

The GNU Licenses

An Overview

Free Software Foundation



Founded by Stallman.

Funds the GNU Project.



Free Software

The freedom to run the program for any purpose.

The freedom to study how the program works, and change it to make it do what you wish.

The freedom to redistribute and make copies so you can help your neighbour.

The freedom to improve the program, and release your improvements (and modified versions in general) to the public, so that the whole community benefits.



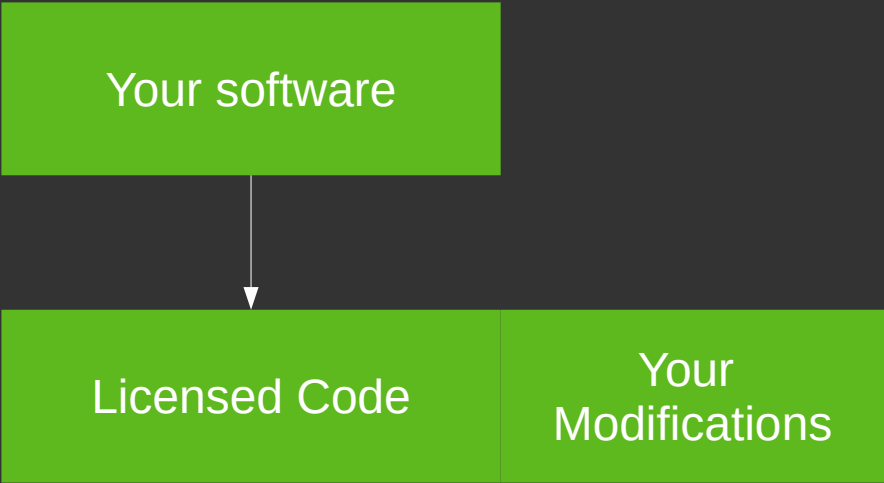
The GNU Public License(s)

The GPL licenses are triggered at distribution.

What distribution is depends on the exact license.

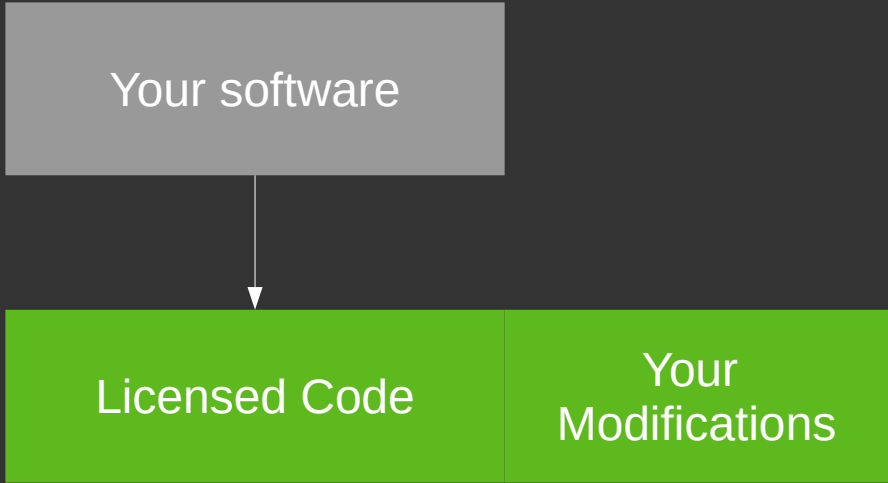
GPL Variants

- GPL – GNU Public License
- LGPL – Lesser GPL
- AGPL – Affero GPL
- GFDL – GNU Free Documentation License



GPL

- Affected
- Not affected



LGPL

Your Software must be dynamically linked to the *Licensed Code*, as the end-user must be able to exchange the *Licensed Code*.

- Affected
- Not affected

“...must prominently offer all users interacting with it **remotely through a computer network** (if your version supports such interaction) an opportunity to **receive the Corresponding Source** of your version by providing access to the Corresponding Source **from a network server** at no charge, through some standard or customary means of facilitating copying of software.”

AGPL

Affero Inc. was founded by Henry Poole in 2001, and wanted to solve this issue. Originally section 2(d) was added to GPLv2.

The quote from above is from AGPLv3.

A **copyleft** license for documentation.

e.g

Derivative works must be made available under the same license.

Full license text, copyright notices, and additional warranty disclaimers must be maintained.

Prohibits the use of DRM to restrict distribution and editing.

All previous work must be attributed.

Sections may be marked as invariant (must not change)

GFDL

Somewhat similar to CC BY-SA.

Incompatible with GPL in both directions!

If distributing more than **100 copies**, a machine readable copy must be made available

Timeline

- 1989: GPLv1
- 1991: GPLv2, section 7 – You can only distribute the work if you can satisfy all of the license's obligations, despite any other legal obligations.
- 1991: LGPLv2
- 1999: LGPLv2.1, section 6.b: “Use a suitable shared library mechanism for linking with the Library.”
- 2007: GPLv3, covers patents, DRM, Tivoization

Trusting FSF

- GPLvX+
 - Allow the usage of later versions of the GPL
- Copyright assignment to FSF
 - Allows FSF to enforce the licence

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