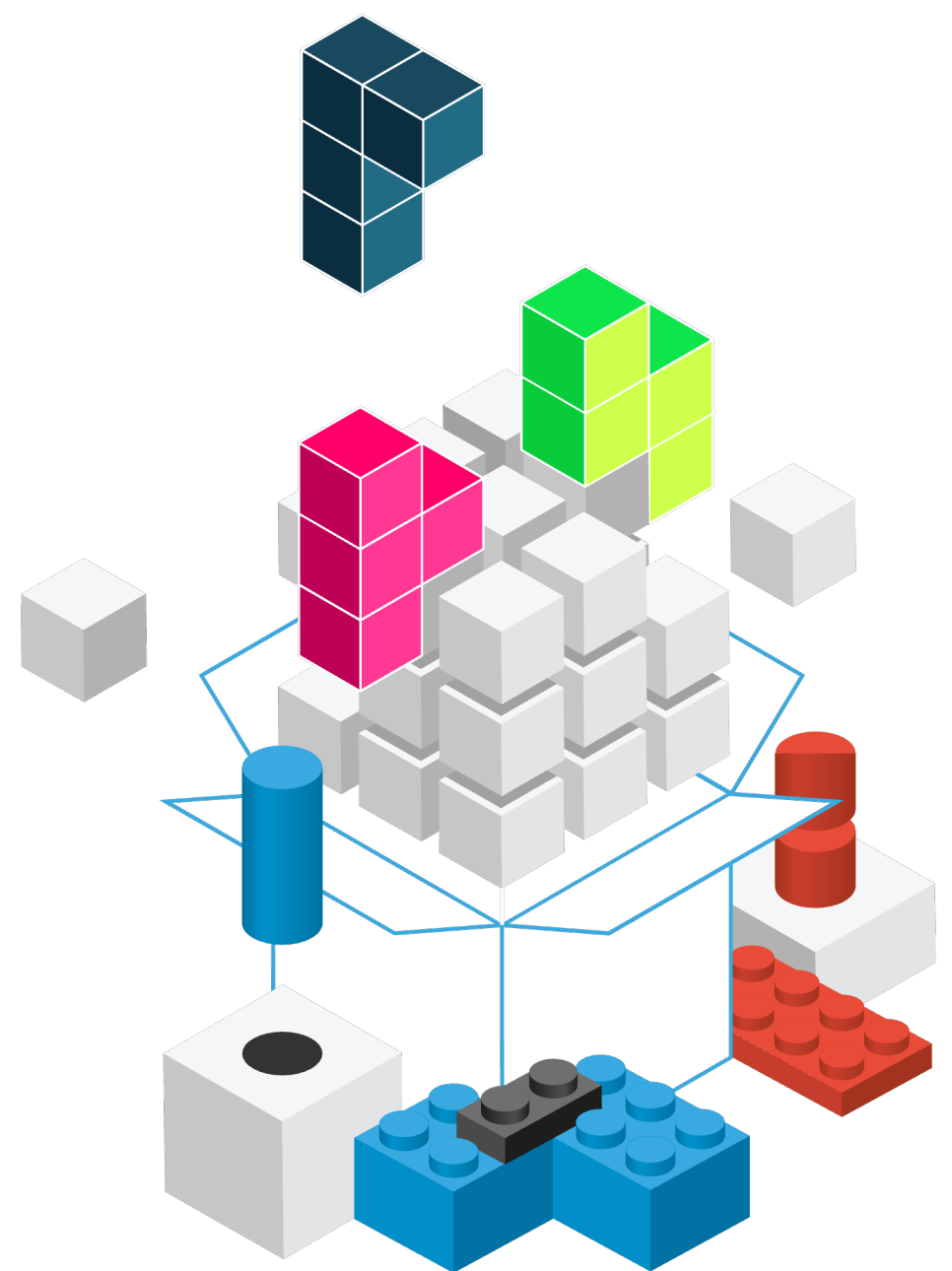


<WA1/>
<AW1/>
2023

Forms

The Foundations of User Interaction

Fulvio Corno
Luigi De Russis
Enrico Masala





<https://react.dev/reference/react-dom/components#form-components>

Full Stack React, Chapter “Forms”

React Handbook, Chapter “JSX”

Forms, Events and Event Handlers

FORMS IN JSX

HTML Forms

- (Native) HTML Forms are *inconsistent*: different ways of handling values, events etc. depending on the type of input element
 - Consequence of backward compatibility
- For instance:
 - `onChange` on a radio button is not easy to handle
 - `value` in a `textarea` does not work, etc.
- React flattens this behavior exposing (via JSX) a more uniform interface
 - Synthetic Events

Value in JSX forms

- The **value** attribute always holds the current value of the field
- The `defaultValue` attribute holds the default value that was set when the field was created
- This also applies to
 - `textarea`: the content is in the `value` attribute; it is NOT to be taken from the actual content of the `<textarea>...</textarea>` tag
 - `select`: do not use the `<option selected>` syntax, but `<select value='id' >`

Change Events in JSX Forms

- React provides a more consistent **onChange** event
- By passing a function to the `onChange` attribute you can subscribe to events on form fields (every time `value` changes)
- `onChange` fires when typing a single character into an `input` or `textarea` field
- It works consistently across fields: even `radio`, `select` and `checkbox` input fields fire a `onChange` event

Event Handlers

- An Event Handler callback function is called with one parameter: an **event object**
- All event objects have a standard set of properties
 - **event.target**: *source* of the event
- Some events, depending on categories, have more specific properties

Synthetic Events

<https://react.dev/reference/react-dom/components/common#react-event-object>

- “High level events” wrap the corresponding DOM Events
- Same attributes as DOMEvent
- **target** points to the source of the event.
- In case of a *form element*
 - target.**value** = current input value
 - target.**name** = input element name

```
boolean bubbles
boolean cancelable
DOMEventTarget currentTarget
boolean defaultPrevented
number eventPhase
boolean isTrusted
DOMEvent nativeEvent
void preventDefault()
boolean isDefaultPrevented()
void stopPropagation()
boolean isPropagationStopped()
DOMEventTarget target
number timeStamp
string type
```

Synthetic Events

<https://reactjs.org/docs/events.html>

Category	Events
Clipboard	onCopy onCut onPaste
Composition	onCompositionEnd onCompositionStart onCompositionUpdate
Keyboard	onKeyDown onKeyPress onKeyUp
Focus	onFocus onBlur
Form	onChange onInput onInvalid onReset onSubmit
Generic	onError onLoad
Mouse	onClick onContextMenu onDoubleClick onDrag onDragEnd onDragEnter onDragExit onDragLeave onDragOver onDragStart onDrop onMouseDown onMouseEnter onMouseLeave onMouseMove onMouseOut onMouseOver onMouseUp
Pointer	onPointerDown onPointerMove onPointerUp onPointerCancel onGotPointerCapture onLostPointerCapture onPointerEnter onPointerLeave onPointerOver onPointerOut
Selection	onSelect
Touch	onTouchCancel onTouchEnd onTouchMove onTouchStart
UI	onScroll
Wheel	onWheel
Media	onAbort onCanPlay onCanPlayThrough onDurationChange onEmptied onEncrypted onEnded onError onLoadedData onLoadedMetadata onLoadStart onPause onPlay onPlaying onProgress onRateChange onSeeked onSeeking onStalled onSuspend onTimeUpdate onVolumeChange onWaiting
Image	onLoad onError
Animation	onAnimationStart onAnimationEnd onAnimationIteration
Transition	onTransitionEnd

Tip: Defining Event Handlers

- Define the function as...
 - an arrow function
 - a function expression

```
const handler = () => { ... }
```



```
handler = function() { ... }
```



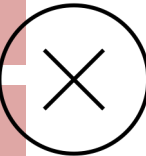
Tip: Defining Event Handlers

- Pass the *name* of the function as a prop
 - As a function object (not string)
 - Don't *call* the function

```
return <div handler={handler} />
```



```
return <div handler={handler()} />
```



```
return <div handler='handler' />
```

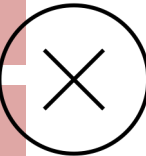
Tip: Defining Event Handlers

- Specify the *name* of the function prop in the event handler
- If you need to pass *parameters*, use an *arrow* function

```
return <button onClick=  
  {props.handler} />
```



```
return <button onClick=  
  {props.handler()} />
```



```
return <button onClick=  
  {props.handler(a, b)} />
```

```
return <button onClick=  
  {()=>props.handler()} />
```



```
return <button onClick=  
  {()=>props.handler(a, b)} />
```



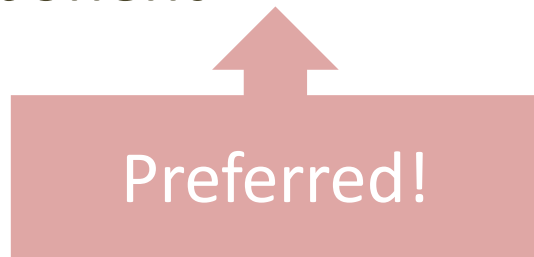
Who Owns The State?

- Form elements are **inherently stateful**: they hold a value
 - Input text form, selection, etc.
- React components are designed to handle the state
- The props and state are used to render the component
 - To correctly render the component from the virtual DOM, React needs to know which value must be set in the form element
 - Hence, on every change (onChange) React *must be notified* to get the new value and update the component state

Where Is The Source of Truth?

Controlled Form Components

- When the React component holds, in its state, the value to be shown in the form element, it is named a **controlled** form component



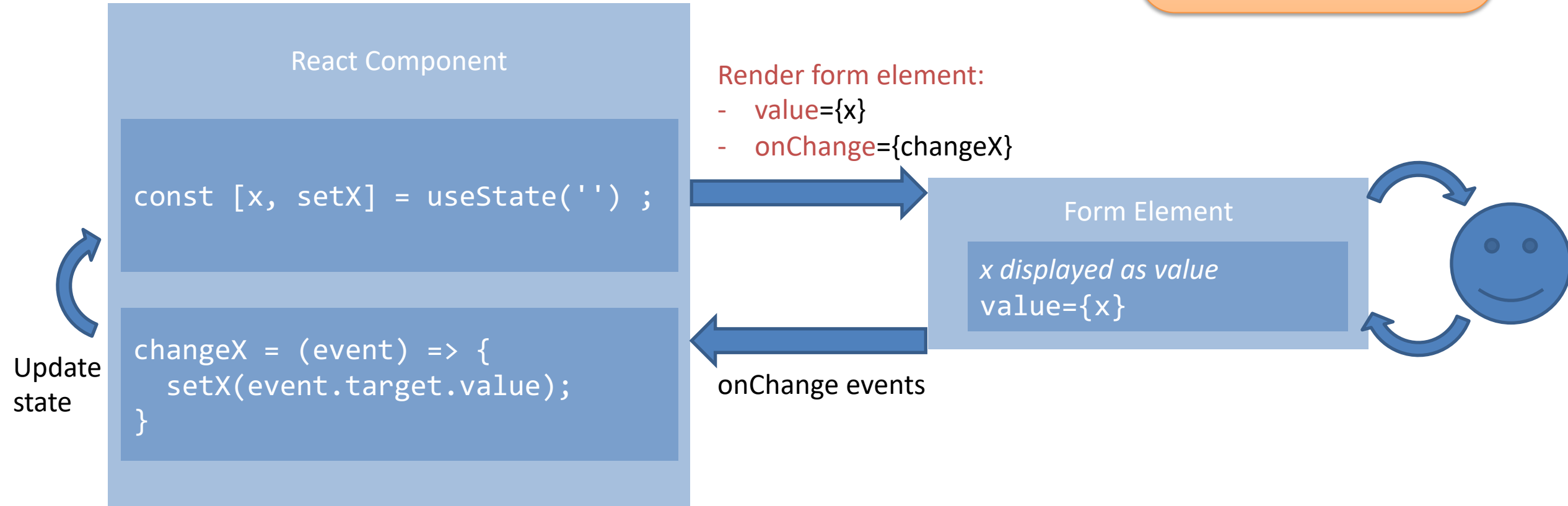
Uncontrolled Form Components

- In some occasions, it could be useful to keep the value directly in the HTML form element in the DOM: **uncontrolled** form component

Controlled Form Components



Setting value +
onChange makes the
form component fully
controlled



Controlled Form Component

- The event handler changes the state, `setXXX()` starts the update of the virtual DOM that then updates the actual DOM content

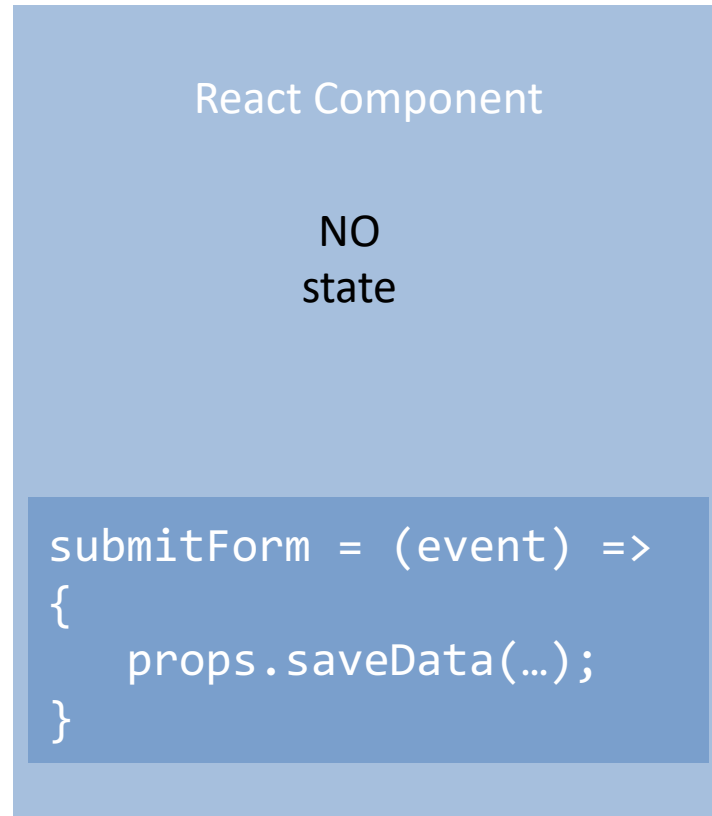
```
function MyForm (props) {  
  const [name, setName] = useState();  
  return <form onSubmit={handleSubmit}>  
    <label> Name:  
      <input type="text" value={name}  
        onChange={handleChange} />  
    </label>  
    <input type="submit" value="Submit" />  
  </form> ;  
}
```

```
handleSubmit = (event) => {  
  console.log('Name submitted: ' +  
    name);  
  event.preventDefault();  
}  
  
handleChange = (event) => {  
  setName(event.target.value) ;  
};
```

Uncontrolled Form Components

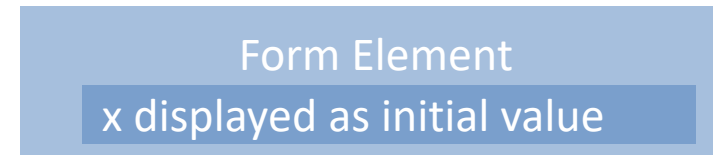


Not setting value +
onChange makes the
form component
uncontrolled

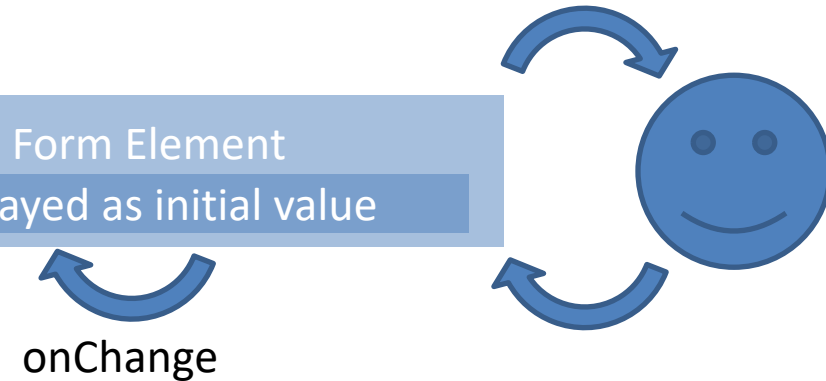


Render Form Element

- `defaultValue={props.x}`
- `onSubmit={submitForm}`



onSubmit



onChange

Uncontrolled components
will not be described

Tip: Form Submission

- The `onSubmit` event is generated by the `<form>` element
- Always call `event.preventDefault()` to avoid the submission (and reloading of the page)
- Perform *validation of all form data* before proceeding
 - Using checks on state variables (on a controlled component, they contain updated information)
 - May use validator <https://github.com/validatorjs/validator.js>

Alternatives to Controlled Form Components

- Sometimes, it is tedious to use controlled form components
 - Need to write an event handler for every way data can change
 - Pipe all of the input state through a React component
- Alternatively, use a **library** such as Formik
 - Keep things organized without hiding them too much
 - Form state is inherently ephemeral and local: does not use state management solutions (e.g., Redux/Flux) which would unnecessarily complicate things
 - Includes validation, keeping track of the visited fields, and handling form submission
 - <https://jaredpalmer.com/formik>

Tips: Handling Arrays in State

- React `setXXX()` with arrays requires that a new array is returned (cannot mutate the current state)
 - What is the correct way to handle arrays in React state?
- Use a new array as the value of the property
 - When referencing objects, use a *new object* every time a property changes
- Use a callback to ensure no modifications are missed
- Typical cases -- mostly triggered by form events
 - Add items
 - Update items
 - Remove items

<https://www.robinwieruch.de/react-state-array-add-update-remove>

Adding Items in array-valued state

```
// Append at the end: use .concat()
// NO .push(): it returns the number of
// elements, not the array
...

const [list, setList] = useState(['a',
  'b', 'c']);
...

setList(oldList =>
  return oldList.concat(newItem);
)
```

```
// Insert value(s) at the beginning
// use spread operator
...

const [list, setList] = useState(['a',
  'b', 'c']);
...

setList(oldList =>
  return [newItem, ...oldList];
)
```

<https://www.robinwieruch.de/react-state-array-add-update-remove>

Updating Items in array-valued state

```
// Update item: use map()
...
const [list, setList] = useState([11, 42, 32]);
...
// i is the index of the element to update
setList(oldList => {
  const list = oldList.map((item, j) => {
    if (j === i) {
      return item + 1; // update the item
    } else {
      return item;
    }
  });
  return list ;
});
```

<https://www.robinwieruch.de/react-state-array-add-update-remove>

Updating Items in array-of-objects state

```
// Update item: use map(); if items are objects, always return a new object if modified
...
const [list, setList] = useState([ {id:3, val:'Foo'}, {id:5, val:'Bar'} ]);
...
// i is the id of the item to update
setList(oldList => {
  const list = oldList.map((item) => {
    if (item.id === i) {
      // item.val='NewVal'; return item; // WRONG: the old object must not be reused
      return {id:item.id, val:'NewVal'}; // return a new object: do not simply change content
    } else {
      return item;
    }
  });
  return list ;
});
```

Removing Items in array-valued state

```
// Remove item: use filter()

...
const [list, setList] = useState([11, 42,
32]);
...

// i is the index of the element to remove
setList(oldList=> {
  return oldList.filter(
    (item, j) => i !== j );
});
```

```
// Remove first item(s): use destructuring

...
const [list, setList] = useState([11, 42,
32]);
...

setList(oldList => {
  const [first, ...list] = oldList;
  return list ;
});
```

<https://www.robinwieruch.de/react-state-array-add-update-remove>

Tip: Heuristics for State Lifting

- Presentational components
 - Forms, Tables, Lists, Widgets, ...
 - Should contain **local state** to represent their display property
 - Sort order, open/collapsed, active/paused, ...
 - Such state is *not interesting outside* the component
- Application components (or Container components)
 - Manage the information and the application logic
 - Usually don't directly generate markup, generate props or context
 - Most **application state** is “lifted up” to a **Container**
 - Centralizes the updates, single source of State truth



License

- These slides are distributed under a Creative Commons license “**Attribution-NonCommercial-ShareAlike 4.0 International (CC BY-NC-SA 4.0)**”
- **You are free to:**
 - **Share** — copy and redistribute the material in any medium or format
 - **Adapt** — remix, transform, and build upon the material
 - The licensor cannot revoke these freedoms as long as you follow the license terms.
- **Under the following terms:**
 - **Attribution** — You must give [appropriate credit](#), provide a link to the license, and [indicate if changes were made](#). You may do so in any reasonable manner, but not in any way that suggests the licensor endorses you or your use.
 - **NonCommercial** — You may not use the material for [commercial purposes](#).
 - **ShareAlike** — If you remix, transform, or build upon the material, you must distribute your contributions under the [same license](#) as the original.
 - **No additional restrictions** — You may not apply legal terms or [technological measures](#) that legally restrict others from doing anything the license permits.
- <https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-sa/4.0/>

