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Dear Fiona and the STA team,

I have been in technology leadership roles for over 10 years. Starting with my time at ThoughtWorks and DRW Trading, I led teams of dozens of developers. When I left DRW, I moved to India and started Nilenso Software, an employee-owned software consultancy with a mission to work with clients building critical infrastructure products, whether for-profit like GoJek or non-profit like Simple.org. Throughout these roles, I was constantly evaluating software and architecture choices which had a direct impact on the resilience of such clients. Open source always formed the foundation of these choices. However, just because software is open source does not mean it is inherently safe or stable; the other side of this coin was the work of selecting stable infrastructure. I was always looking for emerging open source technologies which valued stability, sustainability, and longevity. When I founded Nilenso, Clojure (a language and ecosystem which strives for near-zero API breakage) was a significant technology choice for us for precisely this reason.

In the years since, I have promoted "third wave open source." I founded Endatabas, a database startup, on this ideal. Nurturing stability and correcting the broken financial markets surrounding open source usage (and, in many cases, exploitation) are of acute interest to me. After decades of working with, on, and around open source infrastructure, I want to contribute directly to the solution.

The Sovereign Tech Agency is an obvious candidate for this kind of work. Even though the STA is a new contributor to the landscape of open source infrastructure, it has already demonstrated its importance with contributions to a wide range of essential projects like OpenSSH, cURL, and GNOME. Given the nature of these projects, these are the sorts of worthwhile investments I would love to be a part of evaluating.

In the public sphere, I have written and spoken extensively about open source, next-generation organizational structures, and emerging tech/concepts — particularly those which address deep infrastructural failure, such as immutable and temporal data. Within the organizations I have run, like Nilenso and Pariyatti Open Source, I have spent over a decade connecting non-profits, business models, customers, and open source communities to this emerging tech. All of this experience would be directly relevant to my role at the Sovereign Tech Agency.

I look forward to hearing from you.

All the best,

Steven Deobald