

Welcome to Multistage

1. Introduction

The multistage project's purpose is to provide flexible, customizable and open source software for conducting economics and other social science experiments. Multistage is a client-server system, with both the client and server being written in Java, to provide cross-platform flexibility.

Existing experimental software is customizable by providing scripts or configuration files. But the source code is not available to the user, nor is there any provision for collaborative development. Especially when custom interfaces are needed, it is still often necessary to write code from scratch. By way of contrast, the source code to multistage is available under the GNU public license, providing both the ability to customize the software, and the guarantee that it will not become "orphanware."

Multi-stage is a modular package, designed initially to deal with a broad class of multi-stage games, where the stages may be determined by players' play and/or random events. A variety of scenarios for matching players into games are supported. The software itself is highly modular with the game tree separated from the interface, and the underlying communications handled transparently. Many specialized modules are available, each highly customizable without modifying the source code, through configuration files. The communications protocols have been extensively tested and are highly reliable.

One longer term goal, currently only partially realized, is to provide a series of intuitive GUI interfaces for designing experimental games.

You are invited to use the software, to modify the software, and to communicate to us how you would like to see development proceed.