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Building Open Technology Skills at SOOCon24

OpenUK's State of Open Con 2024

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State of Open Con is the UK's annual open technology conference for open source software, open hardware, open data, open standards, and AI openness.



The [2024 State of Open Con \(SOOCon24\)](#) is rapidly approaching, so if you haven't already made plans to attend, now is the time. This open technology conference, presented by OpenUK, will be held in London, February 6-7, 2024.

The not-for-profit [OpenUK](#) is on a mission to lead and advocate for the use and development of open technology as well as to encourage open technology education and skills for all. Toward that end, the organization recently conducted research into the state of open source in the UK, providing key insights on how to grow the open source space.

The [OpenUK's report](#) identifies three specific ways to support such growth in the UK:

- Fill the gap in the UK talent pool's business skills.
- Retain talent that often goes to other countries.
- Train people in engineering and development skills.

"Open source is the submarine under the digital economy. Number one in Europe by number of software developers and by GitHub accounts, the UK already has a significant open source population across its rural and urban areas contributing to open source, both code and other skills. In 2022, open source contributed 27% to the UK Tech Sector's Gross Value Add," says Amanda Brock, CEO of OpenUK.

Tech Skills in Demand

The research also shows demand for various tech and open source skills within the UK, noting that 77% of companies are seeking programming skills. Specifically, organizations are looking for:

- Backend developers (51% recruited)
- Cloud engineers (36%)
- Development operations engineers (32%)

Open source software presents a huge opportunity to develop these skills to “an employable level,” according to the research.

“State of Open Con 24 builds on this to accelerate skills development and to encourage more people to evolve their skills through open source,” Brock explains. “We want to help new talent to build a living CV through open source contributions, from which they will have the potential to become part of the global tech sector. Thanks to remote working, many can stay where they are and take up high-paying jobs in the UK or around the world.”

Open Source Opportunities

To help attendees from the UK and around the world grow their open source knowledge and skills, the two-day SOOCon24 event offers a mix of technical and non-technical talks covering the business of open source, tech sustainability, future-proofing your skills, and more.

“The conference convenes the global open tech sector in London to discuss the hardest issues of the day in our plenary sessions – Day one on the Future of Digital and Open Source and Day two on AI Openness,” says Brock. “It offers eight tracks with world leading experts from across the globe and plenty of opportunities to network and ask questions. All of the content is also made available as free download afterwards to enable access to the content for those who cannot attend.”

SOOCon24 includes the following conference tracks:

- Careers and Entrepreneurship
- Finance
- Government, Law & Policy
- Open Data
- Open Hardware
- Open Source Software
- Security

Additionally, OpenUK is partnering with [Open Source JobHub](#) at SOOCon24 to provide an on-site as well as a virtual job board. Attendees can stop by the job board at the event or visit the [SOOCon24 jobs page](#) to see featured open source jobs at leading organizations.

According to Brock, the “conference is founded on openness to the broader and diverse community, welcoming attendees of all levels to get inspired, meet their peers, and maybe even find the next stepping stone in their career.”

To further support attendees from this diverse community, [OpenUK is offering free tickets](#) to those who otherwise would not be able to attend. Three hundred tickets have been reserved especially for students, community contributors, and those currently between jobs.

“Community is at the heart of open source, and growing and strengthening our UK and global open tech community is at the heart of OpenUK,” Brock says.

Visit the [SOOCon24](#) website to learn more about the event and how you can participate.

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[Docker Build Cloud Helps Speed Up Build Time](#)

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Docker has announced a new product that directly addresses the time spent waiting on builds to complete.

[Firefox 122 Release Includes Official DEB for Ubuntu Distros](#)

[DEBIAN](#) , [Firefox](#) , [Linux](#) , [Ubuntu](#)

Finally, Mozilla has returned to Ubuntu's/Debian's roots to offer an official DEB package for those who prefer to not use the Snap package.

[MX Linux 23.2 "Libretto" Released](#)

[Linux](#) , [MX Linux](#) , [open source](#) , [Operating Systems](#)

MX-23.2 is a second refresh of the MX-23 release and mostly consists of bug fixes and updates, but users will find a couple of new tools in the mix.

[Linux Mint 21.3 – with Extra Cinnamon – Available for Download](#)

[Cinnamon](#) , [Desktop](#) , [Linux](#) , [Linux Mint](#) , [open source](#) , [Wayland](#)

Linux Mint 21.3 has arrived for general usage and includes Cinnamon 6.0 and new goodies all around.

Gnome 46 Alpha Available for Public Testing

Desktop , Linux , open source

The development team behind Gnome has released the latest alpha build for testing and it offers some pretty cool new additions.

System76 Updates Thelio to Offer New AMD Threadripper CPUs

Hardware , open source , Thelio

If you're looking to get the most power for your desktop, System76 has what you need by way of a Thelio desktop powered by the Zen 4 AMD Threadripper.

Two AI features Introduced in Deepin Linux 23 Beta 2 Release

Artificial Inte... , Deepin , Desktop , Linux , Tools

In a bid to challenge Microsoft's Copilot, the developers of Deepin have announced they've begun the process of integrating AI into the desktop.

Nitrux 3.2.1 Released with Plenty of Improvements

DEBIAN , Desktop , KDE , Linux , Nitrux

The Nitrux Linux distribution has a new release available that includes the latest software updates, bug fixes, performance improvements, and a new tiling window manager for KWin.

Gentoo Linux Goes Binary... Sort of

Gentoo Linux , Linux , open source , Operating Systems , package manager

The Gentoo team has announced there is now a centralized repository available for installing pre-compiled binary packages on the storied distribution.

Linux Machines with Poorly Secured SSH Servers are Under Attack

Linux , open source , Security , Server

A new cryptocurrency miner is attacking Linux servers to co-opt them into a cryptocurrency mining network as well as spreading distributed denial-of-service attacks.

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Glossary

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