



2025

Annual Report

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Who we are

The Open Home Foundation is an independent, Swiss-based nonprofit organization, fighting for the fundamental principles of **privacy**, **choice**, and **sustainability** for smart homes. And for every person who lives in one.



An alternative to Big Tech

The Open Home Foundation represents the main alternative to Big Tech in the smart home space. Its efforts are built around the free, open source software Home Assistant, which allows people to design and operate smart homes based on local control of data, open systems, and a high degree of personalization and flexibility. Other Open Home Foundation flagship projects include ESPHome and Music Assistant.

A key goal of the organization is to give the community of people who live in smart homes the power to help shape the future of the industry. This includes broadening community involvement by offering numerous opportunities for direct user feedback—and by empowering everyone to contribute to open source designs, features, and its public roadmap.

One of the major challenges to achieving this goal is that the Open Home Foundation, in more deeply integrating volunteer contributors and exploring partnerships with for-profit companies, is pioneering new approaches to software development and governance. As a result, it often lacks peers with whom to exchange experiences and ideas, and to co-develop best practices. Many of its initiatives are being developed from scratch.



Privacy



Choice



Sustainability



Home Assistant



Music Assistant



ESPHome



How we operate

To address these challenges and maintain the foundation's independence and long-term viability, we have developed a specialized funding and labor model designed to protect open source projects from external corporate influence and interests.

Our partner model

The foundation is funded primarily via revenue governed by Partner Agreements (legally structured as “Partner” contracts). Throughout this report, these entities are referred to as “commercial partners” to distinguish them from the foundation's technical collaborators and “Works with Home Assistant” (WWHA) partners.

This model is built on two core pillars:

Single-direction support:

funding and support flow in a single direction—from commercial partners to the Open Home Foundation. The foundation holds no financial obligation to its commercial partners.

Mission alignment:

commercial partners are contractually required to contribute a majority of their profits from products licensing Open Home Foundation project names and logos to the foundation. This ensures the foundation's activities are governed solely by its principles of privacy, choice, and sustainability.

Why we invest in people

As mandated by Art. 2 of the Open Home Foundation's public deed, the foundation's purpose is to provide society with “knowledge, technology, and tools.” Because open source projects (and the software code they comprise) require constant maintenance, development, and security updates to remain useful, the foundation's primary “asset” isn't the code itself, but the human expertise required to maintain and promote it.

In 2025 we invested more than 60% of our revenue to support 52 salaried staff. These expert individuals provide the operational continuity, project promotion, and security that volunteer efforts alone cannot guarantee at scale.





What we do

Our work is split into three primary areas:

Development

By creating a home for more than 250 open source projects, standards, drivers, and libraries, the Open Home Foundation is building a new governance model for ensuring the sustainable development of software, hardware, and systems that put users in control. Its approach aims to strengthen the long-term survival of important, user-centric, user-developed smart home projects, and protects such projects from the influence of corporate interests.

Community

By collaborating on external projects that the Open Home Foundation does not own—but which align with its principles—the foundation extends its support to the broader smart home community, serving the public good. This work fosters a healthy ecosystem of smart home projects and organizations, and ensures that the Open Home Foundation's impact reaches beyond its own users. In addition, the Open Home Foundation helps fund and support independent projects it considers critical to both its own community and the broader smart home landscape. Finally, the foundation organizes community events and initiatives to foster two-way interaction and a constant flow of information between the Open Home Foundation and those who use and contribute to its projects.

Advocacy

The Open Home Foundation is a voice for people who live in or visit smart homes, promoting the principles of **privacy, choice, and sustainability**. It does this by investigating these topic areas and publishing its findings and positions in order to influence internal activities—and industry stakeholders. It also participates in the broader, public discussion of these topics, supports and conducts primary academic research, and uses its collective expertise to research and articulate its user-focused principles.

2025 Highlights

This was a year of transition for the Open Home Foundation, both in terms of major achievements, and major changes to governance. Here are our highlights:

Development

- ▲ Made Home Assistant more approachable to new users, increasing the number of smart homes that respect privacy, choice, and sustainability by 28 percent year-over-year to more than 2 million active installations worldwide.
- ▲ Protected open ecosystems by accepting ownership of key projects such as Music Assistant, Home Assistant Community Store (HACS), Z-Wave JS, matter.js, and microWakeWord.
- ▲ Added an Ecosystem department, dedicated to projects that were previously under-represented or under-resourced within the Home Assistant department.
- ▲ Created a smart home device database (for launch in 2026).
- ▲ Attained official Connectivity Standards Alliance Matter certification for Home Assistant and the Open Home Foundation Matter Server.
- ▲ Initiated development of the open audio standard Sendspin (for launch in 2026).
- ▲ Added two newly licensed products to the Open Home Foundation portfolio via commercial partner Nabu Casa (Home Assistant Connect ZWA-2 and ZBT-2)—increasing foundation and community funding.
- ▲ Welcomed Apollo Automation as our second commercial partner, expanding the official hardware ecosystem to products licensed under ESPHome, and extending support to people in the community who have a wider range of technical abilities.

Community

- Instituted Community Sync meetings, opening major project planning to community members—a process previously exclusive to salaried staff.
- Created the Smart Home Device Research Program: an initiative for community members to evaluate smart home hardware for interoperability, sustainability, and privacy compliance.
- Completed a major community survey to find out what Home Assistant users are happy about, unsatisfied with, and interested in addressing.
- Organized the Open Home Foundation Summit, welcoming people to a three-day event in Dublin, Ireland.
- Organized Community Day, with 82 in-person events around the globe and 1,600 registered visitors—hosted by volunteers from within the community.
- Planned three major in-person events to take place in 2026: State of the Open Home, Open Home Foundation Summit, and IFA 2026.
- Formalized policy for Open Home Foundation-hosted community meetups as a regular part of community operations.
- Donated €24,000: €8,000 to aio-lib, €8,000 to Alpine Linux, and €8,000 to Buildroot.

Advocacy

- Launched an independent working group tasked with researching, communicating, and upholding the Open Home Foundation's stance on internal policy and principles.
- Published “Privacy in the Smart Home,” the first of three primary position papers.
- Increased participation in the Connectivity Standards Alliance in order to amplify the voices of people who live in smart homes as the Matter standard is created, refined, and maintained.

A message from our president



Paulus Schoutsen
President of the
Open Home Foundation

“As we like to say, we are a **community of communities.**”

In 2025, the Open Home Foundation undertook a major transition in terms of its structure and governance. This has improved efficiency and reduced the risk of conflicts of interest.

Though we founded this organization in April 2024—to create a bulwark against surveillance capitalism, the risk of buyout, and open source projects becoming abandonware—2025 is when the Open Home Foundation really became a force to be reckoned with.

I'm proud to say that in 2025 our revenue rose to 8.84 million Swiss francs (CHF). The vast majority of this, more than 5.58 million CHF, was invested in the stewardship of open source projects owned by the Open Home Foundation via salaried staff. These experts manage essential operations, security, and project promotion, ensuring the foundation has the professional continuity required to help fulfill our mission. This strategic investment ensures volunteer staff are not burdened with administrative or infrastructure demands, but are instead

empowered to focus on the creative contributions that benefit the greater smart home community.

All this goes a long way towards strengthening digital sovereignty for both individuals and communities. In a time of increasing instability, we think this is more important than ever.

A community shortfall

As we like to say, we are a community of communities. Our salaried staff ensure continuity and support for the real heroes of our industry: the mostly volunteer force of contributors who grind away, often after their normal workdays have ended, to make Home Assistant, ESPHome, Music Assistant, and the ecosystem of projects that has emerged around them (including those not owned by or benefitting the Open Home Foundation) such a success. In 2025, Home Assistant continued to grow, reaching an estimated 2.28¹ million homes powered by the platform!

¹ Data from analytics using an estimated 4x multiplier.

These achievements, however, came at some cost. Largely because of how much energy we spent reorganizing the Open Home Foundation in the first part of 2025, it took longer than originally planned to prioritize our work supporting the greater smart home community, and figuring out how to better facilitate communication and collaboration across salaried staff, volunteer staff, and our community of users.

While by most measures the Open Home Foundation funds and supports its volunteer community, and has integrated it into our organization, to a degree few of our peers achieve—we have lofty aspirations, and think we can do even better.

So how do we improve in 2026?

- We will launch a **Community department²** dedicated to supporting salaried and volunteer staff, and users of Open Home Foundation and related projects. It will organize more community events, solicit ideas and criticism, and open a channel for a more regular, two-way flow of information.
- We will **formalize the relationship between volunteers and the foundation.** We will integrate volunteer staff more deeply into the Open Home Foundation so they can have a direct impact on our daily activities—and we can focus more resources, from funding to infrastructure, to support what they are doing.
- We will **prioritize efforts to build in the open³,** making a commitment to explore how open source software can be efficiently and transparently co-developed by salaried staff, volunteer developers, and non-technical members of the greater smart home community. Not everything we do and discuss can be made public, but we're hoping we can challenge the current status quo, push boundaries, and work towards a better, more transparent way to develop software than anyone else is doing right now.
- We will **direct a part of a financial surplus generated in 2025 to 2026's** community funding.

² Launched February 2026

³ Announced April 2026 at State of the Open Home



Governance gets a revamp

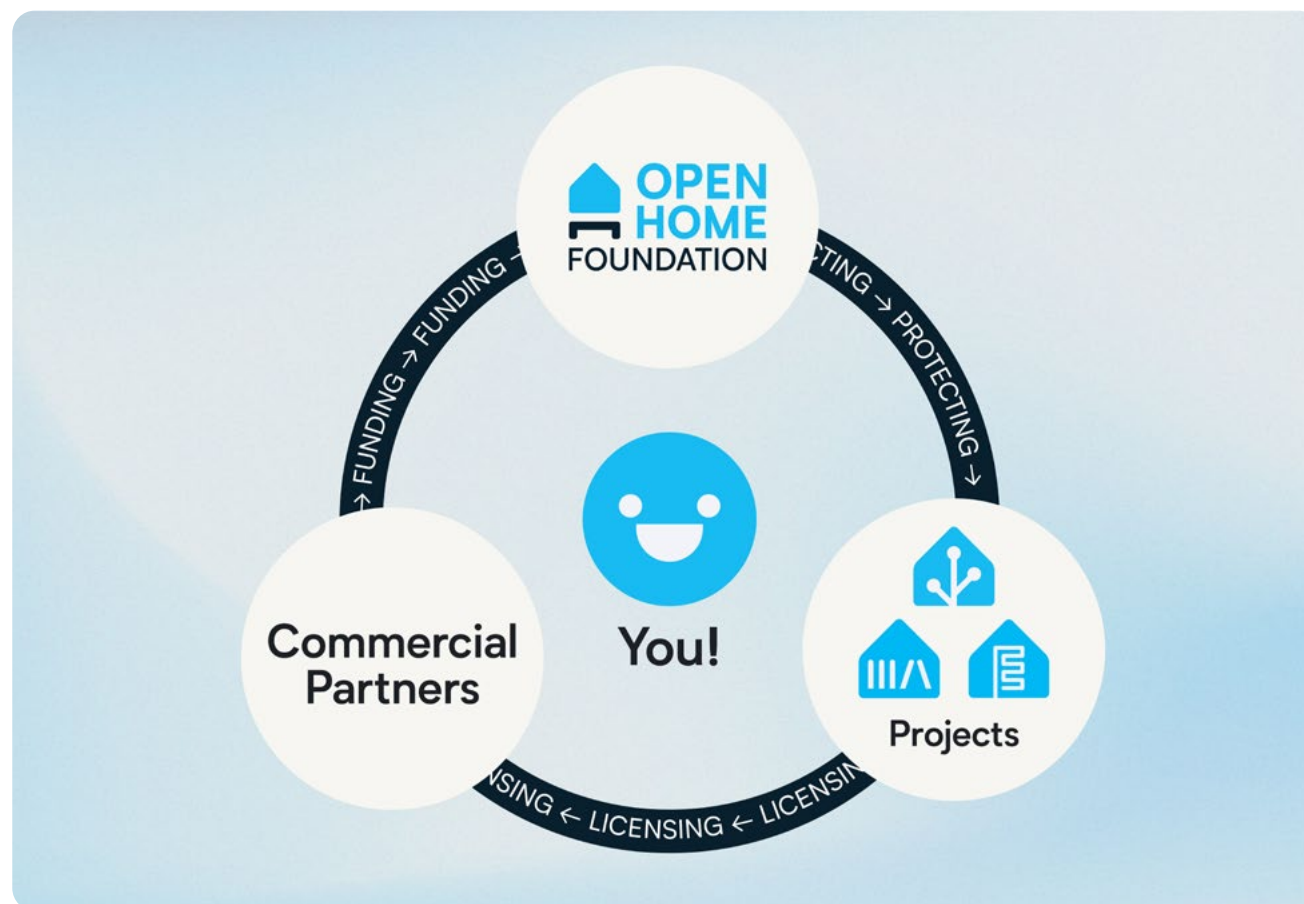
This year we revisited how the Open Home Foundation, its commercial partners (which fund most of our work), and our staff are organized. When we were founded, most of our current salaried staff had been working at Nabu Casa—at the time our only commercial partner. The majority of them were already dedicating their full-time efforts towards open source, non-revenue-generating projects supported by the Open Home Foundation. Launching the foundation only formalized their use of time.

In 2025 we took the next step in our evolution by officially moving those people over to the Open Home Foundation itself. Everyone who is paid to work on Open Home Foundation projects today is a member of salaried staff or an independent contractor of the Open Home Foundation, rather than any of our commercial partners.

The upside is that it's clearer than ever—legally, ethically, and philosophically—who works on and is responsible for what. And just as importantly, it is now the Open Home Foundation that decides what work gets done and how it is prioritized. This has resolved the significant potential for real

or perceived conflicts of interest between the foundation and its first commercial partner. This shift has also allowed us to add a second commercial partner, Apollo Automation, diversifying and strengthening our sources of revenue.

The circular relationship between our community, the foundation, our projects, and commercial partners.



Advocacy empowered

At the end of 2025 we created a Policy & Principles Working Group—dedicating space within our organization to researching and articulating our principles, and standing up for our users, both internally and in the broader public discourse.

It is an independent body tasked with helping us explore and live up to our ideals—playing a watchdog role internally. The group answers directly to the Board of the Open Home Foundation, and acts as a resource across all departments, making sure we don't lose track of why we were founded in the first place: as an alternative to Big Tech, where people are never the product, privacy is a right, and you are empowered to make your home yours, the way you see fit.

The group's first publication, "[Privacy in the Smart Home](#)" was released in October 2025. The next will be a position paper on choice, followed by one on sustainability. But this is just the beginning. Stay tuned.

More time face-to-face

As we move into 2026, we're doing more to connect with users, our volunteer developers, and others working at the confluence of smart homes, IoT, and tech. This broader community is important to us; it's not enough to fight for our principles within our domain and ignore the rest of the world, even if our focus remains the smart home.

But this isn't just about us creating a place where we can interact with our users. We want to use our funding and power to create opportunities for them (and others interested in smart homes) to meet one another, strengthen their local communities, and forge the sort of personal ties upon which good societies are built.

While smart homes are abstract in a way, their digital layer is embedded within a physical structure—a home—where real people live, meet, play, love, grieve, and find meaning. In an age of increasing digital isolation, we consider it a duty to pay attention to the flesh and blood stories of human experience, and the places where people can exchange their trials and tribulations and desires for a better life.



The Open Home Foundation Summit 2025 in Dublin

We also believe this idea can foster a healthier tech industry. Look around. While we're optimists by nature, we can't ignore what Cory Doctorow describes as widespread enshittification—the gradual degradation of online platforms as they prioritize profit over users. The only way to push back against this trend is to put people, not profits, first—and get them involved in shaping their own futures.

That's why I'm excited we're expanding our in-person events, and finding ways to better use our resources to open up to the outside world and make connections. Our work is important, and our future looks bright. We're thankful each day we get to take this experiment forward.

Together. With you.

Paulus Schoutsen

President of the Open Home Foundation

Governance

In 2025, the Open Home Foundation restructured itself as a nonprofit *Stiftung* (foundation) in Switzerland.

This change made it easier for the foundation to hire salaried staff to work for the Open Home Foundation directly—rather than working as sponsored contributors paid by a commercial partner. This improves stability and long-term viability of our development work. And it means that the Open Home Foundation, not our commercial partners, decides what work is greenlit and prioritized.

The independence this provides also bolsters our role as a neutral platform for consumers and the wider industry. A key example is the Works with Home Assistant (WWHA) program, which helps the community identify smart home devices that prioritize local, private, and sustainable operation. Previously managed by Nabu Casa, this program is now fully operated by the foundation and has expanded from 7 to 19 partners in 2025.



WORKS WITH

Home Assistant

The Works with Home Assistant badge

A new fundraising initiative

In conjunction with these structural changes, we examined our approach to institutional giving to help ensure a broader, more resilient revenue base. Significant contributions in 2025—\$50,000 from DuckDuckGo and \$25,000 from Espressif—served as a catalyst for us to formalize a new [Donation Tiers framework](#).

Comprising three levels (Gold, Silver, and Bronze) and standardized terms for public recognition, this framework provides a transparent pathway for future donors. By moving away from ad-hoc arrangements towards this systematic model, the foundation remains open to corporate support, without allowing any single donor to exert undue influence.

Furthermore, we also started work on a [merchandise store](#)⁴ to provide our community with a direct way to support the foundation's work. By managing the store ourselves, we ensure the majority of contributions go directly to our mission, rather than being captured as profit by third-party retailers.

⁴ Launched February 2026.



DuckDuckGo

\$50,000

Gold Tier Donor



ESPRESSIF

\$25,000

Silver Tier Donor

Our second commercial partner

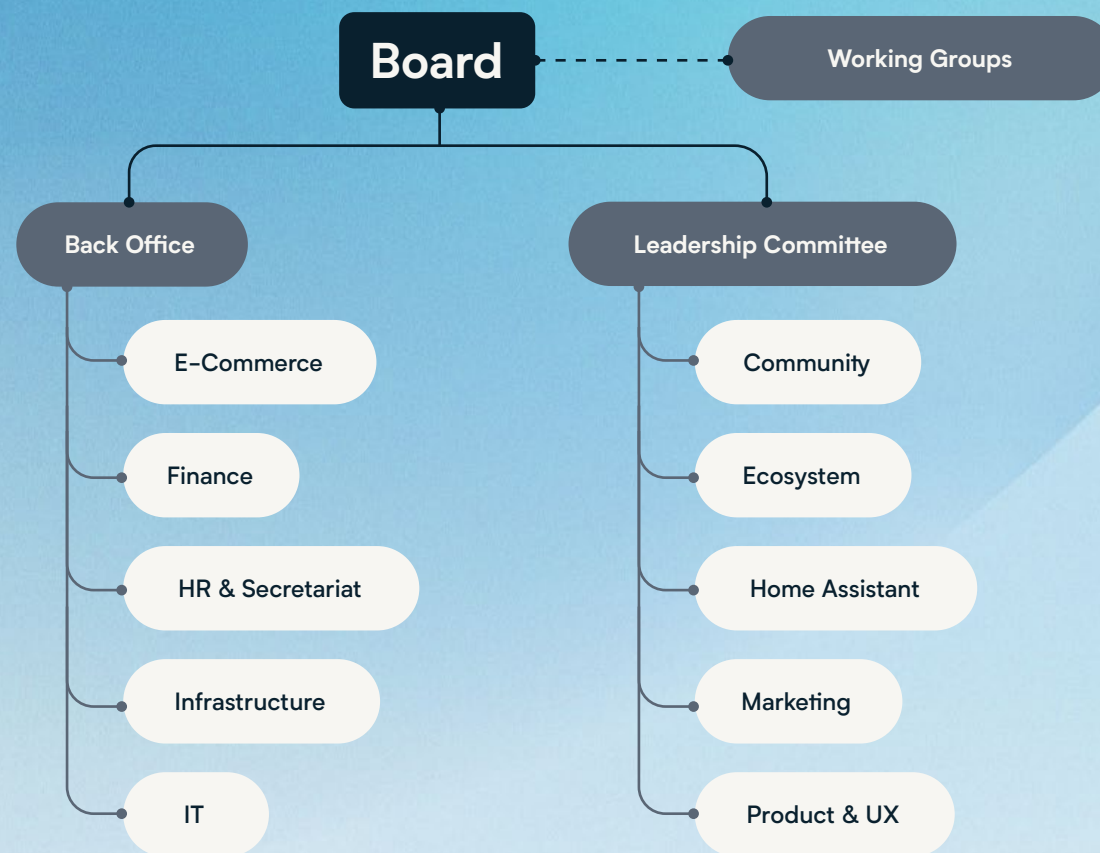
Towards the end of 2025 we added Apollo Automation as a second commercial partner, granting it the license to produce and sell official ESPHome products. This means it is contractually required to contribute a majority of the profits from selling those products to the foundation. This addition not only strengthens the foundation financially, but helps us ensure that, as a nonprofit working closely with for-profit businesses, no single commercial partner has undue influence on what we do.

Official hardware produced by commercial partners offers people with diverse technical abilities an easy way to access open source technology. This dual focus—empowering developers and maintainers while providing simple, ready-to-use tools for the public—is critically important for fulfilling our mission.

APOLLO

Strengthening our structure

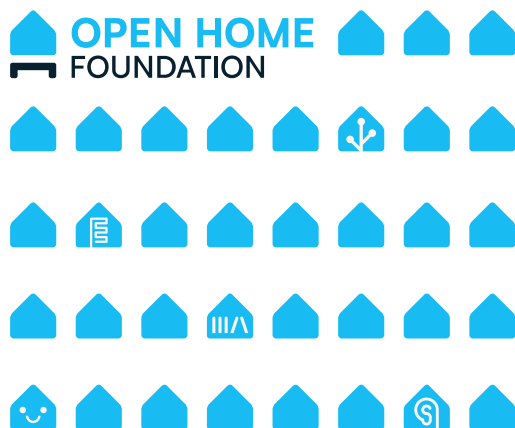
Another important step was updating our governance model and leadership structure to eliminate conflicts of interest between the Board, Leadership Committee, and Back Office. This created a clear separation of responsibilities. These changes were published to our website in order to boost our transparency. The Open Home Foundation's structure is now more logical, improving both efficiency on a day-to-day basis, and increasing the independence and ownership of each department and group. Our Working Groups—common non-profit teams—remain semi-independent and answer directly to the Board.



Development

An entire ecosystem

In 2025 we launched an Ecosystem department to help draw attention and resources to Open Home Foundation projects beyond Home Assistant, which remains our headline project. Of all our platforms, Home Assistant is the one most people encounter first. Yet the Open Home Foundation exists to strengthen the overall smart home ecosystem to serve the public good—so boosting visibility and resources for non-Home Assistant projects, including ESPHome and Music Assistant, helps us accomplish our deeper mission.



Trust fosters growth

The Open Home Foundation welcomed the donation of Music Assistant, HACS, Z-WaveJS, matter.js, and microWakeWord to its roster of internal projects.

It's noteworthy that many of these projects were previously Collabs, or projects we didn't own, but that we contributed to. The Open Home Foundation intentionally participates in these internal-external relationships because they align with our principles, and improve the experience of those who live in smart homes. When we engage in external projects, we don't expect or demand anything in return.

So when the maintainers of such projects independently request to donate their projects to the Open Home Foundation, it means we've earned their trust. And it means our organization's founding values resonate; the maintainers of these projects see a more sustainable future, with better opportunities for robust development, as a part of our organization. We are humbled by the independent decisions to donate projects to us, and accept such proposals only when we are confident we can live up to expectations.

Sendspin, a new music experience protocol

In 2025 the Open Home Foundation didn't just support open standards—we created a new one.

Sendspin, which is set to launch in 2026, is a direct answer to closed audio standards controlled by Big Tech, such as Apple AirPlay and Google Cast.

Among other things, this new open standard allows people to sync multi-room audio across different smart home speakers and brands, visualize artwork and track information, and control playback progress. It also simplifies adding devices with automatic network discovery.

Because Sendspin is open source, anyone can use the protocol to build apps, devices, and integrations—regardless of whether they are intended for Home Assistant or other systems.

Discovering devices

One of the many developments we're proud of over the past year is taking the first steps to create the world's most comprehensive, community-powered smart home device database⁵.

The information contained in the database will be available in a public interface and dashboard designed to help people figure out what smart home devices to buy based on what others are already using successfully. The ultimate goal is to help people more easily choose smart home devices that respect privacy, choice, and sustainability.

⁵ As of February 2026 the Open Home Foundation added an experimental, opt-in feature to Home Assistant that lets users upload anonymous, aggregated information about the devices and enabled features they use in their smart home.

Reference hardware

In 2025 we collaborated on launching two new products with commercial partner Nabu Casa, (Home Assistant Connect ZWA-2 and ZBT-2), as reference design hardware to benefit users and guide manufacturers. Home Assistant Connect ZWA-2 is a USB-based adapter for setting up a Z-Wave network, and Home Assistant Connect ZBT-2 is the same for a Zigbee or Thread network.

In keeping with our principles, both products are based on open hardware, open source software, and open standards—meaning that advanced users can repurpose and reprogram the devices, and use them with any systems they like. Not just our own.

From left: the Home Assistant Connect ZBT-2 and Home Assistant Connect ZWA-2.



Community

A day to remember

The Open Home Foundation held its first-ever Home Assistant Community Day on May 24, 2025. More than 1,600 people registered for 82 in-person events spanning the globe. The events were hosted by regular members of the smart home community, and were supported by the Open Home Foundation with funding and other resources.

While we knew people in our community were excited to meet in person, we were caught off guard by just how popular this idea turned out to be! Community Day was such a success that it will now become an annual feature, with 2026 planning already underway. It also jumpstarted an ongoing series of in-person events throughout the year—so people interested in smart homes can meet face-to-face more often.



1,600+

people

82 in-person events



Open Home Foundation Summit

Beyond Community Day, we also hosted the Open Home Foundation Summit in Dublin, Ireland, on June 4, 2025. It was an opportunity for people from across the entire smart home ecosystem to get together in person—from salaried staff of the Open Home Foundation and our commercial partners, to community members and top contributors to our projects.

A proof of concept for what would become Sendspin, our open standard for audio, was hacked together at the summit—showing what is possible when a group of creative, smart, passionate people get together in the same room to cross-pollinate ideas and abilities. One of those people was even hired by the Open Home Foundation afterwards.

It was yet another great event for exchanging ideas about what the future of our projects—and smart homes—should look like.



Summit talk in Dublin

Keeping in sync

Another way we exchange ideas and information is via our new Community Sync meetings. These are a regularly occurring, open forum where developers, contributors, enthusiasts, and ordinary smart home owners and users can stay aligned on the planning and progress of major projects such as Matter. Music Assistant, device database, and ESPHome syncs are also in the pipeline. Open to the general public, these forums lower the barrier to participation, and help build trust and shared understanding, ensuring our projects and others develop in the open, with input from the very people they are built for.

Donating devices and improving our work

In 2025 we created the Smart Home Device Research Program to help us get smart home devices into the hands of expert and novice users alike.

As a small organization, we don't have the resources to prod, test, and push the vast number of smart home devices on the market to ensure they work with our software—and adhere as closely as possible to our principles of privacy, choice, and sustainability. But our community does.

The Smart Home Research Program will let us donate smart home devices to trusted participants, including salaried staff, contributors, and community members, with the following goals:

- ▲ To test how well devices work with our platform over time.
- ▲ To identify compatibility issues and help developers fix them.
- ▲ To document how manufacturers respect privacy, choice, and sustainability.
- ▲ To help the community make informed purchasing decisions.

An organizational delay

While our community efforts were substantial, undergoing a structural and governance transition did slow our impact in this area. Specifically, we were unable to adequately establish clear structures to recognize and support volunteer contributors, gather input from non-technical users, and create feedback loops between our organization, salaried staff, volunteer staff, and people who use our software. The restructuring also impacted our ability to distribute funding to the extent we would have liked.

As a result, we continued to rely on traditional open source development channels. Such channels serve a narrow slice of the population well—developers—but miss input from many of the people who live in a smart home, yet lack the technical expertise, time, or desire to participate in platforms such as Github and Discord.

These gaps meant we fell short of involving a more diverse group of voices to shape the direction of our projects and organization.

Despite these challenges, the foundation prioritized €24,000 in strategic grants to the underlying infrastructure that makes our work possible while benefitting the public good, donating €8,000 to each of the following:



aio-lib:

a high-performance engine for managing concurrent web connections and real-time data, which we use in Home Assistant.



Alpine Linux:

a security-first, minimal operating system used globally for lightweight software containers, which we used to create the Home Assistant Operating System.



Buildroot:

a tool for creating stable, custom-tailored operating systems for embedded hardware, which we also use in the Home Assistant Operating System.

By funding these projects, we ensure their long-term sustainability and keep them available as open alternatives for everyone to benefit from.

And a plan

The Open Home Foundation is taking concrete steps to catch up in 2026. A primary driver of this forward momentum is our 2024 Community Survey, designed to create a clearer picture of the people who use our platform. While the results are yet to be released publicly, they have already helped us identify how we can better reach the diverse voices—including non-technical users and neurodivergent individuals—currently missing from our traditional developer channels.

Guided by these insights, we'll hold more in-person meetups, expand our roster of community events, and direct more funding—including hardware and software donations—to those in the community. This effort includes creating official policy with respect to events, hosts, and volunteers.

We will also use part of our surplus from 2025 to create a dedicated reserve, which we will draw on throughout 2026 and beyond to support open source projects and community initiatives—and to make up for where we fell short of our goals in the previous year.

Advocacy

A dedicated space for policy and principles

Since the launch of the Open Home Foundation, the advocacy branch of our organization has been a bit ad-hoc, and a lot aspirational. To some extent it is still a work in progress.

In 2025, we took our first step to make advocacy a standing feature by launching a semi-independent Policy & Principles Working Group—creating a formal place within the Open Home Foundation dedicated to championing our principles of privacy, choice, and sustainability.

Its initial publication was a position paper on [“Privacy in the Smart Home”](#), the first in a three-part series including future papers on choice and sustainability.

While still in its early stages, the group is already helping our organization more deeply define what these terms mean to us at an institutional, cross-departmental level—ensuring that our principles are applied to everything we do.

In 2025, the group consulted on:

How we structure our relationships with commercial partners, including the division of labor on shared projects.

Merchandise store choices, from how we display cost breakdowns, to what products we carry and how we source them.

Home Assistant features.

Communication and language related to official positions.

Formal and informal relationships within the industry.

Research decisions and academic partnerships.

A light for the smart home industry

Our advocacy role educating the public and industry stakeholders goes far beyond this working group. For instance, in 2025 we helped guide the Connectivity Standards Alliance (the Alliance) on the design and implementation of the Matter connectivity protocol.

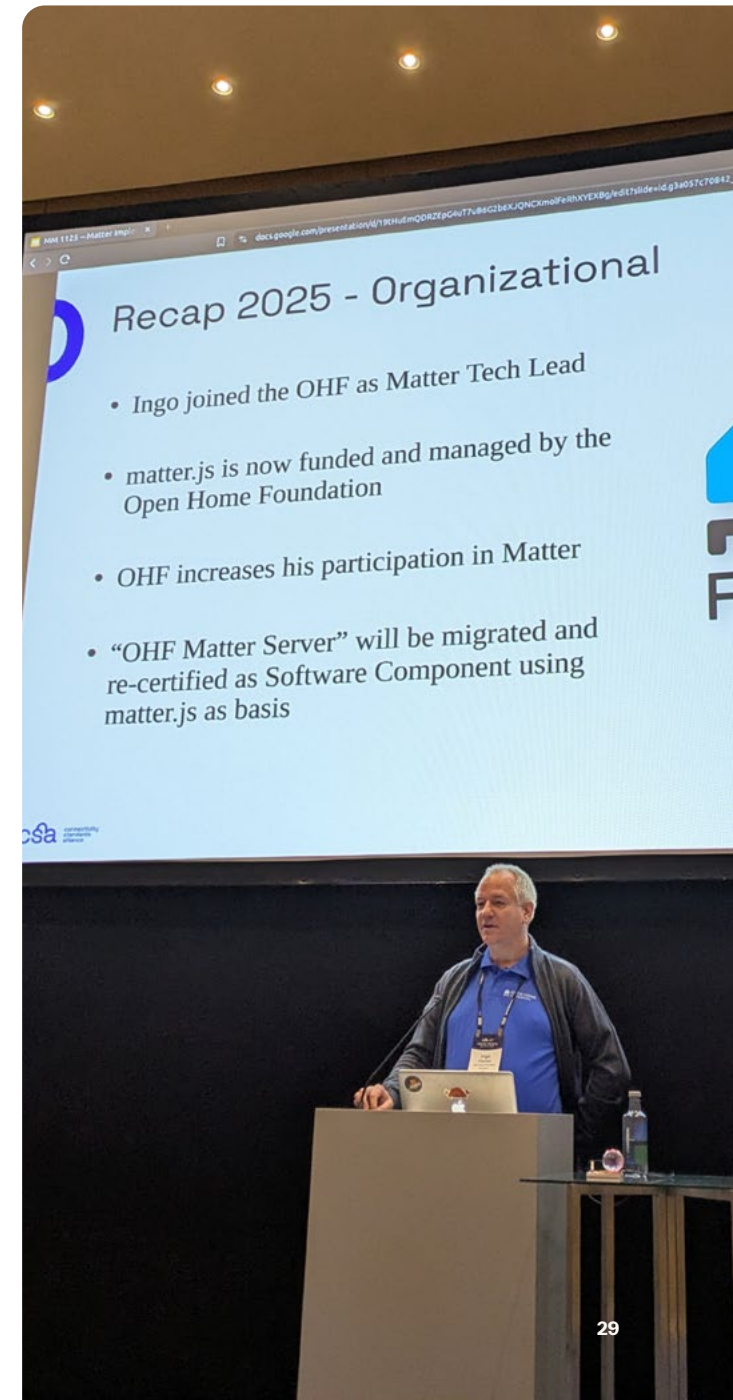
Matter has been heralded as an open standard that will dramatically improve interoperability between smart home devices and systems—despite old boundaries still being enforced by walled gardens, siloed apps, and poor adherence to guidelines. To a large extent, Matter is already addressing these things.

But critics rightfully note that the main stakeholders shaping the future of Matter include Big Tech. That is, except for the Open Home Foundation, which is an Alliance member at the Participant tier, giving us a vote in Alliance groups many other organizations do not have.

As a result we use our largesse to speak up for users. But in 2025, we also took ownership of matter.js and began hosting our own Open Home Foundation Matter Server built around Javascript—making open source development and infrastructure more accessible and more widely available for Matter-based projects. What's more, the Alliance also gave the Matter Server, and Home Assistant itself, official CSA Matter certification. **This benefits everyone, including those who don't use Home Assistant, and is a public good for the smart home community.**

In 2025 we didn't just offer alternatives to those who want to build a smart home—we shaped the discussions and focused the narrative of the entire industry.

Ingo Fischer at the CSA 2025 meeting in Barcelona

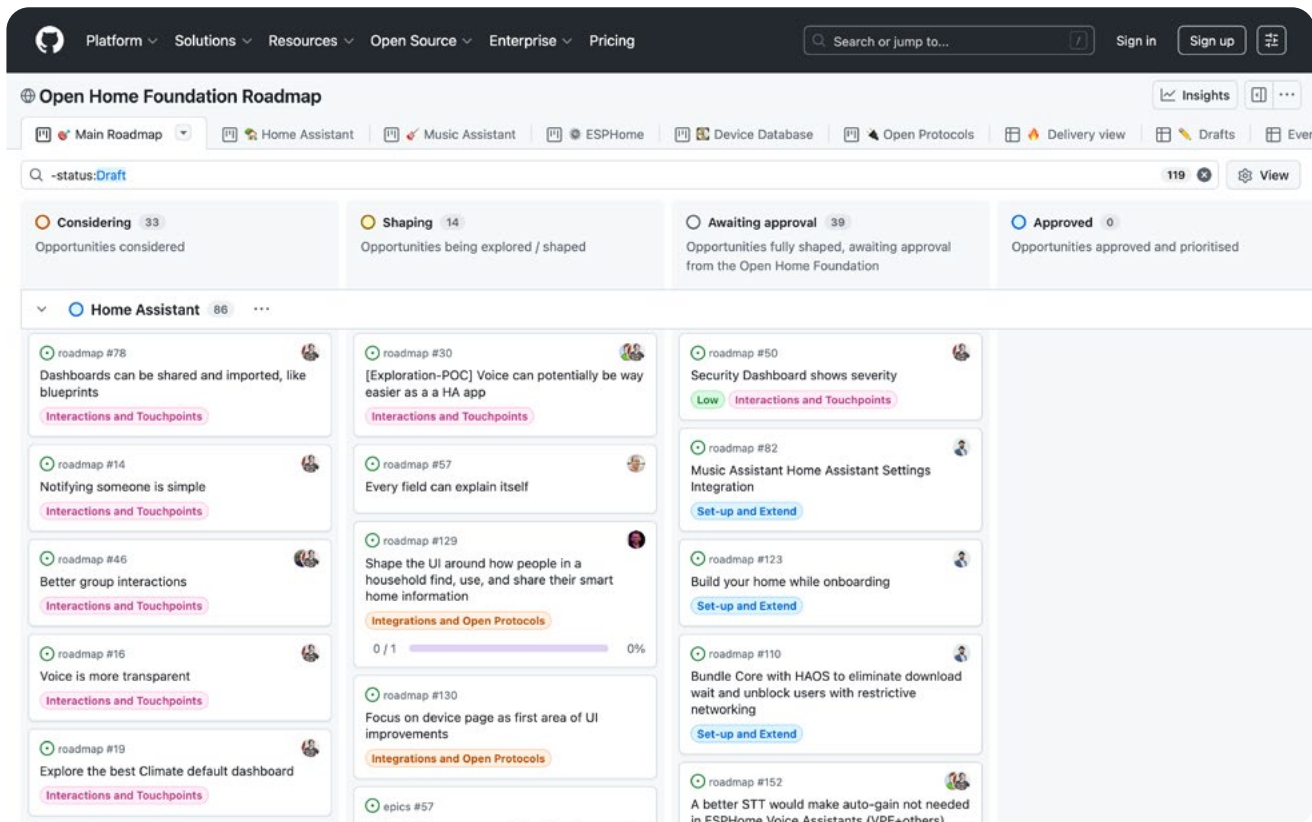


What to expect in 2026

Building in the open

Perhaps the biggest step we're taking to get the community more deeply involved in our work is our commitment to building in the open. To us it's an idea that seems less like something new and more of a return to our roots, since this is how Home Assistant has always been made.

Our roadmap is openly accessible on GitHub.



Yet even within the world of free, open source software, the idea is still a radical one. We're opening up not only what we do (the code itself), but why we do it. This includes bringing the public in as early as possible to help us shape our goals, our roadmap, and our exploration of problems and solutions where people, smart homes, and technology meet. This doesn't just mean giving people an advance look at what we've already decided on—but empowering everyone to be a part of the story, regardless of their ability to code or not.

We're still figuring out the full scope of what building in the open looks like even as we take concrete action, like creating a Labs section in Home Assistant for opt-in testing and feedback on experimental features, and publishing our development roadmap for the community to help contribute to. Of course, building in the open introduces important tensions to grapple with. For example, we need to ensure opening up goes beyond an ideological gesture, prioritizes privacy, and avoids existential risks to our projects. Some might call it a risky endeavor, but after careful consideration, we believe building in the open is not only the right thing to do, but a way to maximize benefits to our community and beyond.

A new Community department

Community is the heart of what we do, and as such deserves its own center within the Open Home Foundation.

That's why in 2026 we're creating a new Community department⁶ to focus our efforts on strengthening the bonds between us. We're not only formalizing our commitment to our community—but also investing real resources in it.



From left: Melissa Thermidor, Missy Quarry, and Florencia Martin — our new Community department!

This will look like new team members, more funding for contributors and volunteer staff, additional resources for local meetups, and deeper connections with people building in the open all over the world.

We're moving beyond maintaining the community to actively growing it—and can't wait to share more about what this looks like in the year to come.

⁶ Launched February 2026.

Putting our wallet where our volunteers are

In 2025 the Open Home Foundation and its volunteers hosted 83 community events in 31 countries. In 2026 we will do even better—and put our wallet (including part of our surplus from 2025) where our volunteers are.

This means setting aside more resources for such events, and supporting more people who aren't paid by the Open Home Foundation itself.

To help accomplish these goals, and to ensure we encourage long-term collaboration, in 2026 we will formalize our volunteer structure within the Open Home Foundation. This will involve a meaningful update to our governing documents, as well as official guidance on how we fund and support volunteer staff.

Merchandise and more

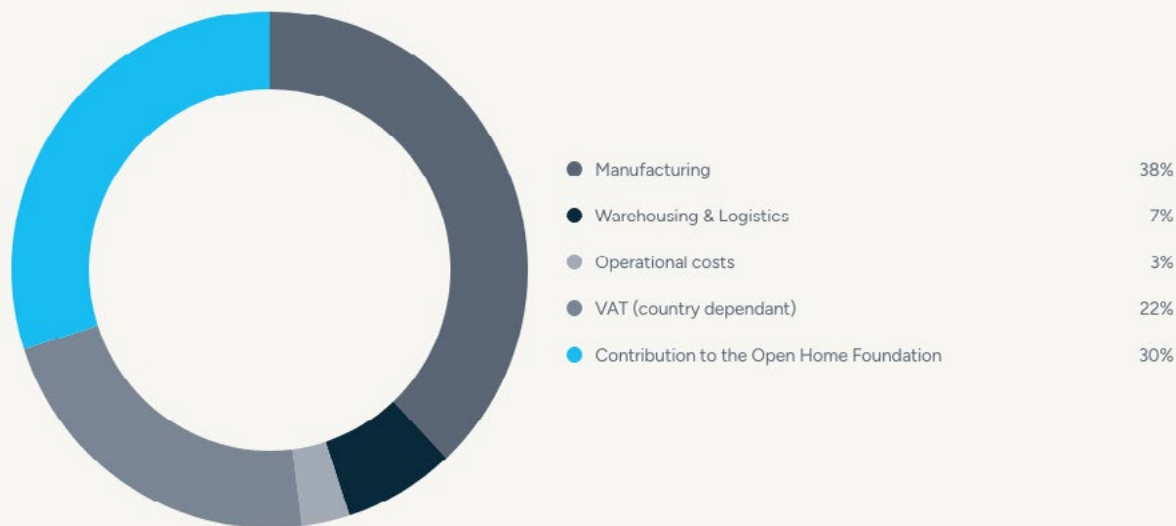
While we created a new system for institutional donations this past year (with an update coming in 2026), we continue to hear from everyday people about their desire for more ways to support the Open Home Foundation financially.

In 2026 we're providing another option via our [own merchandise store](#)⁷—with a per-product breakdown of how much of each purchase goes directly to the Open Home Foundation. So if you want to support our non-profit organization right at the source—in 2026 you can!

Like everything we do, we are working to make the merchandise store, and the products we carry, align with our principles and be of benefit to our users.

⁷ Launched in early 2026.

Price breakdown



Onward

A new Community department. More face-to-face events. Better integration with and funding for volunteers. Our own store. Building in the open.

Our plans for 2026 reflect a core belief that the best version of what we do is something we can only create together.

With—and for—the community.

Three ways to join our fight

for privacy, choice, and sustainability
in the smart home!

1.

Share your skills

Contribute code, translations, docs,
or designs to any of our projects.

2.

Support our work

Buy official Home Assistant or
ESPHome products from our
commercial partners.

3.

Shop our store

Choose from a range of ethically made
apparel and accessories you'll love.