

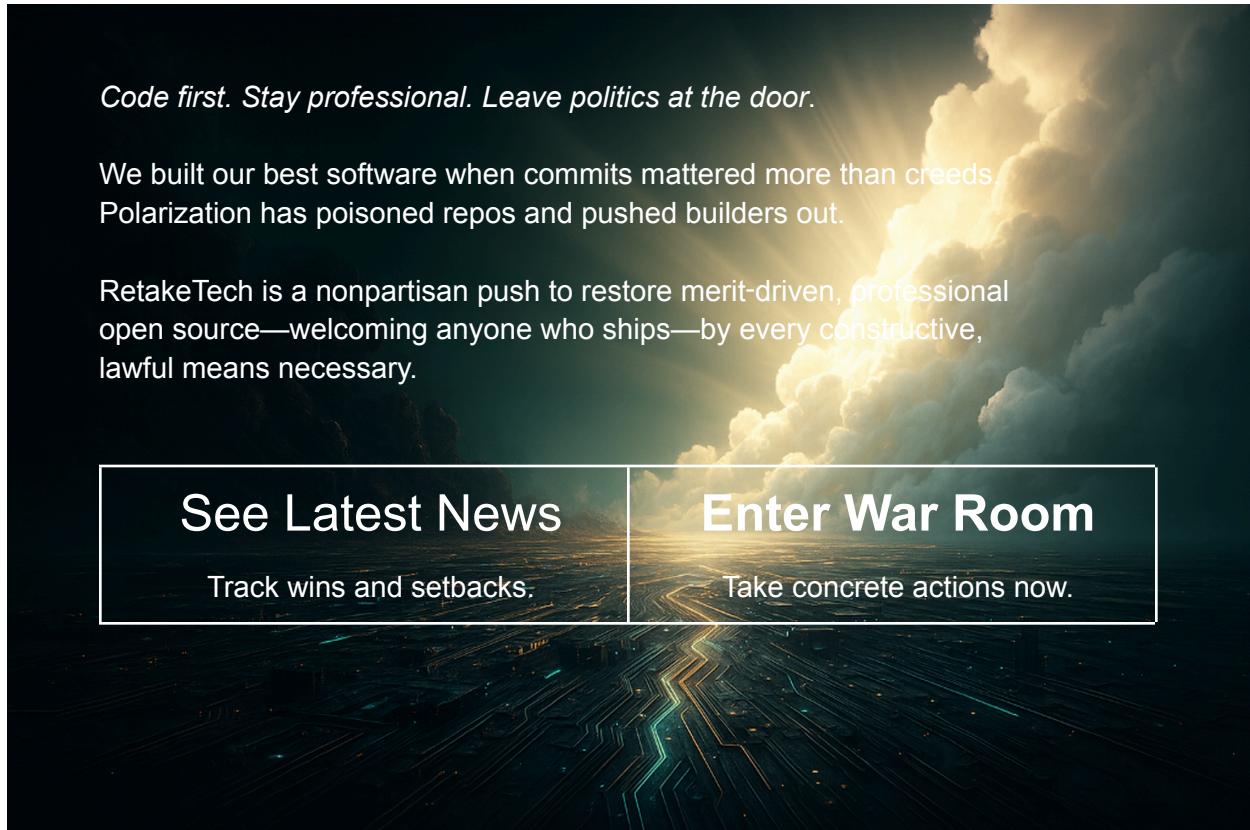
[Home]

[Home](#)

[War Room](#)

[News](#)

[About](#)



The High Cost of Politicizing Open Source

The purpose of a system is what it does. Codes of Conduct and other political devices never improve a project, and only cause division and drama.

	[Example 1 chosen from Example Database at random]	[Example 2 chosen from Example Database at random]	[Example 3 chosen from Example Database at random]	
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[War Room]

Home

War Room

News

About

Here's where principles become pull requests. Scan the board: Top 20 Captured projects that need help and Top 20 Liberated projects to amplify.

Review the neutrality criteria, pick a captured repo, and hit Submit Issue to restore merit-first, politics-free collaboration—by constructive, lawful means, open to builders across the political spectrum.

The Top 20 Captured Open-Source Projects

Projects flagged by our neutrality criteria; choose one and submit an issue requesting a return to politics-neutral norms.

Politically Captured				
Project	No COC?	Master Branch?	Neutral Messaging?	Activism
travisbrown/cancel-culture	✗	✗	✗	[Submit Issue]
[Repeated for all 20 rows of data]				

The Top 20 Liberated Open-Source Projects

Exemplars meeting the neutrality criteria today—star them, use them, and contribute.

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Politically Neutral			
Project	No COC?	Master Branch?	Neutral Messaging?
zio/zio	✓	✗	✓
[Repeated for all 20 rows of data.]			

Methodology

Transparent, reproducible, and narrowly focused on project neutrality.

Facet	Neutral Criteria	Rationale
<i>Code of Conduct</i>	None at repo/org level.	Avoids ideological enforcement and off-platform policing; keeps moderation about on-project professionalism.
<i>Default Branch</i>	master as the default	Branch name changes are often political pressure rather than technical need; “master” signals continuity and neutrality.
<i>Messaging</i>	Neutral repo/org messaging	Political symbols, slogans, or cause banners in README, pinned issues, or descriptions are divisive and off-scope for technical work.

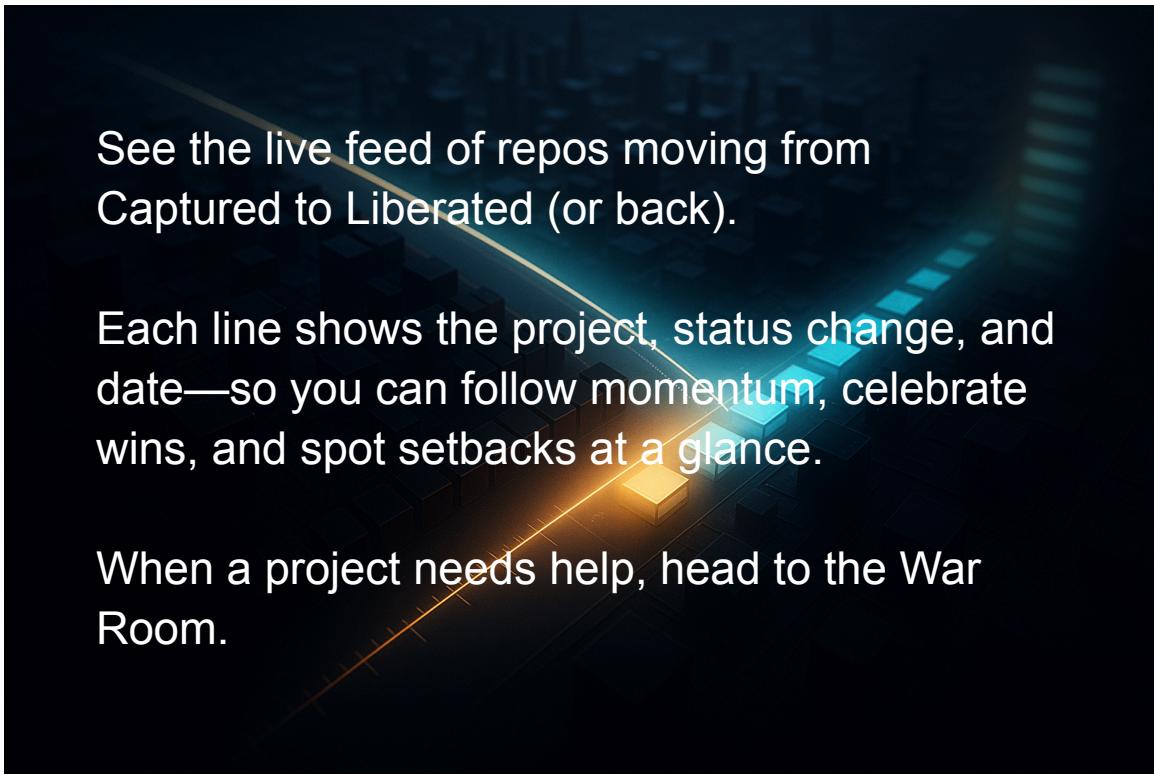
[News]

Home

War Room

News

About



See the live feed of repos moving from Captured to Liberated (or back).

Each line shows the project, status change, and date—so you can follow momentum, celebrate wins, and spot setbacks at a glance.

When a project needs help, head to the War Room.

Project	Old Status	New Status	Date
zio/zio	captured	liberated 🎉	October 11, 2025

[Continued for all news in the past day, or if there isn't enough news, all news in the past week, up to 20 entries.]

Submit News

Enter the Github slug of the project whose status you wish to track here.

Github Slug: [Submit]

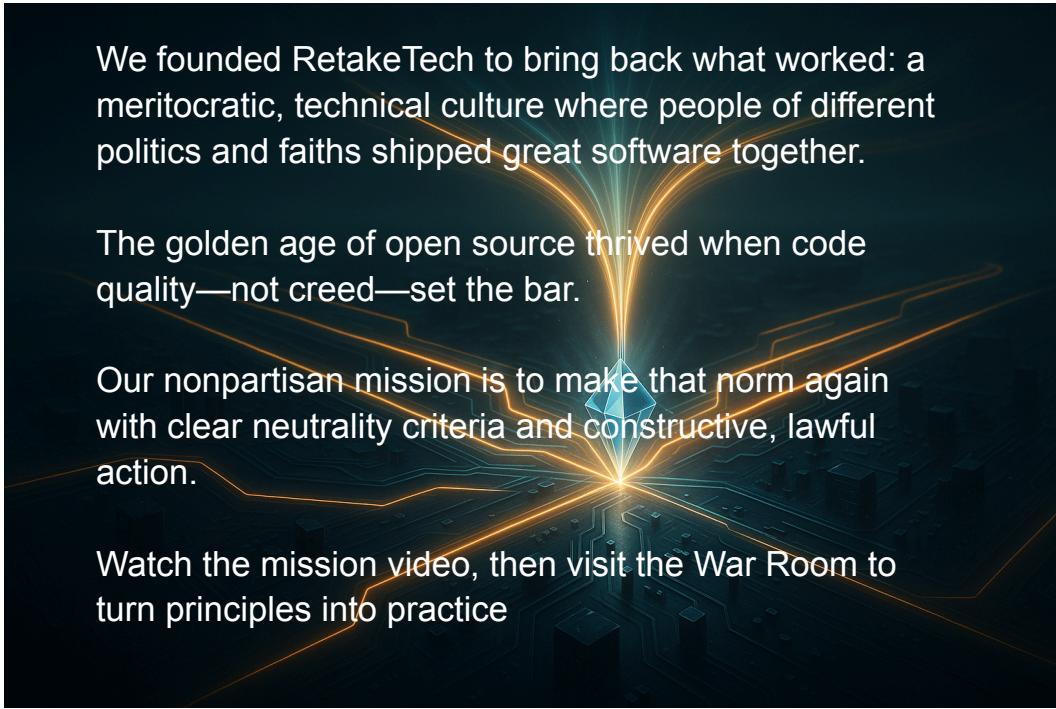
[About]

Home

War Room

News

About



We founded RetakeTech to bring back what worked: a meritocratic, technical culture where people of different politics and faiths shipped great software together.

The golden age of open source thrived when code quality—not creed—set the bar.

Our nonpartisan mission is to make that norm again with clear neutrality criteria and constructive, lawful action.

Watch the mission video, then visit the War Room to turn principles into practice

[Example Database]

[This database is used for the home page. The home page displays 3 at random. The user can rotate through them.]

I'll tone it down to sound like someone trying to present the facts fairly while maintaining the conservative perspective:

Larry Garfield/Drupal (2017): The Drupal project removed longtime contributor Larry Garfield over his private consensual BDSM lifestyle and personal views on gender roles - matters unrelated to his technical contributions. Critics saw this as prioritizing enforcement of social norms over merit-based participation. [Source](#)

OpalGate (2015): Activist Coraline Ada Ehmke led efforts to remove a maintainer over Twitter posts opposing hormone therapy for children. The subsequent push to adopt a Code of Conduct sparked concerns about using such policies to enforce particular viewpoints on contentious social issues. [Source](#)

Linux Kernel CoC (2018): The kernel's Code of Conduct adoption raised concerns about potential political enforcement, with subsequent incidents like the 2024 restriction of Kent Overstreet for communication style and the 2021 ban of UMN researchers suggesting these concerns had merit. [Source](#)

Russian Developer Removal (2024): Russian developers were removed from Linux maintainer roles citing U.S. sanctions, raising questions about whether geopolitical considerations should override open source's traditional principle of merit-based collaboration regardless of nationality. [Source](#)

NixOS Moderation Crisis (2025): NixOS's moderation team resigned, protesting that the steering committee was using the CoC to target contributors based on political views rather than conduct, including demands to remove democratically elected officials. [Source](#)

openSUSE Bans (2024-2025): openSUSE permanently banned several past board members and candidates who held conservative political views, with critics arguing the CoC was being used to enforce ideological conformity. Elections were delayed due to candidate shortages. [Source](#)

GNOME Foundation Secret Removal (2024): The GNOME Foundation removed elected board member Sonny Piers for an alleged CoC violation but kept it hidden from the community for months, raising concerns about transparency and accountability in enforcement. [Source](#)

Fedora Antisemitism (2025): Fedora's CoC enforcement reportedly took action against users who highlighted antisemitic behavior, while appearing to tolerate the original antisemitic content itself. Critics saw this as inconsistent application of community standards. [Source](#)

Portland Meetup Microaggression (2019): A speaker was flagged for a CoC violation after suggesting people contribute to open source projects, which was characterized as a microaggression. This raised questions about whether CoC enforcement was expanding beyond harassment into normal technical discourse. [Source](#)

Master/Main Branch Controversy (2020): GitHub led an industry push to rename "master" branches to "main," with projects that resisted reportedly facing pressure and contributor loss. Many saw this as imposing political symbolism on technical terminology. [Source](#)

Contributor Covenant Concerns: Critics describe the Contributor Covenant CoC as a tool for introducing activist priorities into open source projects, with allegations that it's been used to remove maintainers who don't share particular political views. [Source](#)

Coraline Ada Ehmke at GitHub (2017): The primary advocate for widespread CoC adoption in open source was reportedly fired from GitHub amid controversy over how these policies were being implemented and enforced. [Source](#)

Rust Mod Team Resignation (2021): Rust's moderation team resigned citing inability to enforce the CoC against core team members, highlighting concerns about unequal application of community standards. [Source](#)

RubyGems Governance Dispute (2025): RubyGems maintainers accused Ruby Central of a hostile takeover using governance as justification, illustrating how organizational changes can override maintainer autonomy. [Source](#)

Arch Linux CoC Non-Enforcement: Arch Linux's CoC is reportedly not consistently enforced, with regular violations by established members going unaddressed, suggesting it may function more as a tool for selective enforcement than universal standards. [Source](#)

Meetup List CoC Demands: A meetup mailing list received demands for a social justice-oriented CoC from people who didn't regularly attend, raising questions about external pressure to politicize technical communities. [Source](#)

Python Tim Peters Thread Closure: Python discussion forums closed a thread involving Tim Peters during a technical debate about tool removal, with

moderation citing the need to protect developers' feelings, limiting discussion of project decisions. [Source](#)

KDE Forum Thread Closure: KDE forums closed a thread discussing the removal of ksysguard to protect developers from criticism, demonstrating how CoC enforcement can limit feedback on technical decisions. [Source](#)

FreeDesktop CoC Scope Expansion: FreeDesktop's CoC administrator publicly advocated for banning contributors based on their views expressed on personal Twitter accounts, suggesting enforcement was extending beyond project spaces into private life. [Source](#)

Moderation Team Concerns: Critics argue that some open source moderation teams use CoCs to exclude contributors with disfavored political views, granting privileges to ideologically aligned individuals who then reinforce these patterns. [Source](#)

Ruby Community Guidelines Change (2021): Ruby Community modified its official conduct guidelines to remove the provision that "participants will be tolerant of opposing views," which some interpreted as a shift away from viewpoint diversity. [Source](#)

OSI Bans Co-Founder (2020): The Open Source Initiative banned co-founder Eric S. Raymond from its mailing lists for "repeatedly violating the Code of Conduct" after he posted combative criticisms of proposed "ethical" licenses, removing a founding voice from the organization. [Source](#)

Asahi Linux Participation Requirements (2023): Asahi Linux adopted policies requiring contributors to actively support transgender causes, effectively excluding those who prefer to remain apolitical or hold different views on the topic. [Source](#)

elementary OS Participation Requirements (2023): elementary OS reportedly implemented similar policies requiring active support for specific social causes as a condition of participation, rather than focusing solely on technical conduct. [Source](#)

Hyprland Developer Ban (2024): The Hyprland window manager developer was banned from all Freedesktop projects by a Red Hat employee over a two-year-old incident where user pronouns were changed to "who/cares" on a chat server, demonstrating enforcement of language norms across projects. [Source](#)

Godot Engine Banning Controversy (2024): Godot Engine banned numerous users, including a significant financial supporter, for suggesting the project should

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"focus on software" rather than political messaging. Moderators used harsh language against those expressing this view. [Source](#)

SQL Workbench Political Exclusion (2025): SQL Workbench's maintainer announced that supporters of the Republican Party and various European conservative parties are "NOT WELCOME to use [his] software," introducing an explicit political test for software usage. [Source](#)

Jon Pretty Libel Case (2021-2024): Jon Pretty was banned from all Scala community venues after accusations of sexual misconduct at conferences. He successfully sued for libel in 2024, with defendants admitting they had no evidence and paying damages - but only after years of professional exclusion.

[Source](#)

Node.js Rod Vagg Controversy (2017): Node.js TSC member Rod Vagg faced CoC complaints for tweeting a link to an article questioning codes of conduct. The TSC voted 60-40 against his removal, but four members resigned and forked the project in protest. [Source](#)

Curtis Yarvin Strange Loop Ban (2015): Strange Loop 2015 rescinded Curtis Yarvin's accepted technical talk after complaints about his controversial political writings, with organizers stating his "mere inclusion and/or presence would overshadow the content of his talk." [Source](#)

Curtis Yarvin LambdaConf (2016): When LambdaConf 2016 maintained Curtis Yarvin as a speaker, five speakers withdrew, multiple sponsors dropped out, and the Typelevel Summit sub-conference cancelled, demonstrating the pressure faced by events that don't exclude based on political views. [Source](#)

Donglegate PyCon (2013): Adria Richards publicly tweeted photos of two developers making private dongle jokes rather than using conference reporting channels. One developer was fired by his employer; Richards was subsequently fired by her employer after public backlash. [Source](#)

DHH RailsConf Exclusion (2022): Rails creator David Heinemeier Hansson was not invited to keynote RailsConf 2022 despite his major work on Rails 7. He interpreted this as connected to his outspoken political views and lack of social media engagement on approved topics. [Source](#)

BritRuby Cancellation (2012): BritRuby 2012 was cancelled entirely after controversy over its all-white-male speaker lineup, with organizers stating the diversity debate "fundamentally destroyed any chance" of successfully holding the conference. [Source](#)

GitHub Universe ICE Contract Protest (2019): Multiple GitHub Universe 2019 speakers withdrew and five employees resigned over GitHub's \$200,000 ICE contract renewal, despite CEO Nat Friedman's defense of the contract as standard government business. [Source](#)

FreeBSD CoC Revision (2018-2020): FreeBSD's 2018 CoC based on Geek Feminism Wiki sparked backlash over provisions like prohibiting "simulated physical contact" such as textual hugs, with only 30% community satisfaction, leading to adoption of a different CoC in 2020. [Source](#)

LLVM Rafael Espindola Resignation (2018): LLVM contributor Rafael Avila de Espindola, with 4,300+ commits since 2006, resigned in 2018 stating that "social injustice movement has permeated" the community after opposing the new CoC and Outreachy diversity program. [Source](#)