

TAC Evolution Plan

DLFENERGY

Successes

- We have brought in nearly 30 projects in into LF Energy, 10 alone in 2023
- Strong project pipeline, with booking out 3 months to have a project present to the TAC.
- Annual Reviews were implemented in 2022, which has given greater insight into project challenges and potential collaboration opportunities.
- We've seen 2 projects move from Incubation to Early Adoption in 2023 (EVerest and SEAPATH)
- Of 15 projects at Incubation stage or later, only 4 non-compliant with OpenSSF Best Practices badge level based on the lifecycle stage
 - Passing for Incubation, Silver for Early Adoption.

Pain Points

- Running out of TAC Bandwidth for new projects
 - Approaching 30 Projects/Working Groups quickly
 - TAC has meeting space for 52 long agenda items (new project proposal, annual review, special presentations
 - This means the TAC has only 22 agenda spots annually left for new projects and special presentations.
 - At current pace of growth, we will be maxed on our agenda with annual reviews by mid 2025
- Breadth of projects
 - Our TAC members tend to be more specialists in certain areas (Distribution, Smart Meter, EV, etc)
 - This makes it hard for a TAC member not familiar with an area to objectively judge alignment.
- Project silos and lack of a holistic ecosystem with interoperability
 - Only 6 projects at Early Adoption and none at Graduated.
 - No mechanism for formal collaboration and alignment.
- No current strategic vision for projects
 - TAC will say “yes” most often and isn’t sure how to say “no” to a project
 - No analysis of gap areas or cross project issues.
 - Starting to see project competition/overlap, and there isn’t a strategy on how to address.

The good news is that we aren't the first foundation with this problem.

- 180 projects as of February 2024 (<https://www.cncf.io/project-metrics/>)
 - 24 new projects in 2023 alone (22 at Sandbox level)
 - 7 projects have move up a maturity level
- Developed out TAGs in various cloud-native topical areas and aligned projects to them
 - Examples include storage, observability, network
 - TAGs are also used for cross-project efforts such as Security and Contributor Experience.



Proposed Changes

Establish SIGs around project clusters

Goals

- Scale TAC operations to a larger number of projects
- Enable deeper collaborations between projects in related spaces
- More easily identify gaps where a new collaboration is needed and/or an existing project should be brought into LF Energy.
- Reduce need of TAC members to be experts in every single aspect of energy
- Improve engagement for technical communities outside their own project.
- Remove TAC Sponsors from individual projects, instead having support at the SIGs

Actions

- Do analysis of current projects and determine 3-4 SIGs to kickoff
- Align TAC member(s) with SIGs
- Identify SIG leader(s) (ideally not TAC member(s))
- Start SIG meetings and hold working session at LF Energy Summit

Streamline onboarding new sandbox projects, and have TAC approve in a group.

Goals

- Streamline project onboarding, shortening the time for a new project to begin formation.
- Tackle any legal roadblocks before a project comes to the TAC.
- Open up meeting bandwidth for the TAC for strategic discussions and topic.
- Scale staff time investment and focus to be able add value to projects “moving the needle” or of strategic importance.

Actions

- LF Energy Staff to revise project onboarding process.
- Collect sandbox proposals at set cadence for group approval with the TAC
- Revisit lifecycle to consider making sandbox projects not official “LF Energy Projects”, primarily to set correct expectations and incentivize growth to Incubation stage.

Annual Reviews held at the SIG level

Goals

- Open up meeting bandwidth for the TAC for strategic discussions and topic.
- Feedback from SMEs more closely aligned will give projects better peer guidance.

Actions

- Redo annual review schedule to align with SIG meeting schedule
- Develop process for a SIG to make recommendation to the TAC to consider lifecycle stage change for a project

This leaves the TAC meetings to focus on

- Overall project health and relevance
- Project lifecycle and value proposition for moving from one stage to another
- Projects moving from one lifecycle stage to the next
- Cross project strategic programs (security, infrastructure, architecture, documentation, AI, developer success, etc)
- Future initiatives

Timeline

Q1 2024

Socialize with TAC and Project Leads - gain consensus and approval

Socialize with GB

Q2 2024

Identify and launch initial SIGs - align TAC voting members with SIGs

LF Staff operationalize project onboarding changes

Q3 2024

TAC hold 2025 Strategy Planning meeting at LF Energy Summit

SIG working sessions at LF Energy Summit

LF Staff coordinate moving annual review schedules to SIGs

Q4 2024

Transition complete
TAC to review and identify any bottlenecks

Complete transition by Q4