An OSPO for CERN

OSWG 2022-03-11 - Giacomo Tenaglia (IT/CDA)
Open Source at CERN

The foundations

• 1984: CERN makes Cernlib freely available to other labs.
• 1994: CERN releases the Web as OSS (after it being in the Public Domain for one year).
• 2012: CERN Open Source License Task Force report:
  ▪ GPLv3, LGPL as default, Apache2 as alternate.
  ▪ Set of recommendations on how to license code.
• “Open Source License Officer” role (T. Smith 2012→2016, then G. Tenaglia).
• 2017: Software Dissemination Policy (referencing to the OSL TF guidelines).
Open Source at CERN

Fast-forward to today

• Open Source Hardware initiatives and licenses.
• CERN Open Science Strategy Working Group:
  ▪ Open Data and Open Source as pillars of Open Science.
• Grass-root sets of recommendations:
  ▪ IT: “How to accept contributions”, “CLA vs DCO”.
• IT is a major contributor and governance player in large OS projects (CentOS, Ceph, Openstack, Kubernetes, ...).
• CERN GitHub organisation.
Open Source at CERN

Current critical points

- Unstructured approach across the Organization:
  - Individual team cultures/practices driven.
  - Virtually impossible to have a global view.
  - Limited sharing of best practices.
- No central inventory of CERN’s contributions to OSS:
  - Long-standing management request.
  - CERN projects/organizations “zoo” on GitHub.
- Legal risks if due diligence not correctly performed.
A grass-root OSPO initiative

- Timeline:
  - May: initial discussions between Open Source experts.
  - November: discussion with IPT/KT via IT KT liaison (N. Høimyr).
  - January: presentation to IT management.
    - Mandate to develop a joint proposal with other departments including the set-up of a structured body and to clarify the governance by end of March.
  - February: tasks and activities discussions with CERN and experiments.
  - Now: getting your feedback.
An OSPO for CERN

Open Source Software and Hardware Programme Office

• Provide guidance to CERN’s Open Source projects.
• Provide implementation guidance for the software and hardware part of CERN’s Open Science Policy.
• Provide guidance on CERN’s software policies.
• Facilitate and publicise CERN’s contributions to society through Open Source.
• Promote CERN as an “Open Source lab” to help recruitment.
OSPO activities

- Encourage CERN investment in Open Source:
  - Guide the creation of a CERN Open Source Policy;
  - Interaction with procurement processes (support/development/TCO/lock-in).
OSPO activities (cont’d)

- Support CERN Open Source projects:
  - CERN Open Source projects inventory;
  - Guidelines/best practices for developers.

- Internal/external communication:
  - Training (modularity/re-usability/sustainability, ...);
  - Yearly “CERN Open Source Report”.
Composition and roles

• “Board of experts” in Open Source (SW/HW) transversal to the Organization.
• Legal adviser(s).
• Local “review boards” to help with department-specific issues.
• Networking with development teams across the Organization.
Thank you!

- We believe an OSPO would help CERN Open Science activities.
- The OSPO proposal is an on-going cross-department effort.
- Detailed OSPO Tasks and Activities working document.
- Your input is welcome!