



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?

1

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
superrr.net



recommendations.implicit-development.org

2

Roadwork Ahead

Methodology

Human-centered research based on qualitative interviews

Focus

Developers, communities & non-profits working on digital infrastructure

Structure

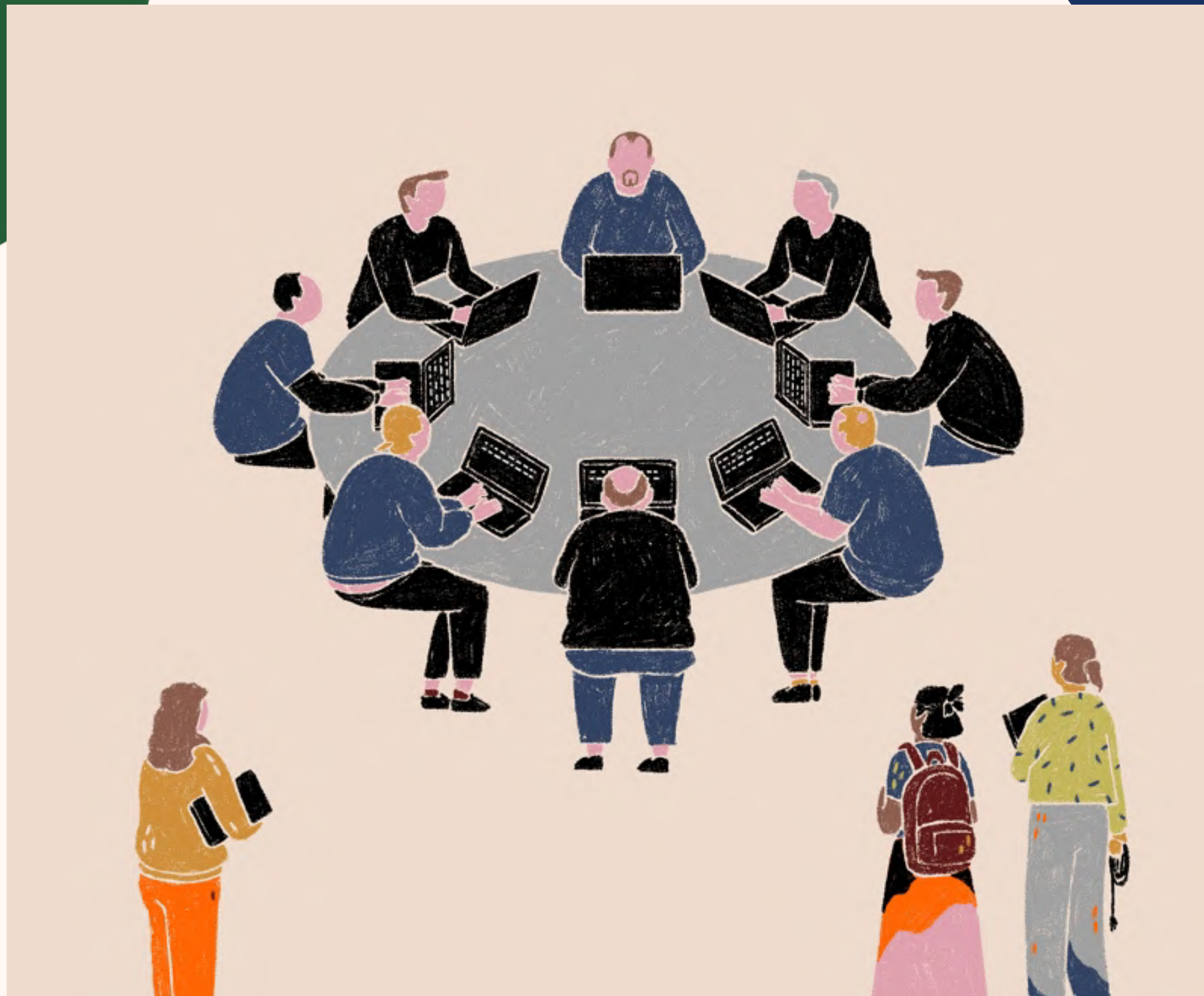
Definition of 4 project types
10 insights
30 recommendations

Paths into FOSS are limited.

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.



Non-coding work and value.

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.



4

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