

Support for DSpace 5 and 6 is ending in 2023

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DSpace 5 and 6 End-of-Life (EOL) Dates

The DSpace Steering Group announces that security support for DSpace 5.x and 6.x will end on the following dates:

- **DSpace 5.x: Support ended on January 1, 2023**
- **DSpace 6.x: Support ended on July 1, 2023**

This means that *after* those dates:

- That version of DSpace will be considered “end-of-life” (EOL)
- Future minor releases of that major version will not occur
- Bugs affecting those releases will not be addressed
- Security vulnerabilities affecting those releases will not be addressed

We recommend all institutions upgrade to [DSpace 7](#) as soon as possible.

As we realize that both DSpace 5.x and 6.x are still in wide usage throughout the community, we've attempted to answer all questions you may have in the below FAQ

If your question is not yet answered on this page, please add it in the wiki page comments and we will ensure it is answered.

Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ)

Why is support ending for DSpace 5.x and 6.x in 2023?

Both DSpace 5.x and 6.x have had a very long lifespan compared to past DSpace releases. 5.x has been under support since 2015, and 6.x has been under support since 2016. Prior to these releases, the support period for any major release was usually 3-4 years. The support period for 5.x and 6.x was necessarily extended to allow for the development of 7.x (which is a significant update to the DSpace platform).

As you may be aware, in the last year, several major open source libraries have discovered major security vulnerabilities. While DSpace 5.x and 6.x were luckily not impacted, those events forced us to reanalyze the ongoing support promised for these releases.

Because both versions 5.x and 6.x were designed and built on technologies from 6-7 years ago, they have become difficult to maintain. *The age of these releases impacts our ability to promise that all future security vulnerabilities can be addressed.* These old codebases are showing their age and cannot be made as secure as the 7.x platform. Therefore, we highly recommend all institutions begin planning an upgrade to DSpace 7.x as soon as reasonably possible.

Isn't this a change to the DSpace Software Support Policy?

Yes, this announcement constitutes a support policy change. As you may be aware, the current [Software Support Policy](#) states:

The DSpace Committers provide security updates/support for the most recent three (3) major releases of the platform.

This statement clearly states that 5.x and 6.x would still be supported as they are in the “most recent three (3) major releases”.

However, effective immediately, this policy will be updated to state (*bolded text is added*):

*The DSpace Committers provide security updates/support for the most recent three (3) major releases of the platform. **However, earlier end-of-life dates may be announced if major concerns arise over the stability or longevity of a specific release.***

In this scenario, the age of the 5.x and 6.x codebases has resulted in major concerns over our ability to continue to address future security vulnerabilities in these releases.

Is it still possible to run DSpace 5.x or 6.x after these dates?

Yes, of course it is possible to continue to run 5.x or 6.x after support ends. However, no bug fixes or security fixes will be provided after support ends. So, you will be on your own in terms of addressing bugs or resolving future security vulnerabilities that may arise.

If you want to continue to receive community-supported bug and security fixes, you should begin planning an upgrade to DSpace 7.x as soon as reasonably possible.

After those dates, if I have questions about DSpace 5.x or 6.x will they still be answered on mailing lists, Slack, etc?

Yes, questions on older releases of DSpace are always welcome on any [Support](#) channels (mailing lists, Slack, etc) even after support ends for those releases. However, if you encounter a bug or a security issue, we may only be able to suggest upgrading to DSpace 7 to resolve it.

Also, keep in mind that support on mailing list is provided on a volunteer basis. So, the older the release you are using, the less likely others may be able to easily answer your questions. That said, everyone tends to do their best to at least provide helpful advice.

I'm running an older version of DSpace. Should I upgrade to DSpace 6.x?

No, we do not recommend upgrading to DSpace 6.x from any earlier release. Upgrading to DSpace 6.x will not bring you any substantial benefits in terms of functionality, security or stability compared to earlier versions of DSpace.

Instead, we recommend upgrading to the latest version of DSpace 7.x as soon as reasonably possible.

What if DSpace 7.x is still missing an important feature that I need?

Based on our current 7.x development pace, by July 2023, we feel that the vast majority of 5.x or 6.x features will have been ported to DSpace 7.x. You can see which features are already in progress at <https://wiki.lyrasis.org/display/DSPACE/DSpace+Release+7.0+Status#DSpaceRelease7.0Status-Whatfeaturesarecominginalater7.xrelease?7.x>

Additionally, by July 2023, we anticipate having completed at least 3-4 additional 7.x releases:

- 7.3 was released on [June 27, 2022](#)
- 7.4 was released on [Oct 10, 2022](#)
- 7.5 was released on [Feb 20, 2023](#)
- 7.6 is scheduled for June 2023

If you or your institution would like to support feature development in 7.x to help ensure we are able to meet these goals, please consider donating to the [DSpace Development Fund](#). This fund goes directly to 7.x development and ensures that each new release includes as many new features as we can fund.

If you or your institution has developers interested in helping to develop features for 7.x, please get in touch with [Tim Donohue](#) via email or [Slack](#).

What about integrations that worked with DSpace 5.x or 6.x? How can I ensure they will work with 7.x?

We have tried to make DSpace 7.x "backwards compatible" with regards to integrations.

In DSpace 5.x and 6.x, most external integrations involved one (or more) of these machine-based interfaces: OAI-PMH, REST API (v5/v6 version), SWORD (v1 or v2), RDF.

In DSpace 7.x, *all of those same machine-based interfaces still exist*, however only OAI-PMH is enabled by default. You can easily choose to enable SWORD (v1 or v2) or RDF. You also have the option to install the older v6 REST API alongside the brand new v7 REST API. This allows your DSpace 7.x site to be "backwards compatible" with regards to existing integrations.

(That said, we do recommend you plan to migrate any integrations away from the older v6 REST API to the new v7 REST API. [The older v6 REST API is deprecated and will be removed in DSpace 8.](#))

We are aware of a few external sites/tools which already directly integrate with DSpace 7. This list is likely incomplete:

- [Symplectic Elements now integrates with DSpace 7](#) (harvest only)