Open Source Citizenship

Interactive session hosted by Cat Allman and Josh Simmons from Google Open Source Programs Office (OSPO) Outreach Team at Open Source Summit Europe 2018 in Edinburgh, UK. Notes taken by Leslie Hawthorn from Red Hat Open Source and Standards Office.

URL: https://sched.co/Hz6Q

This session at Open Source Summit EU 2018 was structured to be highly interactive, so the purpose of this document is to capture the knowledge shared in the room and to distribute it more widely.

Sustainability discussions are going on; how can companies support projects and communities; in lead up to Sustain have a convo with people here to understand what is being done and what could be done.

Looking for guidance to corps with OSPOs and needs of projects that could be supported.

1. What are companies already doing to support open source?
   - Upstream contributions
   - Paid contributors on staff
   - OSPOs
   - Sponsorship of events, projects, foundations
   - Donations of resources
   - Memberships in project foundations
   - Standards body participation
   - Incentivizing people to contribute back upstream
   - Helping with communication - translations of documentation
   - Organizing events to help new contributors get started in projects
   - Helping ensure projects have adequate documentation

2. What kind of support are open source communities asking for?
   - Adobe OSPO is recognizing contributors from project participants who are not coders
   - Performing design work for projects, e.g. designing an icon ^^
   - Ownership of copyright for individual engineers / working on projects
   - Resources for testing and doing actual testing or QA work
   - Sane employment agreements for folks who are contributors to open source projects
   - Encouraging contribution beyond narrow need, e.g. doing code review on features that are not essential to your corporate interest in the project
   - Sending people to conferences so that contributors can meet in person
● Offer office space to have an event / hackathon / user conference / open co-working space concept so that people can all get together at one place
● Volunteers that can contribute to UI/UX design; product managers to develop user stories or scope out use cases; demo servers for testing; API sandbox; marketing/PR teams who can help with storytelling; help developing business models
● Helping universities form programs for students to get university credit for participating in open source
● Placements of senior folks from the organization into the community to do education of the project community (related to above “volunteers …”)
● Offer work opportunities to an open source project / open source community when the work is effectively built on or repackaging that community's work
● Offer capacity of the company to the community, e.g. hardware manufacturing lab offering these capabilities to the community
● Offer opportunities to upskill experienced programmers who are missing training on certain tasks (short-term virtual mentoring opps, e.g. on Slack)
● Open Source Legal community, place for lawyers to talk to each other
  ○ LF Legal Counsel group
  ○ FSFE Legal Summit in Europe
● Guidance on legal topics / policy changes that impact community projects, e.g. GDPR
● Ad grants useful? - Yes! Generate leads to download the SW, donors to the project
● Greater corporate support for GPL and projects that are built under that license
  ○ SF Conservancy is running Copyleft Conference right after FOSDEM
● Donations of HW or cloud resource (e.g. Azure), direct funding … how to make this transparent and sustainable
● Hosting for project infrastructure, e.g. what Rackspace used to provide, but guaranteed available - people are shy about it going away

3. What are the challenges and how can we collectively address them?
● No legal entity for a project to receive funding
  ○ Several foundations exist to help you with this! Chooseafoundation.com - thanks, Shane!
● For fiscal agents, the amount that they keep for administrative fees is not sufficient to cover their own expenses; sponsor these fiscal agents
● How do we scale this up? We are all using / consuming / building with free software. How do we make this so that it’s not always ‘tin cupping’ to fundraise.
  ○ Can be difficult because open source projects can be essentially a club of 2-3 companies that are running it with a few volunteers. See IRS test for free software projects.
● Where does the money come from? What is the line item?
  ○ Comes out of our marketing budget (goodwill)
- Comes out of the standards bodies / memberships budgets
- Comes out of engineering orgs (product teams) who are actually using the open source project or collaborating with the project
- Recruiting! Hire them peeps!
- Convincing executive leadership to allow folks to contribute to open source projects on company time
  - Changing the narrative to a way to gain legitimacy in the developer community instead of getting more developers to contribute - communication channel
- LF Core Infrastructure project was a model for allocating financial resources
- What about funding a foundation that acts as incubator for development?
  - Are you willing to allow a for-profit organization to do this work or must it all be charities? This invokes jurisdictional law differences vs. companies. (Tidelift?)
- TravisCI runs several programs and is a fiscal sponsor of some programs they do not run - came up with the idea of open source grants. Fundraise for a specific project that aligns with their values that also was focused on diversity.