

# Unblocking the Future

**Finding Done in Open Source**

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Pre-Recorded Project Briefing Series  
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**Join my breakfast discussion  
table at the CNI Spring 2024  
Membership Meeting  
March 25-26, 2024**



**samvera**

**Building digital technologies, together**



**When will it  
be done?**

# Starting a **conversation**

**01**

**The “done”  
problem**

**02**

**Why so much  
delay?**

**03**

**What can we  
do?**





# When will it be done?

2020...2021...2022...2023...2024

# These delays are painful for everyone



## Trust

Frustration with timelines  
breaks trust



## Morale

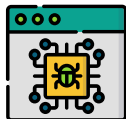
Hurts volunteer leaders,  
reduces community  
engagement

# These delays are painful for everyone



## Adoption

Never seems like the right time to get started



## Development

Rolling impacts on maintenance and feature development





**02**

**Why so  
much  
delay?**



# Our collective development capacity is **shrinking**

Competition with industry

Developers disproportionately at innovation-focused institutions

Local demands are high

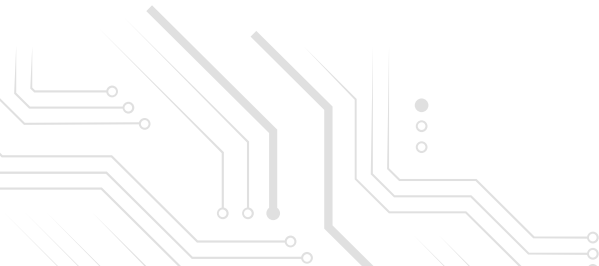
Service providers can fill the gap

# Community technical leadership is **high pressure**

High responsibility, low authority

**Maintaining** code is a specific skill set

Overreliance on a few individuals,  
Institutions leads to burnout



# Factors inherent to **open source**

Community code is difficult

Estimates are difficult

Invisible labor of organizing, reviewing,  
testing, helping others

Time lost to context-switching



# Factors inherent to software

Maintenance needs are an ongoing, often unpredictable, competing priority

“80% of the time is spent on the last 20% of the work”



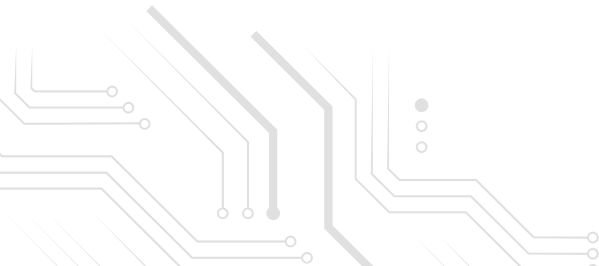
# Factors inherent to customization

Customizations mean migration planning and execution after the release of the code

The more custom your local implementation, the more time it takes to upgrade

# Volunteers are **people**

Institutional, personal, global stresses  
greatly reduce our capacity





**03**

**What can  
we do?**

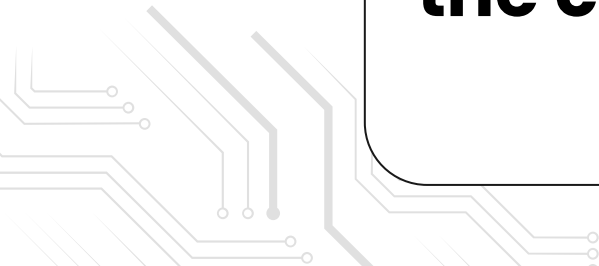




**Is this software  
critical to your  
work?**



**You are part of  
the community**



# Make **decisions** early and often

**Clear governance structure for easier decision making**

**Processes for community input**

**Processes for decisions that come up along the way**

**Flexible, common, standardized underlying technologies**



# Match **expectations** to activity

**Smaller milestones:** this is where “done” lives!

**Regular communication** of when work is happening, and when it isn't

**Concise, frequent calls for help** to reach specific goals through funding work, development hours, etc. to keep the momentum going



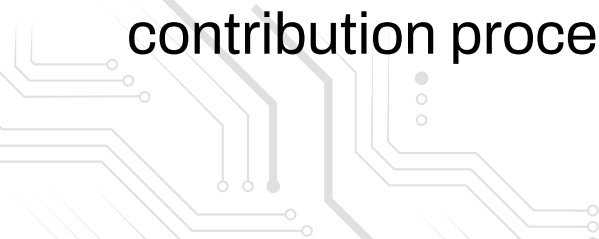
# Take care of **people**

Leadership terms

Recognition of invisible labor

Find sustainable staffing models -  
centralized staffing can do more

Continuous improvement to the  
contribution process



# What software adopters can do



## Contribute

What can you do this year to support your open infrastructure?

How can the community make it easier for you to contribute (staff time, money, volunteer leadership)?



# What software adopters can do



## Stay engaged

What is happening in the community?

What gets in the way of your engagement?





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The background features a green circuit board pattern with white lines and dots, framing a central white area.

**Together we can  
get to “what’s next?”**

**Thanks!**

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