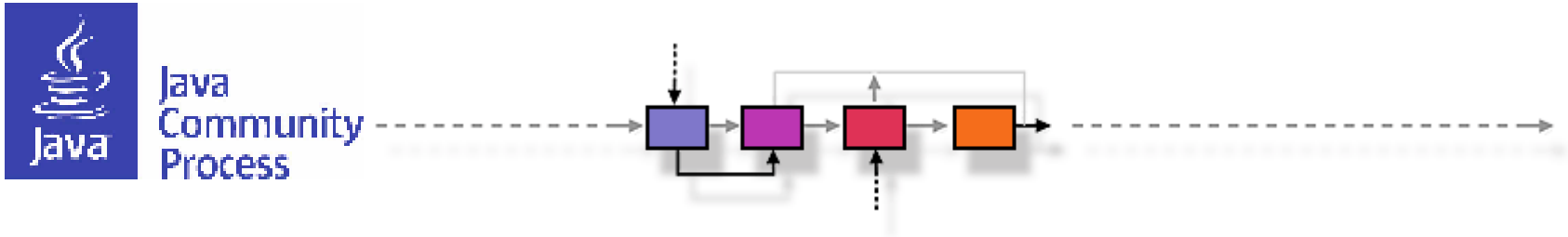
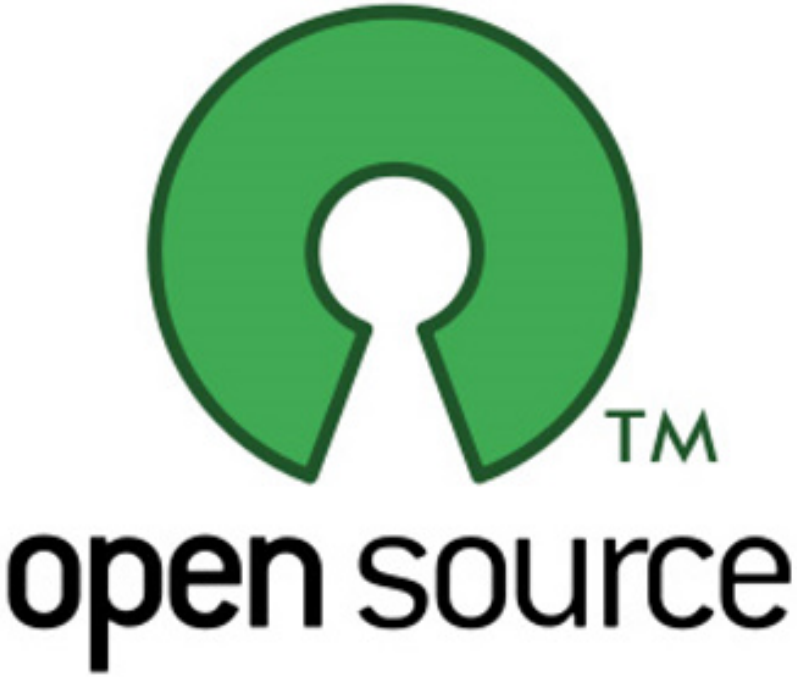


JSR 358 Update

March 2014

Compatibility and open source



Java Community Process

Our high-level goals

- Our high-level goals for JSR 358, as we reported them most recently at the public EC meeting in December 2013, include the following:
  - Maintain compatibility guarantees.
    - All JSRs will be covered by a standard Spec license that includes strong compatibility requirements.
    - All implementations must pass the TCK.
  - Embrace open-source licensing and development processes.
    - Reference Implementations must be developed through open-source projects and released under open-source licenses.

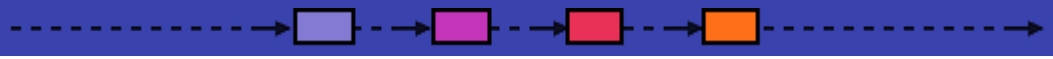
Tensions (1)

- There is a fundamental tension between these goals, which cannot be (completely) reconciled.
  - Open-source licenses, by definition, cannot restriction what licensees may do with the licensed code.
  - Licensees are therefore free to create incompatible derivatives of open-sourced RIs.
- These tensions exist today.
  - Most RIs not led by Oracle are licensed under Apache.
  - Oracle licenses the Java SE and Java EE platforms under GPL.

Tensions (2)

- Despite these tensions our current licensing model is reasonably successful at maintaining compatibility.
  - We should not eliminate the compatibility requirements from existing licenses.
- However, we should not create a new "open-source" license such as the UPL and attach compatibility requirements to it.
  - That would render it "not open-source".

The EC agreed at the August 2014 meeting



- Compatibility is important, and the Spec License and the TCK process are the mechanisms we should use to encourage/enforce compatibility.
- RIs should be distributed under open-source licenses.
- Open-source licenses cannot impose compatibility requirements. Consequently, people will be free to create incompatible derivatives of open-sourced RIs.
- If we create a new RI license (UPL, for example) we should not try to incorporate compatibility requirements into it.
- We want an incentive for people who create implementations based on open-sourced RIs to voluntarily comply with the compatibility requirements in the Spec License.

Since then

- We have had extensive discussions about:
  - The Apache License (unacceptable for incorporation into the platform).
  - The UPL (unacceptable to many EC members).
  - Oracle's proposal that MIT- or BSD-licensed RIs could be incorporated into the platform if all contributors have signed the JSPA or the Affiliate Membership Agreement.

At the January meeting: an emerging consensus

- From the minutes:
  - Make minimal changes to the JSPA. It should state that the Spec Lead is responsible for ensuring that they have all the rights necessary not only to implement the RI but also to permit others to create independent implementations (not derived from the RI).
  - Create a non-normative document (or perhaps use the existing Spec Lead Guide) explaining that the best way for the Spec Lead to ensure that they have those rights is to require that everyone who contributes to the work of the EG or to the development of the RI has signed either the JSPA or the Affiliate Membership Agreement.

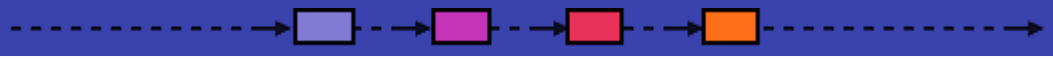
What can be included in the platform?

- At the January meeting we suggested that the non-normative document might also explain the terms under which Oracle will accept JSRs into the platform.
  - On reflection, Oracle management and Legal are unlikely to agree to this.
- A more acceptable approach would be language stating that the Spec Lead's choice of RI license will affect the possibility of including a JSR into the platform, and that the Spec Lead should therefore discuss this with the relevant Platform Spec Lead before selecting a license.
- As for Apache-licensed RIs, we will continue to work that issue in parallel with (but separately from) JSR 358 work.

At the February EC meeting

- We agreed that the JSPA should specify a short-list of permitted RI licenses rather than simply state that any OSI-approved license is acceptable.
  - Our current list of candidates: Apache, EPL, GPL, UPL, MIT, BSD.
- As we previously agreed, the implications of the choice of license will be explained in the Spec-Lead Guide rather than in the JSPA.

The Working Group re-starts

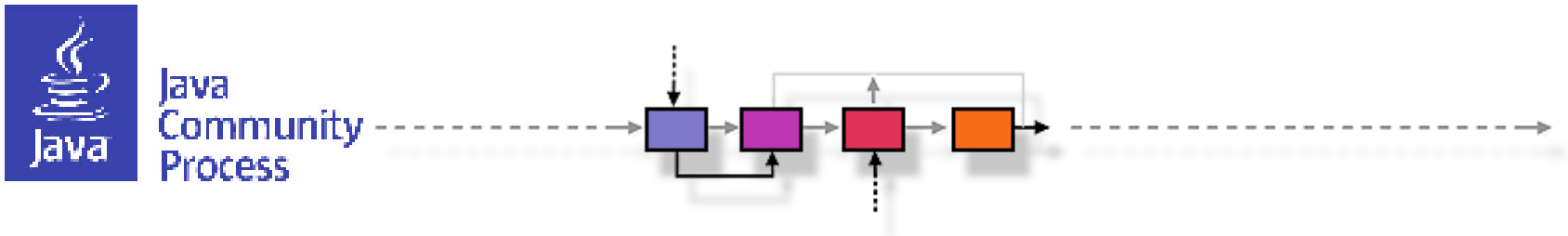


- We have met three times since the last EC meeting:
  - February 19
  - February 26
  - March 5

Java Community Process

Next steps

- Review and agree on the contents of the IP-Flow document.
- Provide use-cases/justifications for a flat IP-flow.
- Clarify our approach to patents.
  - How extensively should JCP members be obligated to license Essential Patents (the “Section 6” discussion)?
  - Choose between Royalty-Free and Non-Assert patent policies.
    - Discuss, and then do a Doodle poll.
- Revise the IP-Flow document and ask Oracle Legal to draft a revised JSPA incorporating its requirements.
- Review and work on our open issues; use these for further revisions of the JSPA.



Thank You!

http://jcp.org