

OSGi Alliance Intellectual Property Rights (IPR) Policy & Licensing Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ)

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Disclaimer:

This document is not intended to be legal advice. The OSGi Alliance Intellectual Property Rights (IPR) policy, Member agreement, Associate agreement, by-laws, Specification licenses, Expert Group (EG) Statements of Work (SoW) are OSGi Alliance's legal documents. Please seek legal advice in understanding these documents before agreeing/signing them.

1. What is the intention behind having an IPR policy?

The OSGi Alliance created the policy to enable widespread adoption and implementation of OSGi specifications and lower the barriers for implementers and users.

2. What rights does the public get for an approved final OSGi specification?

Royalty Free non-assert for fully compliant¹ implementations from all OSGi Alliance members². Additionally, if required, the OSGi Alliance also provides a bilateral Royalty Free license.

3. What rights do OSGi Members get for an approved final OSGi specification?

Same as the public.

4. What rights does the public get for companion code³ associated with a published OSGi specification?

Companion code is released under Apache License version 2.0.

¹ A fully compliant implementation shall be able to pass all COMPLAINCE TESTS (CT).

² Please note that the non-assert is a covenant that can be suspended under certain circumstances. Please refer to the IPR policy for details.

³ Companion code is software (either source or object versions) associated with an OSGi specification, including Java interfaces, XML schema, document type definitions (DTDs) and other data or document formats.

5. What rights do OSGi Members get for companion code associated with an OSGi specification?

Same as the public.

6. What rights does the public get for Reference Implementation (RI) of an approved final OSGi specification?
- For those RIs that are open source: refer to the license associated with the open source implementation.
 - For those RIs that are not open source: None.
7. What rights do OSGi Members get for Reference Implementation (RI) of an approved final OSGi specification?

- For those RIs that are open sourced: refer to the license associated with the open source implementation.
- For those RIs that are not open source: All OSGi members have access to these RIs. For specific rights to RIs see the applicable license below.
 - Strategic member: <https://www.osgi.org/wp-content/uploads/OSGi-Alliance-Strategic-Member-Package2015.zip>
 - Principal member: <https://www.osgi.org/wp-content/uploads/OSGi-Alliance-Principal-Member-Package2015.zip>
 - Contributing Associate: <https://www.osgi.org/wp-content/uploads/OSGi-Alliance-Contributing-Associate-Package2015.zip>

8. What rights does the public get for Compliance Tests (CT) of an approved final OSGi specification?

None.

9. What rights do OSGi Members get for Compliance Tests (CT) of an approved final OSGi specification?

Both Strategic and Principal members have full access to these CTs. Maximum of two individuals from a Contributing Associate member have access to these CTs. See the table at <https://www.osgi.org/join/membership-benefits/> for more details.

10. Is there a Compliance Tests (CT) fee for commercial implementations?

See the table at <https://www.osgi.org/join/membership-benefits/>

11. What about confidentiality in OSGi Alliance Expert Groups?

All contributions to the OSGi Alliance Expert Groups are non-confidential.

12. What rights does the public get during specification development?

None.

13. What rights do OSGi members get during specification development?

- Specification: copyrights
- For those proposed RIs that are open source implementations: refer to the license associated with the open source implementation.
- For those proposed RIs that are not open source implementations: Apache License version 2.0
- Proposed CT code: Apache License version 2.0

14. What is the scope of member's obligations?

For final approved specifications members are obligated to grant standards essential patents (SEPs). All member code contributions are under Apache License version 2.0.

Note that SEPs are patents that are *required* for compliance to a final approved OSGi Alliance specification and where there is no technical feasible non-infringing alternative. For example, if a final approved OSGi Alliance specification were to require sorting without a requirement to use any specific sorting algorithm, then a patent for a new sorting algorithm, whose computational complexity is "O(n)" in the worse case, would not be considered an SEP.

15. What is the recourse for a member who does not want to license their IP?

Members cannot avoid standards essential patent obligations on their own contributions if those contributions are part of the approved final specification. On others' contributions, a timely withdrawal is necessary to avoid certain obligations. See the IPR policy for details.

16. Are there obligations to affiliates of OSGi members?

Yes. Affiliate obligations are the same as the member's obligations.