Public LFN FAQ:

What is the LFN?
Created January 1, 2018, the LF Networking Fund (LFN) is a new entity that integrates the governance of participating projects in order to enhance operational excellence, simplify member engagement, and increase collaboration across open source networking projects and standards bodies.

Why is the Linux Foundation creating the LF Networking Fund?
This is a natural evolution, and was requested by several members. The Linux Foundation is already hosting 9 of the top 10 networking projects. It is in the best interest of our members, developers, and users to provide the most efficient integration of end-to-end stacks (edge to core, hardware to software, etc.). The main goals of the LFN are to simplify engagement for members, enhance operational excellence, and identify opportunities for greater collaboration among LFN projects and related open source standards groups.

Are all networking projects hosted by the LF now under the umbrella?
No. The Linux Foundation will continue to work with independent projects based on the preferences of their members and their technical community. So joining the LFN umbrella is optional and at the discretion of each individual project. The project boards may elect to join at any time, based on timing, governance vision and goals of member stakeholders. All non-LFN networking projects maintain the same relationship with the LF as they have had to date.

Which projects are members of the LF Networking umbrella?
- FD.io
- ONAP
- OpenDaylight
- OPNFV
- PDNA
- SNAS

Does this mean individual projects will no longer operate independently?
The technical communities of our umbrella projects will remain independent and continue to develop according to their own road maps and timetables. However, there is a unified governance model, where funding and ops/marketing staffing resources are held in common.

Do you expect to recruit other projects to join LFN?
Yes. We will continue to evaluate high-value new projects as they emerge. In each case, we seek to understand how a potential project will meaningfully improve the networking industry and society, with input from key groups of potential users.

Moving forward, can new projects still join as independent projects, or do they have to opt in to LFN?
Projects are not required to join the umbrella. The Linux Foundation is open to working with projects through the new LFN structure or as independent projects if that is what their supporters and leaders determine is the right fit.

Governance

What is the new governance and membership structure for LFN? Are there membership tiers?

There are three membership tiers, platinum, gold and silver. Associate members of the LF may also join LFN as associate members; these are typically other non-profits, such as standards bodies. As in other projects, the higher tiers have more representation at the governing board level, but anyone, including non-members, can participate in the technical community. Individual projects will maintain their respective TSC charters, which provide for meritocratic leadership.

Can member organizations still join individual projects, or do they have to join LFN?
Organizations interested in any of the umbrella projects will join LFN--at the same cost as they would have previously seen for a single individual project. They then have insight and input across the range of umbrella projects. As the portfolio and their own engagement evolves, we expect that members will find that their interests will increasingly span several projects. Membership in non-LFN projects will be maintained separately.

What is the process for joining LFN?
A prospective member must be a member of the Linux Foundation at any level, and then may fill out the application to join LF Networking at the desired level (Platinum, Gold, Silver, and Associate). Fill out the membership inquiry form to learn more.

Describe the new governance structure for LFN.
The Governing Board is responsible for prioritizing the allocation of resources across the LFN portfolio. A Technical Advisory Council (TAC) and a Marketing Advisory Council (MAC) support the Board in its decision-making process. The Board includes representatives from member organizations, as well as the TAC and Committer Representatives, who are elected from the technical communities.

Describe the TAC and MAC.
TAC members include representatives from each member project and a representative from each Platinum member. Once formed, the TAC annually will elect a TAC chair, who will also sit on the governing board. The MAC has a similar structure.

Who is leading the new LFN? Are there any leadership changes?
There are no leadership changes. LFN leaders include:

- Arpit Joshipura, General Manager, Networking & Orchestration, Linux Foundation
- Phil Robb, Vice President of Operations - Networking & Orchestration, Linux Foundation
- Heather Kirksey, VP Community and Ecosystem Development, Linux Foundation

Does LFN impact intellectual property licenses? Do all the projects adhere to the same license?
No, they do not. LFN does not mandate a specific license, other than an OSI-approved license.