

Research Questions

How do **code and communication practices** in open source communities shape each other?

How do **code and emergent value practices** in open-source communities shape each other?

Methods

Open source quantum software library ; 200 contributors

35–40 semi-structured interviews planned, 11 interviews done so far

30–36 bi-weekly meeting observations planned, 8 meetings observed so far

Participation and code contributions to the community planned

Ongoing thematic analysis of interviews, fieldnotes, and GitHub trace data

Code is a fussy communicator

“You can ask whoever wrote the code to explain what it does to you but that is sometimes a crapshoot...one person’s explanation and how they understand their own code might not make sense to someone else”

Code is sticky and perpetuates values

“...Every project has its own micro-culture... Do we use data classes or not... object-oriented design or functional... all these little things are kind of subjective... there is no... like one bible... prescribe this... and it is really influenced by the original creators who have strong opinions on this”

Code is modular with interdependencies ; think lego

“ ... It [convention change] was pretty early on... and we felt comfortable... at this point...[when library is mature]... such a change would be unfathomable”

Code’s Affordances: Coding practices in an Open Source Community

Nandini Sharma
The University of Texas at Austin



TEXAS
The University of Texas at Austin