In its second year, the minitrack on Open Source Software (OSS) Development continues to provide a forum for discussion of an increasingly important mode of software development. OSS is a broad term used to embrace software that is developed and released under some sort of “open source” license. OSS development creates new challenges to software development, as team members typically work in a distributed environment and often as volunteers rather than employees. Researchers from a variety of disciplines have turned their attention to the phenomenon of OSS development as a successful and intriguing form of Internet supported-work.

This minitrack brings together three interesting papers addressing various aspects of OSS development. The minitrack start with a paper by Kevin Crowston, Kangning Wei, Qing Li & James Howison titled “Core and periphery in Free/Libre and Open Source software team communications.” In their paper, the authors investigate ways to empirically identify core groups of developers in OSS projects, an important issue to understanding the development process in these teams. The paper examines three analysis approaches to identifying the core discussing the results of these approaches and ways to refine these measures.

The second paper in this minitrack is titled “The Organization of Open Source Communities: Towards a Framework to Analyze the Relationship between Openness and Reliability”, by Ruben van Wendel de Joode and Mark de Bruijne. In this paper the authors examine the relationship between code reliability and openness of OSS development process. The paper presents an initial framework based on a case study.

The third paper is by Vandana Singh, Michael B. Twidale, and Dinesh Rathi titled “Open Source Technical Support: A Look at Peer Help-Giving.” In this paper the authors investigate a different dimension of OSS development, namely technical support. The authors present characteristics of technical support interactions to suggest ways to improve this process. In their paper the authors compare the findings from investigating OSS support to other forms of technical support, namely commercial software, and library reference interviews.

The three papers present a range of topics important to understanding different aspects of OSS process. We thank all authors who submitted papers and the reviewers for their contributions to the minitrack.