



**The Making Of  
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# The Making Of The Making Of

Residency May - June 2006

**Mette Ingvarlsen**



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Deuxième partie : Open Source

### **OPEN SOURCE, compte-rendu d'une conversation**

*Elke van Campenhout*

Première ébauche destinée à explorer la fonction potentielle de l'usage de l'Open Source dans les arts de la scène. Les participants au groupe de travail consacré à l'Open Source ont chacun formulé leurs préoccupations, idées, questions et points de vue. Ce texte découle de cet échange.

### **Suite d'une conversation sur l'open source**

*Mette Ingvarlsen*

En réaction à la discussion sur l'Open Source, Mette Ingvarlsen approfondit les champs de la problématique où cet outil pourrait jouer un rôle.

### **Suite d'une discussion actuelle**

*Heike Langsdorf*

Heike Langsdorf commente le modèle de production Open Source à partir de son expérience avec le collectif open source f,r,o,g,s et de l'organisation du modèle artistique et méta-économique de Spend-It.

### **Communautés innovantes**

*Citations d'Eric Von Hippel*

Eric Von Hippel décrit la naissance, le fonctionnement et l'interdépendance des "communautés innovantes". Un modèle possible pour la pratique de la performance ?

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# **PART TWO: Open Source**

## **The Open Source Definition**

*Bruce Perens*

### **Introduction**

Open source doesn't just mean access to the source code. The distribution terms of open source software must comply with the following criteria:

#### **1. Free Redistribution**

The license shall not restrict any party from selling or giving away the software as a component of an aggregate software distribution containing programs from several different sources. The license shall not require a royalty or other fee for such sale.

#### **2. Source Code**

The program must include source code, and must allow distribution in source code as well as compiled form. Where some form of a product is not distributed with source code, there must be a well-publicized means of obtaining the source code for no more than a reasonable reproduction cost preferably, downloading via the Internet without charge. The source code must be the preferred form in which a programmer would modify the program. Deliberately obfuscated source code is not allowed. Intermediate forms such as the output of a pre-processor or translator are not allowed.

#### **3. Derived Works**

The license must allow modifications and derived works, and must allow them to be distributed under the same terms as the license of the original software.

#### **4. Integrity of The Author's Source Code**

The license may restrict source-code from being distributed in modified form only if the license allows the distribution of "patch files" with the source code for the purpose of modifying the program at build

time. The license must explicitly permit distribution of software built from modified source code. The license may require derived works to carry a different name or version number from the original software.

### **5. No Discrimination Against Persons or Groups**

The license must not discriminate against any person or group of persons.

### **6. No Discrimination Against Fields of Endeavor**

The license must not restrict anyone from making use of the program in a specific field of endeavor. For example, it may not restrict the program from being used in a business, or from being used for genetic research.

### **7. Distribution of License**

The rights attached to the program must apply to all to whom the program is redistributed without the need for execution of an additional license by those parties.

### **8. License Must Not Be Specific to a Product**

The rights attached to the program must not depend on the program's being part of a particular software distribution. If the program is extracted from that distribution and used or distributed within the terms of the program's license, all parties to whom the program is redistributed should have the same rights as those that are granted in conjunction with the original software distribution.

### **9. License Must Not Restrict Other Software**

The license must not place restrictions on other software that is distributed along with the licensed software. For example, the license must not insist that all other programs distributed on the same medium must be open source software.

### **\*10. License Must Be Technology-Neutral**

No provision of the license may be predicated on any individual technology or style of interface.

# Open Source Paradigm in the Arts

*Tomislav Medak*

Currently numerous efforts are being made to contemplate the implications of an open source paradigm for artistic practices. The International Festival discussing how to open source The Theater 1 project they are developing for Steyerischer Herbst 07, or the Open Source workgroup scheduled to meet this August during the Summer Academy at the Performing Arts Forum in Reims 2, to name only a few that I'm personally involved in. A quick google search would bring up dozens of others. But, why would a paradigm emerging from a technological context attain such currency within artistic debates? In most of the cases, at least in performing arts, these efforts originate particularly from those actors who are committed to rethinking artistic production as a particular social practice with its own institutional framework. Consequently, Open Source emerged on the radar of the art-as-system debate as soon as it transcended its original technological context and came to represent not so much a particular method within software making, but a particular form of social organization. Yet, what does Open Source mean? What kind of form of social organization does Open Source represent? What are the normative implications of this metaphor for (performing) arts?

## **Open Source and Free Software**

The term Open Source originally comes from Free Software. Many Free Software projects might be familiar to you: operating system GNU/Linux, Firefox browser, Apache server application, OpenOffice productivity suite and maybe a host of others from hundreds of thousands of free software projects out there in the world. Free software, as opposed to proprietary software, comes with four essential freedoms - freedom 0 (hackers start to count from 0) is the freedom to run the program, which is a freedom that in most of the cases comes unlimited with the proprietary software too. Freedom 1 is the freedom to study and modify the program, and the ability to access the Source Code of the program is prerequisite for this freedom. Freedom 2 is the freedom to redistribute copies. Freedom 3 is the freedom to improve the program and distribute the improvements for the benefit of others, and the ability to access the Source Code of the program is prerequisite for this freedom too. 3

The first underlying difference between free software as defined by those four freedoms and proprietary software is in their respective property form. Software as property falls under the same *property form* as other forms of human creative expression - written word, film, photography, music, etc. This form of intellectual property is called copyright. Now, while proprietary software uses the increasingly aggressive copyright regime mostly to maximize restrictions on freedoms of users, free software uses the copyright to do the exact opposite - to create freedoms for users and to restrict only the ability of

users to restrict those freedoms for other users. And for this reason Free Software is also at times called *copyleft*, which is obviously opposite to copyright.

Yet, for all those freedoms to exist it is necessary that free software be made available in two formats: as binary or executable code, which is a machine readable code that you can run on a computer, and as a source code, which is a human readable code, written in any of the myriad of programming languages such as Basic, Pascal, C++, Perl, etc., and then compiled into the machine code in order to become executable on a computer. And it is this Source Code that humans can understand, study and improve. The second underlying difference between free software and proprietary software is *technological* - while the latter makes a business secret out of its Source Code, the former is always distributed along with its Source Code so that it can be studied and improved. This Source Code is therefore called *Open Source Code*, or shorter *Open Source*, as opposed to the *Closed Source Code* of proprietary software.

Thus while Free Software is about freedom and equal access to information tools that inform contemporary life, Open Source is a methodology to achieve those principles in the domain of software where there are two codes at work – executable code and corresponding source code. With one little caveat though that I won't go into at length here - a thriving economy has started to develop over the last decade around free software and it has created a number of actors who place greater importance in technological excellence and model of economic production of free software rather than in its principles. Greater importance in Open Source as methodology than the principles it originally served to implement. And this debate has pitted two enthusiastic communities against each other: Open Source vs. Free Software.

### **Commons-based peer production**

But without going any further into that debate, let's now return to what I emphasized initially: much of the interest dedicated to Open Source in the art-as-system debate comes from the new form of social organization that it came to represent. Free Software's ability to create indiscriminate freedoms for everyone, yet to deny anyone who would like to take those freedoms away from others by hoarding it as exclusive private property played a pivotal role in mobilizing efforts of hundreds of thousands of developers from all over the world to volunteer and contribute their work to numerous free software projects. Free Software's copyleft nature, where everyone can share and everyone can contribute without having to fear that someone will come along and turn their work into private property that can no longer be shared and no longer be accessible to its makers, created a model of collective, distributed, horizontally organized, participation-guided production unparalleled before. However, it could not have been paralleled before there was a production environment that allowed it to scale to the global level: the networked environment of the internet that has over the last fifteen years become available to a greater part of the Planet's population. Now, it would be a misnomer to call this organizational form of production – based on the collective ownership of information as input/output of the production process and on the networked environment as equally accessible means of production, which have jointly made possible a horizontal organization of producers from all over the world – the Open Source model. It is not based on a technological method, but rather on the social form that came as a consequence of the property form. For the lack of a better term, we will together with Yochai Benkler choose to descriptively call it *commons-based peer production*.<sup>4</sup>

Now, we should make an effort to fully comprehend the fundamental novelty this organizational model of production introduces. Economic science has traditionally known two principle models of economic organization - the first being the production based on non-hierarchical, supply and demand driven action of individual actors in the free markets, the second being the production based on hierarchic command over collective action. The example of the first model is free market; the example of the second is the firm. But with the commons-based peer production we're witnessing the birth of a third model, one that is at the same time non-hierarchical and collective.

And we're witnessing this model emerging not only in free software production, but all over the networked information environment. The examples are numerous, some of them well known, some of them known only to those directly involved: blogs with the citizen journalism phenomenon, social networks such as MySpace, Orkut or Friendster, content-sharing websites such as Flickr, YouTube, last.fm, open access to scientific publishing, open patent-pools in bio-sciences, open courseware from the most advanced institutions of learning such as MIT, free culture production under Creative Commons licenses, and, and, and... Probably the best-known example is Wikipedia. Wikipedia is an on-line encyclopaedia, collectively written and edited in more than hundred languages by thousands of anonymous volunteers from all over the world, whose writing is motivated only by the Wikipedia's sacred norm: neutral point of view. Over the last five years, this effort of amateur collective knowledge production has produced the largest encyclopaedia ever, larger and almost just as accurate as the Encyclopaedia Britannica, which has become the standard reference work for most of the users on the web today. Without anyone hierarchically coordinating the effort, without anyone owning the result.

### **A continuum of knowledge**

But why would this new model of production be of interest for the (performing) arts? What is it that resonates in the commons-based peer production model for the art-as-system debate of the day?

Well, this new model has also introduced a fundamental shift in how people participate in (information) economy. While classical (information) economy was a consumerist economy with clear-cut functions of active producers and passive consumers, this new model has created a production based on participation and collaboration of producers and consumers, conflation of their respective functions. And this is where artists and theorists see a potential paradigm to look into and up to in order to break free from the consumer economy's division between consumers and producers that the contemporary cultural production system has fallen victim to as well.

From the politico-economic perspective this model furthermore produces a shift in the process of exchange. The exchange starts to shed its commodity form and increasingly takes on the shape of knowledge exchange. To use GNU/Linux operating system often requires a demanding process of learning and communicating knowledge, and knowledge is ultimately the fundamental good travelling upstream and downstream between developers, coders, bug-fixers, documentation contributors and users. It is this knowledge exchange that is ultimately the driving force of Free Software production. And it is this continuum of knowledge downstream and upstream between producers and consumers (difficult to tell those two apart) occurring in the process of exchange that is the normative substance the arts can take away from this paradigm - a way of sublating the divide between the producers and consumers, between the artists and audience, and start transforming the politico-economic foundations

of the contemporary art production system. 5

If in the previous period artists and theorists have explored the performativity of culture which came to define the multi-cultural Western societies struggling to come to terms with the effects of decade-long economic migration, now in a global society where the networked knowledge economy promises to be a new tool of hegemonic power they are starting to turn towards exploring the decommodification of knowledge.

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(1) See: <http://international-festival.org/node/28437>.

(2) See: <http://pa-f.net/program>.

(3) The definition of essential freedoms was formulated by the initiator of the Free Software Movement Richard Stallman. See <http://www.gnu.org/philosophy/free-sw.html> [german: <http://www.gnu.org/philosophy/free-sw.de.html>].

(4) See: <http://www.benkler.org/CoasesPenguin.html>, and for further reading: [http://www.benkler.org/wealth\\_of\\_networks/index.php/Main\\_Page](http://www.benkler.org/wealth_of_networks/index.php/Main_Page).

(5) The thesis on a continuum of knowledge as a move away from the economy based on commodity exchange I have explored at greater detail in a short text that originally appeared in Makeworlds, no. 4, 2004. See: <http://www.makeworlds.org/node/96>.

# OPEN SOURCE, notes from a conversation

*Elke Van Campenhout*

*nadine* in Brussels, 27 and 28 May. Mette Ingvartsen, Elke Van Campenhout, Anne Juren, Mette Edvardsen, Manon Santkin, and Heike Langsdorf

## WHAT?

The ‘open source’ movement could be considered to be a reaction to the over-capitalizing tendencies of contemporary capitalism, in which not only the material outcome of production processes has been objectified to commodities, but also the immaterial ‘products’ of knowledge and creativity have come to be considered according to the market principles of scarcity and added value.

Originally conceived of within the software field, open source software is related to the accessibility of the source code of programming to all willing to use, copy and modify the code for their own purposes.

If considering the possibility of open source work in performance, this cannot be done without trying to define the precise definition of ‘open source’ in this very different context: at what level is the ‘openness’ of the production process situated?

Is there a ‘code’ in performance that can be shared, copied and changed? How would this process unfold? What tools would we need?

Wikipedia: Open source describes practices in production and development that promote access to the end product’s sources. Some consider it as a philosophy, and others consider it as a pragmatic methodology. Before open source became widely adopted, developers and producers used a variety of phrases to describe the concept; the term open source gained popularity with the rise of the Internet and its enabling of diverse production models, communication paths, and interactive communities. Subsequently, open source software became the most prominent face of open source.

The open source model can allow for the concurrent use of different agendas and approaches in production, in contrast with more centralized models of development such as those typically used in commercial software companies.

## **PARALLEL SOFTWARE?**

The biggest problem with translating the terminology of ‘open source’ to a performance context is the lack of a shared language. Although choreography can be grasped through labelling movement into certain ‘styles’, this can only be done when studiously following the rules and techniques within this aesthetic paradigm (which more often than not is not the case), and even then it can only be decided upon within the vague, distinctive categories of awareness of being ‘in’ or ‘out’ of this particular paradigm. The possibility of sharing movement scores is limited to say the least, and will always remain rather imprecise.

The only notation system dance/choreography has been working with on a recurring level has been that of video recordings. But in this case the sharing would be on the level of the video image, which is only in a second degree related to the body. The compositional techniques of the choreography would then maybe parallel the cut-and-paste-techniques of video montage, and lose their specificity to the performance field.

An example might be the work of Vincent Dunoyer, who uses photographs of movement, or the video registration of phrases of himself by other dancers to reproduce the dance on stage. (Cadavre Exquis, Solos for others)

## **EQUAL ACCESS IS NOT EQUAL COLLABORATION**

The link made between open source access to materials, procedures, methodologies, is often confused with a process of equal collaboration. But, open source in itself has no inherent link to equal work, nor does it necessarily diffuse the position of the author. Wikipedia makes a distinction between the open source movement as a ‘pragmatic methodology’, and the open source philosophy. On this level there is much confusion on how to understand the terminology: on the one hand ‘open source’ is an ideological source for a level of working together that overrules the strict and ‘romantic’ notions of authenticity, individuality, personal genius and authorship. In practice, though, the use of open source tools doesn’t guarantee any of these things, although they do bring them potentially within reach.

## **WHERE IN PERFORMANCE PROCESS?**

As said before, it is quite difficult to situate the open source potential in the performance process. If we compare the production process of choreography, for example, to that of the software development, the first obvious parallel to consider would be the code material. But as we discussed above, the source material of choreography, being the movement, is very hard to grasp and rework, if not in the studio itself, which could hardly be called an ‘open source’ space. Movement material can only be communicated in an ‘open’ way, which means over a great distance and accessible to a group of non-related peer group members, through the registered image.

Another way of situating open source methodologies in performance might be to consider the methodologies or strategies of making a performance the actual site of open source working. (see also Heike Langsdorf’s contribution on these possibilities).

## **NON-HIERARCHICAL?**

In principle the open source process works in a non-hierarchical manner: since the code can be used and changed by anyone, there is no question of distinguishing between the original and the copy. But is this the case? As we learn from the creative commons licences, the use of open source tools does not necessarily mean the loss of authorship, of hierarchical primacy over the ‘second degree’ users. In an open source network the author may very well decide on the future use of his material by giving out precise licences to ‘users’, which in this case are not considered to be ‘equal’ participants to the creative process anymore.

## **MORE QUESTIONS**

Once someone said that love is giving something you don’t have to someone who doesn’t ask for it. Could it also apply to art and open source programming?

Is a gift free? What is the cost of immaterial work in an open source economy?

When life becomes work and work becomes life, the difference between productive and reproductive work disappears. Paid work is being defined more and more by the precarious and informal working conditions of reproductive work. This transformation is characterized by the emergence of an indistinct pool of life and work: the extension of working hours into the home, temporary labour contracts and individualized terms and conditions, the demand for emotional involvement and affective activities.

Is there a link between the ‘immaterial’ and ‘invisible’ work of all ‘home’ workers: housewives, open source programmers, artists, e-workers, etc? Are there possible models for contracts, social protection, working conditions that would give visibility to the multilayered, flexible and generous workers without commodifying and enclosing them?

Should we define a common policy? Do we want regulations or increased flexibility?



## A continuation of a conversation on open source

*Mette Ingvartsen*

One always has to be careful when transposing a concept belonging to another field to avoid it becoming a simple metaphor. Software has a totally different ontology from the body of performance, which produces complications in the sense that it wouldn't be possible to reproduce a source code without any effort. The great hit about sharing digital information is naturally that a digital copy is as useful and completely identical to the original and can be reproduced with very little effort, whereas if we are dealing with the copying of body material we as yet have no robots where you can just plot in the required motion and, secondly, who said the source code of performance has anything to do with the body?

The questions are many.

Should choreography be understood as something disconnected from the live body in order to be able to really function in terms of open source?

-how independent/disconnected is the product from the software it has been produced with?

-if software most of the time comes from a specific need and a function to be fulfilled, then what needs do we have in performance right now?

-what are we addressing when wanting to implicate OS into performance practices?

- 1) the body
- 2) a performance
- 3) the theatre setup in general
- 4) the audience reception and understanding
- 5) the distributional system, marked/circulation, authorship question
- 6) the research and education facility as in PAF for instance
- 7) techniques, skills, body practices; think of Forsythe's improvisation technologies, which I guess is a kind of open source, as the thinking can be applied to different kinds of aesthetic domains (more conventional dance sharing)
- 8) codeveloping a concept/performance proposal, source-sharing, general working methods for

- specific use
- 9) developing new understandings of the black box, alternative spaces, alternative formats (how does this become a protocol that does not determine the outcome — can it?)
  - 10) how to make the working processes and methods available for the audience, exposing relations between source-production-post-production.
  - 11) Licences for how to make open source credit lists, program texts.  
(check <http://creativecommons.org>)

### **A few thoughts**

It has to do with understanding communities and approaches to sharing. What does it mean to work together without actually making a work together? A work that is done in order to develop the field and our own capacities to understand it. Software is a tool to enable work, until it is in use it is nothing but a mere function.

The idea of OS as a new form of collaboration which does not necessarily have to result in “a work” but which can be a long-term investment without immediate profits seems attractive. If OS is not offered as a product it also cannot be absorbed by the market.

The important thing is not to work on this in order to come up with the next fancy marketing label, but to enable innovation and developments we could not possibly have thought of. A long-term desire to develop thoughts and of course practical application.

The idea of this work being software does in that sense not exclude actual performance products to be developed with the use of OS performance tools.

Such a tool could be anything from (please add)

-a web page for performance art discussions that can be edited and extended by anyone (everybody's)

-to software that connects and challenges interdisciplinary exchanges ([www.ortlos.at](http://www.ortlos.at))

-to a stack of metal plates which is given to different people as a proposal for making a work (multifunctions by Nicolas Floch)

-to a travelling workshop on work methodologies which can be taught by anyone.

-to performance scores.

# An ongoing actual Talk

*Heike Langsdorf*

In 2002 the project f,r,o,g,s was given the extension open source, to underline its collaborative mentality and the *sharing* of concepts between the people involved and to open up to people yet uninvolved.

The common interest is to question the methods and modes of production connected to the idea of a live performance. f,r,o,g,s OS focuses on ideas and concepts while being economical with developing them into cultural products. However, any announced activity of f,r,o,g,s OS is usually accompanied by some form of public presentation in order to give concrete but aesthetically very diverse form to these questions. Different workgroups, of ever changing combinations of people but also absolute newcomers to this community, would find and present very different but concrete approaches to the projects' abstract problem: How to performatively apply the tangent planes of different disciplines, in this case, movement, image and sound?

As a result of this continuous working we today consider f,r,o,g,s OS as a *conglomerate of collaborations*.

The collaborations have taken the form of a 'series' of projects and presentations involving different groups of people up until now. They are totally self-organized and have since 2004 benefited from the advantages of a financial and administrative shelter, Kunst/Werk.

This shows an artistic alliance as well as logistical pragmatism in order to survive on the cultural market even with the following profile:

“f,r,o,g,s OS wants to be a domain typified by continual self-observation.

Its definition should be constantly modified and reformulated according to the description of what has actually happened.

As a matter of principle, people are not encouraged really to produce. To the contrary, f,r,o,g,s OS concentrates on discussion of the need to bring about or work out ideas. This creates either a new starting point for existing and/or new work groups, or a temporary void (no production) if there isn't an immediate cause for the realization of concepts. In a word, the project constantly focuses on ideas and concepts, but is economical with developing them into cultural products. On the other hand, any announced activity of f,r,o,g,s OS is followed up or accompanied with public presentations. This serves to stress the need and interest of f,r,o,g,s OS to develop and use a practice in order to discuss questions. *An ongoing actual talk*, carried out in the community that f,r,o,g,s OS creates — and then at public moments towards an audience — intending to search a common language and understanding again and again of *what work has to be*.”

## Being more than One:

This mentioned *talk* is active through witnessing one another's works, literally testing them, and sharing the upcoming critique in a verbal way or even use the critique to go into a new further collaboration. The talk as such tries to avoid the traps of a pure intellectual discourse and wants to keep track of the necessity to develop new aesthetic propositions rather than new propositional theories.

I.e.:

“What is considered an answer to an articulated problem or experiment?”

“*Konspiration*, a piece by C&H, is an attempt to use plotting as a means to hijack perspectives of observation. Is the proposed piece a step forward on the way searching for new set-ups of performance and does it really change the way we observe?”

Since f,r,o,g,s OS wants to be visual as a project in the cultural landscape, and its essence lies in the long-term change of aesthetics through exchange of working results and working experience, the sense of the protocol had to be embraced, which means f,r,o,g,s OS applies parasitizing the existing structures in the best sense: f,r,o,g,s OS's public outcomes are presented through Kunst/Werk and are thus registered as Belgian cultural productions, which means that they fulfil the demands necessary to receive support.

f,r,o,g,s OS could be considered to localize the *sharing* in the moment of *collaborating* and finding a truly inter-personal *procedure* but also the practical advantages of *being more than one*.

## By way of rumour:

This issue of *procedure* and *being more than one* has been picked up by another project, which in order to function ideally, wants to divest its link to any institutional existence, even f,r,o,g,s OS:

Spend- It, which shows a similar collaborative mentality to f,r,o,g,s OS, wants to drop even the last traces of *protocolism* and so starts out from very different working conditions:

Since it works in total independence from the current official funding and support structures, this project wants and is able to apply a very personal way of processing and promoting itself, namely *by way of rumour*. Foregoing any kind of conventional announcement policies, *the ongoing actual talk* and search for a common language wants to be continuously carried out until the project's public period in April 2007, and simultaneously generate concrete work or *traces of this talk*. The question *how to proceed?* becomes the content itself:

“The budget of Spend-it, raised through a private real estate action, is materialized as tokens. These tokens are never directly exchangeable for real money. They are placeholders for services, can be offered as gifts, trade objects, collector's items and as yet undefined identities. All twenty participants of Spend-It will receive €1500,- in tokens, enough to lead a wealthy life during the public part in April 2007, which offers food and an artistic entertainment programme. To realize this event, the real money still untouched by April 2007 actually gets spent.

The virtual budget, materialized as tokens, is motivation to think of it as a material to give new potential to, change its meaning etc.

This re-potentialization of money is only one of many aspects of Spend-It. Also the way that people become participants wants to be taken care of: two initiators invite ten people to join the project and to take over the second series of invitations. This is to stress the problematics of positioning and curating works and people. (...)"

The open source moment here lies rather in the fact that anyone joining the *talk of Spend-It* would apply the working conditions that Spend-It provides to his/her personal work instead of developing a singular work in order to present it by Spend-it.

((Curious about what has to be done next! Let's find a way to find out!bruce))

## INNOVATION COMMUNITIES, quotes from

*Eric von Hippel*

I define “**innovative communities**” as meaning nodes consisting of individuals or firms interconnected by **information transfer links** that may involve face-to-face, electronic or other communications. These can, but need not, exist within the boundaries of a membership group. They often do, but need not, incorporate the qualities of communities for participants, where “communities” is defined as meaning “networks of interpersonal ties that provide sociability, **support, information**, a sense of belonging and social identity.”

They can flourish when at least some innovate and **voluntarily reveal their innovations**, and when others find the information revealed to be of interest.

Innovation communities are often specialized, serving as collection points and repositories for information related to narrow categories of innovations. They may consist only of information repositories or directories in the form of **physical or virtual publications**.

Innovation communities are often stocked with useful **tools and infrastructure** that increase the speed and effectiveness with which **users can develop and test and diffuse** their user innovations.

All are offered **free access to the source code** of open source software if the author distributes that code.

The **practical value** of the “freely revealed innovation commons” these users collectively offer will be increased if their information is somehow made conveniently accessible.

**Chat rooms and mailing lists** with public posting can be provided so that contributors can exchange ideas and provide mutual assistance. Tools to help users develop, evaluate, and integrate their work can also be provided to community members — and such tools are often developed by community members themselves.

Software can be termed “**open source**” independent of how or by whom it has been developed: the term denotes only the type of **license** under which it is made available.

**Software debugging** can be greatly reduced in costs and also made faster and more effective when it is opened up to a larger community of software users.

Innovation communities are by no means restricted to the development of information products such as software.

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