ONF Member-Only Software License
Overview for ONF Members

June 2020
Taking Stock of how ONF has launched new projects

• ONF’s Model is to create value for the membership through the creation of innovative software
  • ONF membership fees go directly to funding the engineering team that builds platforms & solutions
• ONF has launched every major new software initiative as a private project
  • This was true for: ONOS, CORD, OMEC, Stratum
  • This allowed the projects to build critical mass before being subject to outside pressures
    • Fostered a focused engineering effort amongst committed participants
  • Every one of these projects is now licensed under Apache 2.0
• This has worked well, but ...
  • But this was done slightly differently and ad hoc each time
  • ONF has grown to over 20 projects, so standardizing this practice makes sense at this time
• To address this need, ONF has created the “ONF Member-Only Software License” ...
ONF Member-Only Software License

- To standardize the practice of launching new projects, ONF has created the “Member-Only Software License”
  - Provides clear rules of engagement
  - Ensures all ONF members have uniform access and input into projects based on membership tier
  - Create structure to provide benefits back to the ONF members
- During Incubation, only ONF members can access the source code
  - No forks or commercial use allowed
  - ONF to relicense under Apache 2.0 once the code is deemed ready and the project is self sustaining
Early Commercialization Phase

- In order to promote investment into the project by ONF’s leading benefactors, the license includes a phase during which Partner-level Members can begin to commercialize the project before it is released to open source.
- ONF Partners provide 80% of ONF’s funding:
  - They also put significant resources into ONF projects.
  - They contribute back more into the ONF repositories.
- To help promote robust Partner contributions, the license includes a ‘Partner Commercialization’ phase:
  - Supports Partners’ creation of product and services utilizing the project before it is released to open source.
- Expectation is that this will promote greater Partner investment in the projects:
  - In turn, this will result in more contributions back to the project, benefiting all members.

Only ONF Partners have commercialization rights during this phase of the project.
ONF’s Member-Only Software License supports both these early phases of a project before it is released to open source:

- Incubation Phase
- Partner Commercialization Phase

ONF Board determines what projects are started under the License

ONF Board determines when a project moves between phases and when it is open sourced
Aether & SD-RAN
Now Available to Members under the Member-Only License

• ONF Board has determined that the Aether and SD-RAN projects will first be made available under the ONF Member-Only Software License
  • Both projects have been placed in the “Incubation” phase under the license

• ONF Boards reasoning included these considerations:
  • Aether & SD-RAN are generating a great deal of interest across the ONF ecosystem
  • Aether & SD-RAN are still young, and the projects could become the victim of too much early interest
    • Projects are not yet ready for trials without handholding from ONF engineering
    • Excessive commercial interest could pull the projects in many directions
      • Companies could commercialize the projects too rapidly
      • High likelihood for forking
  • ONF wants to build a strong platform & a collaborative community
    • Ensure project code base has chance to solidify within ONF community before commercial interests can drive any redirection
    • We want to define APIs that can become an industry de facto norm. Need critical mass to achieve this
  • ONF learned from Stratum
    • Member-only period promoted creation of a dedicated community that allowed Stratum to mature before it was publicly released

• Upstream projects (like OMEC and ONOS) upon which Aether and SD-RAN rely will remain licensed under Apache 2.0
Learn More

• To learn more, we encourage you to start by reading the license followed by the FAQ:
  • ONF Member-Only Software License
  • FAQ on ONF Licensing and Intellectual Property
  • To get involved with a project and access any Member-Only repositories, see the Project wikis:
    • Accessing the Aether project
      • https://wiki.opennetworking.org/display/COM/Aether
    • Accessing the SD-RAN project
      • https://wiki.opennetworking.org/display/COM/SD-RAN
  • You can also contact us for further assistance at:
    • membership@opennetworking.org
Thank You