The Exponential project: start here

Last changed 2026-11-12
/learninminutes/exphelp/manual/help-gen-manual-project

A map of the Exponential project as its website exponential.earth presents it, mapped onto this help - what the project is, the FAQ, the licensing FAQ, the roadmap, where to get support, the community channels, how to.

Exponential is free software, but it is also a project: the people who write it, the company and the nonprofit that carry it, the sites where its users meet, and the plans for what comes next. The project's public home is **exponential.earth**. This section of the help covers what that website says, in its own words where that matters and in plain words otherwise, and connects it with the rest of this help.

The website's pages were read in October 2026. Their text is "All rights reserved" according to the site's footer, so this help does not copy them; it explains the same topics in its own words and links to the original. Where the website and the software in this repository disagree, these pages follow the repository for facts about the software and say so.

The pages of this section

Page	Answers	On the website
Frequently asked questions	What is Exponential, why choose it, may I change core files, how are versions released, how do I get help?	/faq
Licensing questions	What the GPL lets you do and asks of you, for sites, extensions, designs and agencies	/faq/licensing
The roadmap	What is planned, what has already been delivered, how to ask for a feature	/roadmap
Getting support	Free help from the community, paid help from 7x, what to try first	/support
Community channels	Forums, Telegram, Discord, Slack, GitHub, social media, the status page	/about/community
Build with Exponential	Why build on it, the product family, the first five steps, the console commands	/build
Contribute to the project	Code, translations, documentation, testing, extensions and site packages	/faq/support
The Exponential code of conduct	How everyone in the community is expected to behave, and where to report a problem	`CODE_OF_CONDUCT.md` in the repository
Give and donate	Partnership, donations, sponsorship subscriptions, sponsored development	/give
About the project and its websites	Who runs it, the portals, the demo, the translation project, the package server	/about
Documentation sources	Every place documentation lives, from this help to the free books and the older manuals	/doc

The project in five sentences

1. **Exponential** is an open source content management system and development framework written in PHP, licensed under the GNU GPL version 2 or later (`COPYRIGHT.md`).
2. Its code was once eZ Publish, a product its creator discontinued after almost eighteen years; Exponential carried that code forward, and the name changed to Exponential in August 2025, as the website's FAQ notes (/faq). The website also says the project is not associated with the original developer of that software.
3. The project is **operated by the Exponential Foundation**, a nonprofit, and **developed by 7x**, the company that leads its development and maintenance (footer of every page of exponential.earth; Who is the Exponential Foundation?, Who is 7x?).
4. Its code lives on GitHub in se7enxweb/exponential, with the extensions in the se7enxweb organization, and every package is on Packagist.
5. Its users meet on Share Exponential, in the Telegram channel, on Discord and Slack, and find extensions on Exponential Projects.

Where to go from here

- New to Exponential: Getting started, then Build with Exponential.
- Stuck: When something goes wrong and Getting support.
- Want to help: Contribute to the project, Contribute extensions back and Give and donate.
- The people and organizations behind it: Who is 7x? and Who is the Exponential Foundation?.
- Free documentation: this page is free to copy, translate and improve under the GNU FDL 1.3.

Become an Exponential Partner. Partners share their information, provide funding, contribute back and develop the products with us, and that is how Exponential grows. A partner website and dashboard are planned for mid-2027: please become a partner today to speed up our growth rate and land new features faster. Start with Partners: start here and How to apply.

Exponential: frequently asked questions

The answers of the FAQ on exponential.earth, retold and checked against the software - what Exponential is and how it relates to eZ Publish, why choose it, modules, designs and distributions, changing core files, code.

> **Supported: PHP 8.0 to 8.5. Usable without support: PHP 7.4 (Exponential 6.0.15 and later).** Why Exponential supports PHP 7.4

These answers follow the FAQ pages of the project website, exponential.earth/faq, read in October 2026, retold in this help's own words and checked against the software in this repository. Where the repository says something different, the answer says so and follows the repository.

[Image: An item's page in the administration]

An item's page in the administration

The website's own FAQ also points to an older FAQ in the archived documentation,

doc.ezpublishlegacy.se7enx.com/FAQ.html, which it describes as "a bit older in age". Its answers about concepts still apply; its version numbers do not.

About Exponential

What is Exponential?

An open source content management system (CMS) and development framework written in PHP. Its main strength is a content model you define yourself: content classes describe what kinds of content exist (an article, a product, an event), content objects hold the content, and the content tree arranges it. On top of that come versions, translations, permissions, workflows, search, multisite support, a shop and a template system. The website's About Exponential page lists web publishing, media portals, intranets, e-commerce and extranets as typical uses. The full feature list is in the README.

Is Exponential the same as eZ Publish?

Exponential is the continuation of the code of eZ Publish, a product its creator discontinued after almost eighteen years. The project carried it forward under the name eZ Publish until August 2025: the website's FAQ notes that the name changed to "Exponential" (or "Exponential (CMS)") on 11 August 2025, at the request of the owner of the old name, and that the project is not associated with the original software's developer. The code, the template language and the extension API stayed compatible: the website's documentation page notes that examples written for eZ Publish work with Exponential. The story is told in the history and on Who is 7x?.

Why choose Exponential?

The website's essay Why choose Exponential? makes these points, which this help can confirm from the software:

- **Long life.** Content modeled years ago still works: the content model, templates and extensions have stayed compatible across releases, and upgrades are documented step by step (Upgrading).
- **Structured, reusable content.** Content is stored as objects with attributes, not as finished pages, so one piece of content can appear in many places and through the REST API.
- **Extensible without touching the core.** Extensions add modules, datatypes, template operators, workflow events and more (Extensions).
- **Separation of roles.** Editors work on content, designers on templates and overrides, developers on extensions.
- **Free software.** Under the GPL you may run, study, change and share it; nobody can take it away from you. See Licensing questions.

Is Exponential a framework, or a complete product?

A complete product. Exponential is a whole working unit, not just a framework you have to finish before it does anything: one `composer install` gives you a rapid application development (RAD) stack for Internet applications that is at the same time a content management system, a digital experience platform (the Exponential Layouts page builder, multisite and multilingual sites, the Exponential Intelligence writing assistant) and an e-commerce system (basket, orders, payment gateways, order receipts and the store

dashboard). As of 6.0.15 that includes its own Internet and web application server, Exponential Velocity. Because every layer comes from one source, with one installer, one console and one set of documentation, adopting Exponential anywhere in the world comes without the usual integration work. See Velocity is part of Exponential 6.0.15.

Does Exponential include a web server?

Yes, as of 6.0.15. The Velocity Internet / Web Application Server is part of Exponential: the root `composer.json` requires `se7enxweb/exponential-velocity ~0.0.4.57` (through `se7enxweb/exponential-php-floor`, on PHP 8.0 and later), so every installation has it, on PHP 8.0 and later. The project calls this a turning point, a cornerstone and a capstone: a new level of application system integration that puts even greater features in the core product, out of the box, by default. Velocity is the recommended engine for every stage and FrankenPHP is a production-ready alternative; Apache and nginx with PHP-FPM keep working as before. The commands are `./console exp:velocity deploy`, `start`, `restart` and `cache clear`. See Velocity is part of Exponential 6.0.15 and Serving the site.

Who makes it?

7x develops and maintains it, and the Exponential Foundation, a nonprofit, operates the project (footer of exponential.earth). See Who is 7x? and Who is the Exponential Foundation?.

Why does Exponential have some features but not others?

The website's About Exponential FAQ answers that the project balances new features against stability: every change to the core is reviewed carefully, and the core is kept to essential functions while extensions add the rest. In this repository you can see the same rule at work: new features usually arrive as extensions or as settings that are off by default, and every change is recorded in the 6.0.15 changelog.

Working with Exponential

These answers follow Working with Exponential.

What is a module, and what is an extension?

The website's FAQ calls the add-ons that extend Exponential "modules". In Exponential's own terms the unit you install is an **extension**: a folder under `extension/` that can contain modules (sets of pages, such as `/content/view`), datatypes, template operators, workflow events, designs, settings and translations. You can install extensions others have shared, or write your own (What an extension is, Extensions).

What is a design?

A design gives a site its look: templates, stylesheets, images and fonts in a `design/<name>/` folder, usually inside an extension. A siteaccess chooses which designs it uses, and the override system lets a design replace any template without editing the original. You can install a design someone else made or build your own.

What is a distribution?

A package that combines the kernel with a chosen set of extensions, designs and settings, ready for one kind of site. For Exponential that means two things: the **site packages** the setup wizard installs (for example the 7x Simple design with its demo content), and the **distributions** of the wider family, such as Exponential Platform Legacy and Exponential Platform Nexus (Build with Exponential). Building a distribution is work for experienced contributors; installing one is not.

May I change Exponential's core files for my site?

You may, the license allows it, but the project strongly advises against it, and so does the website's FAQ. A changed core file is overwritten by the next update, including security updates, or it stops you from updating at all. Put your changes where updates do not touch them:

- **templates**: a design override in your own extension;
- **settings**: `settings/override/` and `settings/siteaccess/<name>/`, or an extension's `settings/`;
- **behavior**: an extension, a workflow event, or a class override registered in settings.

If the core itself has a bug, fix it in the project, not in your copy: Contribute to the project.

Does Exponential have coding standards?

Yes. The website points to the Exponential code standards on Share Exponential and to the code of the se7enxweb repositories as the example to follow. For the kernel, `CONTRIBUTING.md` in the root of the installation is the binding guide: it explains the commit hook, the code style check and the file manifest that every pull request keeps current.

Can I move a WordPress site to Exponential?

Yes. The website's FAQ says tools exist for it; this documentation has a full guide: WordPress and Exponential explains the WordPress export, how posts, pages, media, categories, tags and authors map onto Exponential content, the addresses and redirects, and the way back. Guides for other systems are in the migration hub.

Where can I get help?

Getting support lists the free community channels and the paid options. For an error in the software, see When something goes wrong.

Versions, releases and requirements

When and how are new versions released?

The website's FAQ says that from Exponential 6 on, releases use semantic versioning. In the repository the 6.0 line is released as tags `v6.0.0`, `v6.0.1` and onward (the newest release in October 2026 is `v6.0.14`; 6.0.15 is in development). There is no fixed calendar. A published version is never changed: a fix always comes as the next release (Who is the Exponential Foundation?). To follow releases, or every change as it is made, see Update with Git.

Which PHP versions does it support?

Exponential 6.0.15 is supported on PHP 8.0 to 8.5, the Velocity application server from its release 0.0.4.54, and usable without support on PHP 7.4 (without Velocity) (Requirements). The website's community page says "PHP 8.1 through PHP 8.5" for the 6.0.14 release; the repository's requirements, which also cover PHP 7.4 and 8.0, are the reference.

Can I run Exponential on PHP 7.4?

Yes, from 6.0.15, for sites that cannot change the PHP of their server yet. The kernel and the bundled extensions run on PHP 7.4; Velocity, Exponential Layouts, two-factor authentication and a few other extensions need PHP 8 and are not installed there. Composer picks the right packages by itself through the metapackage `se7enxweb/exponential-php-floor`. PHP 7.4 gets no security fixes from the PHP project any more, so run it only where your operating system vendor or host still patches it, and plan the move to PHP 8. The whole story, with a table per feature: Why Exponential supports PHP 7.4.

How do I host my first site?

The website's article Getting started: hosting your first Exponential website recommends hosting providers that offer Exponential already installed, so you can start with content instead of server setup. Its requirements are those of an older release and not the reference: it names 6.0.10 as the current version, asks for PHP 8.3 or higher and for a LAMP stack with MySQL 5.7 or MariaDB 10.2. The repository says otherwise: 6.0.10 to 6.0.14 require PHP 8.1 or later in their `composer.json`, the 6.0.15 line runs on PHP 8.0 to 8.5 (PHP 7.4 usable without support), and no database server is needed, because SQLite 3 is the default; PostgreSQL, MongoDB, MariaDB, Oracle and MySQL are the alternatives (Requirements). Apache, nginx with PHP-FPM, LiteSpeed and the Velocity application server all serve it. If you install it yourself, the installation book covers every step, and Getting started shows the administration. Hosting companies have their own section of this help (Hosting companies: start here).

Can I try it before installing?

Yes. The website lists a public demo at demo.exponential.earth, with an administration at edit.demo.exponential.earth; the sign-in details are on the website's community page. The demo is reset every day, so you can change anything.

Helping the project

How can I help?

The website's FAQ names donations and memberships, and also the many ways that cost no money: code, translations, documentation, accessibility advice and testing. See Contribute to the project, Contribute extensions back and Give and donate.

Do I have to sign anything to contribute code, and what do I give up?

For the core kernel, yes. 7x and the Exponential Foundation require a signed Contributor Licensing Agreement (CLA) for every code contribution to the kernel, whether it is sent as a pull request, a patch, an issue or by mail, before it can be merged. **By signing and submitting, you assign the copyright in your contribution to the Exponential Foundation and 7x, which become its owners, and give up control over it:** The Exponential Foundation and 7x may use, change, relicense and distribute it in any way, also under other licenses and in

commercial products, without asking or paying you, and you cannot withdraw it or set conditions on it. You sign once for all future contributions. Your own custom extensions, site packages and themes are not affected. See Copyright assignment (CLA).

Is it really free?

Yes. Exponential is free software under the GNU GPL version 2 or later: you may use it for any purpose, including commercial work, change it and share it. The license's conditions apply when you distribute it; see Licensing questions.

Related pages

- The Exponential project: start here
- Licensing questions
- Getting started
- Free documentation: this page is free to copy, translate and improve under the GNU FDL 1.3.

Become an Exponential Partner. Partners share their information, provide funding, contribute back and develop the products with us, and that is how Exponential grows. A partner website and dashboard are planned for mid-2027: please become a partner today to speed up our growth rate and land new features faster. Start with Partners: start here and How to apply.

Copyright and copyleft

Since 29 October 2026 the copyright of Exponential is held by the Exponential Foundation and 7x together, the Foundation named first: "Exponential Copyright © 1998-2026 Exponential Foundation and 7x", in files "Copyright (C) 1998 - 2026 Exponential Foundation and 7x. All rights reserved." Who holds it and why, what the GPL lets you do, the third-party notices that stay and how to write the notice in new files and extensions: Copyright and copyleft.

Getting support: free help and paid help

Every way to get help with Exponential, following the support page of exponential.earth - first the documentation, eZpedia and the articles on Share Exponential, then the forums and the Telegram, Discord and Slack.

Exponential is free software, and its developers are not obliged to give free support; the project's support page says so plainly, and adds that they like to see people use the software and go the extra mile when they can. So there are two kinds of support: **free help from the community**, and **paid help from 7x** when you need it faster or need someone to do the work.

First: look it up

Most questions have been answered before. Look in this order:

1. **This help.** Search it with the search box of the help dashboard, or press the "?" button on any page of the administration for help about that page.
2. **The documentation website**, exponential.doc.exponential.earth, with the installation manual for Exponential 6 and the technical manual.

3. **eZpedia**, ezpedia.exponential.earth, the community wiki.
4. **The articles on Share Exponential**, share.exponential.earth/learn, on key subjects.

More places are listed in Documentation sources.

Free help from the community

If the answer is not documented, ask. These are the channels the support page names, all free:

Channel	Good for	Address
Share Exponential forums	Questions that need a longer answer, that others will search for later	https://share.exponential.earth/forums
Telegram	Quick questions in real time; the support page describes it as a chat with members of the development team and the community	https://t.me/exponentialcms
Discord	Chat with the community, development talk, feedback	https://discord.gg/zXzGMgfzej
Slack	Chat, especially about development	https://exponentialcms.slack.com/

Details and the other places the community meets are on Community channels.

How to ask so you get an answer

- **Say what you run**: the Exponential version, the PHP version, the web server (Velocity, Apache or nginx with PHP-FPM, FrankenPHP), the database. **Setup > System information** gives you a summary to copy, without passwords, keys or server paths.
- **Say what you did, what you expected and what happened**, with the exact message.
- **Show what you tried** and what you already read.
- **Never post** passwords, keys, session cookies, database addresses, or personal data of your users or customers.
- **Report back** when you solved it, so the next person finds the answer.

When it is a bug, not a question

If the software does something wrong, report it where it can be fixed for everyone: When something goes wrong explains which issue tracker to use, and the **Report an error** page of this help prepares the issue for you. Security problems are never posted in public: send them privately as When something goes wrong explains.

Negative features

Not everything that looks like a bug is one. Some behavior is a deliberate choice that simply does not suit every installation, and some is open to interpretation: two reasonable people read the same documentation and expect different results. Engineers call a behavior like this a **negative feature**: it can feel like a defect from one side, yet it exists on purpose, often to protect security, backward compatibility, performance, or the many sites that already depend on it working exactly as it does today.

Examples of what can be a negative feature rather than a bug:

- a setting that is off by default because turning it on would change existing sites (for instance prices, URLs or permissions);
- a limit or refusal that guards against misuse, such as a check that rejects input other sites never send;
- an old behavior that extensions, templates or integrations rely on, even if a new design would choose differently;
- a difference between what you expected and what the documentation actually promises.

What this means for an issue or a pull request:

- **Explain the why, not only the what.** Describe your use case, what the current behavior costs you, and who else it affects. A change to a negative feature is weighed against every installation that depends on it.
- **Expect discussion.** Such a change may need extensive justification, and a pull request may go through several rounds of review and revision before it is accepted and merged. That is normal, not a rejection.
- **Prefer an option over a new default.** A proposal that keeps today's behavior as the default and adds a setting, a hook or an extension point for the new one is much easier to accept than one that changes everyone's site.
- **Ask first if you are unsure.** A short question in the community before you write code saves you a long review.

If a maintainer answers that something works as intended, the reason is usually written down in the documentation, the changelog or the code. You can still propose a change: the project wants to hear why the current behavior does not work for you.

Paid help from 7x

When you cannot wait, or you need someone to do the work, the support page recommends hiring **7x**, the company that maintains Exponential: se7enx.com/services, or contact them at se7enx.com/contact. The support page notes that developers both in and outside the Exponential team can be hired; 7x is the one it names. More about 7x: Who is 7x?.

Companies that offer services around Exponential can also become partners of the project, and partners have their own support levels (Partners: support levels and response times).

What free support cannot promise

Free help depends on the time people give. Nobody promises an answer time in the forums or chats, and nobody will log in to your server for free. For a guaranteed answer time, or work on your site, use paid support. If the free help saved you time or money, consider giving something back: an answer to someone else's question, a fix, or a donation (Give and donate).

Related pages

- Community channels
- When something goes wrong

- Exponential: frequently asked questions
- Free documentation: this page is free to copy, translate and improve under the GNU FDL 1.3.

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Licensing questions: the GPL and Exponential

The licensing FAQ of exponential.earth in plain words - the GPL version 2 or later, compatible and incompatible code, assets and dependencies, who holds the copyright, what source code means for a web application.

The project website answers the common licensing questions on exponential.earth/faq/licensing . This page gives the same answers in plain words, checked against the license files of this repository. It is **not legal advice**: for your own case, read the license and ask a lawyer, as the website itself recommends.

The license texts: `LICENSE` and `COPYRIGHT.md` in the root of the installation, and the GNU GPL version 2 at gnu.org.

The license

Under which license is Exponential?

The **GNU General Public License, version 2 or (at your option) any later version** (`COPYRIGHT.md`; `"license": "GPL-2.0-or-later"` in `composer.json`). "Or any later version" means you may follow the terms of GPL version 2 or of GPL version 3, whichever suits you, and you may combine Exponential with code under licenses that are compatible with either, such as the GNU Affero GPL version 3, as the website notes.

Who holds the copyright?

The kernel's notice names the "Exponential Foundation and 7x" for the years from 1998 and eZ Systems AS for 1999 to 2014 (`COPYRIGHT.md`): "Copyright (C) 1998 - 2026 Exponential Foundation and 7x. All rights reserved." Since 29 October 2026 the Foundation and 7x hold the copyright together, the Foundation named first; see Copyright and copyleft. The code also contains the work of many contributors over the years. The website's FAQ explains the rule: contributors agree to release their code under the same license as Exponential.

For code contributions to the core kernel, the Exponential Foundation and 7x also require a signed Contributor Licensing Agreement (CLA) before the contribution is merged, and **by signing and submitting, you assign the copyright in your contribution to the Exponential Foundation and 7x, which become its owners, and give up control over it.** The Exponential Foundation and 7x may use, change, relicense and distribute your contribution in any way, also under other licenses and in commercial products, without asking or paying you; you cannot withdraw it or set conditions. Your own extensions and designs are not affected. See Copyright assignment (CLA).

Is the GPL going to change to version 3 only?

The website says there are no plans to distribute Exponential under GPL version 3 or later only, though it may be considered one day. Because the license already says "or any later version", anyone may distribute it under GPL 3 today.

Using Exponential

Do I have to give my website's code to its visitors?

No. Visiting a website is not distribution in the GPL's sense, so nothing obliges you to share the code that runs on your server. GPL versions 2 and 3 have no clause about use over a network.

Can I use Exponential for commercial work?

Yes. The GPL allows any use, including running a commercial site, building sites for customers and selling services around it.

Can I sell Exponential, or an extension or design for it?

Yes, but you sell it under the GPL version 2 or later: the buyer gets the source and may change it and pass it on, even for free. You may charge for the copy, the installation, support and updates.

Your own extensions and designs

Must my extension or design be under the GPL?

The website's answer: extensions ("modules") and designs are derivative works of Exponential, so **if you distribute them**, you distribute them under the GPL version 2 or later. If you never distribute them, the question does not arise.

What the GPL covers, the website explains, is code that works together with Exponential's code:

- your **PHP code** that uses Exponential's classes must be GPL or GPL-compatible;
- **images and other files** that your PHP only sends to the browser are data, not affected, unless you made them from an image Exponential provides under the GPL;
- **JavaScript** that works together with Exponential's own JavaScript (which is GPL, including the copy of jQuery shipped with it) must be GPL or GPL-compatible as well.

Must I give my extension to everyone?

No. The GPL only says that whoever *receives* your extension from you must also receive its source, under the GPL. You do not have to give it to anyone, and an extension you only use inside your organization does not have to be shared at all. The website adds that sharing a generally useful extension is still a good idea: you get feedback, bug reports and improvements back. How to do it: Contribute extensions back.

What does "source code" mean for a web application?

The form of a file that people edit:

File	Its source code
PHP, templates	the file itself, not compressed or obfuscated
JavaScript, CSS	the file itself, not minified or obfuscated; for a minified file, the original it was built from
Images	the version meant for editing: the PNG or JPEG itself, a high-resolution original, or the file of the drawing program
Compiled or packed formats	the editable files and whatever is needed to build the result

My extension uses a library under another license. Is that allowed?

The library is	Then
GPL, or GPL-compatible (MIT, BSD, LGPL and others on the FSF's list)	You may distribute your extension together with it. The combination is distributed under the GPL.
GPL-incompatible, but your extension only talks to it over the network (HTTP, XML-RPC, SOAP, a web API)	Allowed: the other system stays separate.
GPL-incompatible and loaded into the same PHP process	You may not distribute the combination: it would be a derivative of both, and break one license or the other. The website names the PHP License of many PEAR packages as an example of an open source license that is not GPL-compatible.
GPL-incompatible, installed by the user through Composer	The website says depending on such code is allowed, because the GPL limits distribution, not use; the project only will not host that code itself.

Assets that are not code, such as fonts and icons under other licenses, may be shipped "in aggregate" with GPL code when you have the right to distribute them, the website adds.

If you write a "bridge" extension for an outside library, the website asks you not to copy the library into a project repository; tell users how to install it instead (with Composer where possible), and open an issue first if you think it really must be included.

The kernel's own libraries are under the Apache License 2.0. How does that fit?

The libraries the kernel is built on, the **expcomponents** (since 6.0.15 Exponential's fork of the Zeta Components, `se7enxweb/expcomponents-*`), are licensed under the Apache License 2.0, as the Zeta Components were before them. The Free Software Foundation considers Apache 2.0 compatible with GPL version 3 and incompatible with GPL version 2 *only*. Exponential's license, GPL version 2 **or any later version**, lets the combination be distributed under GPL version 3, so the kernel and its libraries can be shipped together. The fork changed nothing about this: the same was true of the upstream libraries. Two consequences:

- the libraries keep their own license and notices (`LICENSE.txt` of each package); a bundle lists them as third-party components (Third-party components and their licenses);
- an extension licensed GPL version 2 *only* that ships together with Apache 2.0 code is a combination to avoid; license it "or later".

This is not legal advice. The fork and its license: Exponential Components.

May I contribute code under GPL version 3 only, or GPL version 2 only?

You may publish your own work under any license compatible with GPL 2 or later. But code that goes **into the project's own repositories** must be under the same license as Exponential, GPL version 2 or later, so that everyone can keep the choice between versions. If you cannot or will not license a contribution that way, do not submit it, the website says. The kernel's `CONTRIBUTING.md` says the same.

Agencies and clients

Is an agency distributing code when it builds a site for a client?

The website's answer is **no**: an agency, freelancer or other service provider that assembles a code base for a client under contract acts as the client's agent, so this is not distribution in the GPL's sense. The website adds that such a provider therefore may combine GPL code with incompatible code for the client, but may not distribute that combination to the public.

The client can do with the result what the GPL allows. Selling or giving the same extension to other clients, or publishing it, is distribution, with everything that follows from it.

That answer covers a narrow case: a contractor working on the client's behalf and under its direction, much like an employee. Whether a particular hand-over is that or a distribution depends on the contract and the facts, and not everyone draws the line in the same place. When in doubt, treat the delivery as distribution and meet the obligations in License violations: it costs the agency nothing but handing over files it already has.

License violations

This section explains how the license of Exponential is broken in practice, so that whoever passes Exponential or a design on knows what they owe, and whoever receives it knows what they are entitled to. It follows the GNU GPL version 2 and names its sections (§); where GPL version 3, which anyone may choose under "or any later version", differs, that is noted. It is not legal advice.

What triggers the obligations: distribution

The conditions of the GPL apply when you **distribute** (GPL version 3 says "convey") Exponential or a work based on it to a third party. A work based on Exponential is, for example:

- Exponential itself, changed or unchanged;
- an extension that uses Exponential's classes and runs in the same PHP process;
- a site package built from Exponential's packages and data;
- a design or theme whose templates, stylesheets or scripts include or are built from Exponential's GPL templates, stylesheets or scripts, such as overrides of the standard templates or a shipped design copied and changed.

Distribution means handing a copy to someone else, in any form: an archive, a Git repository, a copy uploaded to the recipient's server, a download from a theme shop. Typical cases:

- an agency delivers a finished site, with its design and extensions, to its customer, who runs

it or has another host run it;

- a designer sells or gives away a theme;
- a company publishes an extension or a site package, or sells it.

What is **not** distribution under GPL version 2:

- installing and running Exponential for yourself, changed or unchanged. The GPL does not restrict running the program (§0: "Activities other than copying, distribution and modification are not covered by this License");
- copies made and used inside your own organization;
- offering a website built with Exponential to its visitors. The PHP code runs on your server; visitors receive its output, not the program. Neither GPL version 2 nor version 3 has a clause about use over a network. The GNU Affero GPL has one (its §13), but Exponential is not under the AGPL; only code under the AGPL that you add to an installation would bring that obligation with it.

One precise point: the JavaScript and stylesheet files a site sends to the browser are copies of those files, and the Free Software Foundation regards sending GPL JavaScript to visitors as conveying it to them. Keep the license notices in such files and make their unminified source available, for example by linking the public repository it comes from.

What you owe when you distribute

Obligation	GPL version 2	GPL version 3
Give every recipient a copy of the license with the program	§1	§4
Keep the copyright notices, the license notices and the notice that there is no warranty intact	§1	§4, §5
Mark changed files with a prominent notice that you changed them, and the date	§2(a)	§5(a)
License the whole work based on Exponential under the GPL to every third party, at no charge	§2(b)	§5(c), §10
Provide the complete corresponding source code	§3	§6
Impose no further restrictions on the recipients' rights	§6	§10, §7

The source code, in the license's words, is "the preferred form of the work for making modifications to it"; the complete source also includes "the scripts used to control compilation and installation" (§3). For a site or a design that means:

- the templates and the PHP code of the extensions;
- the original, unminified CSS and JavaScript, and the files they are built from (Sass, Less, TypeScript and the like): a minified bundle or a compiled stylesheet is not source code;
- the build configuration needed to produce the delivered files from those sources (`package.json`, the bundler's configuration, a `Makefile`, build scripts);
- the editable original of an image you made from a GPL image.

Under §3 you provide it in one of these ways:

- **with the delivery** (§3(a)): the source goes with the copy, which for a web project usually

means the repository or an archive of it;

- **with a written offer** (§3(b)), valid for at least three years, to give **any third party** the complete source for no more than the cost of physically making the copy;
- **by passing on an offer** you received yourself (§3(c)), allowed only for noncommercial distribution.

Two more rules complete the picture:

- **You may charge.** "You may charge a fee for the physical act of transferring a copy, and you may at your option offer warranty protection in exchange for a fee" (§1). Pricing a theme, a site, the installation, support or hosting is allowed. What you may not do is take the freedoms away: the recipient gets the license itself at no charge (§2(b)) and may change the work, share it, sell it or give it away.
- **No further restrictions.** "You may not impose any further restrictions on the recipients' exercise of the rights granted herein" (§6). If a contract, a non-disclosure agreement or any other obligation stops you from meeting the GPL's conditions, you may not distribute the work at all (§7). Under GPL version 3, a recipient may remove a further restriction that comes with the work (§7).

Parts that are separate works and only travel alongside, such as photos, illustrations and fonts the agency made or licensed on their own, may keep their own licenses, because "mere aggregation" with a GPL work does not bring them under the GPL (§2, last paragraph). Say which parts these are and under which terms they come.

Common violations

- Delivering a site without the source of its design or of its custom extensions.
- Delivering only minified or compiled assets, without the files and build scripts they were made from.
- Delivering without the license text, or with a written offer that is never honored.
- Removing or replacing the copyright and license notices of Exponential or of a template a design was built from. Adding your own copyright notice for your own changes is fine; removing the others is not.
- Contracts or terms that forbid the customer to pass the code on, to change it, to reuse it, to publish it or to have another provider work on it.
- Calling a design proprietary, or selling it under a "single-site license", while it is a derivative of GPL templates, stylesheets or scripts.
- Charging a fee for the license of the GPL parts, or making their use depend on a license key.

The consequence under GPL version 2 is that the distributor's rights under the license end automatically (§4: "Any attempt otherwise to copy, modify, sublicense or distribute the Program is void, and will automatically terminate your rights under this License"); those who already received copies from them keep their own licenses. Distributing without a license is copyright infringement, which the copyright holders can take to court; German courts have enforced the GPL since the Landgericht München I decided so on 19 May 2004 (21 O 6123/04). A distributor who follows GPL version 3 gets the license back by ending the violation: provisionally at once, and permanently if the copyright holder does not notify them of it within 60 days after it ended, or if it is the first notice from that copyright holder and the violation is cured within 30 days of receiving it (§8).

Giving back: what the project asks, and what the GPL does not require

The GPL does **not** oblige anyone to give their changes, extensions or designs to the Exponential project. It obliges whoever distributes them to give the source and the license **to the people they distribute to**. Not contributing a design back is therefore not a violation of the license.

Once the customer has received the design under the GPL, the customer holds every right the GPL gives: to use it, change it, have it changed by anyone, and share it with anyone, including the project.

The project asks agencies and designers to contribute their designs, extensions and fixes back, and the community expects it: that is how free software stays healthy, and every site built on Exponential stands on work others gave before. It is a request and an expectation of the community, not a legal duty. How to do it: Contribute extensions back and Contribute to the project.

What customers can ask their agency for

- The license text, and the copyright notices of what was delivered.
- The complete source of everything delivered under the GPL: the extensions, the design with its templates, unminified stylesheets and scripts and their build scripts, the site package, ideally as the Git repository.
- A contract that confirms the rights the GPL gives, and has no clause forbidding changes, passing on, reuse or the choice of another provider. Clauses to look for and to ask for: Lock-in clauses to avoid and the open source license and source availability clause.
- A list of the parts under other licenses (photos, fonts, paid libraries) and what their terms allow.

The contract may give the customer more than the GPL, for example the copyright of work it paid for; it can never give less.

What to do about a violation

1. **Ask first.** Most violations are mistakes. Write to the agency or vendor, name what is missing (the license, the source, a clause that conflicts with the GPL), cite the sections above and give a reasonable time.
2. **The copyright holders can enforce the license.** For the kernel these are the Exponential Foundation and 7x, and eZ Systems AS for the inherited code (`COPYRIGHT.md`); for an extension or a design, its authors. Tell them what you found: for Exponential, write to 7x at info@se7enx.com. A customer who did not receive what was promised may also have claims under the contract; that is a question for the customer's lawyer.
3. **Read the guides on GPL compliance.**
   - Free Software Foundation: Violations of the GNU licenses and the Frequently asked questions about the GNU licenses.
   - Software Freedom Conservancy: Copyleft compliance, the Principles of community-oriented GPL enforcement and the Copyleft and the GNU General Public License: a comprehensive tutorial and guide.

Problems and questions

I found an extension that says "GPL 2 only", "GPL 3 only" or another license. What should I do?

The website asks you to open an issue in that project's tracker first, and if the maintainer does not respond, to report it in the Exponential issue tracker. Before you copy code from such an extension into your own, read Reading licenses before you reuse anything.

What license does documentation have?

This help and the documentation in `doc/` are under the GNU Free Documentation License 1.3 or later (The license of this documentation, Free documentation). The website's licensing FAQ says its own content is under Creative Commons Attribution-ShareAlike 2.0, while the footer of exponential.earth reads "All rights reserved"; until the two agree, link to the website instead of copying it.

I have another question.

Ask general questions in the Share Exponential forums. For your own case, ask a lawyer: the project does not give legal advice.

Related pages

- Contribute extensions back
- Reading licenses before you reuse anything
- Exponential: frequently asked questions
- Free documentation: this page is free to copy, translate and improve under the GNU FDL 1.3.

The roadmap: what is planned and how to shape it

Where the Exponential roadmap lives (the official roadmap and the community roadmap on Share Exponential), what it lists for Exponential 6, the Platform distributions, Basic and the community websites, which items the.

The project keeps its plans in two public places, both on Share Exponential and both linked from exponential.earth/roadmap:

[Image: Setup, Updates and packages]

Setup, Updates and packages

Roadmap	What it is	Address
Official roadmap	The plans of 7x and the project, product by product and resource by resource	https://share.exponential.earth/roadmap
Community roadmap	Feature requests from users, discussed in public; you sign in to add one, and submissions are moderated	https://share.exponential.earth/community-roadmap

The community roadmap also holds feature requests from much older times of the code base, which the website keeps for reference. It has an RSS feed, so you can follow new requests in a feed reader.

What the official roadmap lists

The official roadmap, read in October 2026, covers the period **2025/Q4 to 2026/Q2**. In short, in this help's words:

The products

Product	Plans named on the roadmap
Exponential 6.0.x	Stabilization and fixes for PHP 8 warnings; more templates in the default installation's design to match its content classes; Smarty template language support in the kernel "under heavy consideration"; consolidating the free documentation of the past; video guides; a partner portal; PHP 8.6 support, estimated for 2026/Q3
Exponential Platform Nexus	More Symfony bundles; testing and refining the default installation; getting-started documentation for developers; video guides; PHP 8.4 and 8.5 support
Exponential Platform Legacy and **Exponential Platform**	A default demo design bundle; testing the default installation; getting-started documentation; video guides; PHP 8.4 and 8.5 support
Exponential Basic	More advanced shop features (for example encryption of stored information); testing the default installation; documentation; video guides; PHP 8.4 and 8.5 support

The community websites

- **Documentation** (doc.exponential.earth): a redesigned documentation portal, more coverage of the Platform products, and the wish to move today's static documentation pages into a CMS with comments. The roadmap invites people who share that goal to take part.
- **Exponential Projects** (projects.exponential.earth): a possible redesign, more documentation, package management web services integrated with the Exponential 6 kernel through a Composer-based solution, and support for GitLab repositories.
- **eZpedia** (ezpedia.exponential.earth): more content for both Exponential 6 and the Platform, and a shared sign-in with Share and Projects.
- **Share Exponential** (share.exponential.earth): a redesign, "share a site" announcements, and more ways to take part.

Two calls for volunteers

The roadmap asks the community for help with two things that anyone with some experience can do:

1. **Composer packages for extensions.** Not every extension repository has a `composer.json` and a Packagist entry yet. Adding them makes those extensions installable with one command. Contribute extensions back shows what the file needs.
2. **Site packages.** The setup wizard installs site packages such as 7x Simple. The project wants to open the wizard's list of site packages to the community, so that users can publish their own. The roadmap asks interested people to write to the community address it gives

(community at exponential dot earth); Contribute your site package shows the pull request route.

It also invites companies to become partners and to sponsor 7x's development work (Give and donate).

What has already been delivered

The roadmap names Exponential 6.0.10 as the current stable release. The repository has moved on since: 6.0.11 was tagged on 30 December 2025, 6.0.12 on 10 February 2026, 6.0.13 on 18 April 2026 and 6.0.14 on 7 June 2026 (`git tag`), and 6.0.15 is the current line. So read the roadmap's version numbers as a snapshot of when it was written. Several of its items are visible in the repository today:

Roadmap item	What the repository shows
PHP 8.4 and 8.5 support	Exponential 6.0.15 runs on PHP 8.0 to 8.5 (PHP 7.4 usable without support) (Requirements)
PHP 8.6	`composer.json` already allows PHP up to 8.8 and the README names 8.6 as a goal; the roadmap's estimate was 2026/Q3
Documentation consolidated	The documentation now lives in `doc/` of the repository and this help shows it in the administration (Help system), under the GNU FDL
Composer-based package management in the administration	**Setup > Updates and packages**, from the `ezupdate` extension, finds, checks and installs Composer packages from package servers (Update with Git: Updates and packages)

For everything that changed release by release, read the 6.0.15 changelog and the history. The changelog is the authoritative record; the roadmap is a statement of intent.

How to shape the roadmap

- **Ask for a feature**: sign in on Share Exponential and add it to the community roadmap. Explain the problem it solves, not only the solution, and give enough detail for others to discuss it.
- **Report a missing piece in the software**: open an issue in se7enxweb/exponential; for the project and its websites, in exponential-community. The website's roadmap page also names GitHub as the place to request features.
- **Discuss it first**: the forums, Telegram, Discord and Slack (Community channels).
- **Build it**: a pull request moves a feature faster than any request (Contribute to the project).
- **Fund it**: sponsorship pays for the work on the roadmap (Give and donate). Partners have their own way to take part (Partners: roadmap participation).

Related pages

- The Exponential project: start here
- Build with Exponential
- Who is the Exponential Foundation?
- Free documentation: this page is free to copy, translate and improve under the GNU FDL

1.3.

Become an Exponential Partner. Partners share their information, provide funding, contribute back and develop the products with us, and that is how Exponential grows. A partner website and dashboard are planned for mid-2027: please become a partner today to speed up our growth rate and land new features faster. Start with Partners: start here and How to apply.

Community channels: where Exponential people meet

Every place the Exponential community meets, from the community page of exponential.earth - the Share Exponential forums, Telegram, Discord and Slack, GitHub and the issue trackers, Exponential Projects, eZpedia, the.

The project website's community page lists the "activity centers" of the Exponential community. This page collects them and says what each is for, as of October 2026. Where the website gives two different invitation links for one chat, this page uses the one that worked when it was written.

Talk: forums and chats

Channel	What it is for	Address
Share Exponential forums	The main place for questions, answers, announcements and discussions that others should find later. Also articles, blogs and tutorials.	https://share.exponential.earth/forums
Telegram, "Support Exponential (CMS)"	Real-time chat about Exponential, PHP, design and support. The project calls it a key support channel, with members of the development team in it.	https://t.me/exponentialcms
Discord, server "Exponential"	Community chat, development discussion, feedback and feature ideas	https://discord.gg/zXzGMgfzej
Slack, workspace "exponentialcms"	Chat, especially for development	https://exponentialcms.slack.com/

All of them are free. For a question that needs a long answer, prefer the forums: a chat scrolls away, a forum thread stays searchable. How to ask well: Getting support.

Build: code, issues and extensions

Place	What it is for	Address
Exponential on GitHub	The kernel's source, releases, pull requests	https://github.com/se7enxweb/exponential
Issue tracker for the software	Errors and feature requests for the kernel, the administration and the bundled extensions	https://github.com/se7enxweb/exponential/issues
Issue tracker for the project	The websites, the content, the ecosystem, the community: everything that is not an error in a piece of software	https://github.com/se7enxweb/exponential-community/issues

Place	What it is for	Address
The se7enxweb organization	The extensions, tools and distributions maintained by 7x; also listed at software.se7enx.com	https://github.com/se7enxweb
Exponential Projects	The project forge: thousands of extensions, designs and other projects, with news, downloads and source links	https://projects.exponential.earth/
GitLab	A 7x presence on GitLab, linked from the website's footer	https://gitlab.com/se7enx

The community page also points to older GitHub organizations that keep extensions from earlier years: brookinsconsulting, ezpublishlegacyprojects (community extensions), ezpublishlegacy (a mirror project) and ezecosystem (bundles for the Symfony platform). Treat what you find there as ideas: check its license, its age and whether a maintained fork exists (Evaluating an old extension).

Learn: wiki, blog, documentation, video

Place	What it is	Address
eZpedia	The community wiki, built with Exponential; anyone can sign in and write	https://ezpedia.exponential.earth/
The Exponential Blog	Graham Brookins' blog about maintaining Exponential and related development news	https://graham.se7enx.com/the-exponential-blog
Documentation	See Documentation sources for every documentation site	https://exponential.doc.exponential.earth/
ExponentialCMSInsights on YouTube	Videos about Exponential	https://www.youtube.com/@ExponentialCMSInsights

Try: the demo

The website's community page offers a public demo of the latest Exponential 6 with the 7x Simple design and a shop: the site at demo.exponential.earth and its administration at edit.demo.exponential.earth. The sign-in details are on the community page. Everything in the demo is reset every day.

Check: the status page

status.exponential.earth shows whether the project's services are up. Look there first when a project website or the package server does not answer.

Follow: news and social media

The footer of exponential.earth links these accounts:

Network	Exponential	7x
LinkedIn	group	company page
X	@ExponentialCMS	@se7enxweb
Bluesky	exponentialcms.bsky.social	7xweb.bsky.social
Instagram	exponentialcms, exponentialfoundation	se7enxweb
Mastodon		@7x@mastodon.cloud
YouTube	ExponentialCMSInsights	7xwebsitehosting

The website also offers RSS feeds, among them a feed of featured articles about Exponential from around the web.

Which channel when

You want to	Use
Ask how to do something	The forums, or Telegram for a quick question
Report an error in the software	The software issue tracker (how)
Report a security problem	Privately, never in a channel (how)
Suggest a feature	The community roadmap or an issue (The roadmap)
Find an extension	Exponential Projects and the se7enxweb organization
Share your extension	Contribute extensions back
Talk about development	Discord, Slack, or a pull request
Report a problem with a project website	The project issue tracker

Wherever you are, the usual courtesy applies: be patient, be kind, and never post passwords or other people's personal data. Advocates who represent the project in these channels have their own guidance in the advocates' section.

Related pages

- Getting support
- Contribute to the project
- About the project and its websites
- Free documentation: this page is free to copy, translate and improve under the GNU FDL 1.3.

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Build with Exponential: why, which product, first steps

The "Build with Exponential" page of exponential.earth, checked against the software - why build on it (simple, stable, upgradable), what you get out of the box, the product family as the repositories describe it.

The website's Build with Exponential page explains why to build websites and applications on Exponential, which member of the product family to choose, and how to get from a download to a first published page. This page follows it, in this help's words, and checks every claim against the software in this repository. Where the two disagree, this page follows the repository and says so in a note.

Why build on it

The website gives three reasons. Each is visible in the software:

Simple by design

Everything rests on one content model that you can learn in an afternoon:

- **content classes** define the shape of your content (an article has a title, an intro, a body, an image);
- **content objects** hold the content itself, with versions and translations;
- **the content tree** arranges it, and the address of a page follows the tree, readable and predictable.

There is no build step between a change to a template and the page that shows it.

Stable by default

Caches are built into the kernel and managed for you; you clear them selectively or all at once, from **Setup > Cache management** in the administration or from the command line. Within the 6.0 line an upgrade is new code, one database update file for your database engine, and clearing caches (Upgrading, 11.6).

Upgradable for the long term

Every release is tagged, and every change is recorded in the 6.0.15 changelog and in backwards-compatibility notes under `doc/eng-us/bc/`. Because the license is the GNU GPL version 2 or later, you can fork, self-host and upgrade on your own schedule; no vendor can lock you in.

What you get out of the box

The website's list, each with where to read more in this help:

Feature	Read
Content modeling with content classes and datatypes	Editing content
Several sites, languages or audiences from one installation (siteaccesses)	Languages
Role-based permissions down to single objects	Accounts and sign-in

Feature	Read
Built-in full-text search, with other search engines as plug-ins	Searching
Workflows for approval and scheduled publishing	Publishing and versions
A REST API and JSON views for headless use	the README
An extension API: modules, datatypes, template operators, workflow events and more	Extensions
Cluster-ready file storage	the installation book
Static cache for the fastest pages	the installation book
Translation into any number of languages	Languages

The product family

The website presents Exponential as a family of products that share a lineage. The repositories of the se7enxweb organization describe each one as follows; the full account, with sources, is on Who is the Exponential Foundation?.

Product	What it is, according to its repository	Choose it when
Exponential 6 (this software)	The CMS, framework and shop kernel, with its own template language and administration	You want the full CMS on PHP alone, with or without a database server
Exponential Basic	A small, simple CMS from an older, separate line of the code base, for learning, personal use and small sites	You want something small to learn with
Exponential Platform	A CMS on the Symfony framework from the last free version of that platform, without Exponential 6	You run that Symfony platform and want to stay on it
Exponential Platform Legacy	The Symfony platform with a full copy of Exponential 6 next to it (two kernels)	You keep an Exponential 6 site and want Symfony beside it
Exponential Platform Nexus	The Symfony platform with Exponential 6, a layouts editor and a complete demo media site	You want a complete site with layouts and demo content fast
Exponential Platform DXP	A Symfony-only digital experience platform with REST and GraphQL, without Exponential 6	You start a new Symfony project with no legacy kernel

> **Note: where the website and the repositories differ** The website's build page describes some products differently from their repositories. It calls Exponential Basic a pre-configured distribution of Exponential CMS, while its repository describes a separate, older line of the code base. It describes Platform Legacy as a migration package of compatibility shims and migration tools, while its repository describes a dual-kernel distribution. It describes Nexus as a headless-first edition reached by an extension install, with a JavaScript frontend bridge and event and AI pipelines, and the DXP as a set of Exponential extensions, while their repositories describe Symfony distributions (Nexus with Exponential 6 and the layouts editor; the DXP without the legacy kernel). This help follows the repositories. Read each product's own README before you choose.

For moving an existing site onto any of them, see the migration hub.

From download to first page

The website's five steps, with the details from this help:

1. **Download.** Get the latest stable release from GitHub releases, or clone the repository so that later updates are a `git pull` away. The project recommends Git clones for building websites (Develop with Git; Getting the code).
2. **Install.** Put the files in your web server's document root, or serve them with Velocity, open the site in a browser and follow the setup wizard: database, administrator account, site and languages (The setup wizard; other ways in Choosing an install method).
3. **Model your content.** In the administration, open the content classes and define the kinds of content you need. The website's advice holds: start with two or three classes and add more as you learn what the project needs; attributes and classes can be added later without migrating content.
4. **Build your design.** Create a design folder (best inside your own extension), add templates and stylesheets, and point your siteaccess at it. Override only the templates you need; never edit the core's own, so your work survives upgrades (Exponential: frequently asked questions).
5. **Publish.** Create content in the tree, publish it now or later, add an approval workflow if your team needs one (Publishing and versions), and warm the caches.

The console

Exponential 6.0.15 adds `bin/php/console` (with the shortcut `./console` in the root of the installation), which runs every command-line script under one name. The commands the website shows, checked against `console list`:

Shell

```
php bin/php/console list                        # every command
php bin/php/console exp:ezcache --clear-all     # clear all caches
php bin/php/console exp:preload --apply                 # warm the page caches and report broken
links
php bin/php/console exp:updatesearchindex       # rebuild the search index
php bin/php/console exp:ezpgenerateautoloads -e # regenerate the class autoload arrays of the ext
ensions
```

Run them as the user that owns the files, in the root of the installation. `list` prints every command with a one-line description and the script it runs (`exp:preload` runs `bin/php/preload.php`, for example); the options are those of that script.

Get help, give back

Stuck? Getting support. If Exponential saves you time or earns you money, the website asks you to give something back: sponsor the work, contribute code or documentation, or tell others about it (Give and donate, Contribute to the project).

Related pages

- Getting started
- The installation book

- Who is the Exponential Foundation?
- Free documentation: this page is free to copy, translate and improve under the GNU FDL 1.3.

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Contribute to the project: every way to help build Exponential

How to take part in building Exponential, following the "Support Exponential!"

"No matter your experience level", the website's Support Exponential! FAQ says, you can contribute to Exponential. The community page adds that the project now actively welcomes pull requests from the community. This page lists the ways in, from the ones that need no code at all to changes in the kernel, with the first step for each.

Choose your way in

You can	Start here	Needs
Answer someone's question	Share Exponential forums, Telegram	Experience with Exponential
Report a bug well	When something goes wrong	A free GitHub account
Test a release or a pull request	Testing a change before it is released	A test installation
Translate	Translations	Your native language
Write or fix documentation	Documentation	Clear writing
Fix a bug or add a feature	Code	PHP, Git
Share an extension or a design	Contribute extensions back	An extension that others could use
Add a `composer.json` to an extension	Composer packages	Composer basics
Fund the work	Give and donate	

Code: pull requests to the kernel and extensions

The website describes the path: get a GitHub account, fork the repository, make your fix on a branch, and send a pull request to 7x's repository, where it is reviewed and, when merged, released to everyone. In detail:

1. **Read the rules.** `CONTRIBUTING.md` in the root of the installation, and the code of conduct it links to (The Exponential code of conduct).
2. **Work on a clone.** Fork se7enxweb/exponential (or the extension's repository), clone your fork and create a branch for one change. Develop with Git shows how to turn an installation into clones you can work in.

3. **Make the change, small and focused.** One pull request per change. Follow the code style of the files around you; the website also points to the Exponential code standards.
4. **Write the commit message the project's way.** The subject starts with what the change does: `Added:`, `Updated:`, `Fixed:`, `Removed:` or `Renamed:`, for example `Fixed: The redirect keeps the query string`.
5. **Keep the checks green.** Run `make hooks` once in your clone; the hooks then check the commit message, the PHP syntax, the code style and the file manifest (`share/filelist.md5`, fixed with `make manifest-fix`) at every commit. Run the tests and update the documentation when your change needs it.
6. **Open the pull request** and describe what you changed, why, and how you tested it. Mention the issue it fixes (`Fixes #123`). If the "bug" you fix is behavior that is deliberate or open to interpretation, a negative feature other sites depend on, explain the use case carefully, prefer a new option over a changed default, and expect several rounds of review before it is accepted and merged.
7. **Copyright assignment (CLA).** The Exponential Foundation and 7x merge a code contribution to the core kernel (`se7enxweb/exponential`), sent in any form (pull request, patch, code in an issue, or mail), only after you have signed the Contributor Licensing Agreement. **By signing and submitting, you assign the copyright in your contribution to the Exponential Foundation and 7x, which become its owners, and give up control over it:** The Exponential Foundation and 7x may use, change, relicense and distribute it in any way, also under other licenses and in commercial products, without asking or paying you, and you cannot withdraw it or set conditions on it. See Copyright assignment (CLA) and the CLA page. Your own custom extensions, site packages and themes are not affected.

The project's continuous integration runs on every pull request (CI). The project merges every pull request. While it is open, you squash it and rebase it onto `main` as the reviews ask (`git fetch origin`, `git rebase -i origin/main`, `git push --force-with-lease` to your pull request branch only); once it is merged, `main`'s history is never rewritten, and later fixes come as new pull requests (Who is the Exponential Foundation?).

The license of your contribution

Contribute under the same terms as everyone else: the GNU GPL version 2 or later. The website's FAQ asks for this so that contributions stay compatible with the rest of the code and the project can move to later versions of the GPL as a whole; `CONTRIBUTING.md` says the same. For the kernel, the CLA additionally assigns the copyright in your contribution to the Exponential Foundation and 7x, which may then use, change and relicense it without asking or paying you. If you cannot license a contribution that way, do not submit it (Licensing questions).

Test changes before they are released

Every change reaches `main` on GitHub long before it is in a release. Running `main` on a test installation and reporting what breaks is one of the most useful contributions there is. Update with Git shows how to follow `main` and how to go back to a release. Report what you find in the issue tracker, with the commit you tested.

Translations

The website's Exponential Translation Project (ETP) restarted the translation work for the Exponential family: first to take stock of the existing translations and how complete each is, then to add new languages, with the aim that every language in common use has a ready translation.

In this repository the translations are the files `share/translations/<locale>/translation.ts`; the state of each language, and which are complete, is on Languages. How to translate and test: Contributing translations.

Documentation

The documentation you are reading is the folder `doc/` of the kernel, under the GNU Free Documentation License; a correction is a pull request like any other (Free documentation). The community wiki, eZpedia, is open to anyone who signs in. The roadmap also asks for help with the documentation websites (The roadmap). More: Contributing documentation.

Composer packages and site packages

The official roadmap asks for volunteers for two jobs (The roadmap):

- **Composer packages**: many older extension repositories still lack a `composer.json` and a Packagist entry. Adding them is a small, well-defined pull request per extension (Contribute extensions back).
- **Site packages**: the project wants community site packages in the setup wizard's list (Contribute your site package).

Help in the community

Answer questions in the forums and chats, write an article on Share Exponential, report a broken link on a project website in the project tracker, or tell others about Exponential. These cost no money and keep the community alive. More ideas: Helping in the community and the advocates' section.

Related pages

- Contribute extensions back
- Develop with Git
- Ways to support Exponential
- Free documentation: this page is free to copy, translate and improve under the GNU FDL 1.3.

Become an Exponential Partner. Partners share their information, provide funding, contribute back and develop the products with us, and that is how Exponential grows. A partner website and dashboard are planned for mid-2027: please become a partner today to speed up our growth rate and land new features faster. Start with Partners: start here and How to apply.

Copyright and copyleft

Since 29 October 2026 the copyright of Exponential is held by the Exponential Foundation and 7x together, the Foundation named first: "Exponential Copyright © 1998-2026 Exponential Foundation and 7x", in files "Copyright (C) 1998 - 2026 Exponential Foundation and 7x. All rights reserved." Who holds it and why, what the GPL lets you do, the third-party notices that stay and how to write the notice in new files and extensions: Copyright and copyleft.

The Exponential code of conduct

The code of conduct of the Exponential project - the Contributor Covenant 2.1 with Exponential additions for partners and commercial conduct, AI-generated contributions, the contributor agreement (CLA) and trainers and.

This page is for everyone who takes part in Exponential: contributors and maintainers, partners, trainers and advocates, and everyone in the community spaces. It explains the project's code of conduct in short. The binding text is the file CODE_OF_CONDUCT.md in the root of the repository (also on GitHub); where this page and the file differ, the file applies.

Contents

1. What the code is
2. Who it applies to
3. The standards in short
4. The Exponential additions
5. Reporting a problem
6. What can happen after a report
7. License and attribution

What the code is

The code of conduct is the Contributor Covenant, version 2.1, a code of conduct used by many open source projects, with four additions written for Exponential:

Part	What it covers
Contributor Covenant 2.1	The pledge, the standards of behavior, enforcement and the four steps of consequences
Partners and commercial conduct	Honesty with customers, fair competition, conflicts of interest, licenses, customer data
AI-generated contributions	Responsibility, disclosure, rights to what you submit, no unchecked floods
The contributor agreement (CLA)	Kernel contributions are a copyright assignment to the Exponential Foundation and 7x; honest authorship
Trainers and advocates	Accurate teaching, no false "official" claims, disclosure, safe and accessible events, privacy

Who it applies to

Who	Where
Contributors and maintainers	The repositories of the project and its extensions: code, documentation, translations, issues, pull requests and reviews
Partners	The companies of the Exponential Partner Program and their people, when they act in connection with Exponential
Community spaces	The forums, the chat channels, the issue trackers, the project's websites and social media, events about Exponential
Trainers and advocates	Everyone who teaches, presents or speaks for Exponential

It also applies when someone officially represents the community in public, for example with an official e-mail address or social media account, or as an appointed representative at an event.

The standards in short

Expected:

- Empathy and kindness toward other people.
- Respect for differing opinions, viewpoints and experiences.
- Giving and gracefully accepting constructive feedback.
- Accepting responsibility for mistakes, apologizing to those affected and learning from it.
- Focusing on what is best for the whole community.

Not acceptable:

- Sexualized language or imagery, and sexual attention or advances of any kind.
- Trolling, insulting or derogatory comments, and personal or political attacks.
- Public or private harassment.
- Publishing others' private information without their explicit permission.
- Other conduct that could reasonably be considered inappropriate in a professional setting.

The Exponential additions

Partners and commercial conduct

Commercial interests are welcome; they do not outrank the standards. Tell customers the truth about Exponential, your level and your certifications; compete fairly and compare on facts; disclose conflicts of interest such as a referral commission; respect the GPL and the GFDL; protect the personal data of customers and leads; use community spaces to help, not to advertise. The partner agreement adds its own terms, and under it 7x may end a partnership for violations. More: Partner code of conduct.

AI-generated contributions

Contributions made with AI tools are welcome on the same terms as any other. You are responsible for what you submit: read it, understand it, test it and be ready to explain it. Say when a substantial part was generated. Submit only what you have the right to submit. Do not

flood maintainers or community spaces with unchecked generated pull requests, issues or answers, and never post an unverified security report in public.

The contributor agreement (CLA)

Contributions to the core kernel need a signed CLA before they are merged. By signing it and submitting a kernel contribution, you assign the copyright in that contribution to the Exponential Foundation and 7x; your own custom extensions are not affected. Sign only for work you have the right to assign. Details: CONTRIBUTING.md, Copyright assignment (CLA).

Trainers and advocates

Teach and present accurately and with sources; do not call a course, a certificate or an event "official" unless it is; disclose your ties; make events welcoming and accessible and name a contact person for problems; publish no photos, recordings or names of participants without consent. More: Advocate conduct and ethics.

Reporting a problem

Write to **community@se7enx.com**. Describe what happened, where and when, and who was involved; add links or screenshots if you have them. Reports are reviewed and investigated promptly and fairly, and the privacy and security of the person who reports are respected. The **Exponential Foundation** decides (Who is the Exponential Foundation?).

A security vulnerability is not a conduct report: report it privately as `SECURITY.md` describes (SECURITY.md).

What can happen after a report

Step	Community impact	Consequence
1. Correction	Inappropriate language or other unprofessional or unwelcome behavior	A private, written warning that explains the violation; a public apology may be requested
2. Warning	A violation through a single incident or a series of actions	A warning, and no interaction with the people involved for a set time, in community spaces and outside them
3. Temporary ban	A serious violation, including sustained inappropriate behavior	A ban from any interaction or public communication with the community for a set time
4. Permanent ban	A pattern of violations, harassment of an individual, or aggression toward or disparagement of groups of people	A permanent ban from any public interaction in the community

Maintainers and moderators may also remove, edit or reject comments, commits, code, wiki edits, issues and other contributions that do not follow the code.

License and attribution

The code is adapted from the Contributor Covenant, version 2.1 (https://www.contributor-covenant.org/version/2/1/code_of_conduct.html), which is licensed under the Creative Commons Attribution 4.0 International license (CC BY 4.0). Its Community Impact Guidelines were inspired by Mozilla's code of conduct enforcement ladder. The

attribution is kept in `CODE_OF_CONDUCT.md`, as the license requires.

Related pages

- Contribute to the project
- Partner code of conduct
- Advocate conduct and ethics
- Growing the community
- Free documentation: this page is free to copy, translate and improve under the GNU FDL 1.3.

Give and donate: fund the work on Exponential

The "Give Support" page of exponential.earth explained - becoming a partner, donating, a sustaining support subscription, sponsoring new software from 7x, GitHub Sponsors for 7x and for the Exponential Foundation.

Exponential is free, but making it is not: releases, security fixes, PHP upgrades, documentation, translations and the community websites all take paid hours. The website's Give Support page names the ways to fund that work. This page explains each one, says which organization the money goes to, and connects it with the sponsor and supporter sections of this help.

Two organizations, one project

The project is developed by **7x**, a company, and operated by the **Exponential Foundation**, a nonprofit. Each has its own GitHub Sponsors page:

	7x	Exponential Foundation
GitHub Sponsors	https://github.com/sponsors/se7enxweb	https://github.com/sponsors/exponentialcms
Funds	The people who do the daily development and maintenance now	The open source project as such: documentation, community, long-term care

The full comparison, with sources, is on Two organizations, two sponsor pages.

The ways to give on the website

The Give Support page lists five, read in October 2026:

On the website	What it is	Where the link goes
Become an Exponential Partner	Join the network of official partners: companies that build, host or sell around Exponential and support the project in return	the partner application, https://exponential.earth/partner/apply
Donate to the Exponential Project	A donation through a GitHub Sponsors subscription	7x's sponsor page, https://sponsor.se7enx.com/

On the website	What it is	Where the link goes
Sustaining Support Subscription ("Become a GameChanger")	A monthly sponsorship that keeps the work going	7x on GitHub Sponsors, https://github.com/sponsors/se7enxweb
Sponsor Development of New Software	Pay 7x to build new software for a need you have	https://sponsor.se7enx.com/
GitHub Sponsors for 7x	Sponsor 7x directly on GitHub	https://github.com/sponsors/se7enxweb

> **Note**
>
> Every donation link on the Give Support page goes to 7x. The Foundation's own sponsor page, https://github.com/sponsors/exponentialcms, is linked from the website's community page ("Sponsor the Exponential Foundation") and from the Foundation's website. Choose the organization whose mission you want to fund, or split your gift between both.

The website's footer also links PayPal donations. Other channels, and a warning about requests for money through channels you cannot verify, are on Other ways to give.

Which one to choose

You are	Consider
A user whose site runs on Exponential	A small monthly sponsorship, to 7x or the Foundation
A company that earns money with Exponential	A larger sustaining sponsorship (Sponsoring as a company), or becoming a partner
A company that needs a feature	Sponsored development from 7x, and the result can come back to everyone
An agency, host or trainer	The partner program (Partners: start here)
Someone who wants a possible tax deduction in the United States	The Foundation, a 501(c)(3) nonprofit; ask your own tax adviser

Why it matters

The website's Project page says the project is funded by donations of time and resources by 7x and its sponsors. The build page puts it simply: if Exponential saves you time, helps you ship a project or earns you revenue, consider giving back. What the money pays for is described on What sponsorship funds; the recognition sponsors receive is on Sponsor recognition.

Giving without money

Not everyone can give money, and the website's FAQ says so too. Code, translations, documentation, testing, accessibility advice and answers in the forums are all gifts to the project: Contribute to the project, Ways to support Exponential.

Related pages

- Sponsors: start here
- Supporters: start here
- Who is the Exponential Foundation? and Who is 7x?
- Free documentation: this page is free to copy, translate and improve under the GNU FDL 1.3.

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About the project and its websites

The About pages of exponential.earth explained - what Exponential is, who leads and operates the project, the name change, the family of websites (exponential.earth, Share Exponential, Exponential Projects, eZpedia, the.

The About section of the project website describes the project, the people behind it and the websites around it. This page retells it, read in October 2026, and adds what the repository says where that is more precise.

What Exponential is

The website describes Exponential as an enterprise-grade open source content management system and development framework for web publishing, media portals, intranets, e-commerce and extranets: a flexible content engine at the core, a lot of functionality out of the box, and its real strength in how far it can be customized. It is free software written in PHP that runs on Linux, macOS, Windows and BSD. The website says it has been installed tens of thousands of times.

For the features in detail, see the README and Build with Exponential.

Who runs the project

- **7x leads it.** The website's Project page calls the project a community effort led by the company 7x, which fosters its growth, support and maintenance, and says the project is funded by donations of time and resources from 7x and its sponsors (Who is 7x?).
- **The Exponential Foundation operates it.** Every page of the website ends with "Developed by 7x" and says the project is operated by the Exponential Foundation, a public nonprofit corporation. The Foundation's mission, in the website's words, is to support the Exponential family of CMS and DXP projects and to educate, assist, guide and foster the growth of the software, its users and the community. Its website has two official addresses, foundation.exponential.earth and exponentialfoundation.earth (Who is the Exponential Foundation?).
- **The name.** The project used the name eZ Publish until 11 August 2025, when it changed to "Exponential" or "Exponential (CMS)" at the request of the owner of the old name; the website adds that the project is not associated with the original software's developer (

/about/project).

The family of websites

The website's Projects list names the sites 7x runs for the community:

Site	What it is for
exponential.earth	The project's home: news about the 6.0 releases, the FAQ, the roadmap, support and giving
share.exponential.earth	**Share Exponential**, the community gateway: forums, articles, blogs and tutorials from decades of community writing; also the official and the community roadmap
projects.exponential.earth	**Exponential Projects**, the project forge for extensions, designs and bundles: project news, reviews, screenshots, downloads, RSS feeds, group project management, notifications for tracked projects and Git or GitHub integration (chapter on Exponential Projects)
ezpedia.exponential.earth	**eZpedia**, the community wiki, built with Exponential
exponential.doc.exponential.earth	The **Exponential Documentation Project**: official and community documentation (Documentation sources)
basic.exponential.earth	Exponential Basic
platform.exponential.earth	The Exponential Platform distributions
foundation.exponential.earth	The Exponential Foundation
status.exponential.earth	Whether the project's services are up

The chats, social media and issue trackers are on Community channels.

The Exponential Translation Project

The Exponential Translation Project (ETP) restarted translation work for the whole family, including Exponential 6.0: first an inventory of which translations exist and how complete they are, then new languages, with the goal that every widely used language works out of the box. The state of each language in this repository is on Languages; how to help is on Contribute to the project.

The package server

The setup wizard installs site designs, extensions and demo content from **packages**. 7x hosts the package server that holds them, at `exponential.packages.exponential.earth`, with a mirror of its contents on GitHub in se7enxweb/exponential.packages.exponential.earth (/about/packages). You can propose your own site package by forking that repository and sending a pull request, the website says; how, step by step: Contribute your site package.

> **Note**
>
> The website's packages page shows a `settings/override/package.ini.append.php` that points the wizard at the 6.0.9 folder of the server, and says this is the default since 6.0.10. You do not need it: Exponential 6.0.15 already sets `RemotePackagesIndexURL` to the 6.0.15 folder of the same server in `settings/package.ini`. Only add an override if you

> want a different server or folder.

The public demo

demo.exponential.earth shows the latest Exponential 6 with the responsive 7x Simple design and a shop, and edit.demo.exponential.earth lets you try the administration; the website's community page gives the sign-in details. The demo's files, database and software are reset every day.

Powered by Exponential

The website offers a "Powered by Exponential" banner, as PNG and WebP, for sites built with Exponential to show their pride and promote the software (/about/powered-by). Partners have their own rules for marks and logos (Powered by Exponential for partners).

Free software and open source

The website stresses that Exponential is free and open source software under the GNU GPL, and invites its users to support the Free Software Foundation's work. It asks open source developers to contribute a pull request or file an issue. What the license means in practice: Licensing questions.

Related pages

- The Exponential project: start here
- Who is the Exponential Foundation?
- Who is 7x?
- Free documentation: this page is free to copy, translate and improve under the GNU FDL 1.3.

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Documentation sources: where to read about Exponential

Every documentation source the Documentation page of exponential.earth lists, with what each

covers, how current it is and how to use it next to this help - the documentation website, the free books, the articles on.

The Documentation page of the project website lists the places where Exponential is documented. Some are current, some describe releases from many years ago and are kept because their concepts still hold. This page lists them all, read in October 2026, says what each is good for, and how to use them next to this help.

Start with this help

This help is the documentation of the release you are running: it is the folder `doc/` of the installation, shown in the administration, and it changes with every change to the software. Where an older source and this help disagree about the software, trust this help and the 6.0.15 changelog. It is free documentation (Free documentation).

Current sources

Source	What it covers	Address
The documentation website	The Exponential 6 installation documentation and the technical manual (concepts, templates, configuration), together with documentation of the Exponential Platform 5 line. `doc.exponential.earth` leads to the same site.	https://exponential.doc.exponential.earth/
Installation, 6.x	The website's newest section, the installation of Exponential 6	Installation
Share Exponential articles	Articles on key subjects collected over many years	https://share.exponential.earth/learn
eZpedia	The community wiki that anyone can edit after signing in	https://ezpedia.exponential.earth/
ExponentialCMSInsights	Videos about Exponential on YouTube	https://www.youtube.com/@ExponentialCMSInsights
Training	The website's collection of training material and developer knowledge sharing	https://exponential.earth/doc/training
Featured articles	Articles and blog posts about Exponential from around the web, with an RSS feed	https://exponential.earth/doc/exponential-featured

The free books

The website offers free books as PDF downloads on its books page, starting with "Learning eZ Publish", written when the software still had its old name. Three books are kept in se7enxweb repositories, two of them under the GNU Free Documentation License; the chapter Learning from the free books lists them and has a table that maps what the books describe to how Exponential 6 does it today.

Older manuals, still useful for concepts

These describe much older releases. Their concepts (content classes and objects, the node tree, templates, overrides, siteaccesses, extensions) still apply; their installation steps, PHP

versions and version numbers do not.

Source	What it is	Address
Exponential Core Documentation	A refined copy of the usage documentation of the 3.0 to 3.4 era	https://doc.core.exponential.earth/
Exponential SDK Documentation	A short introduction to the concepts and APIs, with usage examples, from the 3.0 to 3.2 era	https://doc.sdk.exponential.earth/
Core concepts by Martin Bauer	An overview of the system's core concepts by an early author	martinbauer.com
Share Exponential: articles on the old name	Articles written when the software was still called eZ Publish	https://share.exponential.earth/learn/ez-publish
Mugo documentation	Documentation of the software under its old name, kept by Mugo Web, a long-time contributor	https://ezpublishdoc.mugo.ca/
The older FAQ	The FAQ of the archived documentation, which the website calls "a bit older in age"	https://doc.ezpublishlegacy.se7enx.com/FAQ.html

The website notes that Exponential is compatible with the documentation and software examples written for eZ Publish. In practice this holds for templates, the content model and the extension API; check PHP code against the PHP versions you run, and installation steps against the installation book.

Libraries Exponential uses

Exponential uses the expcomponents, its own fork (since 6.0.15) of the Zeta Components, a set of PHP libraries for tasks such as mail, archives, the database and configuration. The class names and APIs did not change in the fork, so the Zeta Components documentation, with many examples, still describes them: zetacomponents.org. Each fork's repository (`github.com/se7enxweb/expcomponents-<name>`) has the same documentation in its `docs/` folder and its own release notes.

How to use them together

1. Search this help first: it matches your release.
2. For a concept explained at length, read the books or the older manuals.
3. For a practical recipe, search eZpedia and the Share articles, then compare with this help.
4. If something is still unclear, ask (Getting support), and when you find the answer, add it to eZpedia or to this help so the next person finds it (Contribute to the project).

Related pages

- The Exponential project: start here
- The help for editors and users
- Learning from the free books
- Free documentation: this page is free to copy, translate and improve under the GNU FDL

1.3.

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