Guidelines for creating sustainable open source communities in the public sector

FOSDEM 2020

OSOR.eu

Today's agenda

1. OSOR

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3. Our objectives

4. Public sector OSS initiatives

5. Creative Workshop

6. Next Steps

7. How you can contribute

OSOR

INFORMATION OBSERVATORY

Publishes information, experiences and best practices around the use of open source software in public administrations. Additionally, the Knowledge Centre gives access to key resources such as studies and guidelines.

COMMUNITY BUILDING

Promotes open source software through community engagement activities such as participation in events, social media, and production and publication of content.

ASSISTANCE & SUPPORT

Provides information and offers ad-hoc legal support services on the licensing of open source software solutions in cooperation with the EUPL collection.

"OSOR aims to become a trustworthy observatory that provides FOSS expertise and information as well as serves as middle-ground to connect European Public Administrations with other relevant stakeholders. To reach this objective, OSOR will support a dynamic community and further promote the use of Free and Open Source Software."

European Commission

EU-FOSSA 2
Communities Engagement

Three Hackathons

- PHP Symphony
- Apache Tomcat
- EU Projects

One Conference Organisation

- Open Source Beyond 2020
- Powering a Digital Europe
- Open Source software and hardware
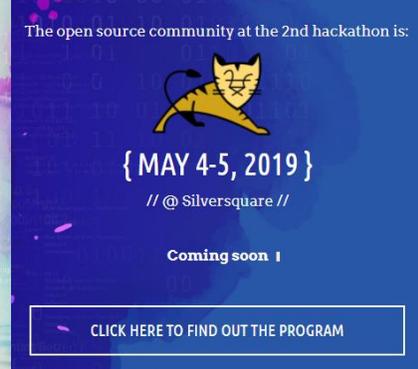
EU-FOSSA 2
Communities Engagement

AMA Session

Community Sessions

We connected with many small & micro communities

Conference participation

Open Forum Europe | FOSDEM | ApacheCon Berlin

Linux Foundation | OSS Summit Lyon | DrupalCon | OSS Summit Paris

Today's objectives

BRAINSTORM

Together with you, let's **identify key factors** that contribute to sustainable (public sector) OSS communities.

PRESENT

Present our work in relation to **successful and failed OSS initiatives** in the public sector and the key success factors.

FOLLOW UP

Provide an overview of the main outcomes of the workshop and present the associated **next steps**.

European Commission

Our Objectives

Key factors

Identify the key success factors contributing to sustainability of public sector OSS communities.

Case studies

Develop case studies of successful and failed OSS initiatives in the public sector.

Guidelines

Create community driven guidelines for fostering open source communities in the public sector.

"A healthy or successful community can be defined as a viable, organisational-friendly community that consistently produces high-quality, innovative products and services."

Maha Shaikh

Public sector OSS initiatives

An example of a successful public sector OSS initiative:
the *School Cloud* in Germany

The open source based HPI School Cloud *'Schul Cloud'* project aims to advance the use of digital media in schools.

The project was initiated by the Federal Ministry of Education and Research.

The project was funded in three phases, a concept phase in 2016, a development phase in 2017/2018 and now in a third extended phase until July 2021.

Explore the source code: https://github.com/schul-cloud/
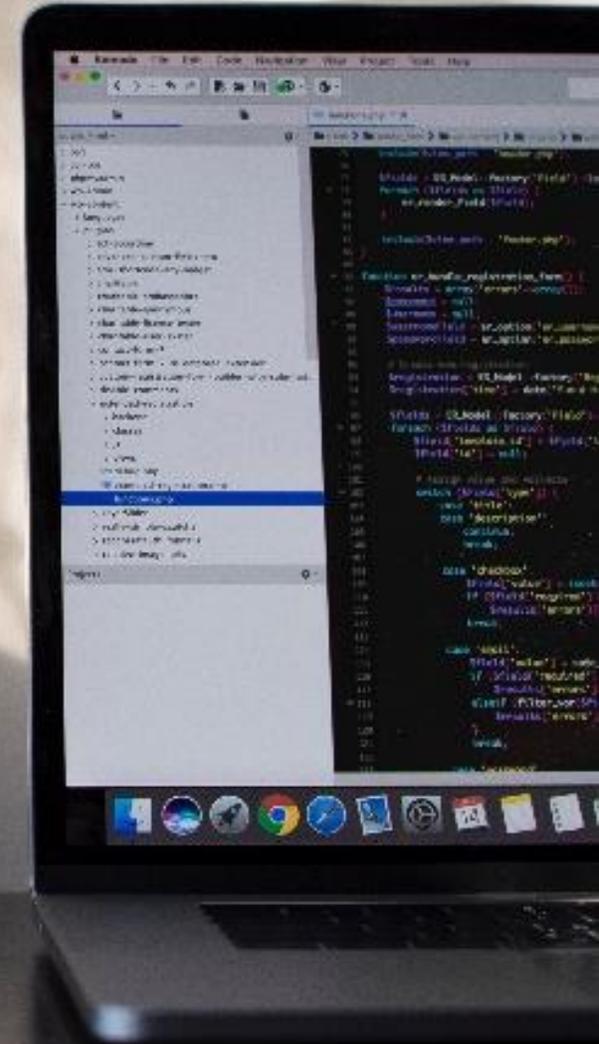
Public sector OSS initiatives

Identified **success** factors:

Cross-state collaboration

- The federal states were incentivised to engage in cross-state projects, thanks to the available funding.

Public sector adoption incentives

- As education does not fall under responsibility of the Federal Government but within the remit of the federal states, necessary competence was developed at the local level.

Successful governance

- Thanks to the project extension, a team of 26 researchers, programmers and subject experts could be recruited.

Sustainable finance

- 5% of the federal funding programme's *DigitalPakt.Schule* budget was allocated to the project.

Explore the source code: https://github.com/schul-cloud/

European Commission

Public sector OSS initiatives

An example of a failed public sector OSS initiative:
adoption of **StarOffice** in Bristol City Council

In 2005, StarOffice was rolled out across the Briston council to over 5 000 users, supported by 8 person team of floorwalkers and technical specialists.

In 2009 continued use of StarOffice became problematic.

The Bristol Council decided that it was no longer viable to continue using StarOffice, and that MS Office should be adopted.
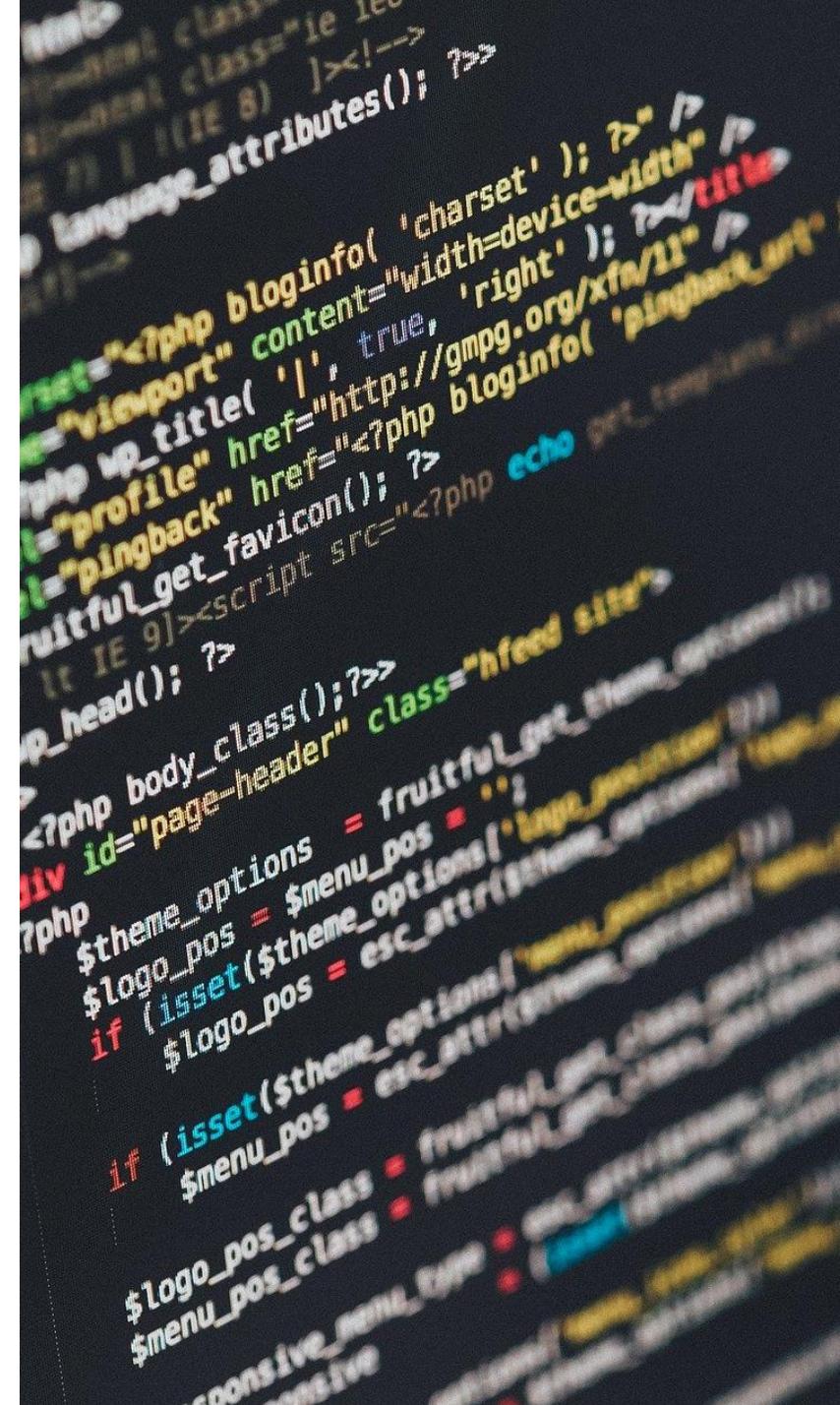
Public sector OSS initiatives

Identified **failure** factors:

Poor Compatibility

- Fidelity of file conversion was still not fully effective and a number of MS Office licenses had to be retained due to lack of system integration.

Lack of political championing

- Allowing the emergence of 'privileged' users that did not use open source created a non-OSS user elite.

Funding

- Vendors began to step back from willingness to do integration work without Bristol contributing significant extra funds, citing lack of market take-up of StarOffice open document format.

No community of support

- Lack of good support and talented pool of candidates to hire to work with OSS.

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Brainstorming session

SUSTAINABILITY

Our findings so far

We identified **five key factors** that contribute to the sustainability of public sector OSS communities.

- Community vibrancy
- Clear governance structure
- Technological maturity
- Sustainable finance
- Public sector adoption incentives

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Brainstorming session

➤ Divide yourselves into **three different groups** around individual flip charts.

➤ You have 10 mins at each chart to brainstorm the **key aspects** of the below factors that contribute to the sustainability of (public sector) OSS communities.

➤ After the time has passed, please **rotate to the next** flip chart.
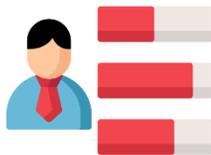
Community Vibrance
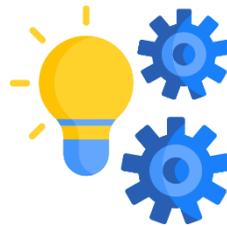
Governance

Finance

European Commission

Brainstorming session

*"What are some of the **key elements** that our guidelines on sustainable (public sector) OSS communities should contain? "*

Time to vote!

Please use your stickers to vote for what you believe are the most important aspects influencing community sustainability.

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Next Steps

✓ Feed today's results into our work

✓ Develop four case studies to be published in the Knowledge Centre on OSOR during the months of February and March 2020

✓ Draft and publish our community guidelines in the Knowledge Centre on OSOR in May

✓ Organise a webinar in April to share our results with you

How you can contribute

Participate in **our questionnaire** on the sustainability of open source communities, published on OSOR. We will wait for your inputs until 15 February.

Spread the word about the questionnaire in your network to ensure that our guidelines are truly community driven.

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How you can contribute

Sign up for our monthly newsletter to stay up to date for the latest OSS highlights.

Get in touch with us and let us know if you have any feedback or ideas that can assist us further in our project.

Join our **OSOR community** and participate in our upcoming webinars and workshops!

European Commission

STAY IN TOUCH

Get Involved – Stay Informed

Follow osor@eu on Twitter

OSOR Knowledge Centre

Reach out at ISA2@ec.europa.eu
or osor@wavestone.com

Join the OSOR community on Joinup

Activate your RSS feed

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Thank you

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