

Upstream University

Overview of the contribution process

Project pulse

- Code speaks : run gource
- How many contributors ?
- How old is the project ?
- When was the last update ?
- etc.

Who's behind ?

- Individuals
- Company
- What's their incentive ?

Project social groups

- Group of friends
- Company employees
- Corporate driven
- Volunteers

Assess your approach

- Verbose or terse ?
- Socialize or strictly professional ?
- Habits : online relationships ?
- Acknowledge the language barrier

Figure out the contribution process

- Find a page explaining it
- What communication channels ?
- Ask a question (IRC, mailing list, direct mail, ...)
- One question
- Terse
- Friendly

Learn and install the tools

- git or bzt or ...
- Which tracker ?
- Which IM ?
- ...

Engage immediately

- Discuss with non upstream
- Get your nick / mail known
- Mingle

Play with your network

- Ask people you know about the project
- Send mails to friends saying you'll contribute
- IM friends saying you'll contribute
- Ask about their contribution experience
- Ask if they know someone

Choose the contribution

- Code or documentation ?
- The first contribution needs to be trivial
- A work that was recently identified as necessary by the upstream
- Think about the work

Smaller tasks

- Sizing the task difficulty
- Splitting a task
- Seeking agreement on the split

Grab the bug / feature

- To avoid parallel development
- Follow the process up to the point where you can announce you're committed to a given contribution
- Check possible duplicates
- Ask a question about the contribution

Choosing a question

- Think about the solution
- Find a choice that needs to be made
- Ask the question and propose your choice

Code of conduct

- Be considerate
- Be respectful
- Be collaborative
- When we disagree, we consult others
- When we are unsure, we ask for help
- Step down considerately

Disagree

- Suspension of disbelief
- Accepting the rules
- No flamewars
- No enemies

Understanding the conventions

- Read the policy
- Read the code / documentation guidelines
- Read the actual code and the actual documentation
- Apply them very diligently

Explain what you do

- Link to the blueprint
- Link to the bug report
- What the work does
- Each choice made must have a rationale

Quantify the delta

- Measure the delta with upstream
- Compare
- Analyze the reasons for an increased delta

Speeding the acceptance

- People skills
- Diplomacy
- Communication
- Getting attention

Timeframe

- Engage daily
- Ask for attention weekly
- Try to get attention at least four times

Building karma

- While waiting for input
- Fix the web site
- Fix the documentation
- Answer questions

Parallelizing

- Work
- Karma missions
- Learning about the project

Archive and collect

- Log IM channels
- Keep links to email archives
- Choose one place to gather all information