

Open Source Program Office (OSPO) Value Proposition

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An Open Source Program Office (OSPO) is the university's central resource for open source software information and support. An OSPO can provide consultations, training, office hours, best-practice guidance, matching of students to research projects, and a community of practice to connect stakeholders. It can assist researchers in adopting strong open source software practices, which can lead to more usable projects and an extended user community, increasing the impact of investments in research software.

Helping Researchers

An OSPO helps researchers increase the sustainability, visibility, and impact of research-oriented open source software by:

- Providing guidance on licensing, governance, and community-building
- Offering training to teach software engineering practices for sustainable code development
- Sharing best practices and successful project models for longer-term project viability
- Connecting researchers with other open source practitioners

Helping Students

An OSPO helps students build career-ready skills through engagement with real-world open source projects and communities by:

- Connecting students with faculty-led software projects and mentorship opportunities
- Offering training in pragmatic software development approaches
- Supporting hackathons and career building workshops to preparing graduates for careers in academia, industry, government, and nonprofits

Helping University Administrators

The OSPO provides a trusted source of expertise for research administration, technology transfer, the library, and research computing teams by:

- Offering a central coordination hub for researcher needs in open source software
- Coordinating activities across units to further the reach of individual offerings
- Offering generalized support for research teams that cross institutional boundaries

Institutional Value

An academic OSPO is a strategic investment that strengthens research, teaching, workforce development, and institutional impact in an increasingly software-driven world.