

## CALL FOR PAPERS

Special Issue of

*The Information Society*

on

### **Open Source and Public Sector: Discourse, Politics and Practice**

Guest Editors: Jan Ljungberg, Magnus Bergquist and Anna Maria Szczepanska

In the last ten years the Open Source (OS) and Free Software (FS) movement has come to challenge the norms and ideals, products and procedures of the dominant proprietary software industry. OS/FS represents a radically different logic within the field of software development. This logic is based on ideas that celebrate the rights of the user and informational freedoms and resist strong intellectual property laws and regulations. In addition to gaining ground in the commercial software market, the OS/FS-movement is also establishing itself as an interesting alternative for the public sector. Currently, discussions regarding OS/FS procurement and policy-making are taking place within governments and public sector organizations all over the world. The OS/FS-technologies advocates have promoted them on the basis of their potential cost-benefits, their value as “a public good,” their egalitarian and digital divide-bridging qualities and so forth. But the public sector initiatives still seem somewhat hesitant. The OS/FS in public sector discussions and policy-making processes represent a discourse still very much in the making.

This special issue will provide an opportunity for researchers to present valuable insights at an early stage about a relevant topic that crosscuts the information technology and policy processes and OS/FS movement’s institutionalization processes. We hope to bring together insights from multiple areas, such as political science, sociology, economics, IS-research, media studies, policy studies and cultural studies. Discourse analysis and case studies would both be welcome analytical strategies to provide breadth to the special issue.

Contributions could include the following:

- Papers identifying and discussing how underlying norms, values and practices inscribed in OS/FS and proprietary software are understood and dealt with in public sector discourse.
- Case studies on evolving policies and laws related to Open Source / Free Software in the public sector.
- Papers analyzing the rhetoric on the pros and cons of OS/FS in the public sector.
- Papers identifying and analyzing the way actors (e.g. the media, business groups, academia, consumers, NGO’s, SMO’s, transnational advocacy networks) are organizing in order to influence, support or criticize policy processes and other activities relating to the dispersal of OS/FS products and ideas in public sector.

The guest editors invite abstracts by September 1, 2007, which should be sent to [anmar@ituniv.se](mailto:anmar@ituniv.se). Authors with the most to offer to the dialogue will be invited to contribute full papers, which will go through the normal review process of the journal. For more information on TIS guidelines, please refer to:

<http://www.indiana.edu/~tisj/contributors/guest%20editors.html>