Transcript of Interview with P2

Speaker 1 00:00
I hope you can explain why you choose this option and also your comments on the overall results. Let's go. The first part is about the motivation. We want to know why did you want to be a GSoC mentor? And there are several categories. You can explain your answer. Okay.

Speaker 2 00:36
So the left columns are my answers to the questions like, right? The left column. Okay, because I didn't remember that. So in my opinion, first of all, you have two perspectives, the student one and the mentor one. As a mentor, I really like the idea to create something new and to help ▮▮▮▮▮ community.
Okay, so I also, because when you are a mentor, I try to help other people to make a project, make a timeline, put the milestones for the project. And I really like the idea because I think that in that way, I can also improve myself, because I try to help other people to write the project to write the possible results, how to evaluate results. And so on to。
I think that it's a good way to improve myself. Career building.
That's one point on the resume, but I don't know how many people outside the area know the google summer of code. Because for instance, once I went to Netherlands where I met people from other fields than computer engineering, computer science, and a lot of people didn't know about GSoC, so it's really hard to evaluate in the resume. Does that conformity and recommendation? I don't know what to have to extend the right learning about the learning. It's really got an opportunity for humanitarian matters, because you can you can try to learn something from the students, because you have students from all over the world
So everyone has a different background, different set, different context. It's really nice that I can give something to the student, because I have another background as well. And then it's so nice to try to teach something to the student. So like when you start the program, you have to tell your student how to where to publish the code, how to publish the code, how to make the documentation. Even in that case, you can learn a lot because you have to teach someone else, how to do stuff. And it's really hard to make. It really can tell me from talking about not about something useless.

Speaker 1 04:11
I noticed that you told teaching student, you think this is very interesting during GSoC。

Speaker 2 04:26
yeah, I think that's interesting because it's really when you my opinion, when you do, it's really different when you do something and when you try to teach someone else to do that stuff.

Okay? Because you have to think all the steps to do something, and that steps should be reasonable and should be clean. And so when you teach something, you are really mastering that thing. Okay, that could be publishing code, writing code so on this depends. I strongly disagree because I didn't get anything. So.

Speaker 1 05:05
Okay, and I also noticed that you said that being a mentor in just or say is a good way to polish your resume. But because there are not so many people, they know GSoC, to so maybe it is not a very good way. Is it the reason that you didn't choose to strongly agree with career building?

Speaker 2 05:37
Yeah, I mean in, my experience when in the resume, I saw that really few times, the GSoC experience meant something for someone else.

So I agree because in my opinion, it's a good point, but I don't know if other people see GSoC in the same way. So I agree, but not strongly agree because uh. I didn't get any new position.

Speaker 1 06:15
I also have a question for being a mentor in jest or say, there is no one to recommend you to do so. It is only your personal choice。

Speaker 2 06:33
recommendation from other people to do GSoC. Yes. I found out GSoC could we go to our professor the first year or so. 4 or 5 years ago, I when I made the proposal as a student, a professor was advertising the GSoC program and the ▮▮▮▮▮▮ community and the project specifically of the ▮▮▮▮▮ community in our university course.
In that way, I got in contact with these are contact with the community, but then after there I've been a student, I decided myself to be a mentor. So there was no one that told me be a mentor or try to follow me or that kind of stuff. So I started like I made myself, I wrote a proposal for another student or like few lines of a project, some students, so that and made their proposal.
So it's like someone told me about GSoC when I wanted to be the student, but no one told me when I wanted to be a mentor.

Speaker 1 08:08
So I think maybe it's better for the university to have the open source course and to recommend the students to participate in these projects. It will be a good start mhm.

Speaker 2 08:31
Yeah, and that. That's another point for the for the estimate. So when I tried to advertise my projects in the university for GSoC, I didn't get so many feedback. So it's like, I don't know if the other professors in my university, at least in my university, though, then I don't know the other ones. They don't see GSoC the same way I see. So I tried to advertise the project in my university, but that wasn't so successful.

Speaker 1 09:07
maybe I think if you can combine your project with some credits of the students, there will be more students that participating in your project. Yeah. I noticed there is a little strange for the project development. We can see on the overall, most of people think strongly agree with being a mentor in GSoC can help project the skin, but your answer is neutral. Please. Could you please explain why。

Speaker 2 09:53
sustain and sustain? I don't remember the question.

Speaker 1 10:03
The question is, are you participating in GSoC as a mentor because I want the project to sustain and to attract more new newcomers?

Speaker 2 10:24
That probably because I worked in a different projects during the 4 years to the only project that went through 2 years. I mentored only one project that lasted 2 years. So the other ones were created and then died there. So probably the reason.

Speaker 1 11:07
So the reason for this died project is not related to GSoC. Sorry, I wonder to know why the project died.

Speaker 2 11:30
Next question. So the first thing, I had two projects. The died. The reason I don't know now that I think it goes. One was an extractor for the weekend tablets that the community that it was useful, but then they forgot about it. So they never use it. Was another project with the other project. We made a publication on conference. But its corporate was related to only one context. So like we developed a model for competition, for alignment of ontology and then. Yeah, we developed them all. We made the publication and the project.

Speaker 1 12:37
Now let's move to the next part. This part is about the challenges for the organization application. It means a when a organization they apply, they apply to participate in GSoC, their challenges, because you haven't send your application to GSoC. Could you give some comments on these results? Do you know someone in your organization, they participated in this process?

Speaker 2 13:35
In the org application? Yeah, not so much. I know the people in ▇▇▇▇ that made the org application . If you want, I can write you they remain, if I find them.

Speaker 1 13:57
Okay, let's move to the next part. This part is about the challenges during the student selection and community boarding period. Could you explain your answer?

Speaker 2 14:23
Yeah, I try to transaction. Remember be your question. So I'm mostly lying with the other when you receive the applications, or when you first get in contact with other people, it's really hard to get the personality.
First of all, you don't know how they work out. What are their habits uh in terms of working the communication skills? It's really hard. It's really hard to set up for the project. And then the technical skills. It's really hard. You can write what your programming languages are in the proposal.

But then you have to work. So you have to, we have to see if the technical skills are correct in the proposal or not. So that's pretty hard. And then the mostly, sorry.

Speaker 1 15:48
I have a question, do you have some tasks for the applicants before they are selected?

Speaker 2 15:51
We as ▇▇ as the community of ▇▇ don't know if other ones makes the same. We as a mentor, when we write project proposal, like we want to develop these projects in this way. With this objective. In general, you have also to write some warm up task. If you want to apply for this project, you have to set up design ., make some queries something like that. We don't know if students do that, but we try to make some more warm up. So the students can know the architecture or the software used by the organization.

Speaker 1 17:04
Do you think these warm-up tasks are very difficult for the students?

Speaker 2 17:17
It depends on their mentor that write it. Mine are not so hard, because I I think about the warm up task as. I need to read some one or two papers about the project like ██████ or some other papers. And in my opinion, you have all these two read something and set up the environment. So if we want to work with some main points somewhere, you have to install it and test it.

Speaker 1 17:56
How about the communication issues? Do you think it's a problem?

Speaker 2 18:08
It depends a lot on the students because I had some students that didn't talk a lot. So it was really hard to communicate with him to say some messages or me. So we made a lot, but he didn't talk a lot. So it's really hard than to develop a project. If I have to be a mentor and the student don't talk and don't say, he shouldn't tell me the issues, the issues of in the project with the time soon.
So we worked out very, pretty well. I worked with some India student. I'm in Italy. I work with the Indian students with one student from china this year. Yeah, we work it out pretty well times on so, not any issues, lack of interpersonal skills. It depends. It depends on the students. While I had some students that didn't communicate a lot, and then that was an issue that made the project fail, because we didn't communicate. So he like developed something else we asked for another project. And then we had to fail the student, but we tried to tell him what was going on. So it depends on the student. I got the other students that we made weekly call we communicate a lot, text a lot, so that surely improve the project.

Speaker 1 20:22
So I noticed that you communicate with your students use multiple communication applications, including audio and video, text.

Speaker 2 20:40
We have like telegram groups.
We have yeah, once what's happened or the other one telegram groups and I tried from that year when the students Didn't talk a lot, I tried to make a weekly call so that we have a time uh a specific time, each time. It's weaker and we make a call, so we can see the progress, the issues and so on. That happened a lot.

Speaker 1 21:17
Yeah, it's very good. Could you explain why do you disagree with too many applicants or too few applicants to select?

Speaker 2 21:32
We many people. Yeah, in my experience, we had more or less the enough number of applicants for projects. Like for each year we. Hi, it's better. I got like two, one two at most three students for application. So this election, so that's not really an issue.

Also because some of these students tried to contact me months before the deadline. Sure that if I get to know the students, he asked for feedbacks and the ask for reviewing the proposal before the setup The last, it helps a lot. I didn't have too many up begins or too few.

Speaker 1 22:54
Okay, I see. We can go ahead. The next part is about challenges during official execution. You can explain some of your answers.

Speaker 2 23:17
So the first one depends on the student. It depends on the you have students from all over the world. So everyone has different habits. for instance, in my experience, so some differences between the India students and the china students for the communications, for instance, uh for how do how we communicated.
So that's not so difficult, but you have to do it because you have to be more or less think in another way to work in another way to, convincing people to start smaller rather than me that not so much. So people were in the proposal were pretty low within their objective.
So that's another issue. I didn't I didn't have that experience. So people mostly heard me, I hope. So no one disappeared. Making mentees proactive. That's difficult because you have to set up a project with someone you didn't know, so you don't know they work and what's their background. But from the proposal, but you really don't know that's another not issue, but another thing to consider it that is that you can have some students from metro, from masters, from PhD as you may know, you have the a complete different background. If you have a PhD student or a better students. And in that way, you have to try to make the students more proactive, more um uh. I don't know you have to, you have to make him talk a lot. So that is he explains his issues and tries to propose new solutions for the issues. Because as a mentor, you don't have to my opinion, you don't have to provide the solutions every time that you have to make the students find the solutions.

Speaker 1 26:12
What do you think is difficult to know when student disappeared? I think if you talk with your students per week, maybe you can know whether the students is doing their work.

Speaker 2 26:41
You have a lot of ways to see if the students is working. Like you have the comments on the GitHub repository where you have to publish a project that something I require so that I require. I ask that students make some commits during the week or during the project in general, so that you can see the that he's working what and the progress that he is making. You can see the commits. I had the weekly call. So I didn't have a student that disappeared.

And then you have all to the evaluation. So after a month, you have devaluation if the student disappeared and get paid. Okay?

Speaker 1 27:49
Uh I noticed that you agree difficulty in creating an inclusive community. How do you think of inclusive community?

Speaker 2 28:06
That's our at least we tried to include the students in the community, but start to take to keep up because you have to post the progress in the forum of the community, for instance, and wait for a feedback.

In our experience, my experience, we didn't get a lot of feedbacks from the community. Okay, so for instance, once we tried to ask the community to use a dashboard, we developed to see if it was working and no one tried it, so really hard to read the community when you have few months.

Speaker 1 28:56
Okay. You disagree the challenge of identifying appropriate tasks for newcomers. It's do you think it's very easy for you to identify an appropriate task? Yeah.

Speaker 2 29:22
Yeah, ii think that if the project propose, if the project of the matter is clearer, it's not that difficult to find what the students can do like up their environment, for instance, or to the environment, read papers, and try to fit the community, software and communication software.

For instance, we ■ user uses slack for communication. So you have to start slack, write something in the group to present to present yourself. So it's not that. It's not that it's yeah, it's harder to write the proposal, the project proposal like the idea of the project.

Speaker 1 30:25
And okay, why do you think it's harder to write the project proposal?

Speaker 2 30:34
Because in the project proposal, you have to write the ideas behind the project. So what's its objective early expecting results and so on. So you have to think a new project to develop while the tasks depend on the project ideas. So I found that the writing of the project is really, really hard. While the warm up tasks, I wrote them in 2 minutes.

Speaker 1 31:17
Do your project has a clear guide for the evaluation of the students?

Speaker 2 31:31
No clear guide for evolution of the students. Rather, there are some google has a leader guide for the evaluation of the students. We also have some ways to evaluate the students. So not so hard, because I use way, but I don't know if it's really correct way, but the students as also to write blog posts, some blog posts during the 3 months, so that you can see the progress. You can see if you really work on the milestone, you have some ways to evaluate the results.

For example, you can check in milestone time-consuming. So he wrote if they expect the results are correct if they are evaluated correctly. So I don't find the valuation really hard.

Speaker 1 32:46
I agree with you. I think writing a blog is a very good way.

Speaker 2 32:55
The students don't want to write it. Every time I'm like write a post, please write a post. Every time we just do the answer, I'm trying to make them write as much as possible, but they really don't like it.

Speaker 1 33:11
Do you think it is very time consuming? They like writing code instead of writing blog.

Speaker 2 33:22
the issues of the program So you don't want to write documentation.

Speaker 1 33:29
Let's go to the next part. This part is about the strategies for the organization application. Some of your answers, I think it's a little strange, for example, you disagreed that to have multiple ideas and have them categories that why。

Speaker 2 34:05
have motivated them disagree? I don't remember this question. They have democratic rise. I don't know why I answered the disagree. So probably I miss click here.

Speaker 1 34:34
You think it's a good strategy.

Speaker 2 34:37
We this year we had a lot of ideas and some of them didn't get accepted because you have some slots in GSoC. Yeah, if you have multiple ideas, so you can try to get more slots, more students and the community probably get known better. So probably there I mislead. Sorry.

Speaker 1 35:08
no problem. How about the strategy of never link to just a bug tracker? Your answer is, I don't know. They have some new comments.

Speaker 2 35:25
So ███████ doesn't have a software are unique software, first of all, and does it provide like many, many celebrities or many, many projects. And there isn't the most important one in the ███ as I saw, the projects that are used in the ████ community are developed from the ones that work in █████.

Like the most important software in ████████, some software that is really important to ████████. That is the endpoint where you make the queries that is developed from someone in ███ and not from the students. It's like the organization software is developed from the ███████ developers. And then the projects are aside on the other side. So we needn't have any students that worked for solving specific bugs of project?

Speaker 1 37:06
Okay? Let's move to the next part. This part is about the strategy during students selection and community bonding period. Could you explain some of your answers?

Speaker 2 37:30
Okay, assess whether the student is patient for applying every suggestion from mentors? You don't have to use every suggestions from mentors. Like, as I mentor, I tried to make suggestions to improve something, but the students really need to think with their head. So they don't have to apply have a suggestion. Could be able to wrong.

Speaker 1 38:06
Do you think the mentors can also make mi Speaker 2 38:14
Sure. So you have to of. Course, you have to think about these suggestions of the mentors. But then you have to discuss it because it would also be wrong. This is where is the personality type and work style? I disagree because you have to like set up something with the with the students to work. But then I found that it's not, it's not an issue.

So I try to work with different personalities and work types and different times. Yes. Asked us whether the mentees have a proper technical discussion. I don't find it. It really useful about it could also depend on how many applicants you have for the proposals. Like in my experience, I had from 1 to 3 students for my projects. So a proper technical discussion is not that useful. I have to make an interview.

Speaker 1 39:33
So you said during this selection period, technical discussion is not necessary because you can know the student technical skills through interview or through some of their warm-up tasks.

Speaker 2 39:57
From the work map task, you have the technical section in the project proposal.
So the students already wrote that. If I had to make a technical discussion before the deadline of the project, I asked if they know programming language or a library, I don't go for a technical discussion, which is a case. It was never an issue, because I got the only one student that made the 2 years as a student.

Speaker 1 40:43
okay.

Speaker 2 40:44
Through student GitHub profiles where they have certain skills. I look at only to the GitHub profiles not for certain skills, but only if they know GitHub, because you put the record.

Speaker 1 41:04
So you don't think you don't look at the students GitHub. but some mentors through GitHub profile, they can know the student experience, for example, how often do they contribute to open source?

Speaker 2 41:31
But here the students, the digital program is like the first contact with the open source for most of the time. So I don't think that checking the GitHub profiles to see if they provided something to the open source community, it's really helpful because yeah, if I check it, it's only to see what's their account for publishing stuff. And if they can use GitHub. Check whether the student has been around contributing before the application period as the same reason as before. So for a lot of students, it's the first experience to open source community to the open source in general, and to the █ community. So I don't check their contribution.

Speaker 1 43:30
I think maybe the situation can become much better, because in the open source, we collaborate online.

So the students can do their own things, but they should spend some time for their project.

Speaker 2 43:56
Yeah, sure. I you can travel, you can do whatever you want. The important thing is that you reach your milestones, you reach your milestones, you can work during the night. You can go whatever you want, but then you have to tell me what are you are doing. Because I'm the mentor, so I need to know what you're doing uh. You have to write your blog posts and then respect the objectives.

Speaker 1 44:27
Just could you explain the last one? You strongly disagree that when in doubt, feel the student early?

Speaker 2 44:36
I don't want to fail this student early, because sometimes there are issues like personal issues with the students or in any case, I try to talk with them. So like, what's going on? And I try to understand what they are doing and why uh they are like behind the schedule.

Okay, for instance, this year, the student from china, he said to me that he had some exams to do. In that case, he was like a little behind the schedule, a little behind the milestones, but I know that he was making some exams for the university.
So then I asked him, you can do the exams. We have to try to recover all the stuff and try to anyway, reach the milestones because you get paid for it. Yeah.

Speaker 1 45:50
I think you are very patient mentor.

Speaker 1 45:58
Let's move to the strategies for the official execution. Could you explain your answers?

Speaker 2 46:17
Okay. The activity is needed. Okay so.

You have to recognize your mistakes. Good, at last year for their opinions before decisions with the weekly call be inclusive. The patient with students, even when they ask silly questions. Because as I said, for many students, is their first experience. So they can ask whatever they want. In general, and there aren't silly questions. Don't be a jerk. I don't know how to say it, because you are a mentor and you have to follow the student project. So you don't, it' really difficult to, say, saving savings to improve the project that. Don't make, don't make the students feel failure， and try to maintain the position of the mentors.

Speaker 1 47:45
You choose neutral for this strategy? Keep communicating as much as possible?

Speaker 2 48:01
Because I had the students that once that text me a lot of time. For each step, I want to help them in a anyway. But if you communicate, if you tell me each step, each line you write, it's really hard for me to keep helping you. You have a way where a middle way, where you communicate a lot and communicate is not enough.

Okay, so if you develop a bunch of steps and then we discuss it it's better. At most, we were a little behind deadline, but not so much. Be specific about positive and negative aspects of a student performance. You have to improve yourself and the students so what's the negative aspects could be useful to tell.

Speaker 1 49:48
I have a question about the strategy of asking students how much time they can devote per week. Do you think it is very necessary?

Speaker 2 50:11
It depends on the student, because sometimes they want to work for 40, I think, about the project as a set of milestones instead of the time you want to develop the project.
So if you achieve the milestones within the 10 hours per week, it's fine. If you want to work for 40 hours per week, fine, too. ItSpeaker 1 50:47
Yeah, so we need to evaluate the students' performance through how many milestones they completed instead of how much time they spent.

Speaker 2 51:01
Yeah, that's, the reason why I insist a lot on putting the milestones clear and valuable in some ways,

precision or whatever depends on the project. Yeah. So if you have the milestones, no one can tell you are failing the project.

Speaker 1 51:19
Yeah, but uh. I noticed that you choose neutral for the task and completion deeds are associated with each milestone.

Speaker 1 51:41
do you think for some milestone, it is difficult to set a certain day? Because it's difficult to know how much time to spend.

Speaker 2 52:02
Yeah, you cannot define an exact data when you finish your milestone, but you have also to put some milestones around the GSoC key evaluation dates, we had only one evaluation, but you have to put something around time.

So probably you will need the milestones. You will need the 2 weeks to do some stuff, but you have to also work around the GSoC evaluations.

Speaker 1 52:43
Could you explain the make sure that students are familiar with the workflow of the community as early as possible?

Speaker 2 52:59
You disagree? Yeah. I I'm this time on the outsider, because in the community, we had the really several workflow. So depending on the project, you have to download and install something. So it's not, in my opinion, it's not. So for the ██ community is not so important to be familiar with the workflow. Because in some cases, you have to do something. In some other case, you have to do other stuff to be hard to define a general workflow here.

Speaker 1 53:41
Okay, I see. So the students need only to focus on their own workflow, not all the workflows. Yeah. Okay. Let's uh go to the next party. What kind of tasks do you think are suitable for newcomers? you choose too kinds: risky, exploratory and core development? Could you explain?

Speaker 2 54:13
I choose that because some projects we developed are research ones.

To, in one case, we had an alignment of anthology that implies a lot of risk in the exploratory because you have to search for something new.

Speaker 1 54:38
Do You think it's difficult for students?

Speaker 2 54:40
not so much, not so much, it depends also on the probably depends also on the warm up tasks, because if you warm up tasks and the project ideas, because if the project ideas are clear, too easy to know what the objective, the risk and extraordinary could be easy to do.
include development because we developed also for other projects to be dashboard that worked with some of the core software of ██ that the provide data.

Speaker 1 55:34
why didn't you choose fun/peripheral? You don't think this kind of tasks are not suitable for students.

Speaker 2 55:49
Fine, prefer. And I can't think about something. I don't know how to put something fun in this case. In our projects there, you can get fun for making talk to it I. Don't know how you can make a warm up task fun.

Speaker 1 56:12
So you think it's very difficult to find this fun task for students.

Speaker 2 56:18
Yeah, it totally depends on the students because I can't find something fun to develop and other ones.

Speaker 1 56:24
I see oh okay, let's go to the last part. This part focus on what did you gain from being a mentor in GSoC? You disagreed with things of accomplishment.

Speaker 2 56:44
Why? Try to say, I don't know, because sometimes the project is the student once they develop something. I don't know, I don't find a lot of self-satisfaction. I want to improve myself in terms of communicating with other people. But I don't get any self-satisfaction.

Speaker 1 57:26
What don't you get to a sense of self-accomplishment? Do you know the reasons?

Speaker 2 57:39
I don't know, probably because some projects didn't get good advertising from the community, like some projects where for instance, I told you about the dashboard projects where you can see the data provided by the ██ he didn't get a lot of attention from the community.
So if you develop a project and then it didn't work, at least it worked, but the community didn't appreciate it. That's not the accomplishment.

Speaker 1 58:25
Could you explain the improvement of technical skills? You choose the neutral?

Speaker 2 58:41
We are like trying to guide the students for writing something, but we don't get any new technical skills. Or you get something is really not that much.

Speaker 1 59:10
So could you summarize, what's your gain from participating in GSoC, what's the important one?

Speaker 2 59:33
The important one is the, let's say, the communication one. So which is occur I have, you put I had the opportunity to improve my communication skills, because you have to face, you have to work with all different kind of people from different context to different countries and so on. So the communication skills is really important. For instance, I tried with my Chinese student to learn his name, because we

have a complete, different language and way to pronounce. So that surely is important and improved a lot. I tried a lot of.

Speaker 1 01:00:27
Thanks.