

CUAHSI HIS Software Policy

Approved by the Executive Committee of the Board, February 25, 2008

In order to best serve the interests of hydrologic science community, CUAHSI HIS software projects shall provide operational software and online services that are openly and freely available to all interested parties. In applying these principles, it is recognized that most of the hydrologic science community typically use a diversity of software for many analyses and operate in a complex computing environment. It is not the intent of this policy to require replication of analytical capabilities currently provided by such software. As a practical goal, this shall mean that all software and online services developed beyond “beta” status should be:

1. distributed under an open source license, such as those approved by either the Open Source Initiative (www.opensource.org) or Free Software Foundation (www.fsf.org);
2. downloadable and installable from a network connected computer without charge (distribution on physical media can be charged for on a cost recovery basis, for actual media and shipping expenses only);
3. fully functional without requiring the purchase of additional software, other than that contained in standard operating system packages and/or packages that are generally already available to users;
4. fully functional on all major operating systems, at a minimum including Linux/Unix, OS X and Windows;
5. interoperable with existing software and tools using open, well defined and published interface specifications, thus allowing components to be interchanged as needed;
6. extensible by users and that the algorithms, methods, schemas and source code used are publicly available and sufficiently well documented to support such activity.

Leads for HIS projects are expected to provide, for review by the committee, a plan for bringing their projects into conformity with HIS policy or to document why it is impracticable to conform to this policy, or would otherwise be restricted by existing contractual or written agreements or prohibited by the sponsoring entity.