by communities and projects to describe how they would like their work to be cited.

GitHub will link to these files in the *Cite this repository* prompt, but will not attempt to parse them into other citation formats.

```
# Note these are case-insensitive and must be in the root of the repository  
CITATION  
CITATIONS  
CITATION.bib  
CITATIONS.bib  
CITATION.md  
CITATIONS.md  
  
# CITATION files for R packages are typically found at inst/CITATION  
inst/CITATION
```

## Citation formats [↗](#)

We currently support APA and BibTeX file formats.

Are you looking for additional citation formats? GitHub uses a Ruby library, to parse the `CITATION.cff` files. You can request additional formats in the [ruby-cff](#) repository, or contribute them yourself.

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