Meritocracy, Open Source, and Funding
Agenda

01 About: All the backgrounds

02 The Report: Roadwork Ahead

03 Spotlight: Communities, Funders, and Meritocracy

04 Up next: What needs to change?
All the backgrounds

- **Prototype Fund**: Germany's first public funding program for individual FOSS developers
  prototypefund.de
- **Research Project "IDE – Implicit Development Environments"**: Supported through the digital infrastructure research grants by Ford Foundation and Sloan Foundation
  implicit-development.org
- **SUPERRR Lab**: A Berlin-based non-profit
  superrrr.net
Methodology
Human-centered research based on qualitative interviews

Focus
Developers, communities & non-profits working on digital infrastructure

Structure
Definition of 4 project types
10 insights
30 recommendations
The initial filter mechanism for FOSS communities is not merit, it is resources.

If people join a project by contributing code, the community will consist of developers.

Meritocracy becomes a self-fulfilling prophecy.
Because of formative paths into FOSS, non-coding tasks are taken on by developers - there is no-one else to do them.

If roles for non-coding tasks exist, they are not valued at the same rate as development.

Developers undertaking non-developer work can favour technical fixes to non-technical problems.
Funding shapes merit.

The kinds of work funders support sends messages of value and merit.
What next?

Scrutinize
Make implied merit explicit without focusing on code contributions

Learn
Community building is hard. Share examples of good practice with others.

Share the load
Similar to fiscal sponsorship, there might be non-technical backbone services that can be pooled between communities and projects.
Thank You

Elisa Lindinger
@elizab0t
elisa@superrr.net
elisalindinger.de
superrr.net

All GIFs by Thoka Maer for Roadwork Ahead