

Introduction to the FSF Campaigns Team

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What's free software? What's the FSF?

- The Free Software Foundation is a nonprofit with the worldwide mission to promote computer user freedom.
- In practice, this means educating the public about free software and the dangers of proprietary software.
- The FSF does its **entire** work with free software, even down to our office phones.

About the FSF

- The FSF accomplishes its work through our three teams: campaigns, licensing, and the FSF tech team.
- The FSF licensing team is the steward of the GNU General Public License (GPL) and defends copyright on the GNU Project. The licensing team also holds a CLE seminar on the proper use of copyleft licensing.
- The FSF tech team provides critical infrastructure to the GNU Project, managing their build servers, mailing lists, and other important servers.
- The FSF campaigns team advocates for free software and pushes against proprietary software. We produce educational materials, organize protests like the International Day Against DRM, and host LibrePlanet, our annual conference on free software issues.

Free software definition

Free software grants its users four basic freedoms.

- 1 The freedom to run the program as you wish, for any purpose
- 2 The freedom to study how the program works, and change it
- 3 The freedom to redistribute copies so you can help others
- 4 The freedom to distribute copies of your modified versions to others.

GNU

- The GNU Project was started in 1985 by Richard Stallman (rms), with the goal of writing an operating system that was fully free software.
- By 1991, most of GNU was complete, but it was missing a key system component known as the kernel. This is where the kernel Linux comes in: when combined with GNU, it forms the GNU/Linux operating system that we all know and love.
- GNU is still going strong! Progress is being made on interesting projects like GNU Guix, a reproducible package manager, and GNU Taler, a free software payment system.
- And of course there's GNU Emacs, which is how we wrote this presentation. :)

Fully free software

- As the FSF considers proprietary software to be a social injustice, we recommend the use of fully free distributions of the GNU/Linux operating system. Trisquel is the chief one that we use, but there are others.
- The FSF licensing team is in charge of the "Respects Your Freedom" initiative, a way for manufacturers to certify that their hardware runs fully free software – right down to the BIOS, in the case of laptops.

Advocacy and community

- One of the chief ways the FSF campaigns team promotes free software is through our writing and local advocacy efforts.
- At <https://fsf.org>, we're regularly commenting on how recent events impact computer user freedom, and how corporations like Google, Apple, or Microsoft put them at risk.
- We also are the FSF's main point of connection with the global free software community, and do our best to stay involved in discussions on how technology can empower users or deprive them of their freedom.
- We're always looking for members of the community to interview for our Working Together for Free Software project, where we discuss the importance of software freedom with a wide variety of activists, developers, and community organizers.

Animated videos

- "ShoeTool", a holiday short from last year:
<https://u.fsf.org/shoetool>
- "The University of Costumed Heroes", a video warning about the dangers of proprietary remote education:
<https://u.fsf.org/fsfheroes>
- And most recently, "Rewind", a video we developed to teach others about the positive impact free software can have on the scientific community: <https://u.fsf.org/rewind>

Defective by Design

- Defective by Design is the FSF's campaign against Digital Restrictions Management (DRM)
- DRM is a grave threat to computer user freedom, not only because it limits what you can do with media, but because it relies on proprietary backdoors to function.
- Each year we sponsor an annual day to protest Digital Restrictions Management: the International Day Against DRM (IDAD). This year's is on December 4th.
- You can learn more at <https://defectivebydesign.org>

Email Self-Defense

- Email Self-Defense is a guide to help nontechnical users escape bulk government surveillance by creating a GPG keypair.
- The ESD guide helps users create their key no matter what operating system they run, and we have a bot set up to help you verify that your key is working.
- You can take the first steps in Email Self-Defense by following the guide here: <https://emailselfdefense.fsf.org/en/>

Free JS

- Most pages on the Internet now require the use of nonfree software to even function, in the form of proprietary JavaScript.
- Although the source of a JavaScript program is viewable in a certain sense, it is often intensely minified and obfuscated, to the point where there is no meaningful difference between the obfuscated code and binary.
- The Free JS campaign encourages site owners to release the JavaScript to their websites under a free license, and also promotes the use of GNU LibreJS, a browser extension you can use to ensure you're only running free JavaScript.

LibrePlanet

- LibrePlanet is the FSF's annual conference on technology and social justice.
- Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, LibrePlanet 2021 will be held online this year in early March.
- Our call for sessions (CFS) is still open! You can submit your presentation for this year's conference at <https://libreplanet.org/2021/>.

High Priority Projects

- Together with a committee of free software luminaries, the FSF campaigns team manages the High Priority Projects list, a way to draw attention to areas where free software solutions are sorely needed.
- These are often the places where people feel most pressured to use proprietary software, and some examples include the need for free CAPTCHA tools, free videoconferencing platforms, and decentralized social media.
- The committee is currently making its latest round of updates to the HPP list, and you can send in your own suggestions by mailing hpp-feedback@gnu.org.

Free Software Awards

- Each year at LibrePlanet, the FSF gives out the Free Software Awards, our way of recognizing individuals and projects who have made great strides in the free software community.
- The three categories are: Award for the Advancement of Free Software, Award for Projects of Social Benefit, and Award for Outstanding New Free Software Contributor
- If there's someone who inspires your own work on or with free software, we encourage you to nominate them:
<https://fsf.org/awards/>

Mobile phone freedom

- People all over the globe now use a mobile phone as their primary computer. They deserve free software.
- Android is nominally free software, but almost always ships with nonfree Google libraries and nonfree drivers. We recommend using the Replicant distribution of Android to make sure your freedom is protected.
- Purism's Librem 5 is also promising, but we haven't had a chance to review it for RYF certification yet. However, we do know that it runs PureOS, an FSF-approved distribution of GNU/Linux.

Federated social media

- Network services like Twitter are neither free nor nonfree. However, they may require their users to run nonfree JavaScript to use.
- To avoid centralization and corporate surveillance, we recommend the use of federated social media platforms like Mastodon, GNU Social, and Pleroma.
- The FSF itself has made a big step into federated services recently with our PeerTube account, which we've been using to distribute our animated videos and the sessions from our 35th anniversary livestream.
- You can find and follow the FSF's PeerTube account here: <https://framatube.org/accounts/fsf/>

Remote education & free video conferencing

- As society has transitioned to remote methods of work and education, most people are more dependent on proprietary software than ever.
- Recently, the FSF launched a petition against the use of proprietary software in education. We're using the information we collected to approach schools and invite them to a discussion on the importance of software freedom.
- The FSF tech team has also helped MIT professor and FSF board member Gerald Sussman transition his classes to a fully free BigBlueButton setup. Our writeup of this can be found on the GNU website: <https://www.gnu.org/education/teaching-my-mit-classes-with-only-free-libre-software.html>

Giving Guide

- Especially when doing holiday shopping, it can be difficult to find devices that are freedom-respecting.
- Each year, the FSF publishes an annual Giving Guide that offers our latest recommendations on computer hardware and other gadgets that don't compromise your freedom.
- This year's update to the Giving Guide will be published in late November, but you can view the 2019 Giving Guide here:
<https://www.fsf.org/givingguide/v10/>

Volunteer

- While COVID-19 keeps everyone from meeting, you can still help the free software movement by doing advocacy work in your local area.
- We run the LibrePlanet wiki for exactly this purpose, giving free software projects and local groups a place to collaborate, and organize actions.
- Once it's safe to resume meeting in person, the FSF is planning to help get these groups up and running by reimbursing their expenses. If you're interested, write us at `<campaigns@fsf.org>`.

Associate membership

- The best way to support the work of the FSF is by becoming an associate member. Our associate membership program is the bulk of our revenue, and helps us stay independent and focused on our mission.
- Becoming an FSF associate member nets you some great benefits like access to our Jitsi Meet server, member forum, and bootable USB card with Trisquel GNU/Linux preinstalled.
- You can join or renew your membership at <https://fsf.org/join>.

Talk to us

- The FSF has several official channels on the Freenode IRC network, including #fsf, #dbd, and #libreplanet. Feel free to chat with us there.
- You can also join the libreplanet-discuss mailing list, a place where our community discusses software freedom issues.
- If you happen to be an employer with a free software friendly job listing, let us know! We can include it in our directory of free software employment opportunities:
<https://www.fsf.org/resources/jobs>
- And if you have any other questions, feel free to write us at <campaigns@fsf.org>.

Q&A

- Greg will be calling in by phone to answer any questions you might have about the presentation.
- Thanks for joining us!