

Q&A SESSION WITH CONTRIBUTORS

Thank you for joining us in the Q&A session that was held to help you solve the most frequently asked questions during this Google Summer of Code.

Find below some questions that have come up quite often over the last month through our support channel and the Q&A session. We will continue to update this doc with other questions that come in.

- [Project questions](#)
- [Evaluations](#)
- [Payoneer questions](#)
- [Google questions](#)

Project Questions

All projects must have only one contributor working on them, if your project has more than one contributor working on the same part of the project please email us at gsoc-support@google.com because that is not allowed.

Review the [GSoC Project Dates](#) (8-22 weeks)

Stipends

If you want to review your stipend information please read the email that you received earlier from support which specifies the 2 stipend payments that you will get (45% for passing midterm and 55% for passing final). You can review the specific dates of your project on your Dashboard.

What advice do you have for contributors who sometimes feel a little lost during the project and feel there's a mountain before them to scale?

A lot of people have some imposter syndrome, which is perfectly normal. But give yourself some credit, your organization wouldn't have selected you if they didn't think you would do great things with your GSoC project. Talk with your mentor about breaking the project up into smaller chunks since looking at the mountain before you is overwhelming, but doing smaller sections in progression can be super helpful.

Can the project length be extended after the mid term evaluation?

Yes, a project can be extended after the midterm evaluation (and many projects will be, probably around 10-15% of projects). If you and your mentor want to extend a project to say 14

or 16 or 18 weeks, etc your mentor needs to let the Org Admin know and the Org Admin will make the adjustment in the system.

I want to extend the length of my project from the standard length (12 weeks for medium and large projects, 8 weeks for small projects). What should I do?

Talk to your mentor and if they agree to extend your project then they will need to let the Org Admin know so they can make the adjustment to your project schedule from the Org Admin's dashboard.

Remember ***adjusting your project length will not change the stipend amount you will receive***. All projects must be the 10, 12, 14, 16, 18, 20 or 22 week lengths for medium and large projects. For small projects the lengths are 8, 10, or 12 weeks.

Is there any deadline for extending the project length?

If you want to extend your project it must happen at least 10 days before your evaluation period opens. First, you must talk to your Mentor and Org Admin so they can decide if it's possible to proceed with any changes in your project. If you change your project less than 10 days before the start of your evaluation period you will not receive email reminders. It is your responsibility to note your deadlines and meet them.

Can I request to shorten my project from 350 hours to 175 hours (large project to a medium one)?

Sometimes. You should talk to your mentor about your specific situation. The earlier the better, because basically that's going to completely change the scope of your project and the Mentor and/or Org Admin might not allow you to do it. But we all understand that life happens and it can be necessary for folks to downsize so just talk to your mentor. This of course will affect your stipend amount as well.

Is there still time to catch up and try to deliver the project if the contributor has had some issues during this first month of coding?

You should be in constant contact with your mentor, particularly if you are having delays/issues. You can ask them to extend your project length so you have time to catch up and your mentor can decide whether or not to approve your request. They may or may not decide to extend your project based on your progress thus far.

Is it possible to pass GSoC without completing the project?

Yes, in some situations. Sometimes you and your Mentor may realize the project is bigger in scope than you originally thought. For example, instead of doing these eight things, we're really only going to be able to do six and that's okay because the mentors are making the best guess as to the scope of what a small, medium or large project is. Also if you have a good idea on how to add great improvements to your projects as you are going along that vary from your original plan that can be a good thing so talk to your mentor about your suggestions and they can approve (or not).

I'm going to travel to a different country from where I am doing most of my coding during GSoC. Is that okay?

We strongly recommend that you do not code while in the other country, just code from where you will be during the majority of GSoC. For example, if you are going on vacation to visit your family in another country for 2 weeks, ask your mentor if you can take a 2 week break from coding and then code when you return to your primary country. You may be able to extend the length of your project with your mentor's approval to make up for those couple of weeks you will not be able to code.

The reason is that you must be eligible to code in every country where you code, and you are responsible for the tax implications in all countries you code in which is complicated. And if you are on a visa it gets really challenging and you don't want to violate your visa and have it revoked.

Can you add additional information on the Acceptance letter for my CPT letter?

No, we can not make edits to your Acceptance letter other than changing the dates if you are going to have a longer project period than the standard 12 weeks for medium or large projects or 8 weeks for a small project. We have to manually update those so please only request this if it is a requirement for you.

At the end of the program you will receive a completion letter with the dates of your actual coding period and a certificate of completion.

I'm a first-time contributor to my organization. I'm not totally familiar with all the tech stack that is used in my project. Should I worry about this issue?

You should be familiar with certain things, but if you feel that the scope is out of your skills, talk to your Mentor so they can help you address your concerns and create a plan to work accordingly. But it depends on the project you are going to work with, part of GSoC is to learn new things, acquire knowledge and have exposure to open source projects so you aren't expected to know everything especially on some of the larger, more complicated tech stacks.

If we are able to finish the project before time, will the stipend be reduced?

No. If you finish your project before the proposed deadline that probably means that you were picking up things faster than expected or that the scope of your project was actually smaller than the Mentor anticipated. Often if the scope was smaller than it should have been for that size project the mentors will add additional parts to your project.

Remember GSoC is not a code for hire program. It is not about getting as much code written as fast as possible. This behavior will lead to failing the program as you aren't actually doing the important part of the program- being involved with the community and learning under your mentor's guidance.

How do I decline the stipend?

If you are going to decline the stipend please send us an email to our support address to review it. If you have questions regarding your specific situation email us gsoc-support@google.com.

I have registered as a contributor on the GSoC portal through my University email. In case I lose access to my email in the future will there be any problem?

You won't be able to access your GSoC account if you lose access to your university email.

Is it okay to communicate in chats and not in a video call?

Some orgs use mostly video chats, others use a combo of video and real time chats, others use mostly real time chat. Certainly, not everybody wants to be on video for many multiple different reasons, and that's fine. As long as you are in constant communication with your mentors about your project it is OK. The project can use a chat, audio calls, video calls, etc.

Your org may require you to have some video presence as some people have tried to manipulate the GSoC program and mentors are wary of people who don't want to appear on camera at all as it can mean the contributor is not who they say they are.

Where should I send my blog posts?

If your mentor is requesting that you submit blogs periodically, they should specify where you should be sending those.

Should I prepare a project presentation for the first meeting with the org and the team?

If the Org is requesting a first time presentation (small deck) and you are open to it, that would be a great way to start getting to know each other and the overview of the project itself.

The org admin hasn't mentioned their name on the contributor page. How can we get in touch with them?

Ask your Mentor, but usually it's going to be through a chat Channel or mailing list. The situations where you really need to contact your Org Admin are to let them know that something is going really bad, like when your mentor disappears or when you're having a problem with your Mentor.

In what situations might contributors be required to contact GSoC Admins instead of our orgs and mentors?

If things are not going well for some reason. For example, if your mentor is non responsive (for a week+) and you can't get help moving forward on your project and you've already contacted the Org Admin and haven't heard from them either. Or your mentor is completely changing your project from what you agreed to (and what you wanted to work on in the summer). Or if you and your mentor are not communicating effectively for some reason and your Org Admin has not been able to resolve the issue.

Evaluations

Why do Contributors fail GSoC?

There are 4 principal reasons:

1. When contributors essentially disappear and are not in regular communication with their mentors.
2. When a contributor oversold their technical skills, meaning that they are not able to actually do the work on the project.
3. When a contributor constantly ignores Mentor's instructions during the coding period.
4. When a contributor rushes to finish their project as fast as possible and doesn't actually "do the GSoC program." GSoC is about learning and being actively involved in the community it is not about how fast you can produce some decent code.

Is the midterm evaluation like a test?

No, the evaluation is a series of simple questions about your experience, it is not a test so you don't need to stress about it. :)

Where can I find the evaluation questions and form?

Questions for the GSoC midterm and final evaluations are available [here](#). The evaluation forms will appear on your GSoC dashboard when your midterm and final evaluations periods open.

Can you fail the midterm evaluation? What happens if I fail?

Yes, you can fail the program at the midterm. If you fail the midterm you are immediately removed from the program and will not receive a stipend. If you fail at the final you will not receive the final stipend and will be removed from the program and will not appear in program archives.

Is my mentor the only one who is responsible for passing or failing me? Can GSoC Admins fail my project even if my mentor passes me?

Yes, your mentor is in charge of evaluating your work and submitting the midterm and final evaluations and their decision is final. GSoC Admins will get involved only if something has gone terribly wrong with the project (mentor completely disappeared, didn't mentor the contributor, etc.- this is very, very rare.)

Do contributors have to submit any report before the midterm evaluation. The same way we submit the final report before the final evaluation?

It depends on your Org, your mentor will let you know if this is a requirement. Some orgs require you to submit the status of your work periodically. This helps them see you when you are stuck on something and what you have accomplished so far.

Who can see the answers to my evaluation questions and when can they see them?

Only Google Program Admins can see [all of your answers](#) (and the mentor's answers) after your evaluation period closes.

There is a section at the bottom of the contributor evaluation called 'Feedback for your Organization' and it states *The answers in this section will be shared with Google Program Admins, your Org Admins, and your Mentors as indicated.*

How responsive are your mentors? (response shared with Org Admins only)

Feedback for your organization and mentors (response shared with Org Admins and your Mentors)

Your responses to these 2 questions above will be visible to the Org Admin (and Mentors for the 1 question noted above) after the midterm evaluation deadline has passed.

When will the contributors be receiving the Stipend?

Generally the payments are made within 48 hours after the evaluation deadline ends. but if for some reason your dates are not in the standard timeframes then it will be done in the next round. This is why it's so important for the org admins to use the 8, 10, 12, 14, 16, 18, 20 and 22 week deadlines we provide.

Payoneer Questions

If you need to solve specific questions regarding changes in your account, or specific situations please contact Payoneer support team:

[Payoneer support page](#)

Calls within the US: [+1-800-251-2521](#).

Calls outside of the US: [+1-646-658-3695](#)

Do I need to complete the IEC number in Payoneer?

If you are getting the option to fill in the IEC number then you answered some question oddly when completing the Payoneer registration. You can ignore the request to complete the IEC form as it is not required for GSoC participants.

Do I need to complete the Business Details Questionnaire?

If you are getting the option to fill the Business Details Questionnaire then you answered some question incorrectly when completing the Payoneer registration. You should not need to complete that form for GSoC. Reach out to GSoC admins and we can send you a new registration link to try again.

Can I use someone else's information to register for Payoneer?

NO, you can not use someone else's information to register for Payoneer. Payoneer can only pay you - the GSoC contributor.

Does Payoneer deduct any fees for currency conversion?

Google covers most of the fees associated with Payoneer. However, if you are doing currency conversions from your local currency to something else you will have some fees that are based on what your bank charges that are not covered by Google.

How to avoid being banned in Payoneer when sharing legal documentation?

Share official documentation only that is clear and legible without errors. If you can't find the requested documents, keep working with Payoneer to figure something out but do not alter any of the documentation. Payoneer's system will detect it and altering official documents is

considered fraud so you will be automatically banned without being able to open any account and you won't receive your stipend.

I've received an email from Payoneer saying my account is successfully connected with GSoC. Do I need to submit any more documents?

Most people will be fine once they receive that email. Payoneer will do another random check and only then if Payoneer asks you for additional docs will you need to submit them to comply with the legal requirements. If Payoneer doesn't ask you for more documents then you are good to go.

Please do not email GSoC Admins requesting to review if your Payoneer account is ok, we can see less information about your account than you can. Only if you received an additional email from Payoneer saying there is a problem with your account should you reach out to GSoC Admins.

If there's any problem with my Payoneer account before the payment is sent by Google, will I be notified?

Yes, if Payoneer detects an error in your account, discrepancies in the documentation that you previously provided or you are missing the Tax form they will notify you by email that there is something wrong with your account. Remember you won't be able to receive the stipend if the tax form is missing (for the US folks required to complete it). Check your emails.

I'm based in India and I'm being asked for a Purpose Code . What is that? You must select code P0802- Software consultancy/implementation. If you have any questions about the Purpose Code, please contact Payoneer.

Regarding Google questions

How will GSoC help me in applying for Google?

All experiences that you can mention in your CV when applying to future job posts matter, so please be sure that your project link will last for several years (at least 5) to show real proof of your achievement with your coding project in Google Summer of Code.

Will there be referrals after completing the program?

If you successfully complete the GSoC program, you will have the option to be noted as a *"successful GSoC contributor"*, so when you apply for roles at Google, now or in the future, your resume will be labeled accordingly.

Are we going to get any goodies after GSoC?

No. We do not ship things anymore, it's way too complicated. You will receive a digital certificate and letter of completion that will be available on your GSoC dashboard once you successfully pass the final evaluation.

I received a weird request asking for my personal documentation in GSoC, is that ok?

If you receive weird requests please email us to review it. The legitimate emails connected to GSoC Support are the following:

- gsoc-support@google.com
- summerofcode-noreply@google.com
- no-reply-eventsatgoogle@google.com (Events)

Can we help/ contribute to our org AFTER GSoC is done?

Absolutely! This is an overarching goal of GSoC, to have GSoC contributors stay involved in the communities long after their GSoC summer ends. Many become committers and mentors and even board members on orgs.

Is there a specific rubric that mentors will use for the evaluations?

Please stay in regular contact with your mentor, they will provide you all the parameters and detailed instructions on what they expect you to complete before the midterm evaluation (and the final evaluation). If you want to review general information about this subject read the [GSoC Evaluations in the Contributor Guide](#).

Could you please give some insights into how the evaluations are done?

The midterm and final evaluations that you will complete are mostly multiple choice with a few open-ended questions. The final evaluation must also include a link to your work product (work submission URL).

Most of the Orgs require you to submit a blog post or some sort of progress report periodically and this will help you organize your progress and should be included in the final work submission report. We will share detailed instructions on final evaluations later this summer.