GNOME Documentation: helping you learn and give back

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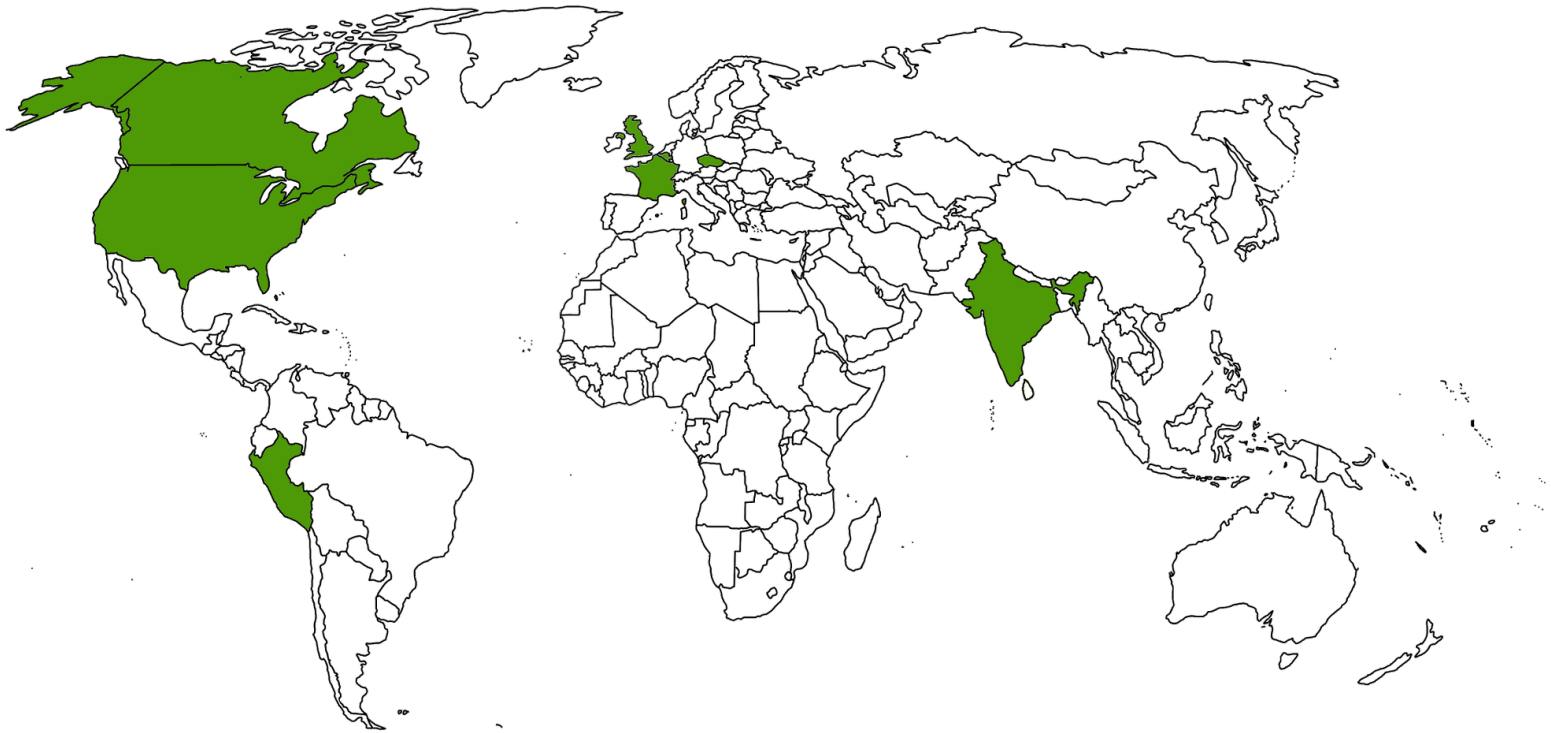
Who are the documentation team?

- Established around 1999
- Sun Microsystems were heavily involved in GNOME documentation in the early days
- Now made up mostly of volunteer contributors
- Valuable contributions from other community members, especially translators



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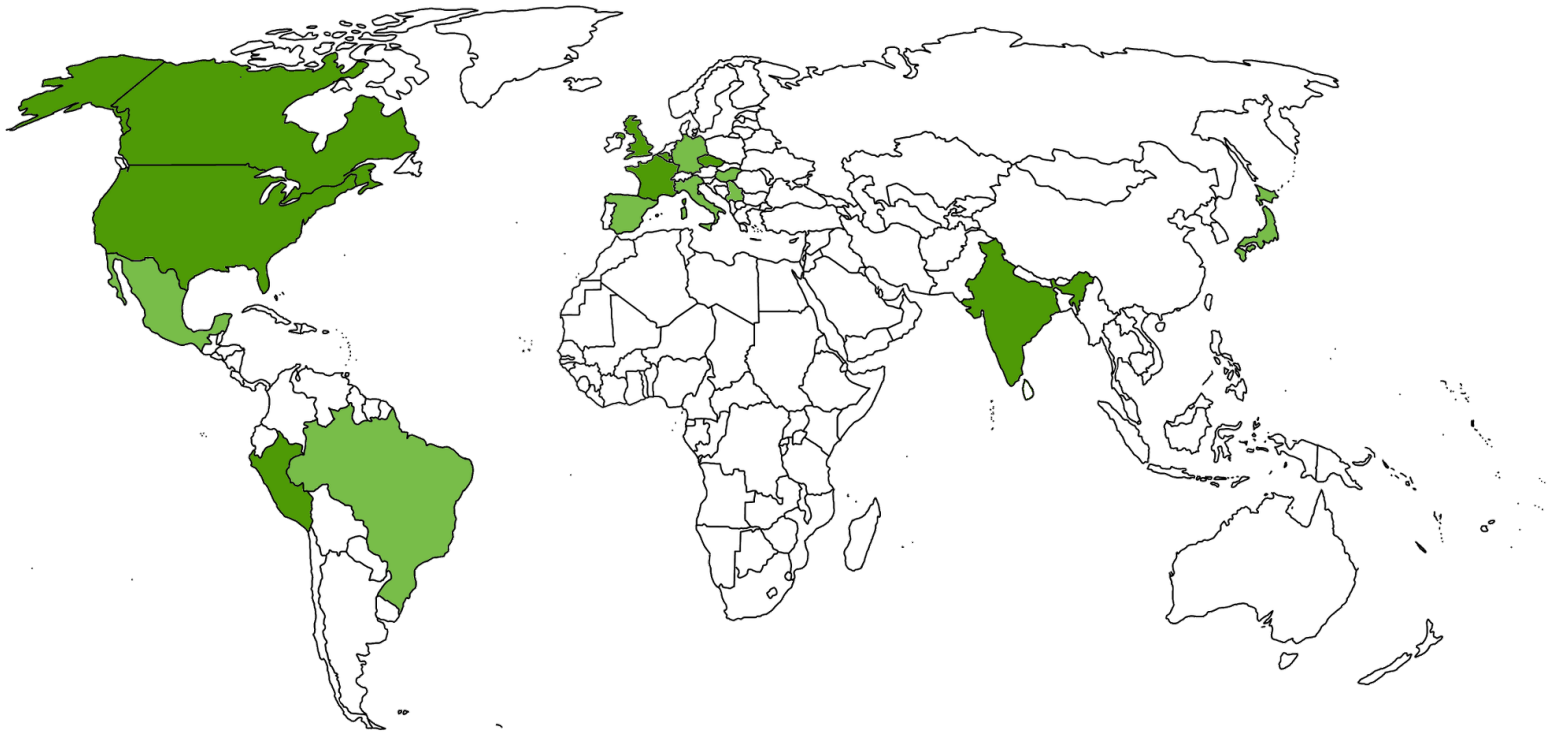

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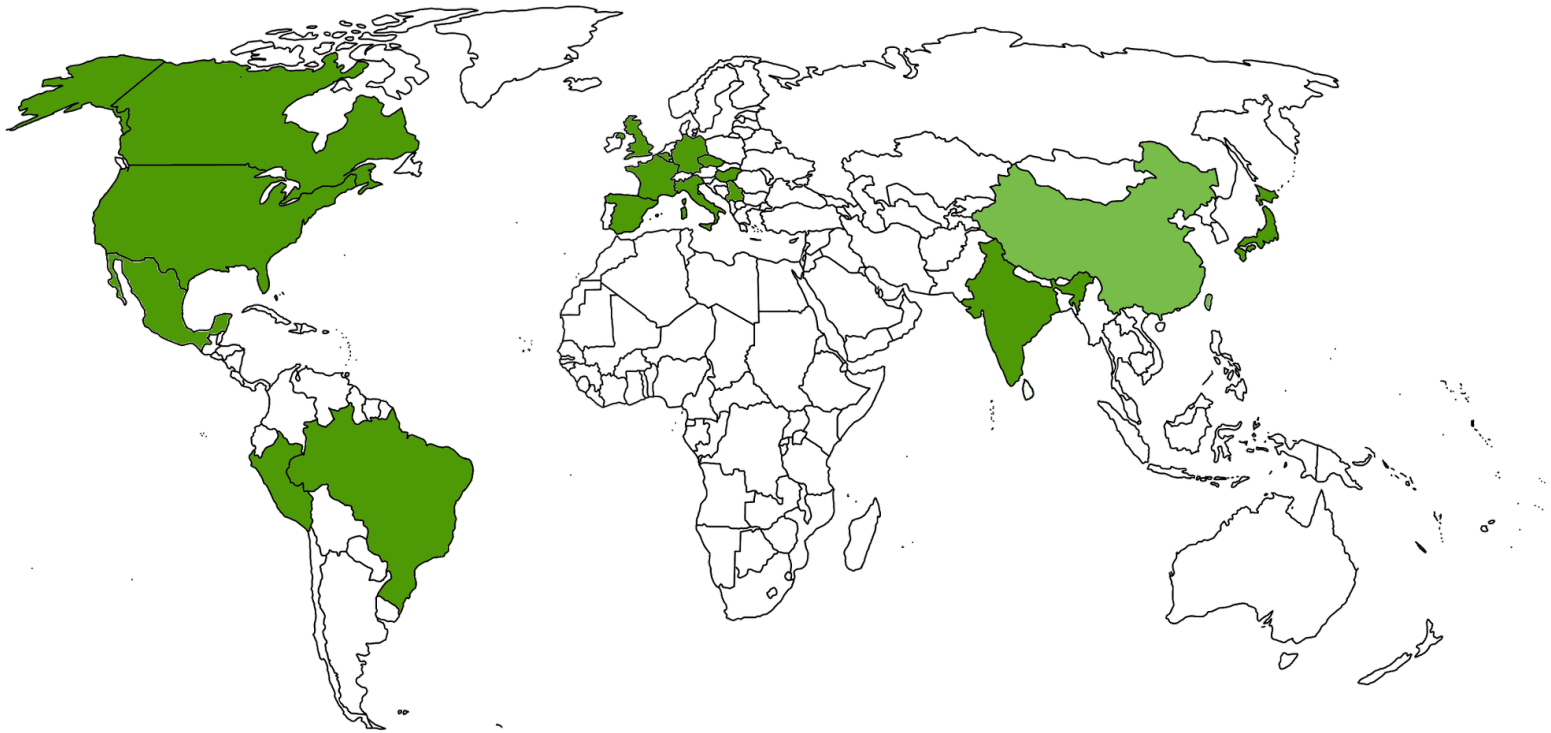

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What does the documentation team do?

- User help: http://help.gnome.org/user/
- System administrator guide: http://help.gnome.org/admin/
- Developer documentation: http://developer.gnome.org

What tools does the team use?

- Mallard
  - XML, similar to HTML
  - designed for application and desktop documentation
- yelp-tools
  - set of helpful command-line tools
  - great for validating Mallard
- text editor (any is suitable)

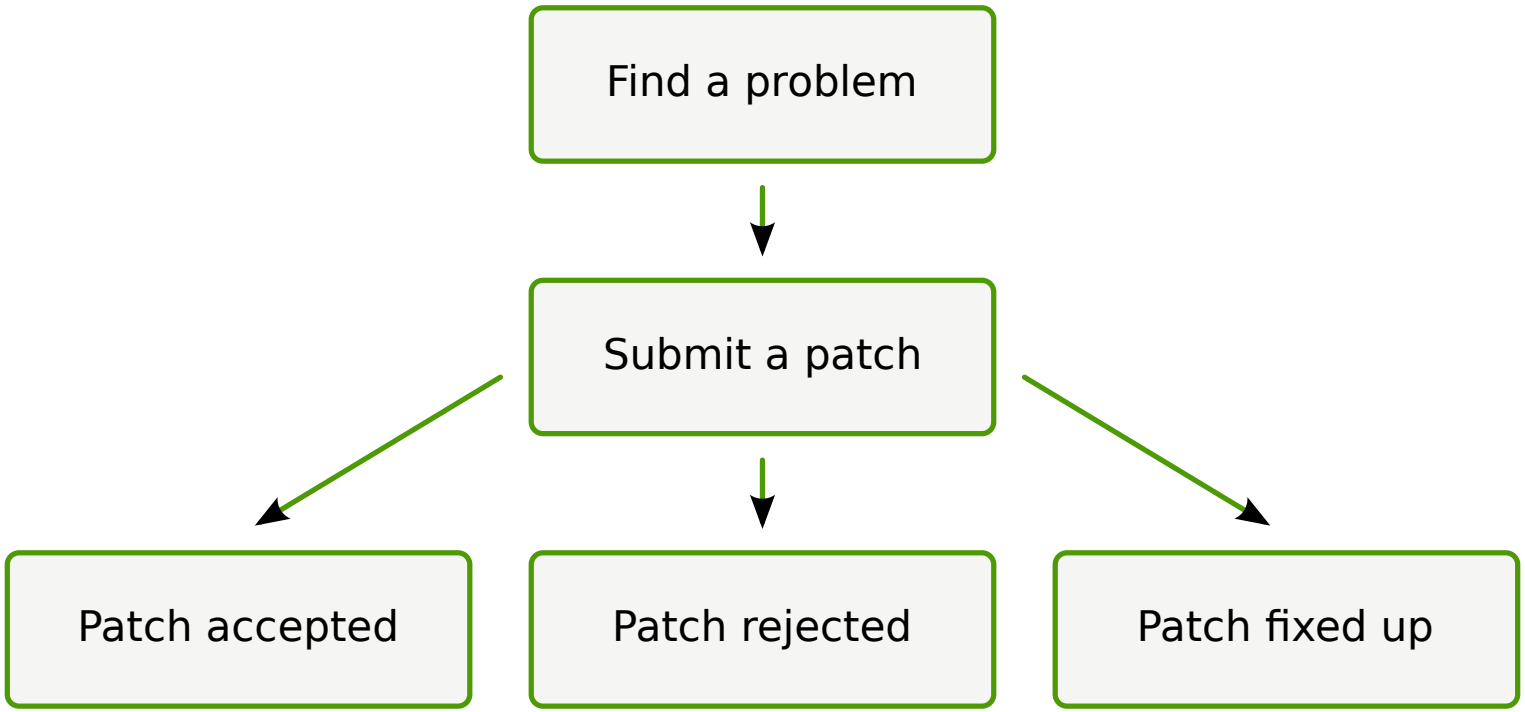
What about the help itself?

- Task oriented: short pages explaining how to achieve one goal
- Extensible: easy to add pages one at a time
- Limited markup: around 50 elements, much fewer than alternatives
- Easy to preview on the go: run ’yelp help/C/’ for most applications
- Licensed under CC-by-SA 3.0

How does the team work?

- Efforts coordinated on wiki, IRC and mailing list
- At least two in-person meetups per year
- Organised online sprints around release time
- Team members "maintain" docs for individual projects

Why are you here?



It's all about the people

- Talk to people...
  - IRC
  - Mailing lists
  - Here and now
- Use available resources
- Ask for help

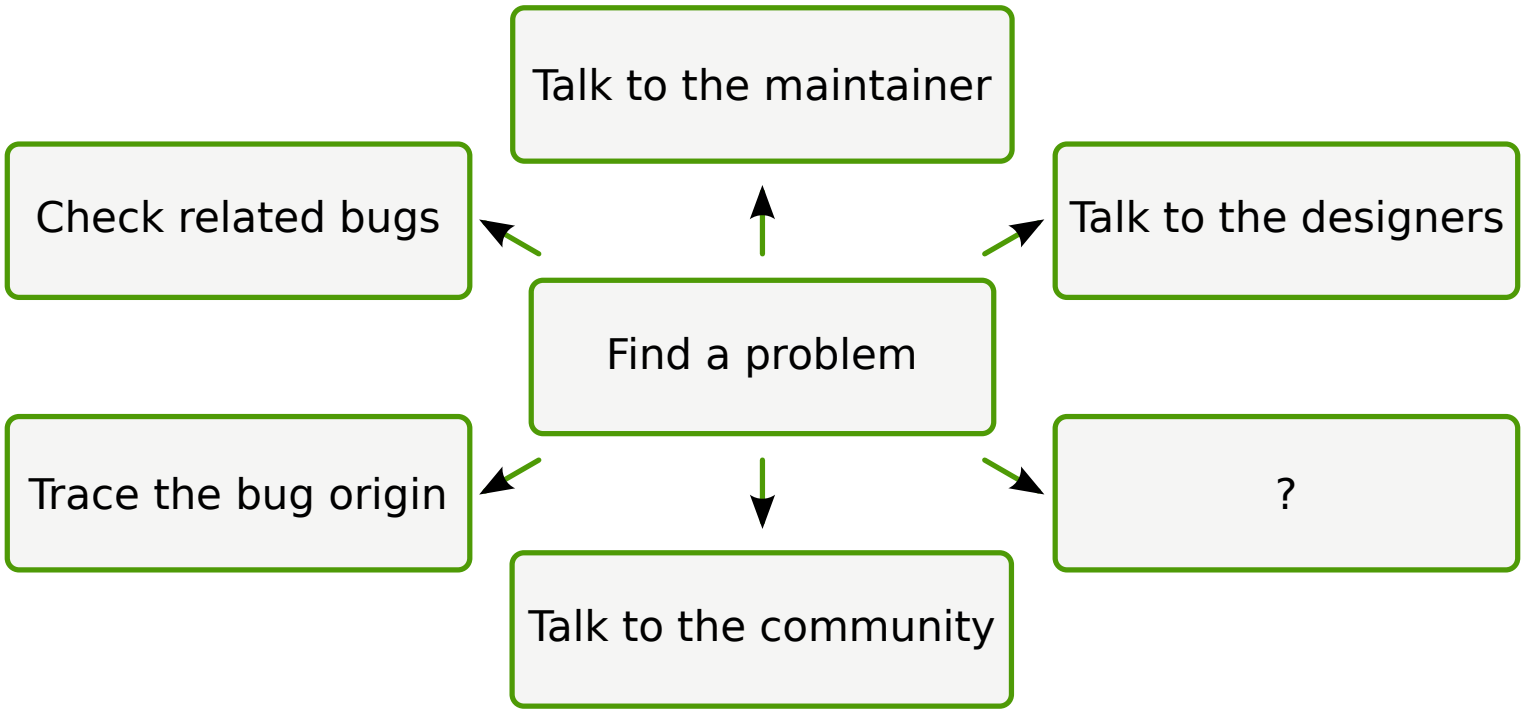
Code of conduct

- Assume people mean well
- Try to be concise
- Be patient and generous
- Be respectful and considerate

Workflow

- Find out about the project workflow and follow it
  - Bugzilla
  - Mailing lists
  - IRC
  - Email
- Build and test

How things happen



Followup

- Be patient
- Follow up with the reviewer
- Follow up on the review

Make good contributions

- Use the reviewer's time well
- Keep to the style of the project
- Follow the review process
- Respond in a timely manner
- Write good commit messages

Experience and growth

- The more you contribute, the more you communicate with people
- The more you communicate, the more you become part of the community
- Once you are part of the community, you can become a Foundation member

- Help others?

Summary

- The passion for a FLOSS project comes from your personal interest in the project
- Collaborate with others and learn together to get ahead
- Explore other projects

With special thanks to

- André Č. Klapper,
- Sindhu S, `sindhus@gnome.org`

Resources

- Documentation team workspace:
  https://wiki.gnome.org/DocumentationProject/
- Source code:
  https://git.gnome.org/
- Bugzilla:
  https://bugzilla.gnome.org/
- Mallard references:
  http://projectmallard.org/
  http://flossmanuals.net/introduction-to-mallard/