Contributor License Agreement guidance and template

Summary

We have excellent information on ownership and licensing and we want to keep it that way. This benefits the community because the terms for distribution and usage are clear. When contributing any changes or features to our software, you are likely to be generating material with copyright and you will need to provide a document specifying the license that the copyright owner (usually you or your employer) wants to use for distribution. This license has to be the Apache 2.0 license. A template letter is below.

Legal issues

Copyright

As soon as you write software or documentation, it is protected by copyright law, which essentially means that the copyright owner can (in principle) prevent anyone from copying the work, or only allow developments under certain licensing conditions. In some countries, the author of the software is the copyright owner, but in other countries (e.g. UK) it is your employer (this will clearly also depend on your contract). This means that **you (probably) need to ask your employer/university permission to be able to contribute your work**. You will need to confirm the copyright ownership using the template below.

License

We use the [Apache 2.0 license](#).

Paperwork

Once you have sorted out who owns your copyright, please prepare the following letter and send it to Kris Thielemans. (The letter is for institutional copyright ownership and requires minor modifications if an individual owns the copyright).

[DATE]
[NAME/INSTITUTION]

Dear Sir or Madam,

I am writing on behalf of [UNIV/COMPANY].

I am pleased to have the opportunity to contribute to the software of the CCP PET-MR (Collaborative Computational Project in Positron Emission Tomography and Magnetic Resonance imaging) project.

Specifically, I am pleased to licence to University College London the software described below ("the Software") *under the terms of the Apache License version 2.0 (AL2)*.

The Software is described as follows: [● e.g. a set of C++ classes, member functions and test files developed to … Ideally refer to github pull-request. If not, add an Appendix with list of new/modified files].

If I provide any other software to University College London related to the CCP PET-MR project or similar medical imaging processing projects in the future, unless I indicate otherwise at the time of provision, such additional software shall be deemed incorporated into the definition of "the Software" under this Agreement and licensed to University College London under the same terms as this agreement. Such contribution could for instance take the form of a submission of a pull-request or a git commit on the CCP-PETMR or STIR github sites, or similar version tracking system used by the project.

The ownership of the copyright in the Software licensed to you above will remain with us and we request that the names of the authors and also [UNIV/COMPANY], as copyright owner, are acknowledged on any copy of the Software that you may release in original or modified form. I confirm that the authors are: [●].

Furthermore, as stated by the *AL2* terms and without intending to affect those terms, the Software is provided without any warranty as to its quality or fitness for any general or particular purpose. In particular, it is neither approved nor recommended for any clinical purpose.

I confirm that the Software was entirely created by the authors named above and that the licence granted to you under this letter will be valid and binding upon us.

Would you kindly sign and return a copy of this letter to confirm that you agree with its contents.

Yours sincerely,

[Name]
Sign.: …………………………………………… Dated: …………………..
Job title: [●]
For and on behalf of [●]

AGREED for and on behalf of University College London:

Sign.: …………………………………………… Dated: …………………..
Job title: