



# Public by Default: Sharing Evaluation Tools on Github

John Baek, NOAA Office of Education

November 11, 2015  
American Evaluation Association Conference, Chicago, IL



# Learning Objectives

1. What is Github?
2. Key features
3. Applying it to evaluation projects



## **What is Github?**

Github is a web-based service for hosting open source project contributions. It offers a distributed version control system and source code management functions provided by Git as well as adding its own features.



## **GitHub can be used for any type of text file.**

If you have a team that is constantly making changes to a text document, you can use GitHub as your version control system.

# Basic Features for Evaluation Projects

**Public access** = Share evaluation documents and tools that you'd like to be adopted and adapted, even by non-registered users.

**Markdown** = A lightweight and easy-to-use syntax for styling text. Think HTML only easier. Format documents with headers, links, lists, tables, and images.

Click on file name to view file. The README is the default "home page" for the repository.



Creating a new file is as easy as typing in a new file name.

See the latest update submitted.

See the contents of the text file online.

# Demo 1

Go to: <https://github.com/noaaedeval/github-intro>

# More Features for Evaluation Projects

**Branching** = Allows the development of new ideas without affecting the master branch.

**Bug tracking** = Issues can be used to report errors and authors can be automatically notified.

**Contributors** = Adding multiple users to contribute to the repository.

## Common measure definitions — Edit

117 commits   3 branches   0 releases   2 contributors

Branch: master   **common-measures / +**

**noaaedeval** Cleaned up References Part 2   Latest commit 5638e2 on Jun 21

definitions	Changed measure to website visitors	4 months ago
README.md	Update README.md	5 months ago
dictionary.md	Cleaned up References Part 2	4 months ago
strategic-plan.md	Update strategic-plan.md	7 months ago

README.md

# Readme

## Folders

<> Code

Issues 9

Pull requests 0

Wiki

Pulse

Graphs

Settings

HTTPS clone URL

https://github.cc

You can clone with HTTPS, SSH, or Subversion.

Download ZIP

# Demo 2

Go to: <https://github.com/noaaedeval/common-measures>



# Even More Features

**Project management** = Issues can also be used to manage completion of tasks in a distributed fashion.

**Github Pages** = Create a working prototype of a dynamic website.



**John Baek**  
noaaedeval






🏢 NOAA Office of Education  
📍 Washington, DC  
📅 Joined on Jan 22, 2015

**0** Followers  
**0** Starred  
**0** Following

Contributions **Repositories** Public activity

Follow

#### Popular repositories

 <a href="#">noaa-educators-network</a> NOAA Educators Network	1 ★
 <a href="#">open-model</a> This is a collection of common database schemas used within projects	0 ★
 <a href="#">social-network-analysis</a>	0 ★
 <a href="#">ga-gtm</a> Google Analytics and Google Tag Manager	0 ★
 <a href="#">geojson</a> How to create a geojson map	0 ★

#### Public contributions



## Demo 3

Go to: <https://github.com/noaaedeval/>



**Thank you for listening**

[john.baek@noaa.gov](mailto:john.baek@noaa.gov)

<https://github.com/noaaedeval/>

# Other Projects

<https://guides.github.com/>

<http://slides.com/>

<https://pages.18f.gov/open-source-guide/>

<http://adopta.agency/>

<http://hackeducation.com/2015/08/28/adopta/>

<http://audreywatters.com/2015/08/27/adopta/>

# Proposal Abstract

In this demonstration you will learn about Github, a web-based service for hosting open source project contributions, and how to use it to share and access evaluation tools. Participants will walk away with an understanding of github and how it might apply to internal evaluation where front-line staff are required to collect and report data consistently. This session will give novices the tools to utilize the resources shared in repositories and to contribute or adapt resources for their own projects. Advanced topics covered will address additional github features such as: building websites, creating presentations, and mapping geospatial data. Pros and cons of github will be discussed. A public github repository will be made available with all presentation materials and step-by-step instructions.

Evaluators and educators are always looking to avoid reinventing the wheel when it comes to instruments and data tools. When we do find something, it is never a perfect match and needs to be customized for the context. That adaptive process takes time and requires understanding the history of how the tool was built; information that is usually lost or takes more time than it is worth to gather. What if someone else has already adapted it and addressed some of the issues you face, wouldn't you rather leverage what they have already learned?

The open source programming community has developed a solution for building software tools together, adapting it to local contexts as needed, all while documenting the history of that project along the way. GitHub is a web-based Git repository service for hosting code, but is also sometimes used for non-code types of files. GitHub is not solely for programmers, any knowledge worker, any professional who makes use of a computer, can benefit.

While tools like Google docs and Dropbox make the process of sharing files easier, the admittedly low barriers to entry prove to inhibit the adoption of evaluation tools across a diverse community of practitioners. Such barriers include user accounts, file access privileges, and the need to install software locally. GitHub allows registered and **non-registered users** to browse public repositories on the site. GitHub provides a web-based graphical interface and desktop as well as mobile integration. It also provides access control and several collaboration features such as wikis, task management, and bug tracking and feature requests for every

GitHub is a potentially ideal platform for collaboration amongst evaluators that seek to work on common instrumentation and protocols. Choosing a platform that also allows for two-way contributions, but also allows educators to make improvements on their own, means that common survey tools have the opportunity for improvement over time. **Branching** also allows for development of new features in the same environment without overwriting the working, stable release, yet it is open for review and comment for those interested in contributing. GitHub provides an environment for a community to develop around a shared understanding of how to measure things in a common way.

This session will give novices the tools to utilize the resources shared in repositories and to contribute or adapt resources for their own projects. The presenter will also cover the documentation, formatting, and project management features of github. Advanced topics covered will address additional github features such as: building websites, creating presentations, and mapping geospatial data. Pros and cons of github will be discussed. A public github repository will be made available with all presentation materials and step-by-step instructions.

# Glossary

**Version control system** = Manages changes made to code from different contributors and stores revisions in a central repository.

**Git** = A specific flavor of version control system.

**Repository** = Location where all the files for a particular project are stored.

**Fork** = When you create a new project based off of another project that already exists.

**Pull/Commit** = Submitting a change you made to the code (pull), and the author decides whether to accept the change (commit).

## [GitHub] Subscribed to noaaedeval/github-intro notifications



**GitHub** <noreply@github.com>

2:34 PM (17 hours ago) ★



to me ▾

Hey there, we're just writing to let you know that you've been automatically subscribed to a repository on GitHub.

noaaedeval/github-intro created by noaaedeval

GitHub Introduction

<https://github.com/noaaedeval/github-intro>

You'll receive notifications for all issues, pull requests, and comments that happen inside the repository. If you would like to stop watching this repository, you can manage your settings here:

<https://github.com/noaaedeval/github-intro/subscription>

You can unwatch this repository immediately by clicking here:

[https://github.com/noaaedeval/github-intro/unsubscribe\\_via\\_email/AKCyYpeB06I3AoSCykxoUvHzzi4aoUomks5pCOO\\_gaJpZM4Cpv74](https://github.com/noaaedeval/github-intro/unsubscribe_via_email/AKCyYpeB06I3AoSCykxoUvHzzi4aoUomks5pCOO_gaJpZM4Cpv74)

You were automatically subscribed because you've been given push access to the repository.

Thanks!



Click here to [Reply](#) or [Forward](#)