

Guido van Rossum

Guido van Rossum (Dutch: [ˈɣido vɑn ˈrɔsɪm, -səm]; born 31 January 1956) is a Dutch programmer best known as the author of the Python programming language, for which he was the "Benevolent dictator for life" (BDFL) until he stepped down from the position in July 2018.^{[5][6]} He is currently a member of the Python Steering Council^[7], however he has withdrawn from nominations for the 2020 Python Steering Council^[8].

Guido van Rossum



Guido van Rossum at the Dropbox headquarters in 2014

Born	31 January 1956 ^[1] <div>Haarlem, Netherlands^{[2][3]}</div>
Nationality	Dutch
Alma mater	University of Amsterdam
Occupation	Computer programmer, author
Known for	Creating the Python programming language
Spouse(s)	Kim Knapp (m. 2000)
Children	1 ^[4]
Awards	Award for the Advancement of Free Software (2001)
Website	gvanrossum.github.io (https://gvanrossum.github.io/)

Contents

- Life and education
- Work
 - Python
 - Computer Programming for Everybody
 - Mondrian
 - Dropbox
- Awards
- References
- External links

Life and education

Van Rossum was born and raised in the Netherlands, where he received a master's degree in mathematics and computer science from the University of Amsterdam in 1982. He has a brother, Just van Rossum, who is a type designer and programmer who designed the typeface used in the "Python Powered" logo.^[9]

Van Rossum lives in Belmont, California, with his wife, Kim Knapp,^[10] and their son.^{[11][12][13]} According to his home page and Dutch naming conventions, the "van" in his name is capitalized when he is referred to by surname alone, but not when using his first and last name together.^[14]

Work

While working at the Centrum Wiskunde & Informatica (CWI), Van Rossum wrote and contributed a glob() routine to BSD Unix in 1986^{[15][16]} and helped develop the ABC programming language. He once stated, "I try to mention ABC's influence because I'm indebted to everything I learned during that project and to the people who worked on it."^[17] He also created Grail, an early web browser written in Python, and engaged in discussions about the HTML standard.^[18]

He has worked for various research institutes, including the Centrum Wiskunde & Informatica (CWI) in the Netherlands, the U.S. National Institute of Standards and Technology (NIST), and the Corporation for National Research Initiatives (CNRI). From 2000 until 2003 he worked for Zope corporation. In 2003 Van Rossum left Zope for Elemental Security. While there he worked on a custom programming language for the organization.^[19] From 2005 to December 2012, he worked at Google, where he spent half of his time developing the Python language. In January 2013, he started working for Dropbox.^[20] In October 2019 Van Rossum officially retired.

Python

In December 1989, Van Rossum had been looking for a "'hobby' programming project that would keep [him] occupied during the week around Christmas" as his office was closed when he decided to write an interpreter for a "new scripting language [he] had been thinking about lately: a descendant of ABC that would appeal to Unix/C hackers". He attributes choosing the name "Python" to "being in a slightly irreverent mood (and a big fan of Monty Python's Flying Circus)".^[21]

He has explained that Python's predecessor, ABC, was inspired by SETL, noting that ABC co-developer Lambert Meertens had "spent a year with the SETL group at NYU before coming up with the final ABC design".^[22]

In July 2018, Van Rossum announced that he would be stepping down from the position of BDFL of the Python programming language.^[23]

Computer Programming for Everybody

In 1999, Van Rossum submitted a funding proposal to DARPA called "Computer Programming for Everybody", in which he further defined his goals for Python:

- An easy and intuitive language just as powerful as major competitors
- Open source, so anyone can contribute to its development
- Code that is as understandable as plain English
- Suitability for everyday tasks, allowing for short development times

Python has grown to become a popular programming language. In 2018, it was the third most popular language on GitHub, a social coding website, behind JavaScript and Java.^[24] According to a programming language popularity survey^[25] it is consistently amongst the top 10 most mentioned languages in job postings. Furthermore, Python is consistently in the top 10 most popular languages according to the TIOBE Programming Community Index.^[26]

Mondrian



Van Rossum at the 2008 Google I/O Developer's Conference



Van Rossum at the 2006 O'Reilly Open Source Convention (OSCON)

At Google, Van Rossum developed Mondrian, a web-based code review system written in Python and used within the company. He named the software after the Dutch painter Piet Mondrian.^[27] He named another related software project after Gerrit Rietveld, a Dutch designer.^[28]

Dropbox

In 2013, Van Rossum started working at the cloud file storage company Dropbox.^[29]

In October 2019, Van Rossum left Dropbox and officially retired.^[30]

Awards

- At the 2002 FOSDEM conference in Brussels, Van Rossum received the 2001 Award for the Advancement of Free Software from the Free Software Foundation (FSF) for his work on Python.
- In May 2003, he received a NLUUG Award.^[31]
- In 2006, he was recognized as a Distinguished Engineer by the Association for Computing Machinery.
- In 2018, he was made a Fellow of the Computer History museum.^[32]
- In 2019, he was awarded the honorary title of Dijkstra Fellow by CWI.^[33]


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External links

- Official website (<https://www.python.org/~guido/>) 
 - *The History of Python* (<http://python-history.blogspot.com/>) Guido's blog on the History of Python and design decisions
 - *Computer Programming for Everybody* (<https://www.python.org/doc/essays/everybody/>)
 - Interview with Guido van Rossum (<http://www.twit.tv/floss11>) on FLOSS Weekly
 - *Guido van Rossum* (<http://workspiration.org/guido-van-rossum>) Guido's interview on Workspiration
 - Computerworld Interview with Guido van Rossum on Python (<https://web.archive.org/web/20081229095320/http://www.computerworld.com.au/index.php/id%3B66665771>)
 - Google App Engine — Run your web applications on Google's infrastructure (<http://www.stanford.edu/class/ee380/Abstracts/081105.html>) — technical talk on Google App Engine given by Guido van Rossum at Stanford University. (online video archive (<https://web.archive.org/web/20090326060917/http://stanford-online.stanford.edu/courses/ee380/081105-ee380-300.asx>))
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