Why R? About

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Signatories

Project team

- Kevin O'Brien, RForwards community team

Consulted

- gwynn sturdevant, RForwards member, RConsortium DI-WG member, RLadies DC organizer, useR! 2020 Diversity committee

The Problem

The Why R? foundation is based in Poland, but has collaborators all across Europe and Africa (This geographic constraint is fundamentally due to similar time zones.) The foundation has run a series of pre-meetings since 2016 and a webinar series since April 2020. There have been 16 webinars to date. The ambition of Why R? is to use proceeds of conferences and pre-meetings to support R community events around the world. Why R? will seek to build strong sponsor relations to strengthen its ability to provide fiscal support.

Webinars usually take place on Thursday at 6pm UTC, evening time in Europe and Africa. We find that more people watch the recordings that are available online than the live stream. In accordance with best community standards, we try to invite speakers from a broad spectrum of backgrounds, and to highlight the work of RLadies.

The proposal

Overview

The goal of this project is support the continuation of the Why R? webinar series.

Detail

The Why R? foundation proposes to create a panel of presenters to present weekly webinars. This panel will be drawn from under-represented minorities and called the Funded Presenter Panel. It will consist of four or five people appointed by the Why R? foundation, and approved by the R consortium.

The proposal envisages the production of 20 one-hour webinars as part of this programme (i.e. a pilot programme). The project will be considered completed when 20 webinars have been made under the terms of reference. By mutual agreement, Why R? foundation and the R consortium may agree to continue the project, i.e. an increased number of webinars. While this proposal envisages one presenter per webinar, we will agree to have two presenters, if preferred by the R consortium. (This will change the budget accordingly.) We would

like to include webinars that have taken place since 3rd September 2020 in this programme. (Constructively this means a payment to Lais Carvalho for her excellent hosting of two webinars)

The fundamental principle behind this proposal is "Representation Matters". The visibility of members of under-represented minorities in positions of responsibility and leadership would be encouraging to under-represented minorities to engage in the R community (i.e. giving talks, co-organizing community events etc).

Webinars that take place during the period, but are not presented by a member of the Funded Presenter Panel, shall not be counted as part of agreed number of productions. This situation may arise no member of the Funded Presenter Panel are available on the date of particular recording (e.g. they have been engaged for similar work by other R conferences).

The webinar series will be used to promote the R consortium brand. For the duration of the project, R consortium branding will appear on all webinar productions (including ones that are not presented by members of the Funded Presenter Panel).

Why R? foundation will produce, and promote each webinar, and is responsible for the recruitment of guest speakers.

Project plan

Start-up phase

Weeks 1 - 5:

- Invite new team members via Twitter/LinkedIn
- Team orientation for all members
- Code of conduct and a website

Technical delivery

Weeks 6 - end:

- Regular meetings with R consortium to approve speakers

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Other aspects

We will continue to use Twitter and youtube to increase attendance at events.

Requirements

People

This work will be completed by the team at Why R that is already in place.

Processes

We have a COC that has worked since we started in 2016 and we will continue to use. We anticipate having meetings every 2 months about progress and quarterly ISC meetings.

Tools & Tech & Development

A payment for the presenter for each webinar - EUR 150. The duties of the presenter are to research the topic and prepare questions for the interview, take part in a test recording ("a sound check") in advance of

the scheduled webinar, present the webinar, introduce the speaker, and afterwards, leading the Questions and Answer session. They will also assist in the promotion of the event on Social Media.

Payments will be made on the basis of professional services. Presenters are responsible for their own tax affairs. Payments will be made to each presenter and travel expenses will not be funded.

Why R? will need some funds for other expenses Graphic Design, Zoom, etc...

Funding

Item	Cost (Euro)
Presenter Stipend (20 sessions x 150)	3,000
Operating Costs for Why R? Foundation	1,500
Total	4,500

Success

Definition of done

We define success as successful continuation of the Why R? series.

Measuring success

We will measure this by the outputs that we have made freely available to the R Community. We will summarize information and make it available to all.

Future work

It is our ambition to have a parallel series of webinars for Asia and Oceania. This series would highlight the contribution of the R community in that part of the world. The webinars would need to take place at an appropriate time (e.g. 11am UTC). We hope to recruit presenters from the region. We would also need to appoint and train webinar producers who will be available at appropriate times.

Why R? notes the strong eco-system of the R communities in the American continents. Why R? will seek to support the growth of these communities, and will be available for future collaborations. For the foreseeable future, the Why R? foundation does not plan run R community events, unless in partnership with a local entity. This does not preclude people from the Americas participating in our current pattern of events (i.e. events scheduled for European and African time zones)

Key risks

We are hopeful that we can continue to find high quality speakers who have the time to work with us.