



Let's make this the year of the
contributor experience

RUTH CHEESLEY
MAUTIC PROJECT LEAD

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RUTH CHEESLEY
(she/her)

18+ years using and contributing to open source projects (mostly Joomla! and Mautic)

Located in Ipswich, UK

Working full time for Acquia as Mautic Project Lead

noti.st/rcheesley for slides, resources & notes



ABOUT MAUTIC

A LITTLE BIT OF HISTORY

- * Open source marketing automation platform launched in 2015 (mautic.org / github.com/mautic/mautic)
- * Founder's SaaS company Mautic Inc was acquired by Acquia in 2019
- * Community now has its own governance model and is operating as a self-sufficient open source project



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The contributor experience is the human experience. It begins at the very first interactions with your open source project, and continues throughout the entire journey.

BEFORE WE GET STARTED

FUNDAMENTALS

- * Do I feel safe in this community?
- * Do I feel welcome in this community?
- * Do the people who contribute get supported in a way that I would find helpful?
- * Does inappropriate behaviour get dealt with quickly and decisively?

“

You don't have to do all the things
yourself, empower people to help
with the skills they have!

BEFORE WE GET STARTED

WHAT IS A CONTRIBUTION?



01

GITHUB

Pull Request opened



02

DISCOURSE

Replies marked as solutions

03

SLACK

Help given in a chat



04

MEETUP

Hosted a meetup



OTHER CONTRIBUTIONS

GIVING CREDIT WHERE IT'S DUE

MANUAL ASSIGNMENT

Manually assign credits to a contributor for anything outside of existing tracked channels (e.g. leading a sprint, speaking at a conference, proof-reading an article, attending a team meeting).

API to track other activities - for example Jira issues being closed, GitHub release being made.



“

Focusing on fixing avoidable leaks in the contributor funnel will bring long term benefits and sustainability to your project.

TAKING THE FIRST STEP



USER, BUT NEVER CONTRIBUTED

Marketer

Age: 37
Location: Helsinki, Finland
Occupation: Marketer

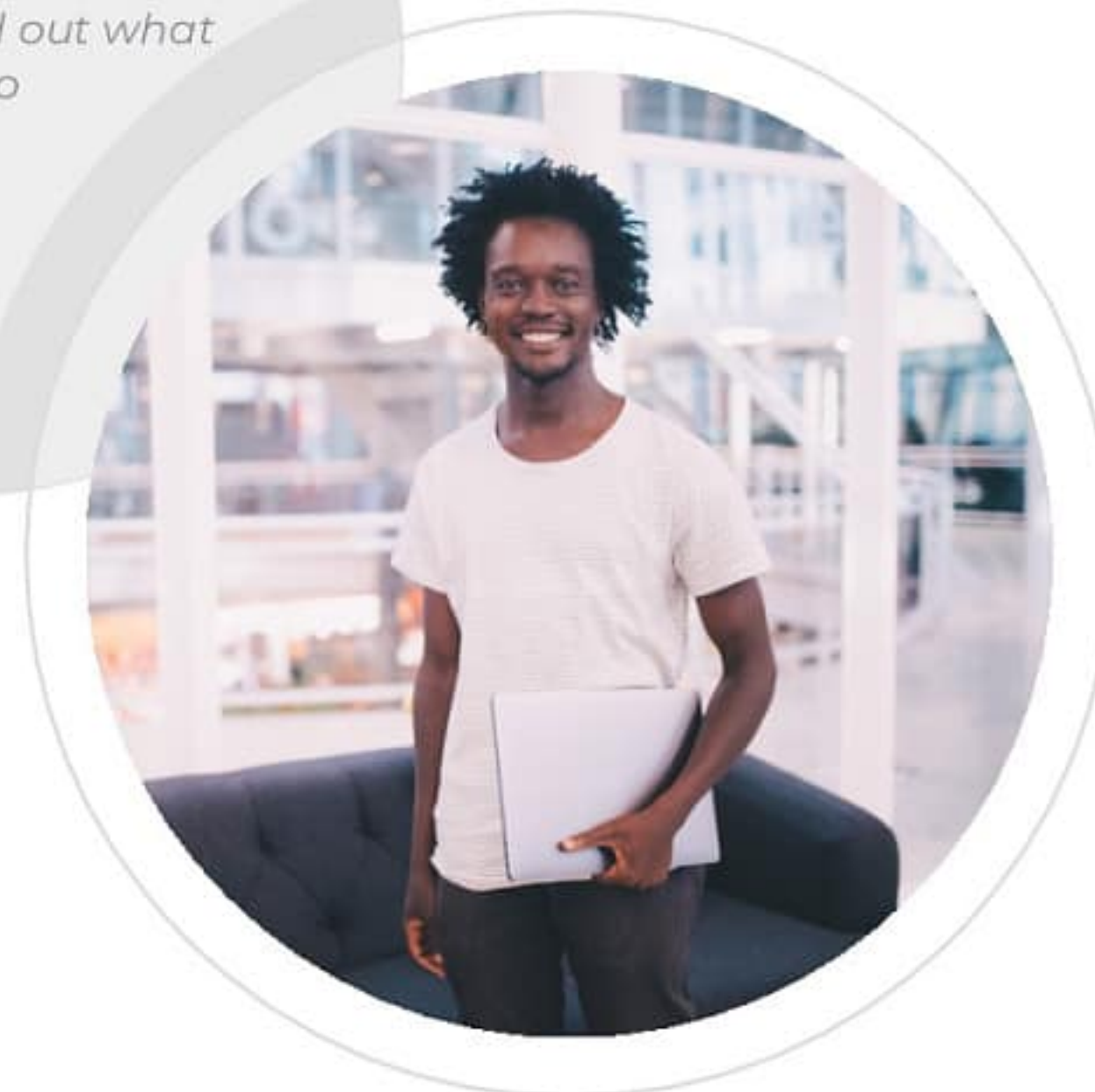
Using the product as part of their job, accesses community resources when help is needed.

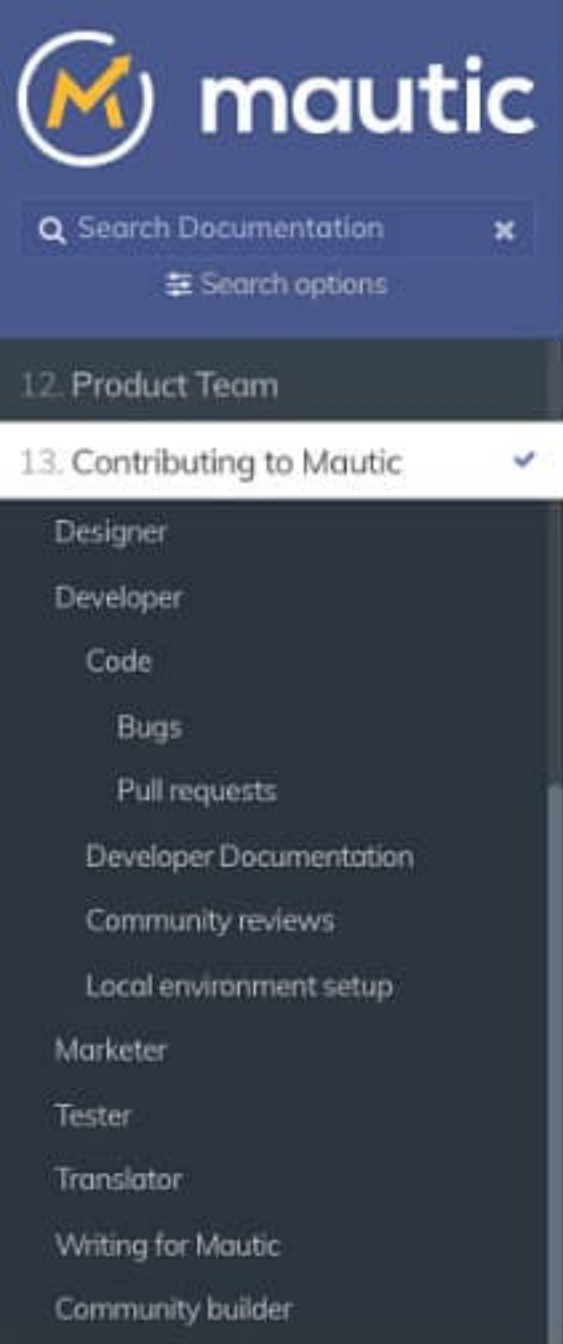
Key pain points / reasons for not contributing

- ✱ Unaware that their skills could be of help
- ✱ Don't know what needs to be done
- ✱ Not seen any call to action / invitation to get involved
- ✱ Don't feel a part of the community

»
I don't think that I have skills that would be helpful [to Mautic], and I don't know how to find out what I might be able to contribute.

RAVI PHILIPS





Contributor roles [↗](#)

We have developed formalized processes for contributing as a designer, developer, marketer, tester, translator and writer. We're an open and evolving project, so if you don't fit into any of these roles, please let us know and we will work with you to create it!

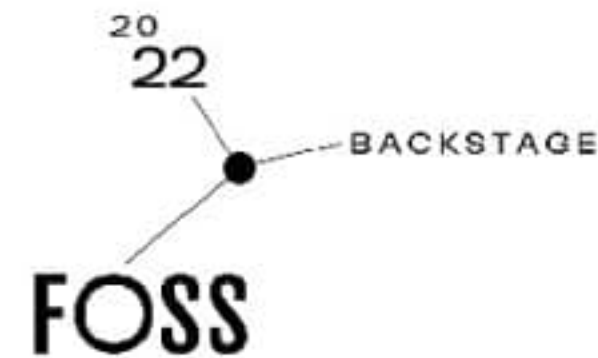
Note

You must join our Slack workspace first before contributing. Get an invite at mautic.org/slack.

Designer

There are many opportunities for designers to get involved with the Mautic Community. Some examples of tasks that you might work on include creating logos or icon sets for use in promotional material, designing a pitch deck to help people promote Mautic, and creating imagery for use at events or in social media/email campaigns.

We also need UX designers to help us when we're bringing in new features to Mautic - you can help us with creating wireframes, defining the user experience, and guiding developers on best practices.



GETTING THEM STARTED

PROJECT LEVEL

- ✳ Awareness of the principles and culture of open source
- ✳ Clearly documenting ways for people to contribute (including financially)
- ✳ New contributors onboarding team / channel
- ✳ Highlight specific tasks in newsletters

Here's ten outstanding tasks that we need contributors to work on:

- Create a new header image for the Mautic Community Facebook page & group [TMAR-2](#)
- Review Mautic Minute videos on YouTube and prioritise for updating [TCOMM-11](#)
- Set up regular Ask-Me-Anything calls with community leaders [TCOMM-8](#)
- Write blog post to announce end of support for Mautic 3 [TMAR-136](#)
- Write a Knowledgebase article series on email deliverability [TEDU-8](#)
- Write a Knowledgebase article on using UTM tracking with Mautic [TEDU-41](#)
- Add case studies to the Mautic Pitch Deck [TMAR-24](#)
- Test feature to enable more than one company for a contact [#10817](#)
- Test feature to prevent segment emails being sent more than once to a contact [#9781](#)
- Test bug fix where Microsoft Dynamics leads were not being fetched [#10848](#)

GETTING THEM STARTED

TEAM LEVEL

- ✱ Clear, easy to find list of 'good first task' opportunities - public Trello, Jira, etc
- ✱ Reaching the contributor directly - email/social outreach with opportunities
- ✱ Power of the personal invitation
- ✱ Timely recognition and appreciation when they do make a contribution (ideally within 24 hours)

Kanban board

20
22

BACKSTAGE

Quick filters

FOSS

TO DO 12

✓ **MCON** 1 issue MautiCon Working Group

MCON-519 Suggest-a-Location for 11/2022

Prepare a blog post to invite location submissions for the next in person event

Unassigned
None

MCON-513

✓ **TCOMM** 5 issues Team "Community"

Best Practices: Starting & Running a Local Community

Local Communities

Unassigned
None

TCOMM-111

Concept: Local Community Web Spaces

Local Communities

Unassigned
None

TCOMM-107

Prepare a campaign which will invite new and old community members to get involved and inform of forthcoming events etc

GETTING THEM STARTED

LOCAL COMMUNITY LEVEL

- ✱ Create a blueprint for local communities to organise contribution events - 'pizza, bugs and fun'
- ✱ Support buddies or team leads to attend local meet-ups and facilitate contribution events
- ✱ Encourage community Meetup leaders to connect attendees with the wider community



RETAINING NEW CONTRIBUTORS

SOME IDEAS

- ✿ Welcome and embed new contributors within the community as soon as possible
- ✿ Buddy scheme - pairing up with another more experienced contributor
- ✿ Contributor exclusive perks (swag, forum badges etc)
- ✿ Always have a supply of 'good first issues' for them to move onto next

20
22

BACKSTAGE

FOSS

ENCOURAGING CONSISTENCY



CONTRIBUTED BUT NOT CONSISTENTLY TESTER

Age: 54
Location: Bakersfield, USA
Occupation: Company owner

Small business owner
using Mautic to grow
their consultancy
business

Key pain points / reasons for not contributing more

- ✱ Driven largely by own needs and interests
- ✱ Lack of dedicated time in calendar means that they don't get around to contributing regularly
- ✱ Lack of outreach from the project to encourage contribution/highlight things they could help with
- ✱ Not actively engaged with the community

Sometimes there's a bug fix that I need or a new feature that I'm looking forward to, so I'll help to test them, but I just don't think about it on a regular basis. I should do more because I rely on the software!

MILO STROMAN



CONTRIBUTED BUT NOT CONSISTENTLY DEVELOPER

Age: 27
Location: Tokyo, Japan
Occupation: PHP Developer

Freelance PHP
developer working on
several Mautic projects
for clients.

Key pain points / reasons for not contributing more

- ✱ Time taken in contribution and review process
- ✱ Has to choose between paid work and contributing
- ✱ Clients aren't always requesting contribution of work
- ✱ Doesn't see value in becoming a regular contributor

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I contribute bug fixes if a client specifically asks me to, but it takes so much time to get it approved, and I have to spend a lot of time writing tests. Time which I could spend earning.

KAORU AOYAMA



PROJECT LEVEL

- ✱ Streamline the review / feedback process, prioritising new contributors
- ✱ Ensure there are regular contribution events where support is available
- ✱ Raise the profile of regular contributors within the community so that they develop their reputation in the ecosystem
- ✱ Consider equitable ways to provide financial compensation for contributions (bounties, paid contributors etc) as appropriate

Open Source Friday

Open source is made by people just like you. This Friday, invest a few hours contributing to the software you use and love.

Sign up with GitHub

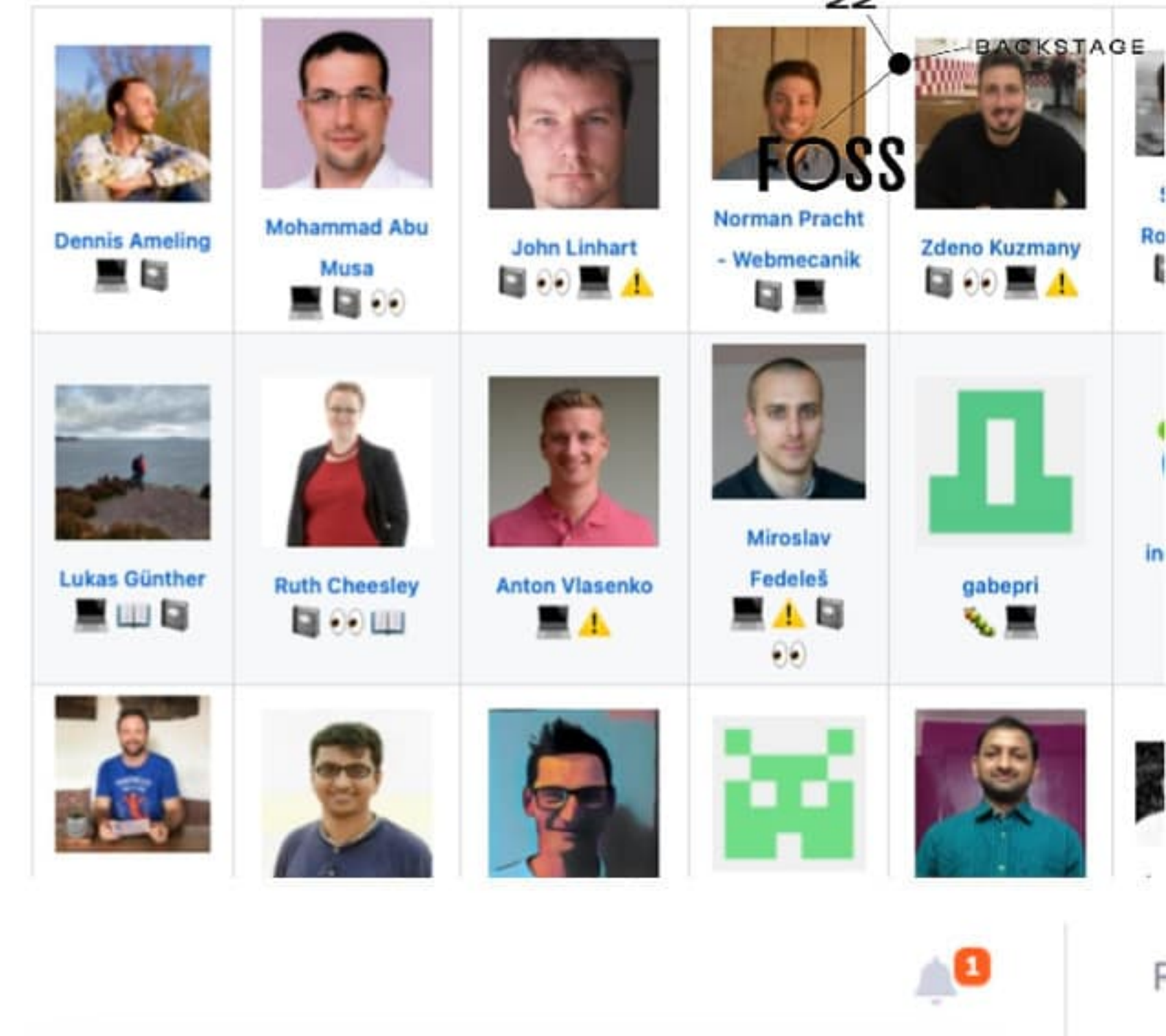


ENCOURAGING CONSISTENCY

TEAM LEVEL

- ✳ Reaching out personally when there's a first contribution, and when folk are becoming inactive
- ✳ Proactively involve first-time contributors in team meetings, conversations and discussions - don't wait for them to join
- ✳ Always give credit where it is due, and try to centralise this so that people can see everyone involved in your project

Thanks goes to these wonderful people (emoji key):



NOTIFICATION CENTER

Tue Mar 15 2022



Milo Stroman has been inactive since 2022-02-15 in **Mautic**

Mark as Read



GETTING THEM STARTED

LOCAL COMMUNITY LEVEL

- ✱ Connect new contributors with their local communities
- ✱ Create a contributions highlight slide for meetups to include in their presentation deck
- ✱ Encourage local communities to take ownership of specific projects

RETAINING THE MAKERS

SOME IDEAS

- ✱ Consider a tool like [Triage Party](#) to highlight / prioritise newer contributions
- ✱ Create a contributor spotlight on your blog to highlight regular contributors
- ✱ Consider using a tool like [All Contributors](#) to recognise everyone who contributes in the readme for your main repository
- ✱ Do a monthly/quarterly shoutout to highlight individual and organisation contributors
- ✱ Tooling to identify contributors who are drifting away - for example [Savannah CRM](#) or [Orbit](#)



SUCCESSION PLANNING



REGULAR CONTRIBUTOR MARKETER

Age: 35
Location: Karnataka, India
Occupation: Marketer

Marketer working for a large agency, contributing in their spare time

Key pain points / reasons for not contributing more

- ✱ Time commitment - work/life balance, overwhelm
- ✱ Not having the confidence/skills to lead a project / team
- ✱ Not having ownership of projects, vision, direction
- ✱ Not feeling like they are making a difference

»
I really enjoy contributing in the Marketing Team, but I wish I could do more. It's a great project to have on my CV, and I get to collaborate with some amazing people!

SANDEEP MICHALSKI





SUPPORTING LEADERS

PROJECT LEVEL

- ✱ Establish mentoring to support emerging leaders
- ✱ Time-based leadership roles with regular review points to 'check in'
- ✱ Establish a culture of 'up and out' succession planning
- ✱ Consider how emerging leaders can be supported to contribute as part of their (paid) work, rather than in their spare time
- ✱ Wherever possible, support leaders attending community events by covering their travel expenses

ROUND UP

DECIDERS



- Support and mentoring for emerging leaders
- Establishing time-based roles
- Develop a culture of 'up and out' succession planning
- Explore how to encourage employers to support voluntary activity

HELPERS



- Prioritise and support new contributors through review processes
- Regular contribution events
- Raise the profile of regular contributors
- Consider equitable ways to financially compensate contributors

MAKERS

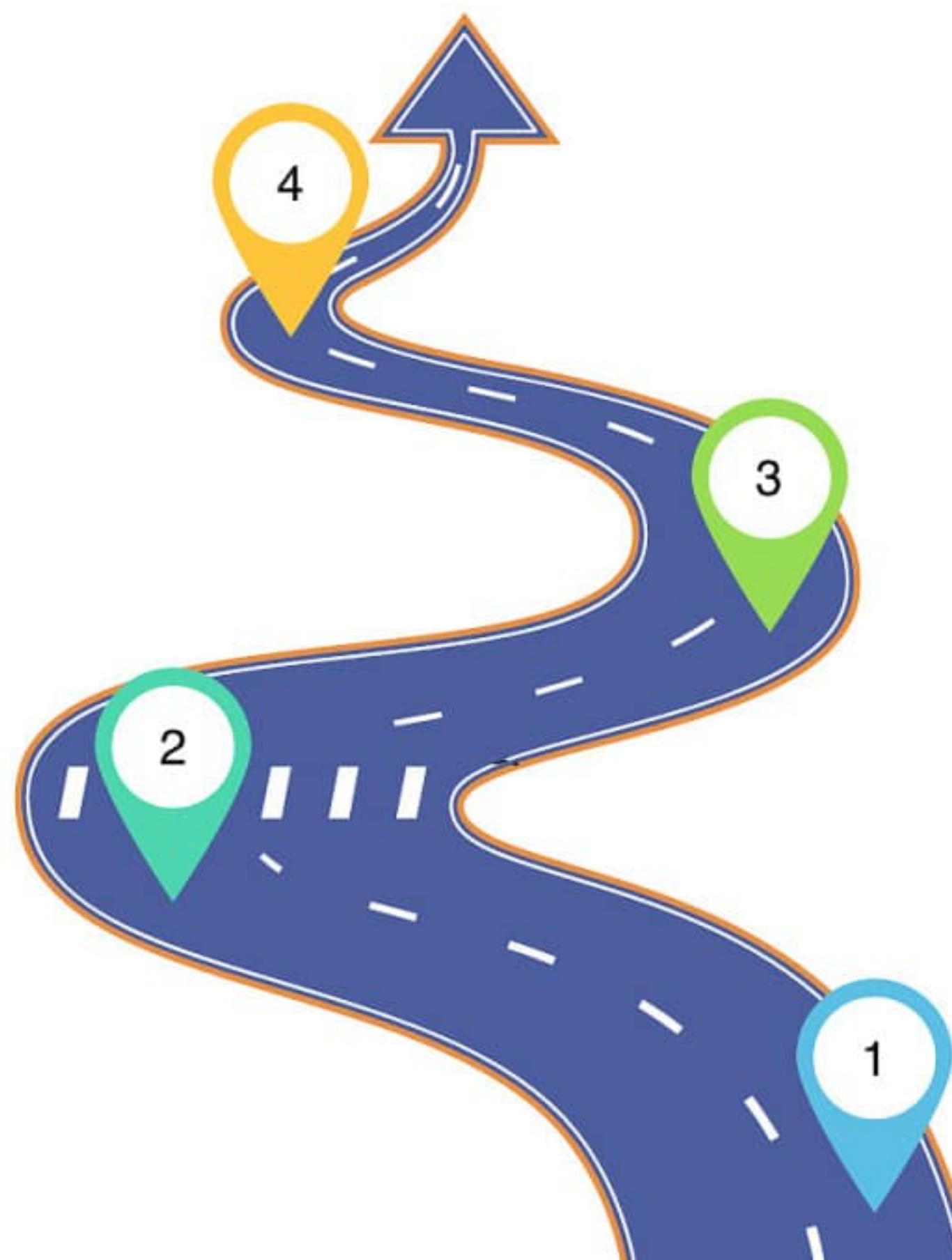


- Engage with local communities
- Contributor perks, swag etc
- Tooling to identify contributors who are drifting away
- Highlight community contributors on your blog

TAKERS



- Community health / culture
- Document what / how to contribute
- Direct outreach
- Onboarding workflow/team
- Centralised place to find tasks
- Community-powered buddies
- Perks and recognition



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What questions can I answer?

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noti.st/rcheesley for slides, recording, links and resources.

