

Community and Governance

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LSL Labs seminar
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Steve Lee

- Full Measure – open accessibility consultant developer
- OSS Watch – advice on FOSS development to HE / FE

Community

What's good?

- Otherwise OSS is just code dumping
- Sustainability
- Support
- Inclusive
- Distributed
- Peer review - educational

Community

The lifeblood of open source

Social activity directed at making something

Governance

The bones of open source

Direction through planning and decisions

Who

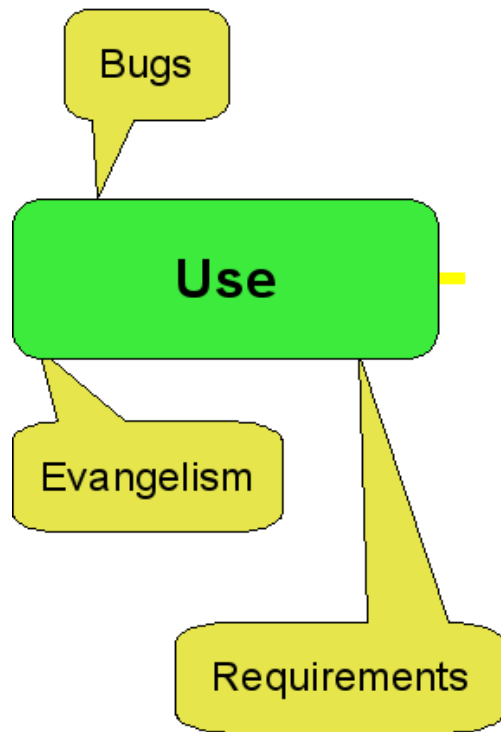
Users

- The reason you are developing
- Provide the requirements and testing

Engaged Users

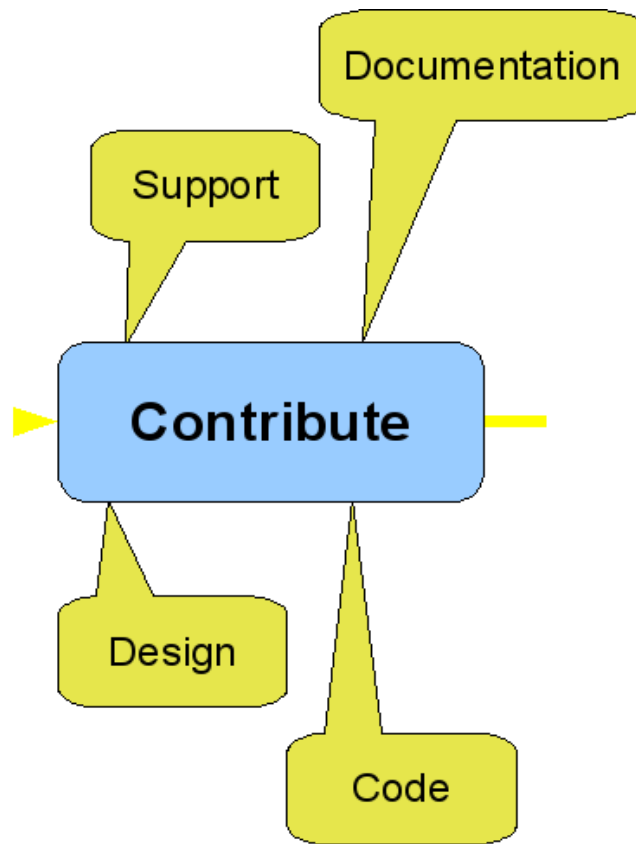
“... including user engagement and **how users will be involved in the development process** and how users will validate the deliverables from the project.”

JISC 03/09 Rapid Innovation call



Contributors

- Provide additional ideas and features
- Provide resource
- Time rich or cash rich

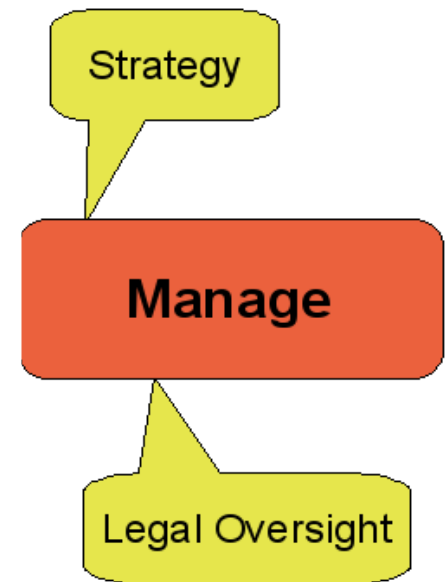


Committers

- Core team contributors
- Able to update project repository
- Review against project goals and standards

Decision Makers

- Set direction and aims
- Make tie-break decisions
- Guide rather than dictate



Diverse community

- All welcome to take or contribute
- Diverse community.
 - Users
 - Developers
 - Researchers
 - Commercial parties

Diverse Meta-community

- Open innovation
- Collaboration between projects, businesses and innovators
- Project REALISE
 - Open innovation in Assistive Technology Software

Leads to sustainability

- For core team and users
- Spreads risk
 - Anyone can leave (even you)
- Spreads cost
 - Community supplied resources

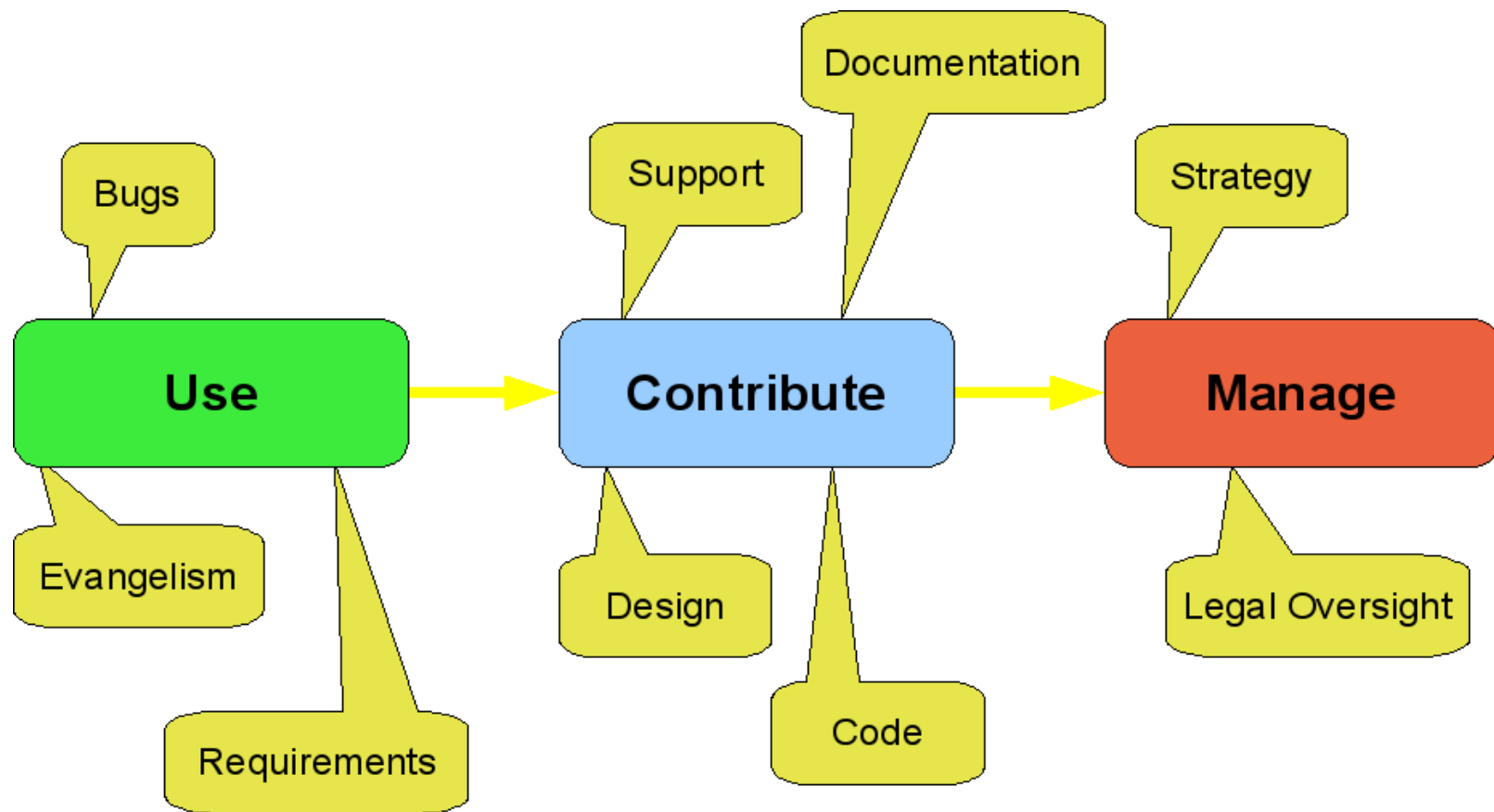
Project Governance

Defines structure & management

- Meritocratic (Apache)
- Benevolent dictator (Linux kernel)
- Bazaar (Linux – not kernel)

Governance model

- Document that defines the governance
- Important guide to operations
- Others can see quality processes
- Others can see how to engage



Decision Making

- All voices heard
- Community voting
 - Lazy consensus
 - Formal vote
 - Binding votes or BD decision

Release management

- Users need easy install
- A release makes it a product
- Stability - a snapshot of code
- Quality - a statement

Community Tools

Support process, reduce barriers to:

- Learn about the project
- Use it and experiment
- Tweak or develop it
- Follow history and decisions
- Engage and Contribute

Community Tools

- Web site – find out
- List – memory, ask, discuss
- Ticket tracker - request, manage
- Version control – safety, history, IP

E.g. The Moodle logo features the word "moodle" in a bold, orange, sans-serif font. A black graduation cap is positioned above the letter 'm'.

moodle.org

- A vibrant, diverse global community of practitioners and developers
- Community is source of it's success
- Plug-in architecture extends community

E.g. ATBar

<http://access.ecs.soton.ac.uk/ToolBar>

Open development win

“I really do think the way we have managed to get the group going and all the bug checking has really helped us speed up the process so much. It has been really useful!”

EA Draffan

Q: how do you go about getting and modifying open source?

Getting

- The project home page or forge
- Browse online
- Tarball = source code release = snapshot
- Version control

Q: how do you go about getting and modifying open source?

Modifying

- Hack locally and do your thing with it
- *Don't stop there – contribute it back*
- Pass to community as contribution (patch)
- Discuss with developers and modify if required
- Get next release / tarball etc with your changes

Q: how do you manage multiple versions of the code?

Why versions?

- Different variants – eg platform
 - Releases made to users
- Support or bug fix old releases
 - Releases made to users
- Developer patches, experiments, new features
 - Not released until it becomes latest

Q: how do you manage multiple versions of the code?

How manage?

- Internal dev best practices
 - Use version control + tracker features
 - Trunk + branches + merge (and DVC)
 - Tag releases
 - Parallel bug fixes
- Release process
 - Clear Latest version
 - Old versions available

OSS Watch - here to help you

Developing guidance tools

- **Openness rating**
- **Community explorer**

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