2021 Google Season of Docs

Sustainable OpenMRS Getting Started Guides

About OpenMRS

OpenMRS' mission is to improve healthcare delivery in resource-constrained environments by coordinating a global community that creates and sustains a robust, scalable open-source medical record platform. The OpenMRS Community is supported by OpenMRS, Inc., a 501(c)(3) whose purpose is to provide fiscal and legal support, infrastructure, and leadership for the community.

OpenMRS: Who Are We?

OpenMRS (Medical Record System) is a robust, scalable, user-driven, open-source electronic medical record system platform currently used to manage more than 12.6 million patients at over 5,500 health facilities in 40 countries. More and more countries are choosing OpenMRS as a part of their overarching health information system architecture. These countries increasingly use patient-level data from OpenMRS to inform the public health decisions needed to measure progress towards and achieve their objectives in regard to the UN Sustainable Development Goals, UNAID's 95-95-95 targets for HIV epidemic control, and universal health coverage.

Since 2004, OpenMRS has brought together a global community of committed individuals with medical informatics, IT, and global health expertise who are dedicated to improving patient outcomes by creating and maintaining the OpenMRS platform. To achieve our vision, our community is currently working toward strategic goals related to evolving our core technical products (the OpenMRS Platform and Reference Application), supporting the development of OpenMRS distributions, advancing meaningful partnerships, expanding the community's capacity, strengthening community engagement, and providing efficient operational support to the community.

About Our Project

Problem Statement
The OpenMRS community welcomes individuals with expertise in software development and quality assurance from different backgrounds to our community. Two challenges prevent us from effectively linking these newcomers to projects that correspond to their skills and interest - and converting them into regular, long-term contributors:

1. Limited guiding documentation to onboard newcomers to new community projects.

2. Limited technical writing capacity to create new and maintain existing Getting Started Guides for onboarding purposes.

As a result, many go through a painful onboarding experience, particularly those who do not have a software development background, and remain at our entry-level OpenMRS Developer Stage. We see too many newcomers leave the community before they even begin to make meaningful contributions. For example, a recent experience with an OpenMRS internship program brought 140 newcomers to the community. After three months, only one remained engaged in the community and advanced to our beginner developer stage (/dev/2).

Our Solution

Our community is currently undergoing a renaissance, with smaller groups of community members driving new and exciting projects forward in response to user needs. The opportunities to make meaningful contributions to our community have never been better. This is the moment for our community to address these problems.

Our solution is two-pronged:

1) Strong **Getting Started Guides** that support an engaging onboarding process for multiple community projects. With an easier and faster onboarding experience, developers will be in a position to make more meaningful, quality contributions to the project of their choice, earlier on in their community experience.
2) A **documentation toolkit for writing smart Getting Started Guides**, including a template and sample guide. With a clear process, templates, and examples to follow, community technical writers will be able to update the Getting Started Guides developed through this project and create new ones when new community projects emerge.

This project will assist our community to sustainably develop and maintain documentation that supports an easy and friendly environment for those who join and are interested in contributing to this community as they get started contributing to the different areas of software development and quality assurance.

Project Scope

The goal of this project is to create a "Getting Started Guide" Documentation Toolkit that includes a "Getting Started Guide" template, process guidance, and a sample guide that the community can use to develop other Getting Started Guides in response to the community's needs.

Objectives & Activities

Objective 1: Document the process and practices for writing & updating "Getting Started

Guides"

> *Activity 1.1: Document a process and best practices for writing OpenMRS "Getting Started Guides."*
> *Activity 1.2: Use "OpenMRS University" sessions to introduce the community to the process and best practices for writing "Getting Started Guides."*
> *Activity 1.3: Revise and publish practices & process for writing and maintaining Getting Started Guides as a part of the "Getting Started Guide" Toolkit on the OpenMRS Wiki*

Objective 2: Publish a "Getting Started Guide" template on the OpenMRS Wiki
> *Activity 2.1: Develop a "Getting Started Guide" template.*
> *Activity 2.2: Review the Getting Started Guide template with the OpenMRS community*
> *Activity 2.3: Revise the Getting Started Guide Documentation Toolkit based on feedback*

Objective 3: Publish up to four "Getting Started Guides"
> *Activity 3.1: Create a "Getting Started Guide" to serve as an example for future guides.*
> *Activity 3.2: Facilitate weekly paired writing sessions with the Technical Writing Fellows and the community to develop priority "Getting Started Guides."*
> *Activity 3.3: Review & test the Getting Started Guides with target audiences/squads.*
> *Activity 3.4: Integrate feedback and finalize Getting Started Guides*

Community Approach

Our community approaches each project with sustainability in mind. We achieve this by integrating opportunities for community member professional development into each project. We intend to use this investment to establish two OpenMRS Technical Writer I Fellowships, thus expanding our community's talent pipeline for creating and maintaining guides for onboarding newcomers.

With the oversight and support of community volunteers on our Documentation Team, these fellows will work closely with a senior-level Technical Writer to test out and use the Getting Started template and process to create additional guides. As a result of this approach, the number of Getting Started Guides will be expanded from the single Getting Started Guide included in the Getting Started Guide Documentation Toolkit to as many as four Getting Started Guides. Potential, priority Getting Started Guides identified by the community include:

- Getting Started with 3.0: How to Develop with Microfrontends and Carbon
- Getting Started with OpenMRS Upgrades
- Getting Started with Quality Assurance
- Getting Started with FHIR
- Getting Started with OCL for OpenMRS

In the end, all these projects will ensure that our community has a robust, sustainable onboarding process supported by community maintained documentation.

Project Timeline

The project will take approximately six months. The first three months will mainly concentrate on establishing the core elements of the Getting Started Guide Documentation Toolkit (Objectives 1 and 2), while the last three months will focus on finalizing the toolkit and using it to mentor Technical Writing Fellows on its use as they create additional Getting Started Guides (Objective 3).

Objectives & Activities	Q2			Q3		
	A	M	J	J	A	S
Objective 1: Document the process and practices for writing & updating "Getting Started Guides"	■	■	■			
Activity 1.1: Document a process and best practices for writing OpenMRS "Getting Started Guides."		■				
Activity 1.2: Use "OpenMRS University" sessions to introduce the community to the process and best practices for writing "Getting Started Guides."			■			
Activity 1.3: Revise and publish practices & process for writing and maintaining Getting Started Guides as a part of the "Getting Started Guide" Toolkit on the OpenMRS Wiki			■			
Objective 2: Publish a "Getting Started Guide" template on the OpenMRS Wiki		■	■	■		
Activity 2.1: Develop a "Getting Started Guide" template, referencing real examples and recent community needs to inform the template.		■	■			
Activity 2.2: Review the Getting Started Guide template with the OpenMRS community			■	■		
Activity 2.3: Revise the Getting Started Guide Documentation Toolkit based on feedback			■	■		
Objective 3: Publish up to four "Getting Started Guides"			■	■	■	■

Activity						
Activity 3.1: Create a "Getting Started Guide" to serve as an example for future guides.			■	■		
Activity 3.2: Facilitate weekly paired writing sessions with the Technical Writing Fellows and the community to develop priority "Getting Started Guides."				■	■	■
Activity 3.3: Review & test the Getting Started Guides with target audiences/squads.						■
Activity 3.4: Integrate feedback and finalize Getting Started Guides						■

Measuring Success

We would consider the project successful if the following metrics are achieved:

- Up to 4 "How to Create a Getting Started Guide" recorded working sessions available in our Knowledge Center (# of recorded sessions available on Wiki)
- "Getting Started Guide" Documentation Toolkit published to the OpenMRS Wiki (Y/N)
- At least one Getting Started Guide per Technical Writer I is published to the OpenMRS Wiki (# of guides published/# of Technical Writing Fellows)

Once published, we will determine the longer term success of this initiative using the following metrics:

- 75% of new Getting Started Guides are used by 90% of newcomers onboarding relevant projects (3 out of 4 guides used)
- The number of getting started related questions reduce on our communication channels
- 50% of new members advance from /dev/null (newbie) to /dev/1 (beginner) with little to no direction

Additional Information

In January 2019, OpenMRS formed a Documentation Review Team that sets annual documentation goals and meets every week to work on and review documentation tasks using our Documentation Roadmap.

In collaboration with technical writers through Google Season of Docs 2019 and 2020, OpenMRS has made several improvements to documentation available on our Wiki (https://wiki.openmrs.org/).

OpenMRS

OpenMRS has participated in Google Season of Docs since its inception. In 2019, we were one of the few organizations to successfully work with three technical writers on two key projects: Developing OpenMRS REST API Documentation (two technical writers) and Updating the OpenMRS Wiki Information Architecture (one technical writer).Through Google Season of Docs in 2020, OpenMRS worked with one technical writer on a project designed to improve our OpenMRS Getting Started Guide for New Developers, which serves as inspiration for this project. Although not selected for Google Season of Docs 2020, another aspiring Season of Docs technical writer joined our Documentation Team and moved ahead with her proposed GSOD project, Developing a Suite of Volunteer Guides. All technical writers became members of our Documentation Team and had ongoing support from experienced community members, our Community Director, and Product Director.

In addition to Google Season of Docs, OpenMRS has been accepted every year as a mentor organization for Google Summer of Code (2005-2021) and Google Code In (2010-2020). Our long running participation in these Google programs reflects our community's commitment to growing the next generation of OpenMRS developers - and cultivating an environment where community members identify and serve as mentors to others in the community.

As a result of these efforts, OpenMRS has a framework for working with technical writers to define and track a variety of documentation projects and tasks. This serves as strong foundation for success for this year's Google Season of Docs.

Project budget

Description	Amount	Running Total	Notes/Justification
OpenMRS Community Management and Project Support	$3,600	$3,600	Our Community Director and Product Director will administer this project and facilitate collaboration between the Technical Writer II, Technical Writers I, and community project experts

Technical Writer II: creation of Getting Started Guide Documentation Toolkit, Getting Started with 3.0 Guide, community working sessions, and guidance/review of Technical Writer I Getting Started Guides	$8,750	$12,350	One mid/senior level Technical Writer for the project's full duration
Technical Writers I stipends: feedback/review of Getting Started Guide Documentation Toolkit, development of Getting Started Guides for Upgrades, FHIR, OCL for OpenMRS, and/or Quality Assurance.	$2,500	$14,850	Two Technical Writer Fellows X $250 stipend per month X 5 months
Sub-Total	$14,850	$14,850	
Total	**$14,850**	**$14,850**	