

Intro

My name is _____,

I am a _____ at _____.

I am conducting a study of sustainability of Open Source, and now I'm particularly interested in network effects on sustainability. For example, is having more dependent projects better for sustainability or worse? Is it better to have people involved in many projects on team or only focused ones, etc.

At this point I have a mathematical model to predict sustainability, but as any other piece of machinery it can catch up on false signals. I would like triangulate the model by talking to people who have some expertise in this domain, i.e. people like you.

I will need your permission to record this interview. The transcript of this interview will only be available to researchers in my group. Is it ok to record?

Can I keep your personal / online identity on the transcript?

During the interview, you can skip any question or stop interview any moment.

Most likely this interview will be used in aggregated form (e.g. "some participants indicated that X"). In a case we'll need to quote any part of the interview, it will be anonymized. In a very unlikely case it will be important to preserve your identity, we will not be able to do so without your written permission.

I would like to thank you for participation. I really appreciate your time and value your input. This interview will take up to 30 minutes. You can skip any question or stop the interview at any time.

Part 1 - Definition of sustainability

<If this participant was recruited because of a specific project:>

Ask to keep this specific project in mind when answering this question

<otherwise, if the participant maintains several projects:>

Ask to keep one of those projects while answering

Is your project sustainable, and how would you define sustainability?

Part 2 - Features

I am going to ask about several features and their meaning for sustainability. Try to think in terms “If I look at this metric, what can I conclude about project sustainability?”. For each feature, please explain your interpretation of this feature and how it affects sustainability. If you have extra comments or clarifications, please feel free to add.

Commits (i.e. number of commits per month)

Contributors (i.e. number of unique committers per month)

Size of the core team (i.e. number of committers doing 90% of the work)

Issues (i.e. number of reported issues per month)

Issue reporters (i.e. number of unique issue reporters per month)

Upstreams (i.e. number of technical dependencies a project has)

Downstreams (i.e. number of projects dependent on a project)

Relative position in the dependency chain (e.g. different situations similar to: “there are few projects depending on me, but there are 10K projects depending on them”)

Social ties (i.e. number of other projects connected to this project through contributors)

University involvement (of any form; if you can think of several forms please explain)

Commercial involvement (e.g. if there was a magic way to measure number of commits from firms rather than individuals)

Part 3 - suggested features

What other indicators of sustainability would you recommend?

Conclusion

Thank you for your time. If you are interested in the results, I can send you a copy of the paper if/when it is accepted. We are also going to share our dataset.