



How to Slide Your Release Past the Incubator

Justin Mclean

Who am I?

- V.P. Apache Incubator
- V.P. Training Services Instaclustr
- Incubator PMC plus a few others
- Mentor of several Apache projects
- Reviewed 100s of incubator releases at Apache

What is the Apache Incubator?

- Main entry point for new projects
- Where communities come to learn the Apache Way
- Links existing projects with a community around them

Why do we Have an Incubating Process?

- Ensure donations comply with the Apache 2.0 license
- Podling follows the ASF structure of contributors, committers and PMC members
- Podling grants more responsibility via meritocracy
- Ensure that decision making is done in the open
- People act as individuals, not the company they work for
- Podling learns to follow the Apache Way

The Apache Way

- Charity - For the public good. Software costs nothing
- Pragmatic - Business friendly
- Community - Collaboration, consensus and diversity
- Merit - The more you do the more responsibility you have. Not just code contributions
- Open - Everything in the public view. Discussions occur on mailing lists. Everyone can participate
- Consensus - Work together to find ways forward

State of Play

- 34 projects in the incubator
- 253 IPMC members (but not all are active)
- Projects usually stay around 2 years in the incubator
- Upto a dozen or so successful releases a month
- About 90% of releases pass the incubator

Source Releases

- Must contain source code and no compiled code
- Must be cryptographically signed
- Must have an incubating disclaimer (there's two now)
- Have LICENSE and NOTICE file that follow Apache policy
- Follow licensing terms of any 3rd party bundled software
- 3rd party files are compatible with the Apache license
- Source files have ASF headers

Work in Progress Disclaimer

- Less strict as your release may not comply with ASF policy
- Must still be legal
- You can list known issues
- Issues noted must be fixed before graduation

Incubator Vote Process

- Podling creates a release candidate
- Vote on dev mailing list until 3 +1 votes and more +1 than -1
- If vote fails need to make a new release candidate
- Vote on incubator general mailing list
- Need 3 +1 and more +1 than -1 by IPMC members
- If vote fails need to make a new release candidate
- Can release once vote passes and 72 hours pass

Why Your Release May Get a -1

- Unexpected binary in the source release
- Includes Category X licensed software (such as GPL)
- Included Category B license software
- LICENSE or NOTICE issue
- Copyright issue
- Missing license header or header issue

It Doesn't Have to be Perfect

- Incubating projects are not expected to get it right the first time
- May not be familiar with policy at the start
- Policy and guidelines don't cover all situations
- Different projects may do things in different ways
- A release containing no surprises is a good thing

There's Not One Right Answer

- Documentation can sometimes be confusing and sometimes out of date
- Some cultural knowledge isn't well documented
- Large IPMC and some differing opinions on what is "correct"
- Often multiple ways to solve the same issue
- If in doubt err on the side of caution, often changes needed are minimal

Licensing

- This is where a lot of the issues occur
- Observed some reluctance to understand
- Language barrier to even those who speak English
- Can be complex
- ASF Policy does change over time

Legal vs Policy

- Licenses provide certain legal obligations you need to comply with
- Apache policy adds a little more:
 - Need to have NOTICE file
 - List all licenses in LICENSE
 - Respect 3rd party licenses and headers

Guiding Principle

- The LICENSE and NOTICE files accurately represent the contents of the distribution they belong to
- Don't mention stuff that's not included in the release
- There's no need to mention external dependencies in LICENSE and NOTICE
- Applies to both source and binary artefacts

May Contain Nuts

- When bundling software check to see what it contains
- In particular look for Category B and Category X software
- Look at photos or other resources like fonts that you may not have permission to distribute
- Check links in code
- Manual inspection is not always required but often a good idea

Rat

- Great tool for finding binaries and licenses in your source release
- Not perfect but very handy
- Will not find double headers
- Will not check for multiple licenses in the same file
- Only knows about a few licenses
- Often exclusions can be too wide and miss something

Finding Licenses

- One way is to use find and grep

```
find . -type f -exec grep -i "$1" {} \;
```
- Search for common license names “GPL”, “BSD”, “MIT”
- Search for “copyright” and pipe to sort -u
- Compare between releases

Other People's Cat Photos

- Copy all the images!

```
find . -name "*.jpg" -exec cp {} images \;
```

- View all images using your OS or favourite image browsing tool
- If you find something that may be suspect:
 - Look at image metadata
 - Find it with a Google reverse image search

License File

- License file named LICENSE or LICENSE.txt in the root directory
- Contains Apache license and list of licenses of bundled software in a distribution
- Short form pointer to license preferred
- May have different contents for source and binary

Notice File

- Contains ASF copyright and developed at the ASF notice
- Keep year up to date
- Only add what is needed
 - Relocated copyright notices
 - Content from bundled Apache software notice files
 - All other required notices
- In general licensing info shouldn't be in the notice file

Category A

- Can bundle software and can depend on
- Doesn't add any restrictions above and beyond what the Apache License 2.0 does
- Common licenses include:
Apache License 2.0, Apache License 1.1, 2 or 3 clause BSD (without advertising clause), MIT/X11, W3C, Unicode, CC copyright only

Category B

- Probably can't include in a source release
- Contains some restriction of use
- May be able to use the binary form to limit the chance of corruption
- Common licenses include:
Common Development and Distribution License (CDDL),
Eclipse Public License (EPL), Mozilla Public License (MPL),
most Creative Common licenses

Category X

- Can't depend on
- Can't bundle software
- A few exceptions for build tools and optional dependencies
- Common Category X include:
GPL, LGPL, CC non commercial, JSON, BSD 4 clause,
Apache 1.0?

No Unexpected Binary Files

- No compiled source in a source release
- No exes, dlls, jars or class files
- No minified JS without source

Headers

- All Apache licensed source files should have an ASF header
- Don't include a copyright line
- Use correct header

Can Compile From Code

- Helps to have clear instructions on how to in the release
- If it doesn't work on a platform, please note that
- If you need to install a 3rd party component to get it to compile, please note that
- Make it easy to compile

Common Mistakes

- Unexpected binary files in the source release
- Contents of LICENSE and NOTICE files
- Source and binary have same LICENSE and NOTICE
- Missing headers
- Issues missed due to Rat exclusions
- Issues missed due to automation
- Missing DISCLAIMER

Binary Distributions

- Not considered an official release
- Need to comply the same way with ASF policies as source distributions
- LICENSE and NOTICE may be different as the contents of the release is often different from the source release

Where to Ask for Help

- Ask on your mailing lists
- Ask your mentors
- Email the incubator mailing list at:
general@incubator.apache.org
- Email the legal discuss mailing list at:
legal-discuss@apache.org

We're here to help

How can we improve? Please email the incubator mailing list
at:

general@incubator.apache.org

We're happy to talk about it.

Questions?

Ask now, see me after the session, or email me, Justin Mclean
at jmclean@apache.org.

Useful Links

- Apache Creadur project (Rat + more)
<http://creadur.apache.org>
- Apache Whisker - describes licenses via meta data
<http://creadur.apache.org/whisker/>
- Release checklist
<http://cwiki.apache.org/confluence/display/INCUBATOR/Incubato>
- Distribution Guides
<https://cwiki.apache.org/confluence/display/INCUBATOR/Distribu>
- Fossology
<http://www.fossology.org>

Useful Links (cont)

- ASF 3rd part license policy
<http://www.apache.org/legal/resolved>
- Incubator release process
<http://incubator.apache.org/guides/releasemanagement.html>
- Assembling License and Notice How To
<http://https://infra.apache.org/licensing-howto.html>

Useful Links (cont)

- Apache Maturity Model
<http://community.apache.org/apache-way/apache-project-maturity-model.html>
- Legal mailing list archive
legal-discuss@apache.org
- Legal JIRA
<https://issues.apache.org/jira/browse/LEGAL>
- Software Licenses in Plain English
<http://tldrlegal.com>