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Services run by the Open Energy Modelling Initiative

This page/topic contains an inventory of the internet services run by the Open Energy Modelling Initiative (openmod) and related legal matters. It also covers our personal privacy policies and the obligations, if any, that arise from the European GDPR. The information is provided in the interests of transparency. The Open Energy Modelling Initiative is not incorporated under law and cannot hold domain name registrations, copyrights, and the like in its own name.

The Open Energy Modelling Initiative offers a number of internet services and there is clearly some overlap between the various functions. There is therefore some discretion as to where a particular discussion might best occur and where persistent information should be added. Participants can use their judgment. But technical threads should generally migrate from the mailing list to the forum when the traffic involved grows. Furthermore, other participants are more likely to return to and comment on a forum topic than a mailing list thread.

Almost all the information contained in this posting is public knowledge in some form and can be verified through websites, internet searches, and the use of command-line internet query tools like `dig` and `whois`.

Community services

These are services (excepting the website and YouTube channel) that openmod participants would normally subscribe to in order to engage with the community. Each service is independent and uses its own authentication system, including passwords.

Users should supply **accurate details** when signing on unless other considerations arise. In particular, we strongly encourage users to register with their **real names** when prompted. In all cases, you will need to supply a functioning email address.

Service	URL	IP address	Host
website	https://openmod-initiative.org	85.13.152.63	Neue Medien Muennich GmbH
wiki	https://wiki.openmod-initiative.org	148.251.196.13	energypedia consult UG
forum	https://forum.openmod.org	167.71.36.150	Communiteq
mailing list	https://groups.google.com/g/openmod-initiative	—	Google Groups
YouTube	https://www.youtube.com/@openmod-initiative/videos	—	YouTube

Website

The openmod website codebase is hosted on GitHub as part of the Open Energy Modelling Initiative account on that platform (see below). The website is modest and relatively static and is intended to act as a gateway. While not strictly a participation service, the website is listed here because it fits alongside the wiki and the forum. The HTML markup for the website can be cloned locally and modified by anybody. A pull request is required to update the site however (see below for the administrators). The HTML markup is hand crafted and dedicated web authoring software is not required.

Wiki

The openmod wiki is hosted on the energypedia server free-of-charge, although the openmod does occasionally contribute content to energypedia in lieu. The wiki runs the MediaWiki software but lacks the range of templates (similar to macros) that Wikipedia

provides, for example. Registering for the wiki requires a short bio and is subject to approval by an administrator.

Forum

The openmod forum uses the discourse software and runs from a hosted commercial service provided by Communiteq. Like the wiki, registration is subject to approval and may require that an applicant describe their interest and background. We do ask that you provide your **proper name** when registering, although you are welcome to use a pseudonym for your login. The forum is funded by ad-hoc donations from the community.

Originally the forum ran on private hosting that Tom Brown otherwise used for scientific outreach projects using infrastructure leased from Hetzner Online. Some technical details can be found in his introductory post. The forum commenced during January 2017, while most of the other openmod internet services were established at the outset back in October 2014. The forum later migrated to DiscourseHosting on 9 January 2021 as indicated in this thread. It was during that changeover that the shorter domain was adopted (lacking the "initiative") and the licensing consents extended to include dedicated open licenses for embedded data and for code snippets. DisourseHosting later became Communiteq.

Forum posts cannot be completely deleted from the forum history by regular users but they can be disabled. More hints about editing on the platform.

Privacy matters are discussed further here: https://forum.openmod.org/privacy

Mailing list

The openmod mailing list is hosted free-of-charge by Google Groups. A google account is necessary to register (otherwise see here), but any kind of email address can be used to sign up. The mailing list is public, archived, and indexed by search engines. As of January 2021, the mailing list numbers around 800 participants. The list of members is available, together with partially-truncated email addresses. Registration under an alias is possible if you need anonymity, but real names are preferred. Your email address will remain visible to the administrators.

As of May 2019, anonymous browsing appears to require that the user be logged in with their google account and not in private or incognito mode — although, of course, explicit registration to the mailing list is not necessary.

YouTube account

The openmod YouTube account was reactivated in 2020 after being established in 2015 and falling into disuse.

Wikipedia article

While not an openmod service, some openmod participants informally maintain a wikipedia page describing the openmod initiative. Anyone may edit wikipedia.

Organization services

The Open Energy Modelling Initiative is registered for several internet services under its own username. The individuals responsible are listed later. These are not services that participants can register for or use directly.

Service	URL	Host	Comment
GitHub	https://github.com/openmod-initiative	GitHub	website markup
twitter	https://twitter.com/openmod	Twitter	@openmod
email address	mail@openmod-initiative.org	Neue Medien Muennich GmbH	use of mailing list preferred

GitHub account

The openmod GitHub account primarily holds the openmod website HTML. It also contains an historical presentation and a toolkit for openmod administration. Stefan Pfenninger is the lead person for this account, although all administrators have the same level of privilege.

Twitter account

The openmod twitter account is used occasionally. It was created in October 2014 and is public.

Email address

The openmod email address mail@openmod-initiative.org is monitored but people are encouraged to register and use the mailing list instead.

Responsible people

Each of the internet services listed above was established by different people at different times to meet different needs, some pressing and some in anticipation. As of August 2018, the following people are responsible for these services.

Service	First tier	Second tier	Comment
website	Ingmar	see GitHub entry	TMG person is Jörn
wiki	Ingmar	Jörn Lion Martin Simon Stefan Tom	TMG person required?
forum	Robbie	Leo	see about page
mailing list	Ingmar Tom	Berit Jörn Grant	Ingmar and Tom are owners
GitHub	Stefan	Ingmar Tim Tom	all have the same admin rights
twitter	Sylvain		occasional use
email address	Ingmar	Berit Jörn	use of mailing list preferred
YouTube	Ingmar, Robbie	Buddi Etienne Jens Wided	

Full names as follows:

- Berit Müller @berit.mueller
- Charitha Buddhika Heendeniya @buddih09
- Etienne Cuisinier @etienne.cuisinier
- Grant Wilson @iagw
- Ingmar Schlecht @ingmar.schlecht
- Jens Weibezahn @jens.weibezahn
- Jörn Richstein —
- Leo Hofbauer @leonhard.hofbauer
- Lion Hirth @Lion
- Martin Glauer @mglauer
- Robbie Morrison @robbie.morrison
- Simon Sawatzki —
- Stefan Pfenninger @stefan.pfenninger
- Sylvain Quoilin @sylvain
- Tim Tröndle @timtroendle
- Tom Brown @tom_brown
- Wided Medjroubi @wided

Under German broadcast media law (*Telemediengesetz* or *TMG*), websites run by organizations *based* in Germany (setting aside the question of whether the Open Energy Modelling Initiative would thus qualify) and irrespective of their top-level domain name have to include an *Impressum* and nominate a legally responsible person. Hence the TMG comments in the above table.

Domain names

The Open Energy Modelling Initiative indirectly controls the following internet domain names. These domains are held by Lion Hirth on behalf of the openmod in either a private capacity or through his consulting practice neon Neue Energieökonomik.

Domain name	Registrant / holder	Registry	Comment

Domain name	Registrant / holder	Registry	Comment
`openmod.de`	Lion Hirth	DENIC	not used
`openmod-initiative.de`	Lion Hirth	DENIC	not used
`openmod.org`	neon Neue Energieökonomik GmbH	PIR	forum
`openmod-initiative.org`	neon Neue Energieökonomik GmbH	PIR	website, wiki

The `.de` top-level domain (TLD) is managed by DENIC. The `.org` TLD is managed by the US-based Public Interest Registry (PIR). In both cases, the details in the table above can be confirmed through the two websites indicated.

Neither Lion Hirth nor neon host or provide hardware for any of the openmod services. A modest annual fee is required to maintain each registered domain name which Lion covers personally.

Content licensing

Open licensing is applied as follows.

Service	Open license	Comment
forum	CC-BY-4,0	data under CC0-1.0 and code snippets under MIT from 9 January 2021
mailing list	full copyright	posters can optionally add open licenses to individual postings
website	CC-BY-4.0	default license, individual content may be otherwise licensed
wiki	CC-BY-4.0	

The following SPDX license identifiers are used: CC-BY-4.0 : Creative Commons Attribution 4.0 International license, CC0-1.0 : Creative Commons Zero 1.0, MIT : MIT license.

Auxiliary files

Auxiliary files are permitted as follows. Please try to reduce files sizes where practicable, for example by down-sampling raster images.

Service	Maximum size	File type
forum	12 MB	common file extensions only (else zip to circumvent restrictions)
mailing list	8 MB	not restricted
wiki	not limited	not restricted

Auxiliary files will also to need align with the open licensing policies of the service in question. That means a compatible open license and a suitable license notice. For presentations and reports, please add a license notice visually to the first slide or page. For native documents and spreadsheets, please store license information in the relevant document properties. For file formats that support embedded metadata (such as PDF and PNG), please add license information to the appropriate fields, typically `author` and `copyright` (exiftool is useful here). Unlike Wikimedia, we do not patrol uploaded files for copyright violations. Nor, like some services, do we strip metadata from image formats on receipt.

Personal data privacy

The European GDPR regulation is designed to protect personal data. It entered into force on 25 May 2018. Among other provisions, the GDPR allows users to request erasure of their personal data. This means any data that could identify them individually must be deleted from both public view and storage as far as is practicable and with certain exceptions.

It is debatable whether the GDPR applies to Open Energy Modelling Initiative services because arguably none of these services meet the definition of "economic activity" under European Union law. Material licensed under an open license or public domain waiver cannot normally be withdrawn. Notwithstanding, all maintainers have decided to comply with the GDPR because it offers good practice and may well pertain in the

future. If you want your personal data removed, please send a written request to person responsible for the relevant site. Some privacy policies are available online as indicated.

Service	Online policy	Comment
website	—	no personal data present
wiki	privacy policy	
forum	privacy policy	
mailing list	—	no dedicated privacy policy

Openmod logo

The original and still current openmod logo (solid and outline lettering and the word initiative in red) was designed by Katrin Schaber in 2014. She automatically retains any copyright under German law. But it is unlikely that the logo itself meets the required threshold for creativity under European law, because it consists of a simple typeset phrase with limited embellishment. The logo has not been released under an open content license. The openmod logo is not protected under trademark law. Nevertheless, the logo should not be used outside the openmod.

User conduct

The first tier administrators of each service (listed in the table above) are responsible for the social conduct on their respective services. Although unlikely, users can be sanctioned, including having their accounts closed permanently, at the discretion of the respective administrators. The Open Energy Modelling Initiative itself has no legal standing, no code of conduct (although terms of use specific to each service may apply), and no agreed process for resolving complaints and disputes over individual behavior. Please be civil and law abiding nonetheless.

Video workshops

From 26 March 2020, the openmod began running mini-workshops using Zoom teleconferencing software. As with other openmod online services, the primary responsibility for conduct lies with the specific organizers.

The material may be recorded and released under Creative Commons CC-BY-4.0 licenses consistent with the consents received. Registration and participant information in tabular form and chat logs are retained for ongoing analysis and reference and the associated files are stored unencrypted on external media.

Participants should note that Zoom has a number of well-documented security and privacy issues. Nor is it possible to prevent attendees from locally recording or taking screenshots of teleconferenced events.

PDF version of this posting

A PDF version of this posting may be obtained using your system print function and electing to print to PDF.

Updates

Please reply below if this posting needs updating.

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