

IEEE SA BOG Open Source Committee (OSCom)

Operations Manual

This document, also referred to as the *IEEE SA BOG Open Source Operations Manual*, was approved by the IEEE Standards Association Board of Governors in November 2019.

1 OSCom Organization

OSCom is a committee authorized by the IEEE Standards Association (IEEE SA) Board of Governors (BOG) to provide guidance, oversight, and life-cycle management support for IEEE Open Source Projects, including IEEE Open Source Projects incorporated into IEEE standards.

OSCom operates in an open, transparent, and community-driven fashion. OSCom works in cooperation with the IEEE Open Source Community Manager and IEEE staff who establish detailed operations and maintenance policies and procedures for the IEEE Open Source Platform and IEEE Open Source Projects.

This Operations Manual sets forth the policies and procedures for OSCom activities and oversight of IEEE Open Source activities.

1.1 OSCom Responsibilities

OSCom shall be responsible for the following:

- Approving Official IEEE Open Source Project activity;
- Developing and maintaining this Operations Manual;
- Reviewing and recommending updates to the Terms of Use for the IEEE Open Source Platform;
- Reviewing and approving a Maintainers Manual providing policies, technical requirements, and procedures for the use of Contributors, Project leads, maintainers, and other volunteers involved in IEEE Open Source Projects;
- Advising and assisting the IEEE Open Source Community Manager and IEEE staff in supporting IEEE Open Source Projects and the IEEE Open Source Platform;
- Serving as a [mandatory coordination body](#) to the IEEE SA Standards Board (SASB) to support governance of IEEE Open Source Projects incorporated into IEEE standards;
- Coordinating with the IEEE Technical Activities Board (TAB), and other IEEE organizational units, to support governance of more general IEEE Open Source Projects;
- Supporting the IEEE SA's marketing and business plans surrounding its Open Source offerings as determined by the IEEE SA BOG Focus Area for Market Incubation and Business Acceleration.

1.2 Organization and Membership

OSCom shall have a Chair, Vice Chair, and at least three other members to serve for a term of one year, or until replaced. All members shall be members of IEEE SA and IEEE. Officers and members may serve for no more than three consecutive terms. All members are appointed by the IEEE SA BOG.

In addition, the Open Source Community Manager, or another IEEE staff member as designated by the Managing Director of Standards, shall serve, ex officio without vote, as the Secretary.

1.2.1 OSCom Chair

The OSCom Chair is designated by the IEEE SA President from the appointed members. Responsibilities of the OSCom Chair or designee shall include:

- Establishing and maintaining OSCom policies and procedures;
- Setting agendas and chairing meetings;
- Representing OSCom for the purpose of reporting to the IEEE SA BOG or collaborating with the SASB, TAB, and other IEEE organizations.

1.2.2 OSCom Vice Chair

The committee shall elect the Vice Chair from among the members of OSCom. The Vice Chair shall fulfill responsibilities as designated by the Chair, and shall assume the duties of the Chair if the Chair is unavailable.

1.3 Governing Documents

OSCom is governed by the following documents listed in order of precedence:

1. [New York State Not-for-Profit Corporation Law](#)
2. [IEEE Certificate of Incorporation](#)
3. [IEEE Constitution](#)
4. [IEEE Bylaws](#)
5. [IEEE Policies](#)
6. [IEEE Board of Directors Resolutions](#)
7. [IEEE Standards Association \(IEEE SA\) Operations Manual](#)
8. [IEEE SA Board of Governors Resolutions](#)
9. The OSCom Operations Manual (this document)

IEEE Open Source Projects incorporated into IEEE standards are also subject to the IEEE SASB policies and procedures.

Robert's Rules of Order Newly Revised (RONR) is the recommended guide on questions of parliamentary procedure not addressed in these procedures.

2 IEEE Open Source Concepts

Open Source is a digital work for which the human-readable source code is available—in the preferred form for making modifications—for use, study, re-use, modification, enhancement, and re-distribution by the users. Open Source applies to software and hardware, which may include computer code, hardware designs, data, documentation, documents, and other digital objects.

The **IEEE Open Source Platform** consists of the code and document repositories, license repositories, communication forums, Project management systems, and related administrative and end-user tools maintained by IEEE for the purpose of hosting Open Source Projects together with the associated governance mechanisms, support mechanisms, and other services offered to participants, users, and consumers of Open Source Projects.

An **IEEE Open Source Project** is a Project that is authorized to use the IEEE Open Source Platform in accordance with this Operations Manual.

There are five categories of IEEE Open Source Projects:

1. Individual Projects—Projects that are maintained and managed by an individual who may accept contributions from others.
2. Group Projects—Projects maintained and managed by a group of individuals or organizations. Such Projects will typically have multiple maintainer(s), committers, etc.
3. Official IEEE Open Source Projects—Open Source Projects authorized by OSCom to create official IEEE Open Source Releases or products.
4. IEEE Open Source Projects incorporated into IEEE standards—Official IEEE Open Source Projects operating in conjunction with an SASB authorized standards Project.
5. Joint IEEE Open Source Projects—Official IEEE Open Source Projects that are operating in conjunction with another IEEE Board or Organizational Unit and are also subject to the policies and procedures of that Board or Organizational Unit.

An IEEE standard incorporates Open Source if it normatively or informatively incorporates an official IEEE Open Source Release developed by an IEEE Open Source Project in accordance with the PAR for that standard.

An official **IEEE Open Source Release** is a release of an Official IEEE Open Source Project.

An **Open Source License** is a license under which an Open Source work is released that defines the rights third parties have to the Open Source work and the terms under which the Open Source work may be used.

An **IEEE Contributor License Agreement (CLA)** is an agreement with IEEE, signed by a Contributor for personal contributions or by an authorized person on behalf of an organization that defines intellectual property rights in contributions made by the Contributor or representatives of the organization.

3 IEEE Open Source Roles and Responsibilities

The following roles are established to engage in activities for the IEEE Open Source Platform and Projects.

3.1 IEEE Staff Roles

The **IEEE Open Source Community Manager** is an IEEE SA staff role that leads the technical guidance and support to IEEE Open Source Projects. The IEEE Open Source Community Manager controls the management and operation of the IEEE Open Source Platform.

The IEEE Open Source Community Manager or designee shall be responsible for a Maintainers Manual, approved by OSCom, which shall be hosted on the IEEE Open Source Platform as an Official IEEE Open Source Project.

The IEEE Open Source Community Manager provides guidance (directly and through the Maintainers Manual) to parties interested in initiating and conducting IEEE Open Source Projects, on:

- Access to the use of the IEEE Open Source Platform;

- The use of tools (IEEE or not) used to develop and maintain IEEE Open Source Projects;
- License agreements, including Open Source licenses and Contributor licenses [in conjunction with IEEE SA Intellectual Property Rights (IPR) Manager, and IEEE Legal and Compliance];
- Requirements for a complete release package, including documentation, and
- Security, configuration management, verification and validation, testing requirements, release, branding, and distribution processes and tools on the Platform.

The Maintainers Manual shall establish criteria for the vitality of Projects and for engaging with Projects to maintain their vitality and for taking actions, which may include deprecating, archiving, and terminating Projects when they become dormant.

The IEEE Open Source Community Manager supports the SASB and its committees by providing or verifying information required for the initiation, governance, and review of IEEE Open Source Projects incorporated into IEEE standards.

3.1.2 Intellectual Property Rights Manager

The IEEE SA Intellectual Property Rights (IPR) Manager is an IEEE staff role responsible for managing Intellectual Property (IP) matters associated with Open Source Projects.

The IEEE SA IPR Manager is responsible for the following:

- Evaluating new Open Source licenses, in conjunction with IEEE Legal and Compliance, for acceptance by OSCom;
- Recommending new Open Source licenses for IEEE Open Source Projects;
- Coordinating with and seeking necessary approvals from IEEE SASB for updates to existing approved CLA templates;
- Working with the IEEE Open Source Community Manager to verify that contributions to IEEE Open Source Projects meet IEEE intellectual property requirements, including verification that proper CLAs are in place;
- Supporting the SASB and its committees by providing or verifying information required for the initiation, governance, and review of Open Source licenses and IEEE Open Source Projects incorporated into IEEE standards.

3.1.3 OSCom Administrator

An OSCom Administrator is an IEEE SA staff role that supports the operations of OSCom.

3.2 IEEE Volunteer Roles

3.2.1 IEEE Open Source Project Lead

An IEEE Open Source Project Lead is responsible for the vitality, organization, development, evaluation, operation, security, and maintenance of an IEEE Open Source Project. An IEEE Open Source Project Lead is an individual, or person designated by a technical organization associated with the Project as the official point of communication with OSCom and the IEEE Open Source Community Manager on behalf of the IEEE Open Source Project. The IEEE Open Source Project Lead may delegate specific responsibilities to an alternate IEEE Open Source Project Representative. For IEEE Open Source Projects incorporated into IEEE standards, the IEEE Open Source Project Lead shall be an Officer of the Standards Committee or Working Group responsible for the Project.

3.2.2 Contributor

A Contributor is any person who submits any material to an IEEE Open Source Project, whether as an individual or on behalf of an organization. Material may include, but is not limited to, Open Source works, comments, and marketing materials. IEEE membership is not required to be a Contributor. Every Contributor is required to obtain an IEEE account that requires agreeing to the IEEE Code of Conduct. Every contribution shall be associated with the IEEE account of its Contributor.

3.2.3 Maintainer

A Maintainer has authority to commit (save changes) to the IEEE code and document repository associated with an IEEE Open Source Project. An IEEE Open Source Project shall have at least one Maintainer, who may be the IEEE Open Source Project Lead. Maintainers shall be familiar with and follow the policies and procedures in the Maintainers Manual. Maintainer responsibilities include committing code, releasing code, and managing the access controls on the IEEE Open Source Project's repository. Maintainers may assign Committers who have the ability to commit code to a Project. For IEEE Open Source Projects incorporated into IEEE standards, Maintainers and Committers shall be members of the Standards Committee or Working Group responsible for the Project, or affiliated with an entity member of such Working Group. Maintainers for IEEE Open Source Projects incorporated into IEEE standards shall also be IEEE members of any grade and a member of IEEE SA. Maintainers for Official IEEE Open Source Projects shall be IEEE members of any grade.

3.2.4 IEEE Open Source Project Peer Reviewers

IEEE Open Source Project peer reviewers, who are familiar with an IEEE Open Source Project's functions, may be invited by the OSCom Community Manager or designee to perform a code review or evaluate the security, usability, performance, or other aspects of a planned release of an Open Source Project that is not an IEEE Open Source Project incorporated into IEEE standards (these IEEE Open Source Projects are reviewed under the Standards Association balloting and Public Review processes of the SASB.)

4 OSCom Meetings

4.1 Quarterly Meetings

The OSCom Chair shall schedule meetings of OSCom at least quarterly by teleconference with screen sharing capabilities or face-to-face. Meetings (except for Executive Sessions) shall be open to all. Dates for meetings shall be announced at least thirty calendar days in advance and the initial agendas should be posted at least seven calendar days in advance. Meetings for urgent purposes, including executive sessions, may be called by the OSCom Chair or designee with at least ten calendar days' notice.

In its meetings or through electronic ballot, OSCom may take the following actions:

- Approve or inactivate IEEE Open Source Projects (other than IEEE Open Source Projects incorporated into IEEE standards);
- Approve or inactivate IEEE Open Source Projects incorporated into IEEE standards in conjunction with the SASB;
- Approve the initial release and subsequent major releases of the Maintainers Manual;

- Advise on changes to the OS Platform, its Terms of Use, or operating procedures.

OSCom members shall review requests to initiate or inactivate IEEE Open Source Projects and shall have the ability to vote for or against a request. OSCom shall have at least 14 calendar days to make comments, shared with other OSCom members, before a vote. The OSCom Chair may extend this period.

The OSCom Administrator shall take minutes of each meeting. Minutes of meetings shall be published to meeting participants within 30 calendar days of the end of the meeting.

4.2 Executive Session

Executive sessions shall be limited to sessions in which sensitive personnel, legal, or business issues are discussed. The OSCom Chair may invite individuals with information germane to an executive session to participate in designated portions of the executive session. Persons otherwise permitted to participate in an executive session may be removed by the committee for reasons of conflict of interest or for other reasons determined by IEEE Legal and Compliance.

4.3 Quorum and Voting

A quorum is defined as 50% or greater of the OSCom members. If a quorum is not present at a meeting, actions may be taken subject to confirmation by letter or electronic ballot. Actions shall be approved by a majority of those voting. Proxy voting is not permitted.

For votes cast by electronic mail, majority consent of those participating, provided a majority of the voting members of the committee respond, shall be required to approve an action taken without a meeting. The action and written confirmations shall be filed with the minutes.

5 IEEE Open Source Project Management

The procedures for Project approval and Open Source approval are different when the Project is an IEEE Open Source Project incorporated into IEEE standards. Management of IEEE Open Source Projects incorporated into IEEE standards is the responsibility of the SASB, coordinating with OSCom for the Open Source components of the IEEE standard.

5.1 Open Source Project Initiation and Approval

Any individual or entity may request to use the IEEE Open Source platform for a purpose related to IEEE objectives. An organization, or group of individuals and organizations, may request to set up a group Project on the IEEE Open Source Platform by application to the IEEE Open Source Community Manager. The IEEE Open Source Community Manager and IEEE SA IPR Manager shall review requests and should provide feedback within ten working days. Requests for initiating Official IEEE Open Source Projects are then forwarded to OSCom for review and approval, which takes a minimum of 14 calendar days.

Pilot Projects operating on the IEEE Open Source Platform before approval of this Operations Manual do not require further OSCom approval.

The IEEE Open Source Community Manager may set up space on the IEEE Open Source Platform for the operation of a Project prior to approval of the Project by OSCom. However, the Project may not have official public Open Source Releases prior to OSCom approval.

5.1.1 Requesting an Official IEEE Open Source Project

An IEEE Open Source Project seeks authorization to become an Official IEEE Open Source Project by posting a request on the IEEE Open Source Platform. The request shall include:

- A title and description of the Project;
- The name and contact information of the IEEE Open Source Project Lead;
- Selection of a single Open Source license and associated CLAs;
- An indication of how the Project will be governed (see 5.1.2);
- A description of the relationship of the Project to known Open Source;
- Agreement to adhere to the Terms of Use for the IEEE Open Source Platform (see 6.1);
- An indicator of whether the IEEE Open Source Project is intended to be incorporated into an IEEE standard associated with an IEEE SA Project Authorization Request (PAR) submitted to the New Standards Committee of the IEEE SASB (NesCom) or an existing IEEE standards Project previously approved for Open Source development.
 - IEEE Open Source Projects incorporated into IEEE standards shall agree to an applicable set of Terms and Conditions (T&Cs).
 - Authorization of an IEEE Open Source Project incorporated into IEEE standards shall require that any associated PARs have been assigned a standards designation.

5.1.2 Project Governance

Project governance is needed to make decisions on the Project and to ensure responsibility for conformance with the IEEE Open Source Platform administrative, technical, security, and licensing requirements. Some possible sources of IEEE Open Source Project governance are the following:

- A single individual
- An external organization
- A closed set of individuals or organization
- An identified set of active Contributors, using a democratic process
- A subgroup of an IEEE Technical Organization, such as a Standards Committee or Working Group
- A consensus-driven process in which any materially interested party may participate
 - A single individual
 - An external organization
 - A closed set of individuals or organizations
 - An identified set of active Contributors, using a democratic process
 - A subgroup of an IEEE Technical Organization, such as a Standards Committee or Working Group
 - A consensus-driven process in which any materially interested party may participate

Items that shall be addressed in IEEE Open Source Project governance include, but are not limited to, who is the Project lead; who may contribute to the Project; how merge requests are handled; how the Maintainers, Committers, and IEEE Open Source Project peer reviewers are admitted to the Project and authorized; and how and when releases are evaluated, reviewed and agreed. Project governance may include a process for external, public, or other review prior to release.

The IEEE Open Source Community Manager will provide samples of governance policies and procedures, as part of the Maintainers Manual, that can be used or adapted by IEEE Open Source Projects. The governance policies and procedures of an Official IEEE Open Source Project shall be publicly available.

The governance of IEEE Open Source Projects incorporated into IEEE standards is detailed in the *IEEE SA Standards Board Bylaws* and the *IEEE SA Standards Board Operations Manual* and approved policies and procedures of its Standards Committees and Working Groups.

5.2 Open Source Evaluation, Approval, and Release

5.2. Initial Commit

An initial commit is the process of uploading a software package for the first time to the IEEE Open Source Platform. Initial commits for Official IEEE Open Source Projects will be reviewed following Maintainers Manual guidelines.

For Official IEEE Open Source Projects, peer reviewers may review the initial commit if requested by OSCoM or the IEEE Open Source Community Manager, and their feedback will be used to inform the IEEE Open Source Community Manager or designee's decision on whether to accept or reject an initial commit to the repository.

5.2.2 Peer Review

The IEEE Open Source Community Manager shall develop procedures for initiating and conducting peer review as part of an Official IEEE Open Source Project and shall publish them through the Maintainers Manual. Peer reviewed releases or products may indicate that they have been peer reviewed when publicized.

The peer review process for IEEE Open Source Projects incorporated into IEEE standards is performed during the Standards Association balloting and Public Review processes of the SASB.

5.2.3 Planned Releases

All intellectual property and Contributor License Agreement (CLA) requirements shall be met prior to initial release or planned releases where the IEEE Open Source Project's artifacts are made publicly available.

A release is the process by which a software package is made available. An IEEE Open Source Release is a release that has been developed through an approved IEEE process and is publicized as an Official IEEE Release. IEEE Open Source Releases require the approval of the Project and the IEEE Open Source Community Manager or designee.

5.3 Review of IEEE Open Source Projects

OSCoM shall periodically review Official IEEE Open Source Projects for viability, at least every three years. OSCoM may request status reports from the OSCoM Administrator to assist in this review.

5.4 Inactivation of an IEEE Open Source Project

An IEEE Open Source Project that does not follow its approved governance procedures may be warned, suspended, or inactivated (terminated) by OSCoM. IEEE Open Source Projects may be

suspended or inactivated, for example, due to unavailability of resources, security issues, or lack of Project oversight, maintenance, or technical viability.

A request to inactivate an IEEE Open Source Project may be made by the IEEE Open Source Project Lead, IEEE technical organization overseeing the Project (such as a Standards Committee or Working Group), OSCom member, or the IEEE Open Source Community Manager. A request shall include reasons for inactivation and recommended disposition of the Project artifacts, as well as the consequences of inactivation or continued availability. The inactivation request shall be forwarded to the IEEE Open Source Community Manager, IEEE SA IPR Manager, IEEE Open Source Project Lead, related IEEE Technical Organization (as applicable), and OSCom for comments. After comments are received, an OSCom meeting shall be held to consider inactivation, which shall require a majority of OSCom members for quorum and a majority vote of OSCom for any action to be taken. Inactivation of an IEEE Open Source Project incorporated into IEEE standards and archiving of its software shall additionally require approval of the SASB.

Open Source software artifacts of inactivated Projects may be archived (removed from unauthorized access), or transferred to another IEEE Open Source Project or IEEE Open Source Project incorporated into IEEE standards.

6 Terms of Use and Appeals

6.1 Terms of Use

OSCom shall provide a set of Terms of Use for the IEEE Open Source Platform. IEEE Legal and Compliance is responsible for reviewing and approving the Terms of Use for the IEEE Open Source Platform. All users of the IEEE Open Source Platform shall agree to and adhere to all IEEE policies and procedures, including but not limited to the Terms of Use for the IEEE Open Source Platform, the [IEEE Code of Ethics](#) and IEEE Code of Conduct (whether or not the user is an IEEE or IEEE SA member), IEEE Nondiscrimination Policy, and all applicable laws and regulations. Access privileges of any user may be suspended or removed in response to violations of any IEEE policies.

All Committers to IEEE Open Source Projects, particularly Maintainers, shall comply with the IEEE Maintainers Manual.

6.2 Appeals

Persons who have directly and materially affected interests and who have been, or could reasonably be expected to be, adversely affected by an Open Source Project within the IEEE's jurisdiction, or by the lack of action on any part of OSCom or the IEEE Open Source Community Manager, shall have the right to appeal procedural actions or inactions, provided that the appellant shall have first exhausted the appeals procedures of any relevant IEEE committee or body responsible for the policies and procedures of the IEEE Open Source Project before filing the procedural appeal with OSCom.

OSCom shall not provide an appeals process to resolve a disagreement about a technical decision. Any person dissatisfied with a technical decision shall follow the procedures of the body that has made the decision to provide input on the technical decision, including, but not limited to, making a technical comment during the applicable comment submission and/or balloting period.

OSCom shall not consider any claim that (i) is based solely on ethical considerations; (ii) does not seek to amend or reverse a decision of a relevant body; or (iii) does not recommend remedial action or recommends remedial action not allowed by current IEEE policies and procedures. The appellant shall be advised to bring ethical claims to the attention of the IEEE Ethics and Member Conduct Committee or the IEEE SA Standards Conduct Committee, as appropriate.

The OSCom Chair and Vice Chair shall act as the OSCom Appeal Officers. The OSCom Chair shall select three members of OSCom to serve as the OSCom Appeals Panel. Members of the OSCom Appeals Panel shall serve until a new OSCom Appeals Panel is appointed. The OSCom Chair may appoint a new member of the OSCom Appeals Panel to replace a current member who is deemed to be conflicted.

The appeals procedure for OSCom shall follow the procedures found in 5.8 of the *IEEE SA Standards Board Operations Manual*, except applied to OSCom and the OSCom Appeal Officers and OSCom Appeals Panel as described in this clause.

7 Licenses and Contributor License Agreements

All IEEE Open Source Projects on the IEEE Open Source Platform shall provide Open Source software or hardware subject to an IEEE approved Open Source license.

All Contributors to IEEE Open Source Projects shall submit appropriate IEEE CLAs, either entity CLAs or individual CLAs, that map to the IEEE approved Open Source license. IEEE CLAs are intended to protect the interests of IEEE, support IEEE's business models, and support IEEE Open Source development.

7.1 List of Approved Open Source Licenses and Contributor License Agreements

The IEEE SA IPR Manager shall maintain a set of Open Source licenses and CLAs that are approved for general IEEE Open Source Projects and shall indicate which are approved for IEEE Open Source Projects incorporated into IEEE standards. This list and the text of the licenses and CLAs shall be made publicly available. The list shall indicate which Contributor License Agreements are approved for use with each approved Open Source license.

An IEEE Open Source Project may request to use a license that is not on the approved list. Any such license shall be submitted to the IEEE Open Source Community Manager for review by the IEEE SA IPR Manager and shall not be used until it is approved by IEEE.

7.2 Identification of License and Contributor License Agreements

The Open Source License and CLAs to be used by an IEEE Open Source Project shall be identified in the request for authorization. OSCom shall verify that the licenses and CLAs are on an approved list.

7.3 Required Notifications and Approvals

An IEEE Open Source Project shall notify the IEEE Open Source Community Manager and IEEE SA IPR Manager whenever it wishes to change the Open Source license it uses for all or some of its Open Source software and shall not make such change until the change is approved by OSCom.