



# OpenStreetMap US Charter Project Guidelines

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## What is the Charter Project program?

With the OSM US Charter program, OpenStreetMap US actively encourages the development of tools, programs and services that contribute to the growth and sustainability of the OpenStreetMap platform in the United States, and beyond.

The Charter Project program provides a framework for long term stewardship and is loosely based on the fiscal sponsorship model for governance of non-profit organizations. Projects are given a home and the ability to fundraise through the OpenStreetMap US organization, a 501(c)(3) charity incorporated in Washington, DC. OpenStreetMap US will maintain all legal and fiduciary responsibility for the charter project, its employees, and activities. The existing maintainers or contributors still control the project, but OpenStreetMap US will support the development of a neutral, well-documented governance process.

The program supports, guides and promotes projects that further the mission and purpose of OpenStreetMap US, which is *to educate the public about OpenStreetMap, ensure broad availability of data, continuous improvement of the map, and an active community of contributors.*



# OpenStreetMap US Charter Project Guidelines

## What are the Benefits of Becoming a Charter Project?

### Formally become a part of the OpenStreetMap ecosystem

The OpenStreetMap ecosystem thrives on collaboration. By becoming a Charter Project, your project becomes a named collaborator in the OpenStreetMap US community.

### Enjoy the benefits of 501(c)(3) Status

OpenStreetMap US provides your project the advantages of being a 501(3)c without the overhead, and most important, a means to direct funding and resources for your project. In return, OpenStreetMap US retains a percentage of any donations earmarked for your project to help us cover administrative costs.

### Expand your Reach

Charter Projects benefit from the growing OpenStreetMap US volunteer network, membership, and social media reach. OpenStreetMap US has an active blog, a monthly newsletter, and social media accounts on Twitter, Facebook, LinkedIn and Instagram with over 12,150 followers and growing. Together we can expand this community, amplify collective efforts, and bring people together across projects.

### A Neutral, Sustainable Home

Charter Projects benefit from conversations around strategy and governance with OpenStreetMap US leadership who can provide perspective and insight into your project. As part of a larger nonprofit organization OpenStreetMap US will support your project as it matures and provide a neutral home long into the future.

## How to Apply

### Before you begin

Please ensure that your Project meets the criteria laid out below, under ***How Do We Choose Projects***. Please also closely read the Template Agreement to understand the legal and operational implications of entering into a Charter relationship with OpenStreetMap US.

If you are unsure if you qualify, or if you have any questions about the criteria or the Agreement, please get in touch with OpenStreetMap US by writing us at [team@openstreetmap.us](mailto:team@openstreetmap.us)

### Applying to become a Charter Project

You can initiate your application by completing the Application Form. 2021 applications will be accepted on a rolling basis. OSM US is looking to build strong, long term relationships with our Charters, so expect the process to take up to 3 months once you submit your application to hear a decision. [Apply to be a Charter Project](#)



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## How Do We Choose Projects?

All projects and related activities **must support in some way the stated mission and purpose of OpenStreetMap US**. In addition, your project should meet the following criteria:

1. Focus related to OpenStreetMap,
2. Not already be a 501c3 organization or incorporated as a for-profit enterprise,
3. Strong preference for projects that are consistent with open-source principles and in line with the transparency & openness principles of the OpenStreetMap US mission,
4. Have a minimum of 2 dedicated maintainers or contributors, with one identified project lead and the intention to grow to 3 committee members within the first year,
5. Recognition that your project will be under the umbrella of OpenStreetMap US, who may be legally responsible for the operations and activities of the project.

## What Kind of Projects Are We Looking For?

- Software or tools that support OpenStreetMap
- OSM related projects
- Long term vision & ongoing programming

## What Might Not Qualify? (Things we are NOT looking for)

- Events or mapathons, workshops, sprints, etc.
- Standalone or short-term mapping initiatives
- Projects that are just looking for one-time funding
- Projects in the early idea stage
- Projects with a short timeline (<1y)

Think your project will be a good fit? [Start your application!](#) Be sure to note the application period listed above.

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Please email us at [team@openstreetmap.us](mailto:team@openstreetmap.us) with questions or for additional information about our Charter Projects program.