

Open Collective Docs

Introduction



While the Internet is a great tool for helping people collaborate, it is still extremely difficult for groups to collect funds and use them transparently. As a result, we see initiatives, projects, and movements popping up here and there only to disappear quickly due to a lack of funds. Imagine how many wonderful things didn't happen because funding (which is arguably the oxygen for most organizations) is difficult to sustain. Without an easy way to raise and manage finances, most of the ideas that can change the world are rarely able to break open from seed, let alone grow into a full-fledged tree.

To be able to operate, meetups, open-source projects, parent associations, neighbourhood associations, pet projects, clubs, unions, movements, non-profits, business incubators - all are either forced to use a physical glass jar, asking a sponsor to directly pay for their expenses or front the huge overhead of setting up and managing a corporation or a non-profit. Even if they manage to achieve it in a way that is neither inefficient nor opaque, it is overkill.

This is the problem that Open Collective solves. We enable groups to quickly set up a collective, raise funds and manage them transparently.

We want all those seeds to have a chance to grow and give the ideas a fighting chance to reach their true potential. We believe everyone should have the tools to create the organizations of tomorrow. And we are dedicating ourselves to make that happen!

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Essays

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[A New Form of Association For the Internet Generation](#), Xavier Damman

- [If you can't beat them, abstract them.](#), Pia Mancini
- [A New Way to Fund Open Source Projects](#), Xavier Damman
- [Money and Open Source Communities](#), Xavier Damman
- [Let's Talk About Money](#), Aseem Sood
- [Moving beyond the charity framework](#), Pia Mancini
- [From Firms to Collectives](#), Xavier Damman
- [Being a Circle in a World Made for Triangles](#), Alanna Irving
- [Ten Steps to Successful Open Source Crowdfunding](#), Alanna Irving
- [Turning our City into an Open Collective](#), Xavier Damman
- [Cities Are Open Collectives](#), Pia Mancini
- [From the Internet of Information to the Internet of Actions](#), Xavier Damman
- [The New Citizen](#), Xavier Damman

Talks

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- [Collaborating with Money](#), Alanna Irving, New Frontiers, New Zealand November 2018
- [Transparent by Design](#), Pia Mancini, Monki Gras, London 2018
- [From the democracy of our voices, to the democracy of our actions](#) - Xavier Damman, Crowdsourcing Week, Luleå (Sweden) March 2018
- [Cities as Open Collectives](#) - Pia Mancini, OuiShare Fest, Paris 2017
- [Reducing the Friction for Citizens to Create Associations and Sustain Them](#) - Xavier Damman, iMAL, Brussels November 2017
- [A new Way of Sustaining Open Source](#) - Pia Mancini, Zeit, Berlin September 2017
- [How to Fund Communities and Movements Transparently](#) - Xavier Damman, OuiShare Fest, Paris, 2016
- [A New Form of Association to Build a New World, Together](#) - Xavier Damman, OSFEST, Barcelona 2016

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FAQ

What is Open Collective?

Open Collective is a platform where communities can collect and disburse money transparently, to sustain and grow their projects.

Who is Open Collective for?

Open Collective is great for collaborative groups, like meetups, open-source projects, [and more](#)—and for [those](#) who want to support them.

Why Open Collective?

The Internet has been really good at helping people do great things together. But things still get complicated once money is involved. These challenges hold communities back from getting all the support they need from supporters and sponsors to achieve their mission.

We enable communities to have economic power, so they can sustain themselves and have a larger impact on the world.

How is Open Collective different from other platforms?

- It's fully transparent (you can see where money comes from and where it goes).
- Designed for ongoing collaborative communities, not one-off campaigns or individual creators.
- Open source and designed for financial and technical transparency.
- Offers fiscal sponsorship as a service, using [Fiscal Hosts](#).

For more information including a full comparison of tech offerings please see our [comparison page](#).

How does it work?

Our platform provides tools for legal entities to fiscally sponsor Collectives under their umbrella, empowering people to create associations without friction. It's like an API between the legacy world of banks and taxes and the emerging future of digitally powered distributed collaborations.

The goal of Open Collective is to create a [New Form of Association for the Internet Generation](#).

Does it work in my country?

People can contribute from anywhere by credit card, with donations denominated in the [currency](#) of the Fiscal Host. Payouts work everywhere our payment providers, Stripe and PayPal, serve.

Can I get a receipt for my donations?

Yes! One main purpose of Open Collective is to provide unincorporated projects with the legal and financial structures to provide [people](#) receipts and invoices.

Why Open Source?

For starters, we are believers in the open-source philosophy. Our code is open source, and so are the Collectives we host. We think transparency in technology and finances is important.

Additionally, regulations are different all over the world. Our platform is the API between Collectives and things like governments, banks, payment processors, and taxes, which vary a lot by country, so it has to be adaptable to different requirements.

How can I contribute?

We are an open-source project and run as an Open Collective ourselves. You can contribute [money](#), [code](#) or [translations](#). And we'd really love it if you [started your own Collective](#) and contributed by growing the community!

For more info about how you can contribute to Open Collective, check the [contributing page](#).

How can I contact you?

[Contact us](#) or join our [Slack](#)!