Guide for the New and Curious

Why Join?

Thank you for your interest in joining the global OpenMRS Community! We’re made up of people from a wide variety of backgrounds and skill sets, from development to translation, to create and implement solutions to various countries’ problems, as shown below. This is an open source project where your code, documents, QA testing, and translations can literally help save lives. Your contributions help OpenMRS create a robust, scalable, user-driven, open source medical record system platform to improve health care delivery in resource-constrained environments. Whether you are looking for a short-term project or to grow your contribution and skills over the long term, we are glad you’re here. We hope this guide gives you the information you need to join the community and find your path to contributing.

The Big Picture

The OpenMRS Community is one part of a much bigger picture that involves local implementers, healthcare workers, national health ministries, and other organizations. The framework shown here is a current depiction of how all of these pieces work together to solve problems and create solutions. When you contribute to OpenMRS, you really are a part of something bigger than yourself!

About OpenMRS

Since 2004, OpenMRS is an electronic medical record system that has grown from its origins in Kenya to clinics, hospitals, research facilities and ministries of health around the world. The project has an exciting roadmap ahead, with projects already underway to improve the OpenMRS developer and implementer experience, facilitate healthcare data exchanges through standardized, structured data, and revamp the UI. Our community has an accomplished past, and your contributions can make its future equally bright.

If you want to learn more about how the OpenMRS community is organized and governed, and how the various squads, teams, councils, and committees relate to each other, here are some helpful resources:

- OpenMRS Community
- OpenMRS Committees and Teams
- OpenMRS User Personas and Site Profiles

Get Started

1. Familiarize yourself with our Community Conventions, especially the Decision Making Playbook, Communication Channels, and the OpenMRS Code of Conduct
2. Sign up for an OpenMRS ID - this is a key step for participating in the community.
3. For real-time or near real-time communication, you can find us on the following platforms. Slack and Telegram are both synced with our IRC channel, so no need to join all three! (Note these are more developer-centric, but everyone is welcome)
   a. Join the OpenMRS Slack
   b. Join #OpenMRS on irc.freenode.net
   c. Join the OpenMRS Telegram channel
4. Sign into our Community Forum, OpenMRS Talk, with your OpenMRS ID. Introduce yourself to other members of the community! If you’re new to Discourse, click on your first notification to begin the interactive tutorial.
5. Make yourself familiar with the OpenMRS Wiki, or bookmark it for later!

Note: If you are interested in becoming a developer, please see the Getting Started as a Developer guide

How to Contribute

Challenges Health Care Workers Face

Healthcare workers are striving to provide their patients with quality care. They use a mix of paper and multiple, siloed electronic systems, leading to the below challenges:

Solutions Cutting Across Countries

At the country level, stakeholders and partners seek to address human health care workers’ burdens by improving access to data through sustainable, interoperable, point of care systems.

- Support multiple program areas (HIV, TB, NCDs)
- Reduce the multiplicity of systems
- Support the continuum of care across sites

Encourage evidence-based decision making

OpenMRS Community Mission

Our mission is to improve health care delivery in resource-constrained environments:

a) Co-creating a global community that
b) Creates a robust, scalable, user-driven, open source medical record system platform to improve health care delivery in resource-constrained environments.

Current Community Engagement Vision

An engaged, collaborative community invested in professional growth and client-driven solutions.

We see an environment where our community members can easily consume, contribute, and collaborate on a variety of topics, solutions, or initiatives that clearly address country priorities and implementer needs.

Top 3 Strategic Priorities

To achieve the vision, our top 3 Strategic Priorities are:

1. Facilitate access to open source software components
2. Involves the community in technical capacity building
3. Enhance contributions through targeted meeting engagement

Please see the Community Engagement Vision & Priorities Dashboard for additional opportunities to invest and contribute to community project initiatives.

Current Platform

We work together in a global fight to bring better care to patients, their families, and caregivers.

This means:

1. Ensuring patients get the right care
2. Improving health workers with
3. Open Source technologies

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Make a Financial Contribution

Sustaining the vital work of the OpenMRS community takes substantial resources. Like most open-source projects, OpenMRS depends on contributions of all levels: in-kind and other donations from individuals, agencies, and organizations. No matter the size of your donation, it will help us make a more collaborative ecosystem, support the minds expanding our core technologies, and sustain our community infrastructure.

Visit our Invest page to learn more about how financial contributions are used, and how to make a donation.

Teams

These are the groups whose work is crucial to routine and long-term community activities, projects, and/or modules. Our teams draw on a wide range of abilities and skills. Read more about our current teams and find your fit!

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<tr>
<th>Development</th>
<th>QA Support</th>
<th>Community Management</th>
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<tr>
<td>Write code, save lives. The OpenMRS Community depends on the helpful hands of many developers around the world. Whether you’re able to dedicate time to extended tasks, or would rather help with quick, simple projects, we have a need and a place for you.</td>
<td>Healthcare systems demand reliable software, so we must always focus on testing OpenMRS code. Whether or not you’re a developer, consider helping us test OpenMRS Releases.</td>
<td>If you want to support the technical infrastructure and the people &quot;infrastructure&quot; that support OpenMRS, this might be the team for you. We help new members discover their interests, work on community documentation and outreach, and support IT Services.</td>
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<tr>
<td><a href="#">Getting Started as a Developer Wiki</a></td>
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<th>Documentation</th>
<th>Global Events</th>
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OpenMRS is currently only completely available in English, and we are always looking for translation help to finish.

We use Transifex.com to translate OpenMRS. If you speak a non-English language and would like to help translate OpenMRS, join our translation project. Learn more about translating the Reference Application here.

And we're always looking for more experienced translators to step up and review the translations of others.

The OpenMRS project has been around several years now, and our source code repository contains over 6 million lines of code. That makes for a lot of documentation. Some of that documentation is good, some of it needs help, and some of it's missing. That's where you come in.

Do you love writing? Enjoy organizing? Like information architecture or project management? We can use your help.

The Global Events Team is responsible for bringing the OpenMRS community together, globally and locally, in-person or virtually.

Our primary purpose is organizing the annual Implementer's Meeting, from developing the budget to planning individual events.

If you have a passion for event planning, we can use your enthusiasm and skill.

Global Events Team Wiki

Squads

Looking for a short-term or a more focused commitment? Squads are smaller groups working on discrete/time-limited community activities, projects, and modules. To see the current squad list, see the Active Projects page.

OpenMRS Academy Squad

If you are interested in education and instructional design, the OpenMRS Academy Squad creates educational materials to be used in the OpenMRS Academy Course.

Community Meeting Calendar

Interested in learning more about any of the teams or squads listed above? Join one of the weekly meetings listed below - click on the links for more information on how to attend.

Available Independent Projects

Want a project suitable for a team, or an adventurous individual? Look at our Available Projects list, and click on the project name for more information and contact information for the project's author and/or mentor.

Start Your Own Project

If you want to work on a new project, we would love to entertain your ideas. To create a new project, either start a topic on OpenMRS Talk or copy the New Project Template into the Unassigned Projects section. You can also share your idea with us in our Discussion Platform and members of our community will be happy to facilitate you.
Get Engaged

Priority Dashboard

Want to know where the most urgent needs are? This dynamic, draft indicator shows the top three strategic priorities to achieve our mission, and the status and current needs/gaps of the projects supporting those priorities. While many of these needs/gaps are developer related, this is a dynamic, regularly updated page and those needs can change.

Product Priorities
Community Strategic Priorities (TBA)

Find Help

If you need extra assistance getting started or finding a way to get involved, please post a topic on our Community Board.