

Dear Communauto Team,

I am applying via your “Spontaneous Application” option. My profile is an odd one: I was a software developer and Tech Lead for the first ten years of my career. A bicycle crash and eye injury in 2014 took me away from daily software development and moved me into management. Since then, I’ve spent time on project management, product management, product ownership, sales, marketing, branding, recruiting, and more. Most of this effort was spent on open source products and services (XTDB, Endatabas, GNOME, etc.) but my interest in open source isn’t abstract — I believe in products and services which serve the common good.

And that brings me to Communauto! I received your Communauto Atlantic (I live in Halifax) newsletter today and it left me wondering if Communauto had job openings which might align with the kind of work I do. You don’t, currently, but between your website, backend systems, and mobile app, there are plenty of places where I might get involved.

I spent the better part of a decade living in Bangalore, India, where traffic grinds the city to an absolute halt on a daily basis. As the population gets wealthier, everyone buys larger vehicles, adding to congestion and pollution. I can see the same thing happening here in Canada: from Vancouver to Montreal to Halifax. Obviously we all want to see our government invest more in public infrastructure, as part of the solution. But I really love the Communauto approach: it grows organically and as car ownership becomes increasingly unpleasant, it’s only bound to see more success. Communauto’s survival over 30 years also demonstrates that it’s a sustainable business and not just an environmentalist’s pipe dream.

The company I started in Bangalore is called Nilenso, and it’s India’s first worker-owned cooperative. Although Communauto isn’t legally a co-op, I believe it embodies the same spirit. While I realize Communauto doesn’t have a role for me today, I wanted to write to you folks to let you know that I am (and will remain) interested in working with you and helping with your mission, should an opportunity ever arise.

If you would ever care to chat with me about my work history or potential opportunities at Communauto in the future, my door is always open.

All the best,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "S. Deobald".

Steven Deobald

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# Steven Deobald

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## Experience

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### Executive Director, GNOME Foundation (2025, Remote)

- *Project Management, staff management, community outreach, fiscal policy, recruitment*
- Created completely new donation platform
- Partner and donor outreach, reinvigorated the Advisory Board
- Complete overhaul of fiscal policy, centralized and standardized documentation
- Recruited board members, appointed treasurer, weekly community outreach

### Founder and CEO, Endatabas (2023-2024, Canada)

- *Product management, funding, pre-sales*
- Defined product UX, APIs, SQL dialect, open source license & business model
- Prioritized features, validated architecture, reviewed all code
- Defined brand and marketing - [endatabas.com](http://endatabas.com), [docs.endatabas.com](http://docs.endatabas.com)
- Created all investment memos, pitch decks - [pitch.endatabas.com](http://pitch.endatabas.com)

### Product Consultant, XTDB (2020-2023, Remote)

- *Market research, product/project/engineering management, funding, legal*
- Researched and successfully pitched open source, serverless business model
- Managed developers and artists for branding, website, documentation - [xtdb.com](http://xtdb.com)
- Wrote all expository technical essays on immutable and temporal databases

### Engineering Manager, Pariyatti (2019-present, Volunteer, Remote)

- *Open source project & engineering management, R&D, architecture*
- Complete development of Clojure and Rails backends (GitHub: [pariyatti/kosa2](https://github.com/pariyatti/kosa2))
- Maintenance of Flutter (Dart) mobile apps (GitHub: [pariyatti/mobile-app](https://github.com/pariyatti/mobile-app))
- Prioritization of projects and tasks, managing staff and volunteers

### Founder and CEO, Nilenso Software (2012-2018, India)

- *Marketing, sales, recruitment, product leadership, project management, mentorship*
- Championed worker-owned, cooperative model
- Wrote and open-sourced first international worker cooperative constitution in India
- Drafted and implemented menstrual leave policy
- Trained all staff in Clojure and functional programming on the JVM
- Engineering Management for Rails and Android teams that built [simple.org](http://simple.org)
- Built company to ₹15cr ARR, with 20 staff members

### Chief Product Officer, C42 Engineering (2011-2012, India)

- *Product management, mentorship, architecture*
- Managed team building [rubymonk.com](http://rubymonk.com), including a self-sandboxing Ruby interpreter

### Tech Lead, DRW Trading (2008-2011, USA)

- *Systems architecture in C#, Java, Ruby, Clojure, and Rails*
- Helped champion re-architecture of entire trade and positions management platform
- Led development of instrument reference data system in JRuby

### Tech Lead, ThoughtWorks (2005-2008, Canada / USA / UK / India)

- *Development in C#, Java, and Ruby; mentorship, architecture, analysis*
- Scoped, sold, built, and maintained projects directly and as project manager

### Senior Developer, Adxstudio (Acq. Microsoft) (2004-2005, Canada)

- *CMS systems design and implementation in C# and .NET*

## Education

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**B.Sc.Hons.Coop. in Computer Science, University of Regina (2005)**

- Graduated with Honours in the Cooperative Education Program
- Participated in five work terms across public, private, and cooperative sectors
- Held Top Secret security clearance with Canadian government

## Activities and Interests

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- Third wave open source
- Vipassana meditation
- Pāli, Sanskrit, Hindi
- Off-grid solar, construction, waste management
- Riding bicycles, swimming, running, yoga, kayaking, canoeing, backpacking, skiing

## Projects

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**Pariyatti Digital Library and Mobile App** (ongoing open source, [github.com/pariyatti](https://github.com/pariyatti))

**Atlantic Canada Vipassana Meditation** (ongoing non-profit, [atlantic.ca/dhamma.org](https://atlantic.ca/dhamma.org))

**Vipassana for Hackers** (ongoing papers, [vipassana-for-hackers.org](https://vipassana-for-hackers.org))

**Two Kinds of GNOMEs** (2025 keynote, [GUADEC](https://gna.org/GNADEC))

**Optimistic Computing** (2024 essay, [deobald.ca/essays](https://deobald.ca/essays))

**Third Wave Open Source** (2024 essay, [deobald.ca/essays](https://deobald.ca/essays))

**The Grift, the Grind, and the ग्रंथ** (2024 keynote, [IN/Clojure](https://in.clojure))

**Democracy at Work: The Case Study of Nilenso** (2023 podcast, [WorkWise](https://workwise.org))

**Trucks, Tubes, and Truth** (2022 essay, [deobald.ca/essays](https://deobald.ca/essays))

**Blockchain Without the Crypto** (2021 essay, [deobald.ca/essays](https://deobald.ca/essays))

**The Strength of the Record** (2021 essay, [deobald.ca/essays](https://deobald.ca/essays))

**Ethical Software for Everyone** (2019 essay, [deobald.ca/essays](https://deobald.ca/essays))

**Transparency in Work** (2017 talk, [CreativeMornings](https://creativemornings.org))

**Vipassana for Hackers** (2016 talk, [HasGeek TV](https://hasgeek.tv))

**Nilenso Cooperative Agreement (CC0-1.0)** (2016 legal template, [github.com/nilenso](https://github.com/nilenso))

**Two Years Wiser: The Nilenso Experiment** (2015 keynote, [The Fifth Elephant](https://the-fifth-elephant.com))

**Clojure is my favourite Ruby** (2012 talk, [RubyConf India](https://rubyconf.org))