How to package your software for Ubuntu

Getting Started

Packaging your software for Ubuntu gives you access to millions of potential users and the process itself plugs you into one of the most vibrant development communities around. The Ubuntu Community have put a lot of thought into how to make getting involved as easy for you as possible. We make software packages available through the Universe repository and so the best way to get involved is to become a Master of the Universe.

When you join the MOTU community you can expect to:

- Understand packaging concepts and benefit from the experience of sponsors and mentors.

- Apply this knowledge by uploading new or maintaining existing packages in the Universe repository.

- Contribute to the Main repository in co-operation with a core developer.

- Merge with new versions from the Debian project.

- Ask questions of other developers and so enhance your learning.

- Participate in technical discussions with other Ubuntu developers and provide ideas and feedback.

- Apply to be a core developer when the right experience has been gained.

You can find out more on getting started at https://wiki.Ubuntu.com/MOTU/GettingStarted.

Register with Launchpad

Launchpad is the central hub for Ubuntu and open source development. A key step is to register here if you have not already. Key features of Launchpad include:

Register
launchpad.net/projects is designed to make it much easier to collaborate with other free software projects. Registering a project here will mean that you, and others, can collaborate efficiently on work related to that project.

Blueprints
blueprints.launchpad.net can track blueprints (lightweight feature specifications) from discussion through to review, approval, and implementation.

Code
code.launchpad.net lets you track branches of any project that uses the Bazaar version control system (the vcs used by Ubuntu) and can convert many CVS and SVN projects, so you can use Bazaar with those too.

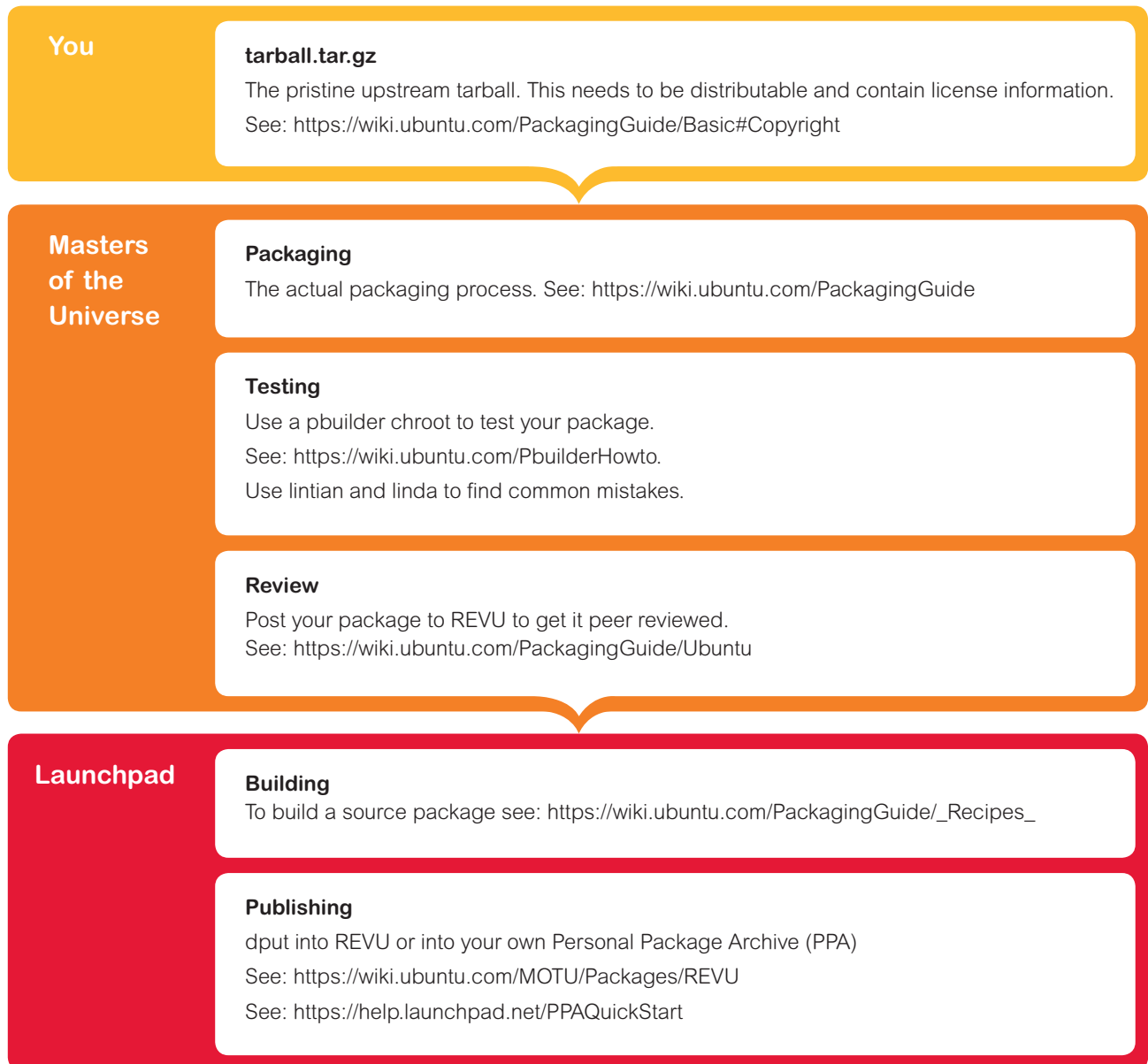**Translations**
translations.launchpad.net helps you build a community to translate your project into almost any language. Translators use this simple web interface to contribute translations through 'wiki'-like collaboration.

Answers
answers.launchpad.net helps you build a community support network and knowledge base for your project. Encourage new users to ask questions rather than file bugs.

Workflow Diagram

You

tarball.tar.gz

The pristine upstream tarball. This needs to be distributable and contain license information.

See: https://wiki.ubuntu.com/PackagingGuide/Basic#Copyright

Masters of the Universe

Packaging

The actual packaging process. See: https://wiki.ubuntu.com/PackagingGuide

Testing

Use a pbuilder chroot to test your package.
See: https://wiki.ubuntu.com/PbuilderHowto.
Use lintian and linda to find common mistakes.

Review

Post your package to REVU to get it peer reviewed.
See: https://wiki.ubuntu.com/PackagingGuide/Ubuntu

Launchpad

Building
To build a source package see: https://wiki.ubuntu.com/PackagingGuide/_Recipes_

Publishing

dput into REVU or into your own Personal Package Archive (PPA)
See: https://wiki.ubuntu.com/MOTU/Packages/REVU
See: https://help.launchpad.net/PPAQuickStart

Where to find the resources

There are a number of key links and resources that will give you access to the MOTU, Ubuntu, Debian and other communities involved in building and maintaining packages for Ubuntu.

- **Getting Started on MOTU**
  https://wiki.ubuntu.com/MOTU/GettingStarted

- **Discover the Ubuntu Developers**
  https://wiki.ubuntu.com/UbuntuDevelopers

- **How To Package for Ubuntu**
  https://wiki.ubuntu.com/PackagingGuide

- **Resources for Debian Developers**
  https://wiki.ubuntu.com/UbuntuForDebianDevelopers

- **Where to find a world of mailing lists**
  http://lists.ubuntu.com