Updating the Open Definition to meet the challenges of today
What is the Open Definition

The Open Definition sets out principles that define «openness» in relation to data and content.

**Summary:**
*Open means anyone can freely access, use, modify, and share for any purpose (subject, at most, to requirements that preserve provenance and openness).*

[https://opendefinition.org/od/2.1/en/](https://opendefinition.org/od/2.1/en/)
The definition was first published in 2005 by Open Knowledge and is maintained by an Advisory Council of experts. In 2015 version 2.1 was released.

It was translated into 41 languages by volunteers, found its way to Wikipedia, and became a standard for open database licensing, influencing state and city policy, academia, and beyond.

https://opendefinition.org/od/2.1/en/
What does «open» mean today?

Since 2015, conversations about «open» have expanded in geography and complexity.

There is a new generation of thinkers, academics and activists, with an agenda that addresses issues that were not fully discussed or covered during the early days of the open movement, such as data extractivism, digital colonialism, economic, racial and gender violences, intersectional inequalities, climate justice, etc.

https://opendefinition.org/od/2.1/en/
What does «open» mean today?

Since 2015, there has also been an accumulation of new technologies that challenge the concept of «open». Examples of new ambiguities:

- Intellectual property of medicines of public interest post COVID-19
- Blockchain technologies, supposedly based on open principles
- Artificial intelligence (AI), which often bases its learning models on data trained or created by others.
- And many more...

https://opendefinition.org/od/2.1/en/
What is this workshop about?

- **We want to listen and learn** from the communities here.

- **We want to rethink** the concept of «open» for current generations and broaden the consensus around the definition – this implies an active process of inclusion and diversity.

- **We want to understand** the main points of interest and the points that deserve more attention.

- **We want to collect** suggestions on how to redefine the governance of the project in a way that generates a broad and diverse consensus.
What is this debate about?

Examples of what we can discuss:

- What is **missing** in the definition
- What is **incomplete** in the definition
- What needs **clarification**
- **Problematic words** and even what should **not be changed**, etc
- **Examples of abuse** of the concept «open» (openwashing) and how to mitigate them
- Different meanings of «open» for **different cultures**
- How the definition can be **useful** in current times
Step 1
Getting familiar

In the last workshop we held in Costa Rica, participants indicated which are the Open Definition **topics that most deserve to be revised**, as shown in the next slide.

For today's session, we will be discussing the **top 6**.

[The complete session documentation can be found here.](#)
Step 2
Working groups

Now let's break into rooms to discuss each topic. Each group will have a maximum of 6 people.

If you're on Zoom, you can choose the room you want to join. If there are more than 6 people, our team will randomly re-accommodate you.

If you are in Singapore, our on-site facilitators will coordinate the division into groups. It is not a problem if there is more than one group dedicated to the same Open Definition article.
Step 2

Working groups

Let's all use the same etherpad to document the discussions.

https://etherpad.wikimedia.org/p/open-definition-wikimania

Each group should elect:

- a **notetaker** to write down what is discussed on the etherpad
- a **rapporteur** to summarise the discussion later for the main group

You will have 15 minutes for discussion.

Ready? Steady? Go!
Welcome back and thank you everyone!

Now it's time to report what was discussed.

Each group rapporteur has 3 minutes to tell the main group the main topics, the agreements and disagreements and make a conclusion.
Open Knowledge Network

- Connecting those in the open movement
- +40 countries
- A common vision: to unlock information, to create and share knowledge
Thank you!

Ways to join the conversation:

- Discussion Forum – discuss.okfn.org
- Website – opendefinition.org
- Newsletter – okfn.org/newsletter
- Hashtag #OpenDefinition on Twitter, Mastodon and LinkedIn.

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