

# OpenMRS Community Governance Model

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## Governance Overview & Objectives (as of 12/9/2015)

The OpenMRS community believes that we can substantially improve the health of underserved populations by enhancing the utilization of health information. We share a common [mission](#), [vision](#), and [values](#) to enable broad scale successful use of electronic medical record systems in diverse care settings. Community

To realize our vision, we commit in 2016 to the following strategic operational goals:

- Develop and evolve the foundational technical products of our community:
  - common platforms and frameworks to simplify development of any person-centric record system
  - reusable best-practice components to speed up development of high quality implementations for common scenarios
- Develop and evolve a pre-configured electronic medical record application meant to be used directly in health delivery settings.
- Actively encourage and support the development of additional [OpenMRS Distributions](#), deriving and disseminating best practices and technologies from them
- Educate individuals, institutions, and companies on building, implementing, and maintaining OpenMRS and related health information technologies
- Help organizations successfully implement OpenMRS by cultivating and participating in an ecosystem of effective service providers
- Ensure that the operations of OpenMRS are maximized for efficiency and effectiveness for the community as well as external partners

[This document describes the structure of the OpenMRS community and OpenMRS governance and outlines how members can participate in the community and influence the direction of the community as you grow as a community member.](#)

## The OpenMRS Community and OpenMRS Inc.

Some activities that benefit the community, such as holding trademarks, title to software or other intellectual property, submitting proposals, or receiving and administering funds, require a legal entity to act on behalf of the OpenMRS community. OpenMRS Inc. is a non profit (Sec 501(c)(3)) corporation, incorporated in Indiana, to serve as that entity. OpenMRS Inc has a commitment to ensure the viability of the OpenMRS community and product.

OpenMRS Inc. is defined by a charter that identifies the beneficiaries as the OpenMRS community. It is governed by a Board, elected for 3 years terms. The Board appoints an Executive to help oversee this commitment. This Executive is responsible to the board for carrying out the work of OpenMRS Inc. This executive serves as a liaison between OpenMRS Inc and the OpenMRS community. This executive ensures that the work as well as the concerns of the OpenMRS community are visible to the board. This executive MAY function as the Project Leader of the OpenMRS community.

See [OpenMRS Inc.](#) for further details.

## Decision Making Process

The OpenMRS community is large, and is in the process of realizing multiple transformational health improvement goals. Clear and explicit decision-making processes allow the community to collectively ensure that what we create is of the highest quality, and is made available to those who need it as quickly as possible. The styles of decision making are noted in the appendix. Specific decision making authority as well as processes are included in the appropriate leadership category. Software development with the OpenMRS platform and the reference application as well deployment and implementation require a constant iterative process, and the decision making process is under the direction of the appropriate director. The community has historically contributed to decision making processes through engagement within different meetings as well as voicing opinions through the wiki and OpenMRS Talk.

## Leadership

### Project Leader

The Project Leader is a single individual, voted for by the OpenMRS Leadership team. Once someone has been appointed Project Lead, they remain in that role until they choose to retire, or the OpenMRS Leadership team casts a two-thirds majority vote to remove them. The Project Leader helps guide other members of the OpenMRS Leadership Team: the role is normally one of coordinator and facilitator. The Project Leader is also expected to ensure that all governance processes are adhered to, and has the tie-breaking vote when a community management committee vote results in a tie. The Project Leader can remove a director with cause. The Project Lead MAY also the Executive that is appointed by the OpenMRS Inc board

### OpenMRS Leadership Team

The OpenMRS leadership team is comprised of OpenMRS Directors as well as Managers and the Project Leader. In the future, additional members to the community management team may be added. The OpenMRS Leadership team ensures the smooth running of the community. OpenMRS Leadership team members are expected to participate in strategic planning, resource raising/allocation activities, and approve changes to the governance model. There is no restriction on the number of management team members at this time.

The OpenMRS Leadership team actively solicits advice and feedback from the advisory committee.

Members of the OpenMRS Leadership team are listed on the leadership talk site.

Weekly management call agendas are posted and the community can submit topics to be addressed during these meetings. Meetings are held via uberconference, and community members are invited to attend. Minutes of the management committees weekly calls are also published at the leadership talk site (see below).

The OpenMRS Leadership team acts on behalf of the community to make decisions and facilitate community engagement. The OpenMRS Leadership team strives to make decisions through consensus as described below. When that approach does not work, a voting process is invoked with a majority vote determining the decision. In case of a tie, the project leader has the tie-breaking vote.

The OpenMRS Leadership team is responsible for creating and endorsing a proposed annual operational plan as well as a proposed annual budget. The operational plan will include non-fiscal requirements and expectation. The project lead presents these plans to the OpenMRS Inc. Board of Directors on an annual basis and provides appropriate updates throughout the year.

A OpenMRS Leadership team meeting may be closed due to a sensitive topic. This will be announced ahead of time. In addition, the OpenMRS Leadership team has access to a private mailing list and its archives. This list is used for sensitive issues, such as votes for leadership and legal matters that cannot be discussed in public. It is never used for project management or planning.

<https://talk.openmrs.org/c/community/leadership> for further information on the OpenLeadership committee within OpenMRS.

### Director

A person selected to oversee the overall direction and planning for the larger OpenMRS community. One example of a director is the director of the OpenMRS Platform. Directors are expected to:

- Develop, publish and oversee yearly operational plans for their area, in conjunction with managers and coordinators,
- Participate as appropriate in the development of [OpenMRS product roadmaps](#),
- Identify, develop, and mentor OpenMRS managers, coordinators, and volunteers in their area of direction,
- Promote and reward productive behaviors among community members contributing to each area's programs/initiative,
- Oversee/modify [meeting schedules](#) and artifacts (virtual and in-person) for their area of direction,
- Participate in the adjudication of requests that generically come to the community (i.e., country implementation and presentation opportunities, training)

The directors define the decision making process within their area using different [Decision Making Styles](#). A director can escalate an issue to the management committee for discussion and decision making as appropriate. This same escalation process can be used for any of the other strategic operational goals or any new problems that arises.

### Manager

A person who takes on responsibility for managing a collection of work activities (domain) consistent with the OpenMRS roadmap. On example of a manager is the software release manager. Managers are expected to:

- Work closely with stakeholders, coordinators and contributors to ensure work is accomplished,
- Identify (and communicate) additional requirements and work that needs to be done,
- Coordinate an overarching timeline and work plan and publish this so the community can monitor and review
- Actively solicit, curate and integrate comments on plans, timelines, and deliverables,
- Be responsible for ensuring things get done in their management area

## Advisory Committee

The OpenMRS advisory committee is comprised of active representatives of the OpenMRS community, representatives of key OpenMRS partner organizations and other appropriate domain expert advisors. The advisory committee is designed to provide guidance to the management committee as well as the project lead. The agenda for the advisory committee meetings is set by the management committee. Meetings occur monthly; agenda and notes are published and available on the wiki.

Members of the advisory committee are selected by the management committee and the project lead. The advisory committee membership is reviewed on an annual basis. Advisory committee members may be appointed ad hoc as needed throughout the year.

## Community Roles and Responsibilities

The community activities are facilitated through a [meritocratic](#) process. OpenMRS is dependent upon the talents of a diverse global community, and to do that, we establish [high standards](#) for collaboration, debate, delegation of responsibility and ethics. Anyone with an interest in what we're doing and who believes in our [mission](#) can join the community, contribute to the project design, participate in the decision making process, and hopefully have a lot of fun in the process.

We consider everyone that uses, participates in, and contributes to OpenMRS to be members of the OpenMRS community. We find that members are passionate and aligned with the [OpenMRS Mission, Vision, and Values](#). There are no requirements to membership, but we encourage all participants to be good citizens within the community. We attempt to describe ideal citizenship through the [OpenMRS Code of Conduct](#). We encourage [direct feedback](#) on both the mission, vision, values, and code of conduct from prospective members.

Participation in the OpenMRS community comes in many forms, from writing software, to helping with testing or documentation, or simply helping to advocate for the further growth of the OpenMRS community. As you begin your engagement with the OpenMRS community, you will likely find yourself interested in one or more of the groups, or roles described below. These roles describe how one can increasingly become involved in OpenMRS and describe the nature of how one progresses into different roles.

Any member of the community can escalate a question or a concern to the leadership group through the OpenMRS talk leadership category.

### User

Users are people who engage with the OpenMRS community and its products. They include clinical teams, ministries of health, and people in other end-user support roles. Anyone can be an OpenMRS user; there are no special requirements.

The OpenMRS community asks its users to participate in the project and community as much as possible. Common user contributions may include spoken support for OpenMRS, financial support, or identifying strengths and weaknesses for the software. If you are new to the community, feel free to introduce yourself at <https://talk.openmrs.org/t/welcome-to-openmrs-talk/6>.

### Contributor

Contributors are community members who contribute in concrete ways to the project. Anyone can become a contributor, and contributions can take many forms, as detailed in our [introduction to contribution](#). Contributions can include supporting new users, writing source code, testing software, and/or writing documentation.

### Coordinator

A person who takes on responsibility for overseeing some work product of the OpenMRS community is considered a coordinator. This is normally time constrained. One example of a work product is Google Summer of Code coordinator. Coordinators are expected to:

- Define the work product that needs to be coordinate
- Develop an operational plan and timelines in conjunction with the community to produce the work product that is reviewed/endorsed with managers
- Publish the plan and timelines to ensure identification of dependencies in conjunction with managers to the wiki
- Monitor and coordinate the work to meet the objectives for the defined domain
- Work closely with volunteers and stakeholders to ensure appropriate support for the work

# Code Governance

## License

We believe that free and open source principles are fundamental to empowering underserved environments throughout the world. We are [proud members of the Open Source Initiative](#). We demonstrate this commitment through the following license models:

OpenMRS Platform, OpenMRS Reference Application, and other software developed to support the OpenMRS Community: these products are distributed to the public under the [Mozilla Public License 2.0 with Healthcare Disclaimer \(MPL 2.0 HD\)](#). [consider a parenthetical or link to a brief paragraph on how our license has influenced our structure]

Documentation, educational materials, other creative works: this content is distributed under the [Creative Commons Attribution 4.0 International License](#).

Additional OpenMRS Distributions: [OpenMRS Distributions](#) are encouraged to adopt a similar licensing strategy based upon free and open licenses. Please check with project leadership of these Distributions for more specific information.

Further details about our community's license strategy are described in [OpenMRS' Contribution Policy](#).

## Copyright

All software on any OpenMRS website is produced by members of the OpenMRS community, and distributed to the public by OpenMRS Inc. under the licenses described above. OpenMRS Inc. is a US not-for-profit entity which serves at the pleasure of the OpenMRS community, in support of it's growth. OpenMRS Inc. and the OpenMRS community respect all copyrights and copyright licenses. If you see any infringing content on the OpenMRS website, [please let us know](#). Further details on copyright are described in the [OpenMRS Copyright Policy](#).

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