

O.K.I. OSID Change Process

version 1.0 – 3/28/05

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Document Conventions

For the purpose of precision, some words and phrases used in this document have specific meanings. These words appear in **boldface** the first time they are used, and may be found in the Glossary at the end of the document.

Summary

This document describes the process that will determine the changes to the next version of the O.K.I. OSIDs. This document describes the process participants and their roles, avenues through which they can provide feedback, and mechanisms that show the current state of the process. In addition, a plan for the effective and thorough review of the proposed OSID changes is described. The contents of the OSID release are also discussed.

Goals

The goal of the OSID Change process is to ensure that the O.K.I. team collects and evaluates all useful stakeholder ideas to improve the OSIDs.

- Stimulate a broad and deep discussion about improving the OSIDs
- Provide transparency to the external OSID user community
- Provide a mechanism for the external community to submit input to the OSID Change process
- Allow the public to contribute to and track the discussion about proposed OSID changes

- Make it easy for governors and contributors to review proposals and provide timely input
- Provide a mechanism to thoroughly examine the impact of proposed changes on the existing OSIDs
- Support the review and evaluation of the proposed OSID changes.

Decision Flow Chart

The OSID Change Process is a series of steps. Some steps represent data transformation, such as turning a Suggestion or Idea into a **RFC**, and others represent decisions, such as which RFCs will be accepted. Associating **Roles** with each step and associating specific people with each Role, will ensure that there is accountability for the process and that progress can be tracked.

This diagram represents a high-level representation of the Change Process. Each numbered step is described below.

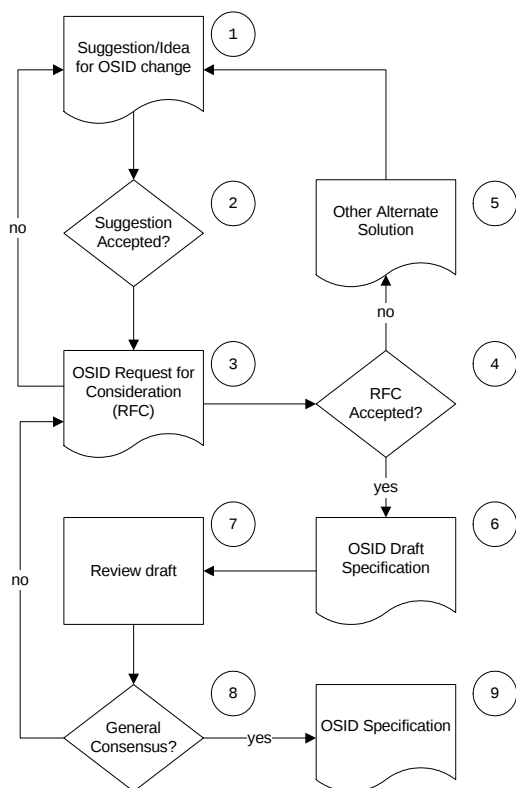


Figure 1- High-level view of Change Process Flow

1 – Suggestion document

The Suggestion is the representation of a raw idea or a suggestion for an OSID change. Suggestions can be submitted into the **Suggestion Queue** using a form on a public web site. The form will provide guidance to assure that sufficient information is contained in the suggestion to support a RFC. This is the only way that a suggestion may be introduced into the Change Process.

The same website will provide a means for these Suggestions to be viewed and discussed publicly.

Associated Role: Proposer

2 – Suggestion Decision Process

While anyone may suggest a change to the OSIDs, not all suggestions have merit. This step is partly an editorial process, and partly a technical evaluation. Its purpose is to decide whether a Suggestion should be made into an RFC, or rejected as inappropriate. This step will be performed by the OSID Experts, a group of architects and developers selected because of their understanding of the goals of the OSIDs.

If accepted, the Suggestion must be converted into a format that will allow it to receive thorough consideration.

The Suggestion Decision contains multiple steps and is described in detail in a separate document.

OSID Experts have the responsibility of taking a suggestion and turning it into the detailed document called a RFC.

Associated Role: OSID Experts

3 – RFC Document

The result of the Suggestion Decision is a RFC that is ready for review, evaluation, and resolution. The RFC is what the O.K.I. Governors evaluate for inclusion in the next OSID release. An RFC represents a single conceptual change to the OSIDs, even if it may contain multiple discreet changes to the code. The expectation is that one or more of the OSID Experts will champion an RFC by providing a thorough description of the change, providing a justification, in context, as well as appropriate detail that constitutes a “change order”. The purpose of the “change order” is to support verification that the change was completed as specified.

RFCs will be viewable on the same public website that supports the submission of Suggestions. Website users may view RFCs based on their state and date of submission. RFC states are:

Open – An RFC that has been created, but has not yet been evaluated by the O.K.I. Governors.

Accepted – An RFC that has been accepted for inclusion in the next OSID version.

Rejected – An RFC that has been rejected for inclusion in the next OSID version.

Deferred – An RFC that has been neither accepted nor rejected, but deferred until a future version.

4 - RFC Decision Process

The RFC Decision is the acceptance or rejection of the RFC. The O.K.I. Governors may not alter the RFC to make their decision.

Since an RFC represents a single conceptual change to the OSIDs, it should be possible for the O.K.I. Governors to evaluate the RFC in a single decision. In the case that the O.K.I. Governors determine that only part of an RFC has merit, they must return the RFC for an Alternate Solution.

The results of the RFC Decision Process may be viewed on the same public website that lists the proposed RFCs.

Associated Role: O.K.I. Governor

5 – Alternate Solution

RFCs that are rejected as unviable or inappropriate are returned to the public forum along with detailed explanation why they were rejected. They are eligible to be resubmitted as the result of further discussion.

6 – Draft OSID Specification (Document)

This is a draft version of the specification that can be reviewed.

The public website will always have the latest draft version of the OSID Specification available for viewing or download. This draft will be a combination of code and documentation to allow the O.K.I. community to track the progress of the Change Process.

7 – General Consensus Process

This decision step is included to recognize that an O.K.I. stakeholder may identify significant issues with a RFC only after the RFC has been accepted as part of the Draft OSID Specification. This decision point is not meant to be a vote by O.K.I. stakeholders, but rather an opportunity to respond to problems that were overlooked in the evaluation of the RFC. Once such a problem is identified, the RFC is returned to the OSID Experts for additional editing and resubmittal.

The public website will provide a form specifically to raise attention to a RFC problem at this stage of the process.

8 – OSID Specification

This is the final OSID Specification, ready for release as the next version. This document will be posted on the public website that hosts the OSID Change Process.

Roles

The purpose of identifying specific Roles is to give a name to a set of discrete actions. These roles map participants to specific steps in the Change Process.

Proposer

Someone who makes a **Suggestion** is acting in the role of Proposer. This person may come from any community of interest, public or internal. While the O.K.I. team expects that those who have used the OSIDs for system development will provide the most relevant suggestions, the process ensures that all suggestions are considered, while at the same time guaranteeing that useful suggestions are turned into actionable RFCs.

OSID Expert

An OSID Expert is a member of the OSID Experts' Committee. Someone who processes a Suggestion into a RFC is acting in the role of OSID Expert. The OSID Expert is responsible for championing a suggestion into a RFC. Membership in the OSID Expert group is governed through the OSID Expert Group Charter.

O.K.I. Governor

An OSID Governor is a member of the OSID Governance Committee. The governors hold the authority to decide what recommendations and proposals will be incorporated into the next OSID release. Someone who has this authority is acting in the role of O.K.I. Governor.

Content of the OSID Release

In the last OSID release (version 2), the published release contained the Java-bindings of the OSIDs and associated Javadoc. The contents of the next release of the OSIDs will be richer. The O.K.I. team is rapidly moving toward a programming language neutral expression of the OSIDs. This language neutral form can be used to generate bindings for a variety of programming languages.

The current state of this work expresses the OSIDs in XML conforming to an XML schema (xosid.xsd) and an XSLT transformation that creates Java-language bindings. There is a “meta-meta” layer that contains a proprietary language generator, and a schema for the XOSID “source”, a second layer that contains the XOSID source and the XSLT for each programming language binding, and finally, a third layer that contains the programming language-specific code. All three layers will be published as part of the OSID release.

The release will also include documentation that specifies the “semantics” of key methods in each interface.

Process Milestones

The Change Process is marked by milestones that indicate completion of specific process tasks, and the transition to a new process phase.

Open for Recommendations – This milestone marks when suggestions for changes to the OSIDs may be submitted to the Suggestion Queue. (The Suggestion Queue is a public website where anyone may make a suggestion for an OSID change. It is described above.)

Closed for Recommendations – While Suggestions may still be submitted to the Suggestion Queue, this milestone marks when no additional Suggestions will be processed into RFCs.

RFC processing Completed – This milestone indicates when all RFCs have been processed and Governors can begin their review of RFCs.

RFC Decisions Completed – The Governors have completed their review and have made decisions for all RFCs. Once this milestone has been reached, work on the draft specification can begin.

OSID Draft Specification Completed – The draft specification is ready for review.

OSID Draft Specification Review Completed – The review of the draft specification is complete and review comments have been processed.

OSID Draft Specification Quiet Period Completed – This is an interval built into the process to allow for additional review of the specification release candidate.

OSID Specification Accepted – The Specification has been accepted.

OSID Specification Published – The new version of the Specification is publicly released.

Glossary

IMS – from the IMS web site (<http://www.imsglobal.org/>): “The mission of the IMS Global Learning Consortium is to support the adoption and use of learning technology worldwide. ...”

RFC – Request for Consideration

Role – The title of a specific activity in the Change Process.

SIG – Special Interest Group

Suggestion Queue – The publicly accessible website that provides the means to submit and view suggestions for OSID changes.