

2025 Annual Report



Introduction

2025 was a consequential year for the Open Source Initiative. As AI regulation, cybersecurity law, and procurement policy accelerated globally, OSI's role as steward of the Open Source Definition grew in both scope and urgency. Our work spanned three areas: licensing and legal stewardship, policy and standards engagement, and research and outreach. The highlights are detailed below.

Quick Links:

- [Licensing and Legal](#)
- [Policy and Standards](#)
- [Research and Outreach](#)
- [Press Mentions](#)
- [Events](#)
- [Financials](#)
- [Toward 2026](#)

Licensing and Legal

License Review

OSI's [license review process](#) approved and discussed several notable submissions this year:

- By approving the [OSC License](#), OSI reduced cross-border legal ambiguity of the MIT license, enabling users to confidently adopt Open Source frameworks under German law while reducing exposing themselves to unexpected liability risks.
- A revision of the [CDDL \(Common Development and Distribution License\)](#) was also approved.
- The Licensing committee and community discussed [the ModelGo Licenses](#), a Creative Commons-style licensing framework designed specifically for AI models.



Top Open Source Licenses in 2025

By pageview volume on the OSI website, [the most-viewed licenses in 2025](#) were MIT (1.5M), Apache 2.0 (344K), BSD 3-Clause (214K), BSD 2-Clause (128K), GPL 2.0 (76K), and GPL 3.0 (55K).

New API for OSI Approved Licenses®

[OSI launched a public API](#) providing programmatic access to the canonical list of OSI Approved Licenses®, making it easier to integrate license data into developer tools and compliance systems. By building our new public API, OSI enabled software automated compliance tools to quickly verify legality at scale, stripping legal friction out of CI/CD pipelines.

State of the Source at All Things Open 2025

OSI hosted the [State of the Source track at All Things Open](#) in October. Pamela Chestek, an emeritus OSI Board member, opened the track with *Licensing 201*, an advanced look at how licenses are approved and why license choice matters for community health. The full track program is listed in the Events section.

ClearlyDefined



[ClearlyDefined](#) is a crowdsourced global database of licensing metadata covering published software components. OSI's stewardship activity in 2025 included two significant developments:

- [Linux Foundation presented their case study](#) of ClearlyDefined, documenting the process of enriching Software Bills of Materials (SBOMs) for key Open Source projects, accelerating compliance and security.
- [OSI and AboutCode signed a Memorandum of Understanding](#) establishing a collaborative framework for stewarding ClearlyDefined. This formalizes shared responsibility for the project's long-term sustainability and operational growth.

Licensing Ecosystem Collaboration

OSI partnered with GitHub's [Secure Open Source Program](#) to include [ScanCode](#), a core ClearlyDefined project, among its first cohort of recipients. OSI also collaborated with [ORT \(OSS Review Toolkit\)](#), ScanCode, [GUAC](#), and [OpenChain](#) on tooling integration and interoperability and worked with [SPDX](#) and [OWASP](#) to advance SBOM standardization.

Policy and Standards

OSI offers support for legislators and policymakers, educating them about the Open Source ecosystem, its role in innovation, and its value for an open future.



**open source
initiative®**
*Policy and
Standards*

Global

As a member of the [Digital Public Goods Alliance](#) (DPGA), OSI collaborates with organizations, technology providers, and countries worldwide to promote the use of Open Source technology. This year, we worked with the DPGA on a [presentation](#) about our Open Source AI Definition and how AI systems fit into the [DPG standard](#) at the UN's Open Source Week.

At the Annual DPGA Member Meeting, OSI organized [breakout sessions](#) on data governance and public interest AI.

OSI participated in the [2025 Open Source Congress in Brussels](#), joining leaders from Open Source foundations, government, and industry to address regulation, security, sustainability, and global coordination challenges.

[OSI endorsed the United Nations Open Source Principles.](#)

[The Open Policy Alliance](#), an Open Source Initiative project, [welcomed the Open Source Technology Improvement Fund](#) as a new member. The Open Policy Alliance brings non-profit organizations together to participate in educating and informing public policy decisions related to Open Source software, content, research, and education.



Europe

Artificial Intelligence

OSI provided deep technical expertise to Members of the European Parliament and legislative offices, which enabled policymakers to recognize and [legally challenge](#) the practice of openwashing. The letter was covered by Euractiv, Mlex, and 01net, and protected the integrity and competitive advantage of genuine Open Source builders. OSI also submitted [formal feedback](#) to the European Commission on the Definition of Open Source AI.

In 2024, the European Union approved the Artificial Intelligence Act, the world's first legal framework for AI. [Our intervention](#) in the legally mandated Code of Practice for General Purpose AI helped avoid crippling, unworkable regulatory compliance traps that ensured AI research in the public interest remains legally viable across Europe.

Open Source Sustainability

OSI co-authored a whitepaper with Mozilla and others [calling on European governments to direct AI investment funding toward Open Source solutions.](#)

OSI separately supported a proposal for a [European Sovereign Tech Fund](#) modeled on Germany's Sovereign Tech Fund.

OSI submitted [feedback on the reform of the European Cybersecurity Agency](#) (ENISA), highlighting Open Source's role in cybersecurity.

On procurement, [OSI submitted feedback](#) and met in person with the European Commission as the EU — which collectively spends over €100B annually on software — revises its public procurement rules. OSI's goal is to reduce barriers to procuring Open Source solutions.

Cyber Resilience Act

The Cyber Resiliency Act (CRA) implementation was [a major focus in 2025](#). By collaborating with Eclipse's [Open Regulatory Compliance](#) working group to build [a community FAQ](#), OSI enabled the global developer community to align with the CRA without lowering their deployment velocity. The working group engaged with the European Commission to answer community questions about CRA obligations, and reviewed and contributed to the CRA's technical standards — the documents most organizations will use to demonstrate compliance.

Standards Bodies

OSI engaged at the European standards bodies [ETSI](#), [CEN](#), and [CENELEC](#) throughout the year. EU Policy & Standards Director Simon Phipps represented OSI at ETSI, where he was elected vice-chair of the relevant CRA working group, satisfying the European Commission's requirement to consult with Open Source communities in standards development. OSI also established a mechanism with ETSI to delegate Open Source experts to CRA working groups and sponsor experts from multiple communities.

Access at CEN and CENELEC has proved more difficult. OSI will report its experiences to the Commission as the new Standardisation Regulation is developed, and is advocating for greater Open Source participation in the standards process.

United States

Educating Policymakers

OSI published [a new resource](#) on AI and Open Source for U.S. federal and state policymakers.

Coalitions and Partnerships

OSI strengthened the [Open Policy Alliance](#) through [new members](#), shared tooling, and coordinated public comments.

OSI joined the [Re:Create Coalition](#), a broad group representing libraries, startups, tech companies, creators, and consumers in support of a balanced U.S. copyright ecosystem.

OSI joined the [Alliance for Responsible Data Collection \(ARDC\)](#), which works to preserve access to public internet data through a framework for responsible data collection.

Public Comments

Working with the [Open Forum for AI \(OFAI\)](#) at Carnegie Mellon University, OSI submitted [comments](#) on the White House AI R&D Strategy, arguing that openness accelerates discovery

and broadens access to AI's benefits. By collaborating to establish structural, evidence-based data on open collaboration for federal agencies, OSI enabled US policymakers to design research frameworks that utilize open architectures to accelerate secure scientific discovery.

OSI and the [Aperero Foundation](#) jointly submitted [comments](#) on the White House AI Action Plan, highlighting the Open Source community's work defining Open Source AI.

State-Level Policy

The volume of state legislation with potential impact on Open Source development prompted OSI to increase its tracking and coordination activity. OSI joined a coalition of Open Source organizations to share information on state bills and analyze their implications.

Policy Internship

OSI hosted its first U.S. policy intern through a collaboration with [Duke University](#). Under US Senior Policy Manager Katie Steen-James' direction, [Gabriel Toscano](#) produced stakeholder mapping, an interactive timeline of Open Source policy history, and support for public comment submissions. He presented his work at [All Things Open](#).

Research and Outreach

Open Source AI Definition

OSI and Open Future published the white paper "[Data Governance in Open Source AI: Enabling Responsible and Systematic Access](#)". This foundational study is a significant step toward addressing the data governance challenge.

OSI hosted [Deep Dive: Data Governance](#), a premier event that brought together world-class experts to explore the latest advancements in Data Governance & Open Source AI.

OSI co-authored a research paper with collaborators from the August Berkeley workshop; it will be presented at the [ACM Fairness, Accountability, and Transparency \(FAccT\) Conference](#) in Montreal in June 2026.

Open Technology Research

OSI, [OpenForum Europe](#), and [Open Knowledge Foundation](#) launched the [Open Technology Research initiative](#), a research partnership designed to fill gaps in evidence about the impact of Open Source and support evidence-based public policy.

Press Mentions

OSI's work was cited across major technology and policy outlets in 2025, including The Verge, TechCrunch, ZDNET, InfoWorld, Ars Technica, The New Stack, Forbes, Nature, and China Daily. Selected coverage:

- [Open source licenses: Everything you need to know](#) — TechCrunch
 - [The Power of Open Collaboration: How Open Source Is Shaping the Future of AI](#) — Forbes
 - [Open source trends for 2025 and beyond](#) — InfoWorld
 - [If DeepSeek wants to be a real disruptor, it should go much further on data transparency](#) — Open Data Initiative
 - [Why the 'spirit' of open source means much more than a license](#) — TechCrunch
 - [Open source LLMs hit Europe's digital sovereignty roadmap](#) — TechCrunch
 - ['Open source' AI isn't truly open — here's how researchers can reclaim the term](#) — Nature
 - [Redis 'returns' to open source with AGPL license](#) — The Register
 - [Data Commons Can Save Open AI](#) — The New Stack
 - [How the World Is Celebrating Open Source Maintainer Month](#) — The New Stack
 - [How AI is changing open source development](#) — Heisi online
 - [Open Source Is Too Important To Dilute](#) — The New Stack
 - [What Is Open Source AI Anyway?](#) — The New Stack
 - [ETSI Elects Three Prominent Leaders to Drive the Creation of New Standards under the EU Cyber Resilience Act](#) — ETSI
 - [Open Source: Inside 2025's 4 Biggest Trends](#) — The New Stack
 - [Where code meets community](#) — China Daily
-

Events

Throughout 2025, OSI actively participated in events from around the world to educate and engage with diverse audiences and communities. OSI staff and representatives also attended numerous CRA standards meetings at ETSI and CEN/CENELEC throughout the year in an expert capacity; those are listed separately at the end of this section.

January, 2025

- [Software Heritage Symposium & Summit](#) (Jan. 29, 2025 – Paris)
- [EU Open Source Policy Summit](#) (Jan. 31, 2025 – Brussels)

February, 2025

- [FOSDEM](#) (Feb. 1-2, 2025 – Brussels)
- [AI Action Summit](#) (Feb. 10-11, 2025 – Paris)
- [NLNet Labs 25th Anniversary Summit](#) (Feb. 21 – Amsterdam)

March, 2025

- [Yale Summit on State AI Legislation](#) (Mar. 14-15, 2025 — New Haven, CT)
- [Linux Foundation Member Summit](#) (Mar. 18-19, 2025 – Napa)

April, 2025

- [FSFE Legal & Licensing Workshop](#) (Apr. 9-11, 2025 – Essen)

May, 2025

- [GOSIM AI Paris](#) (May 6-7, 2025 – Paris)
- [Open Source Founders Summit](#) (May 19-20, 2025 – Paris)

June, 2025

- [Vivatech](#) (Jun. 11-14, 2025 – Paris)
- [OW2Con](#) (Jun. 17-18, 2025 – Paris)
- [UN Open Source Week](#) (Jun. 16-20, 2025 – New York)

August, 2025

- [Workshop: Towards the Promise of Open Source AI](#) (Aug. 12-14, 2025 — Berkeley, CA)
- [Open Source Summit EU](#) (Aug. 25-27, 2025 – Amsterdam)
- [AI_dev: Open Source GenAI & ML Summit](#) (Aug. 28-29, 2025 – Amsterdam)

September, 2025

- [Open Source Congress](#) (Sep. 16-17, 2025 – Brussels)

October, 2025

- [Deep Dive: Data Governance](#) (Oct. 1-3, 2025 – online)
- [Open Source Conference Luxembourg](#) (Oct. 1, 2025 – Luxembourg)
- [All Things Open](#) (Oct. 12-14, 2025 – Raleigh)
- [Eclipse Code & Compliance Workshops](#) (Oct 22-23, 2025, Brussels)

November, 2025

- [SFSCon](#) (Nov. 7-8, 2025 – Bolzano)
- [OpenForum Academy Symposium](#) (Nov. 18-19, 2025 – Rio de Janeiro)
- [DPGA Annual Members Meeting](#) (Nov. 24-26, 2025 – Brasilia)

December, 2025

- [COSCon'25](#) (Dec. 6-7, 2025 – Beijing)

CRA Standards Meetings (ETSI / CEN / CENELEC)

Simon Phipps represented OSI at the following standards meetings throughout the year. He chaired the December joint plenary.

- ETSI General Assembly #85, Sophia-Antipolis (March)
 - ETSI-CEN-CENELEC Joint CRA Plenary, Brussels (April 16)
 - Deep Dive on CRA Horizontal Deliverables, Brussels (May 19)
 - ETSI-CEN-CENELEC Joint CRA Plenary, Brussels (July 11)
 - ETSI-CEN-CENELEC Joint CRA Plenary, Brussels (September 5)
 - ETSI TC CYBER EUSR Plenary, Sophia-Antipolis (September 9–10)
 - ETSI TC CYBER EUSR Plenary, Sophia-Antipolis (December 10–11)
 - CEN/CENELEC JTC13 WG9 Plenary #78, Sophia-Antipolis (December 9–11)
 - ETSI-CEN-CENELEC CRA Standards Joint Plenary, Sophia-Antipolis (December 12)
-

Financials

In 2025, the Open Source ecosystem faced a convergence of global regulatory activity and systemic technological shifts. In response, the OSI Board of Directors made an intentional, strategic choice to deploy our accumulated operational reserves to safeguard the future of the Open Source Definition.

Contextualizing the 2025 Financial Performance

Our top line revenue experienced a contraction to \$667k, impacted by broader macroeconomic contractions in tech sponsorships and the natural operational pause of an Executive Director transition. Compared to 2024, the OSI pursued limited grant funding, which further magnified the contraction. However, the OSI maintained its programmatic commitments without compromise. The resulting net deficit was a deliberate, board authorized mobilization of capital to finance two critical priorities:

Ecosystem and Regulatory Advocacy and Education

Our Policy and Standards spend accounted for nearly 60% of our total program expenditures. This represents the immense legal and policy expertise deployed to ETSI, CEN, and CENELEC to ensure that regulatory frameworks like the EU Cyber Resilience Act did not inadvertently penalize Open Source development.

Institutional Fortification

The 30% increase in Legal & Professional Fees reflects non-recurring investments to audit and upgrade our organization through audits and improvements for processes, governance, and to rebuild structural trust with our community, alongside the execution of a world-class executive search that successfully recruited our new Executive Director.

Consolidated Financials (\$ in thousands) — Prepared March 2, 2026 by Phyllis Dobbs

	2025	2024
REVENUE		
Sponsorships	\$357	\$520
Contributions	\$204	\$227
Membership Dues	\$24	\$26
Grants	\$50	\$249
Event Revenue	\$8	\$33
Other Revenue	\$24	\$36
Total Revenue	\$667	\$1091
EXPENSES		
Staffing	\$120	\$202
Event Expense	\$23	\$76
Information Technology Expenses	\$35	\$37
Insurance	\$12	\$12
Legal & Professional Fees	\$655	\$473
Marketing and Promotion	\$150	\$62
Travel Expense	\$95	\$152
Office & Other Expenses	\$39	\$21

Total Expense	\$1129	\$1035
NET INCOME	-\$462	\$56

ASSETS

Cash and Cash Equivalents	\$432	\$970
Accounts Receivable - Net	\$111	\$68
Other Current Assets	\$7	\$0
Total Assets	\$550	\$1038

LIABILITIES AND NET ASSETS

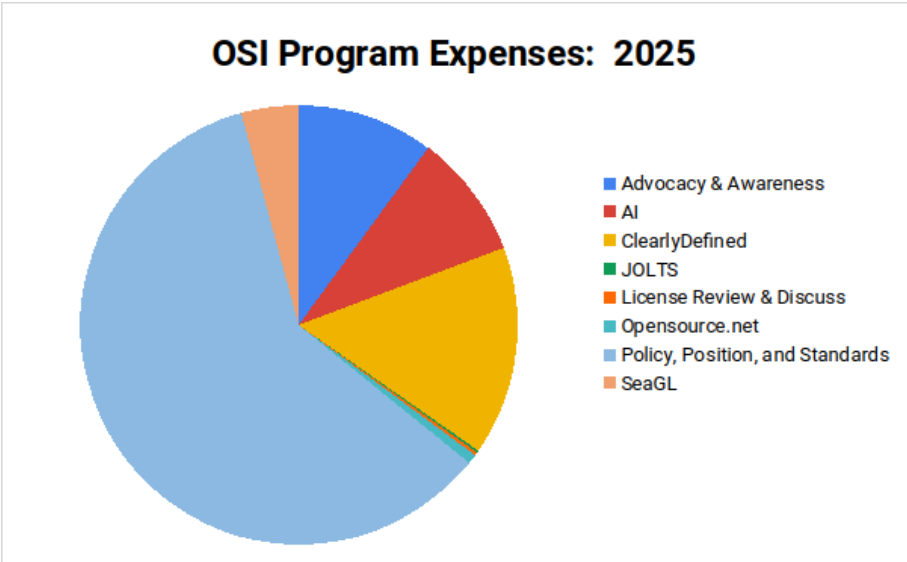
Liabilities		
Accounts Payable and Other Liabilities	\$7	\$28
Loan - SBA	\$137	\$141
Total Liabilities	\$144	\$169
Net Assets		
Net Assets Without Donor Restrictions	\$241	\$596
Net Assets With Donor Restrictions	\$165	\$273
Total Net Assets	\$406	\$869
TOTAL LIABILITIES AND NET ASSETS	\$550	\$1038

Program Service Expenses

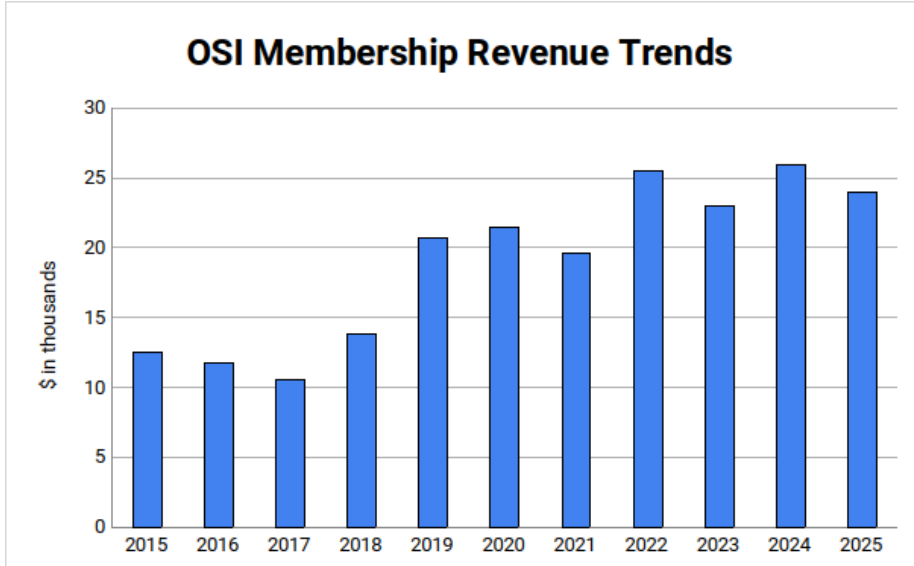
Despite a tightening revenue baseline, the OSI maintained a competitive efficiency ratio. Out of \$1.1M in total expenses, \$631K went directly into program service implementation reflecting the demand and scale of the CRA and AI Policy engagement in 2025. This lean, impactful cost structure proves that every dollar contributed to the OSI translates directly into defensive leverage for the global technology market.

Program Service Expenses

Advocacy & Awareness	\$63,838	10.1%
AI	\$57,924	9.2%
ClearlyDefined	\$97,539	15.5%
JOLTS	\$590	0.1%
License Review & Discuss	\$1,280	0.2%
Opensource.net	\$4,867	0.8%
Policy, Position, and Standards	\$377,735	59.9%
SeaGL	\$27,253	4.3%
Total Program Service Expenses	\$631,025	



Membership Revenue Trends



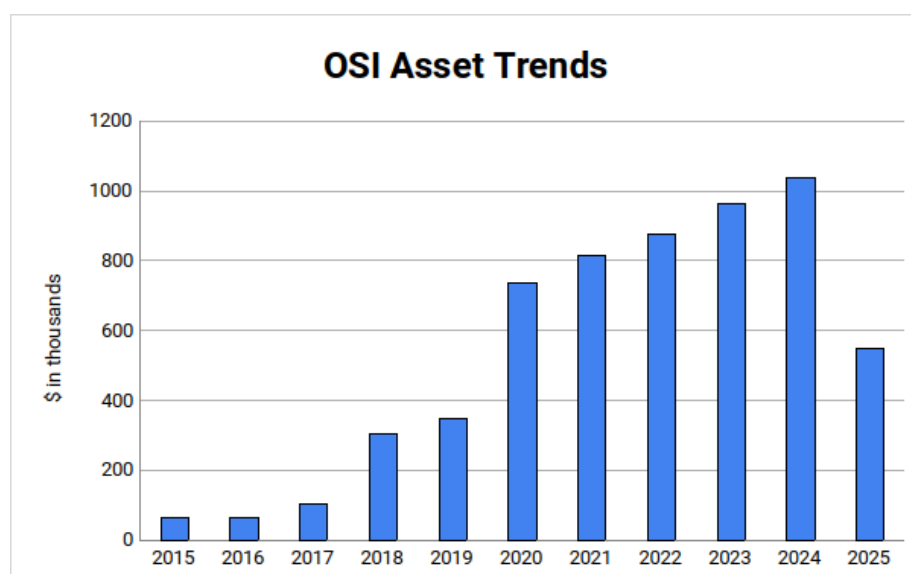
Stabilization and the Path Forward

The intentional drawdown of our historic asset reserves leaves the OSI in a stabilized, low-debt operational posture. We conclude 2025 with \$432K in cash and cash equivalents to execute on our 2026 mandates.

Asset Trends

(\$ in thousands)

	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025
Cash and Cash Equivalents	\$38	\$61	\$85	\$280	\$323	\$577	\$534	\$771	\$896	\$970	\$432
Accounts Receivable - Net	\$28	\$5	\$20	\$25	\$27	\$150	\$282	\$107	\$69	\$68	\$111
Other Assets	\$-	\$-	\$-	\$-	\$-	\$8	\$-	\$-	\$-	\$-	\$7
Total Assets	\$66	\$66	\$105	\$305	\$350	\$735	\$816	\$878	\$965	\$1,038	\$550



With our new leadership secured and our core governance modernized, our strategic priority for 2026 is migrating from a defense driven reserve model, back into an expanded and diversified revenue engine for the scope demanded of us by our global mandate to steward the Open Source Definition. We invite the organizations that rely on Open Source infrastructure to join us as [sustainable financial partners](#).

Toward 2026

The Open Source Definition turned 27 in 2025, and its relevance has never been more directly tested. AI systems, cybersecurity law, and procurement policy are now shaping whether Open Source can remain a global commons, and OSI's engagement in those debates is central to the outcome.

In 2026, OSI will advance the Open Source AI Definition, continue engaging policymakers in the U.S. and Europe as major regulatory frameworks are finalized and entered into force, strengthen collaboration through initiatives such as the Open Policy Alliance, and build out the Open Technology Research initiative to establish an evidentiary foundation for Open Source policy. Securing the financial sustainability that enables this work is equally a priority.

OSI's mission is to educate about and advocate for Open Source in order to sustain the infrastructure — legal, technical, and civic— that the ecosystem depends on. We invite organizations and individuals to join us as contributors, [members](#), [sponsors](#), and [affiliates](#).

###