The OSPO assumes different responsibilities that change over time, including developing and executing the open source (OS) strategy, setting priorities, tracking performance, and leading community engagement.

OSPOs may exist unofficially; virtually; within research and development (R&D), engineering, or other corporate departments; or in executive-level offices of the Chief Technology Officer (CTO) or Chief Legal Officer.

OSPOs oversee the establishment or adaptation of internal policies to better manage open source software (OSS) compliance in fast-moving, dynamic environments.

OSPOs help to implement unique and flexible sets of tools that support OSS development models while meeting corporate Information Technology guidelines.

As organizational needs or strategies evolve, OSPOs enable continuity in executive support, funding, software development practices, and OSS project prioritization.

OSPOs help to bridge the cultural gap between traditional software development practices and the requirements of open source development.

OSPOs improve technical, mentorship, and compliance-related education and training programming for team members across all levels of the organization.