The Open Source Swap Stack

Four free GitHub projects that replace Higgsfield, ElevenLabs, Semrush and Notion, plus five bonus repos, with the install commands and the setup prompts.

Why I swapped these four

I was paying for an image and video generator, a voice cloning account, an SEO platform and a notes app. Four invoices for four things I use maybe twice a week each. Every one of them has a free, open source version on GitHub that does the part I actually use.

The usual way this goes wrong is that someone finds a repo, stars it, and never installs it, because the README assumes you already know what a submodule is. So this guide has the exact commands, in order, for all four, plus what each one needs before it will start.

Two of them run on your own machine with no account at all. The other two swap a flat monthly plan for a metered API key, so you pay for the queries you actually make. That is the whole trade. Everything below was checked against the repos in November 2026.

There are also five bonus repos at the end of the repo section: a voice dictation app, a project manager, a scheduler, a support inbox and a screen recorder. They are listed with their links so you can start with the ones that match something you already pay for.

01

How the swaps actually work

1. Two of the four run fully local. Voice Studio does cloning, dubbing and transcription on your own hardware, and AppFlowy keeps your documents and databases on your own disk, so neither one needs a login or a key.
2. Two of the four are interfaces over an API you pay per use. Open Generative AI routes to 400+ generation models through the Muapi.ai gateway, and Open SEO runs its keyword, rank and backlink data on your own DataForSEO key.
3. That split decides your install order. Start with the two that need no key so you have something working the same day, then set up the two that need an account once you know you want them.

02

The one thing almost everyone gets wrong

The Open Generative AI clone fails if you drop the submodule flag. The repo pulls part of itself in as a submodule, so a plain `git clone` gives you a folder that looks complete and then breaks on `npm run setup` with errors that have nothing to do with the real cause.

WATCH OUT

Clone it with git clone --recurse-submodules, not git clone. If you already cloned it the wrong way, run git submodule update --init --recursive inside the folder instead of starting over.

The second one that catches people: Voice Studio does not ship with models baked in. The first run opens its Model Manager and asks before it downloads anything, and that download is the only slow part of the install. Let it finish before you decide the app does not work.

03

The repos and the install commands

SOURCE CODE

Open Generative AI, the image, video and lip sync studio. MIT licensed.

https://github.com/Anil-matcha/Open-Generative-AI

SOURCE CODE

Voice Studio, fully local voice cloning, dubbing and transcription. AGPL-3.0.

https://github.com/debpalash/VoiceStudio

SOURCE CODE

Open SEO, keyword research, rank tracking, backlinks and site audits. MIT licensed.

https://github.com/every-app/open-seo

SOURCE CODE

AppFlowy, documents, databases and wikis with your data on your own machine. AGPLv3.

https://github.com/AppFlowy-IO/appflowy

1. OPEN GENERATIVE AI (REPLACES HIGGSFIELD, MIDJOURNEY, RUNWAY)

```
# needs Node.js v18 or newer
git clone --recurse-submodules https://github.com/Anil-matcha/Open-Generative-AI.git
cd Open-Generative-AI
npm run setup

# desktop app (recommended)
npm run electron:dev

# or the web version at http://localhost:3000
npm run dev

# production build
npm run build
npm run start

# build your own installer
npm run electron:build        # macOS DMG
npm run electron:build:win    # Windows installer
npm run electron:build:linux  # AppImage + .deb
```

2. VOICE STUDIO (REPLACES ELEVENLABS)

```
# macOS, Homebrew
brew tap debpalash/tap
brew trust --cask debpalash/tap/voicestudio
brew install --cask debpalash/tap/voicestudio

# macOS or Linux, universal installer
curl -fsSL https://voicestudio.sh/install | sh

# Windows, PowerShell
irm https://voicestudio.sh/install.ps1 | iex

# from source
git clone https://github.com/debpalash/VoiceStudio.git
cd VoiceStudio
bun run dev
```

3. OPEN SEO (REPLACES SEMRUSH, AHREFS)

```
git clone https://github.com/every-app/open-seo.git
cd open-seo
cp .env.example .env

# then put your DataForSEO key in .env and pick a host:
#   docs/DATAFORSEO_API_KEY.md      how to get the key
#   docs/LOCAL_DEVELOPMENT.md       run it on your laptop
#   docs/SELF_HOSTING_DOCKER.md     run it on your own server (compose.yaml)
#   docs/SELF_HOSTING_CLOUDFLARE.md run it on Cloudflare (wrangler.jsonc)
```

4. APPFLOWY (REPLACES NOTION)

```
# no terminal needed, grab the build for your OS:
# https://github.com/AppFlowy-IO/AppFlowy/releases
#
# Linux also on FlatHub, Snapcraft and Sourceforge
# iPhone on the App Store, Android 10+ on the Play Store
#
# building from source or self-hosting the server is documented
# in the repo's /doc folder
```

04

Five bonus repos

These five were not in the video. Each one is a free GitHub project you can try the same way as the first four. I have only listed what each repo says about itself, so read its README before you install.

BONUS 1: OPENWHISPR

A free, privacy-first voice-to-text dictation app with meeting transcription, for macOS, Windows and Linux.

https://github.com/OpenWhispr/openwhispr

BONUS 2: OPENPROJECT

An open-source project management platform.

https://github.com/opf/openproject

BONUS 3: CAL.DIY

The community, self-hosted edition of Cal.com, an open-source scheduling platform.

https://github.com/calcom/cal.diy

BONUS 4: CHATWOOT

An open-source alternative to Intercom and Zendesk for customer support.

https://github.com/chatwoot/chatwoot

BONUS 5: CAP

An open-source Loom alternative for screen recording and sharing.

https://github.com/CapSoftware/Cap

INSTALL ANY BONUS REPO

```
Clone [REPO URL] into ~/tools/ and set it up. Read the README first and follow its install steps exactly, including any prerequisite. Tell me what it needs before you start, then run it and give me the URL or command I use to open it. If it needs an API key or a database, tell me before you install, not after.
```

Set it up in Claude Code or Codex

1. Pick a folder for the repos you are going to clone, something like `~/tools/`, and open a terminal there. Open Generative AI and Open SEO both become folders inside it. Voice Studio and AppFlowy are installers and do not need one.
2. Open the folder in Claude Code (`claude` in that directory) or in Codex. If you want the setup saved as a reusable skill, the folder goes in `~/.claude/skills/<name>/` for Claude Code, and the folder name has to match the `name:` field inside that skill's `SKILL.md` or it will not load.
3. For Codex, keep the skill folder in the project or at `.codex/skills/<name>/` and add a pointer line to `AGENTS.md` so the agent knows it exists.
4. Install Node.js v18 or newer before touching Open Generative AI. Check with `node -v`. If it prints anything lower than v18, install the current LTS first.
5. Clone Open Generative AI with `--recurse-submodules` (the full command is in the previous section), run `npm run setup`, then `npm run electron:dev`. On first use it asks for a Muapi.ai access key. That key is stored in browser localStorage, so there is no `.env` file for this one.
6. Install Voice Studio with the one-liner for your operating system. Open it, let the Model Manager download the model it suggests, then record about thirty seconds of clean reference audio and clone your own voice as the first test.
7. Clone Open SEO, copy `.env.example` to `.env`, and get a DataForSEO key following `docs/DATAFORSEO_API_KEY.md`. Ask Claude to add the key to your shell profile rather than pasting it into a file you might commit, then open a new terminal window so the new value is loaded.
8. Download AppFlowy from the releases page and import a few of your existing documents. If you want the AI features running against a model on your own machine, the project documents a local AI setup through Ollama.
9. A successful first run looks like this: Open Generative AI opens on a model picker and returns an image from a one-line prompt, Voice Studio plays back a sentence in your own voice, Open SEO returns live data for one keyword you already rank for, and AppFlowy opens your imported notes.

> 💡 **QUICK TIPS**
>
> - Do one tool per sitting. Four installs in one evening is how you end up with four half-configured apps and no idea which one broke.
> - Before you cancel anything, run the free version against one real piece of work for a week. A feature list is not the same as a tool you will actually open.
> - Keep every API key in your shell profile, never in a file inside a cloned repo. The repos are public and a stray commit is the usual way a key leaks.

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05 The prompts I actually run

INSTALL A REPO WITHOUT READING THE README

```
Clone [REPO URL] into ~/tools/ and set it up. Read the README first and follow it exactly, including any submodule or prerequisite step. Tell me what version of Node or Python it needs and whether mine is new enough before you start. When it is installed, start it and tell me the exact URL or command I use to open it.
```

ADD AN API KEY SAFELY

```
I need to add [KEY NAME] to my environment for [TOOL NAME]. Add it to my shell profile, not to any file inside the repo, and show me the line you added. Then tell me the one command I run to confirm it is loaded in a new terminal. Do not print the key value back to me.
```

COMPARE THE FREE TOOL TO WHAT I PAY FOR

```
I currently pay for [PAID TOOL] and use it mainly for [WHAT I USE IT FOR]. Read the README and docs at [REPO URL] and tell me, feature by feature, whether it covers that specific use. Be blunt about what is missing. Do not sell me on it.
```

FIX A FAILED INSTALL

```
Running [COMMAND] in [FOLDER] failed with this output: [PASTE ERROR]. Find the real cause rather than guessing. Check the repo's README and issues for this error first, then tell me the fix and run it. If it is a missing prerequisite, say which one and how to install it.
```

MOVE MY NOTES INTO APPFLOWY

```
I exported my notes from [OLD APP] to [FOLDER]. Tell me what format AppFlowy imports and whether my export matches. If it does not, convert the files into a format AppFlowy accepts, keeping the folder structure, and tell me what will be lost in the conversion.
```

When it breaks

ERROR	FIX
npm run setup fails right after cloning Open Generative AI	You cloned without --recurse-submodules. Run git submodule update --init --recursive inside the folder, then run npm run setup again.
npm commands fail with an engine or syntax error	Your Node.js is older than v18. Check with node -v and install the current LTS, then delete node_modules and run npm run setup again.
Open Generative AI opens but every generation fails	No Muapi.ai access key, or the wrong one. The key is entered in the app on first use and kept in browser localStorage, so clearing site data wipes it and you re-enter it.
Voice Studio opens but will not generate anything	No model is downloaded yet. Open the Model Manager, accept the download it suggests, and wait for it to finish before trying again.
The cloned voice sounds wrong or robotic	The reference recording is the problem, not the model. Use clean audio with no music, no background noise and no room echo, recorded in one take.
Open SEO returns empty results for every keyword	The DataForSEO key is missing, out of credit, or still sitting in .env.example instead of .env. Follow docs/DATAFORSEO_API_KEY.md and confirm the value is loaded in a new terminal.
Claude or Cursor cannot see your Open SEO data	The MCP connection is not configured. Open SEO exposes its data over the Model Context Protocol, and the client has to be pointed at your running instance before it can query it.
AppFlowy will not open on macOS	It is an unsigned build from GitHub releases. Open it once from the right-click menu and approve it, or allow it in System Settings under Privacy and Security.

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