FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Open Source Education Foundation announces tax-exempt status

TUCSON, Ariz. - The Open Source Education Foundation (OSEF) announced Thursday approval of its application for non-profit tax-exempt status under section 501(c)(3), allowing the organization to begin actively pursuing tax-deductible contributions to assist in project development.

Currently, OSEF projects under development include GOVIA (GOVIA is Ostensible Video, Imagery and Audio), a repository for freely distributable media, and K12Labs, an effort to design and integrate hardware specifically for education.

"By achieving 501(c)(3) status, OSEF is a step closer to fulfilling many of its goals," said Justin Zeigler, an OSEF co-founder and member of its Board of Directors.

The Open Source Education Foundation exists to enhance K-12 educational opportunities through the use of technologies and concepts derived from the Open Source and Free Software movement. Research and development of hardware and software solutions for use in educational settings is the organization's primary focus.

More about GOVIA

GOVIA's first objective is to create the infrastructure for a repository of multimedia that educators can use without worrying about the complex issues of copyright law. Although copyright law has been in the spotlight recently due to controversy surrounding file-sharing and claims of piracy by the Recording Industry Association of America, copyright issues can arise even in the classroom. Most traditional classroom resources require that a copy of the material be purchased for each student, involving extra expenditures or an attempt by the teacher to stay within hazy fair use guidelines. Some free resources (in terms of price and non-restrictive licensing) are now available to teachers, including Project Gutenberg (http://www.gutenberg.net), Nupedia (http://www.nupedia.com), Wikipedia (http://www.wikipedia.com) and others that allow educators to copy, use, modify, and build upon content without having to worry about copyrights. Unfortunately the free resources listed above are almost entirely text-based. Now that multimedia is a reality, there is a need for a similar resource to catalog and store other kinds of media.

As an Internet-based technology, the GOVIA media repository will require increasing bandwidth as it grows. This will be one focus of fund-raising activities for GOVIA. Although OSEF has a location with easy access to a high-bandwidth Internet connection, the organization still must pay for connection costs, which can be quite expensive.

- MORE -

GOVIA will also create educational videos for use in schools. Early funding for the project will be used to obtain equipment, including a quality mini DV camera, a high frame rate (1000+ frames per second) camera to capture scientific phenomena (such as a splash or a bounce), a cordless lapel microphone to improve the quality of audio from in-frame speakers, and a high-end video editing station based on one of the free Unix operating system derivatives available.

More about K12Labs

Since January 1998, OSEF has installed more than 120 Debian GNU/Linux desktop workstations for student use in a local school and has provided pro bono support for these machines since installation. The experience of deploying and supporting a school-wide Linux based network provided OSEF with valuable insight into how teachers and students interact with computers in the classroom, and led to the development of K12Labs, a project to design hardware specifically for educational settings.

K12Labs is in the process of creating a prototype computer called a Deskstation. The Deskstation will have a form factor similar to a laptop or notebook computer, and will operate by internal battery power, but this is where the similarities end. The Deskstation will act as a 'turnkey' solution for schools ready to escape from the constant cycle of upgrades and license fees normally required for educational computer labs by taking advantage of the wide range of free software available.

The entire system consists of 30 or more Deskstations integrated into a mobile cart, allowing for secure and efficient transport of an entire computer lab. The cart contains all of the needed devices for a student learning environment, including a Linux Terminal Server, access to removable media, a high speed laser printer, and a firewall for accessing the Internet through a pre-existing school network. The cart-based network is a self-contained unit, holding all user login information and data within the on-board server. In addition the cart serves as a storage and charging platform for the Deskstation units.

More about OSEF

The Open Source Education Foundation, incorporated in April 2000, believes that Open Source and Free Software are keys to the future of educational technology. OSEF is based in Tucson, Ariz., and works in conjunction with a global development community focused on K-12 education. More information about OSEF and its projects is available at the OSEF website, http://www.osef.org For general inquiries, please send email to info@osef.org.

-30-

7/25/02

Contacts: Harry McGregor (520) 661-7875 (hmcgregor@osef.org)
                 Justin Zeigler (520) 272-5898 (jzeigler@osef.org)
                 HTML version of this release: http://www.osef.org/pr/0725200201.html
                 Portable Document Format of this release: http://www.osef.org/pr/0725200201.pdf
                 Open Source Education Foundation, PO Box 26388, Tucson Arizona 85726-6388