

# ANNUAL REPORT 2024



# CEO LETTER

I am delighted to present to you our new annual report. 2024 was a busy year: We released Mastodon 4.3 which brought a lot of safety and discovery improvements to the platform (for example, the “fediverse:creator” feature that allows writers’s profiles to be featured when their web articles are shared on Mastodon). Along with countless accompanying mobile app updates, we also kickstarted our work on Fediscovery (a project that aims to improve discovery features across all Fediverse projects). We attended FOSDEM, one of the most important open-source software conferences in the world, and we grew our team from three to over six full-time employees. The latter was made possible by our new US-based 501(c)(3) non-profit and generous donations from Mozilla (\$100,000), Jeff Atwood (\$100,000), and Craig Newmark (\$50,000). I also toured New York and San Francisco to speak to a variety of journalists and potential allies about Mastodon’s mission, thanks to the organizational help and connections of respectively Biz Stone and Mike McCue.

In 2024, we also launched a unique line of merchandise: Our own stuffed toy, the #Plushtodon. Our competitors may have magnitudes more resources than us, for everything from quick paced development to wide spread marketing, but they don’t have a cute and genuine mascot that people want a plushie of. It’s far from the most efficient fundraising scheme, but by far the most joyful one, as this isn’t just about exchanging goods for money, but about providing a friend to those who need one. The world is cold and hard. The #Plushtodon is soft and cute.

We still have a long journey ahead of us. We can work faster with a bigger team, and having the correct organisational structure should make fundraising easier in the future, but we’re fighting against billionaires. It is not easy. But it remains important. Perhaps it’s even more important now than it was when Mastodon was founded in 2016, because the landscape of the internet is collapsing around a few corporate walled gardens, and one by one

these walled gardens are bought out by billionaires to serve a specific political agenda. The world in which the Arab Spring was allowed to happen on mainstream social media is gone. Mastodon—and the Fediverse of which it is part—is one of the last remaining bastions of the truly free, wild, and diverse internet.



Eugen Rochko  
CEO / Founder



## 2024 REVIEW

In our Annual Report 2023, we outlined a handful of organisational and development goals we wanted to achieve in 2024. In the following report we will share insights on how we contributed towards those goals and the progress we made beyond.

85%

Our assessment of the extent to which we have achieved this goal

# 2024 REVIEW FINANCIALS

2024 was a transformative year financially for Mastodon, marking our first full year operating both our German non-profit (Mastodon gGmbH) and our newly established U.S. non-profit (Mastodon, Inc.).

## REVENUE

Over the course of 2024, Mastodon received transformative support that changed what we could accomplish. First and foremost, we want to extend a heartfelt thank you to our major sponsors:

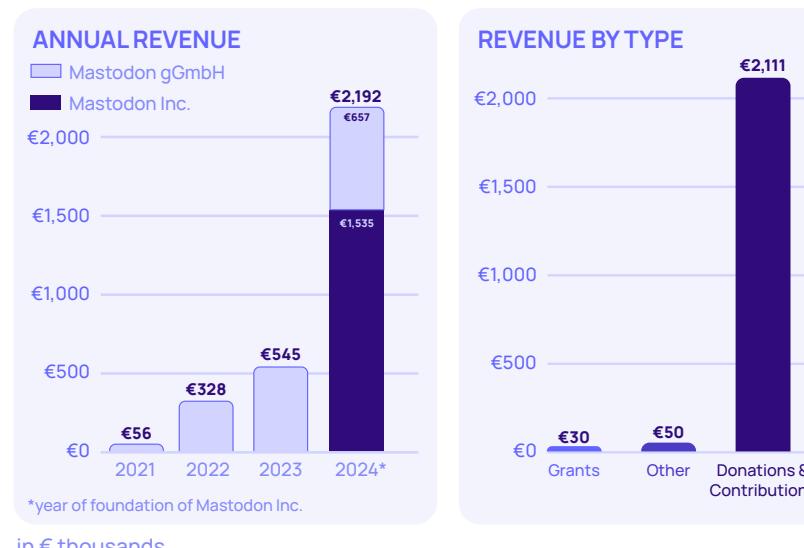
- **Jeff Atwood**,
  - for donating \$100,000 with the specific intention of improving our web user interface
  - for donating \$1,500,000 with the specific intention to support our restructuring
- **The Mozilla Foundation**, for contributing \$100,000, enabling us to increase our team size and development capacity
- **Craig Newmark**, for donating \$50,000 shortly after we established our U.S. non-profit entity

These contributions, combined with continued support from our community on Patreon and individual donors through GiveButter and Benevity, enabled us to expand our team from three to six full-time employees and accelerate development across all platforms.

## FUNDING SOURCES

In 2024, our revenue came from multiple streams:

- **Patreon (Germany)**: €248,531 from recurring small donors
- **Direct Donations (US)**: \$1,582,095 including major gifts
- **Grants**: NGI (an EU Commission program) : Quote Posts were developed from a sub-fund managed by NLNet, and Fediscovery from the NGI Search fund.
- **Commercial Contracts**: Revenue from hosting the European Commission's Mastodon instance and our support contract with Schleswig-Holstein



## MERCHANDISE

In 2024, we launched the **Mastodon plushie**, affectionately known as Plushtodon. When we sat down with our artist, Dopatwo, we had only three requirements: the plushie would have to be cute, cuddly, and round.

The plushie went on sale on 15 October 2024 and took the Fediverse by storm. The EU stock of **610 units sold out within days**. For many, the plushie became more than a toy, it became a work companion, emotional support, and cuddle buddy during the cold winter months. Total merchandise revenue through our online shop reached **€36,152** from 718 orders.



**€2.2M**

Total revenue

**€249k**

From recurring small donors

**< 1%**

Mastodon users donating regularly

**751**

Plushtodon adopted

# 2024 REVIEW FINANCIALS

## REVENUE AND COST

in € thousands

Revenue	2023	2024
Donations and Contributions	€545	€2,111
Grants	€0	€30
Other	€0	€50
<b>TOTAL REVENUE</b>	<b>€545</b>	<b>€2,191</b>

Costs	2023	2024
Technical hosting	-€73	-€84
Personnel	-€383	-€585
Other	-€15	-€106
<b>TOTAL COSTS</b>	<b>-€473</b>	<b>-€774</b>

NET REVENUE	€72	€1,417
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In 2024, our significantly increased budget supported by major donations and community support allowed us to invest substantially more in team growth and infrastructure. As a result, we were able to invest in key areas, reflecting higher spending on essential personnel, development, and operational capabilities.

The **total team costs**, including full-time salaries and freelancer fees, amounted to approximately **€585k**, representing **75.5% of our total costs for 2024**.

## BALANCE SHEET

in € thousands

Assets	2023	2024
Cash and cash equivalents	€152	€1,590
Accounts receivable	€0	€0
Other current assets	€0	€19
Noncurrent assets	€19	€19

Liabilities	2023	2024
Accounts payable & accrued liabilities	€66	€33
Other current liabilities	€3	€22
Loans & long-term debt	€51	€43

In 2024, our cash and cash equivalents increased from €152k to €1.59m. Over the same period, total liabilities decreased from €120k to €98k, including a reduction in loans and long-term debt from €51k to €43k.

**€585k**  
Total personnel costs

**€106k**  
Total other costs

**€84k**  
Technical hosting



# 2024 REVIEW PRODUCT

In 2024 we made strong progress on improving Mastodon's core backend, web interface and mobile apps. We also launched the Fediverse Discovery Provider ("Fediscovery") initiative. An expanded engineering team enabled us to start to tackle larger features we'd been planning for some time.

## WEB

100%



Ship Mastodon 4.3 with major usability improvements, enhanced API capabilities, and better content discovery.

In July, we welcomed David to the team as our second full-time backend developer, initially focusing on the Fediscovery project.

We released Mastodon 4.3 in September – our most feature-rich release to date, after 12 months of development. The release included substantial improvements to notifications, accessibility, and API capabilities. The most significant new feature was grouped notifications, which aggregate similar actions into digestible groups (for example: «Alice, Bob, Carol, and 12 others liked your post»). This required extensive work to avoid performance issues, and went through multiple rounds of community feedback before becoming the default experience.

We overhauled the onboarding experience with a better follow suggestions carousel and recommendations, improved search capabilities, and added automatic light/dark theme support based on system preferences. Other improvements included account popovers when hovering over usernames, drag-and-drop media reordering in the post composer, and an enhanced media viewer.

Another important improvement aimed at helping publishers, writers and journalists connect with their audiences in the Fediverse. We created a new tag for site owners to integrate into their web pages so that links shared on Mastodon display a "card" highlighting the author's account.

In 2024, we received the results of a code security audit sponsored by BSI (German Federal Office for Information Security). After processing and addressing the findings, we released patches for identified vulnerabilities across versions 4.2, 4.1, and nightly builds.

The screenshot shows the Mastodon web interface. At the top, there's a navigation bar with icons for Home, Notifications, Explore, Live feed, Private, Bookmarks, Favorites, Lists, and Preferences. Below the navigation is a sidebar with a 'Notifications' section showing two new followers: Emma Tumanyan and Ali Khattak. The main content area displays a timeline of posts. One post from Daniel Jilg and 32 others is favorited. Another post from Eugen Rochko (@Gargron) discusses the new author bylines feature. A third post from Mike (VK10MG) and 15 others is boosted. A mention from coatilex (@coatilex) is shown. The interface has a clean, modern design with a light blue header and white background.

# 2024 REVIEW PRODUCT

## IOS



95%  
Continue improving the iOS app and establish sustainable development capacity.

In October 2024, we hired Shannon as our first full-time iOS developer. This marked a significant milestone in our ability to maintain and improve the iOS app on a sustainable, ongoing basis.

In 2024, we released 16 updates for the official Mastodon iOS app, bringing it closer to feature parity with the web app and adding support for the new features in Mastodon 4.3. The app was downloaded over 900,000 times in 2024.

Our contributors, including our freelancers Nathan and Marcus, played a vital role in the app's progress throughout the year.

## ANDROID



95%  
Continue improving the Android app and maintain its lightweight performance.

In 2024, our Android app implemented grouped notifications with 4.3 support, a Material You redesign with refreshed interface, and formatted text support.

We also successfully built and tested an in-app donation banner on [mastodon.social](https://mastodon.social) and [mastodon.online](https://mastodon.online) (similar to Signal's nudge approach). This was the first step in a larger sustainability project.

The app was downloaded over 970,000 times in 2024, remains very lightweight, and continues to be primarily developed by Gregory Klyushnikov.

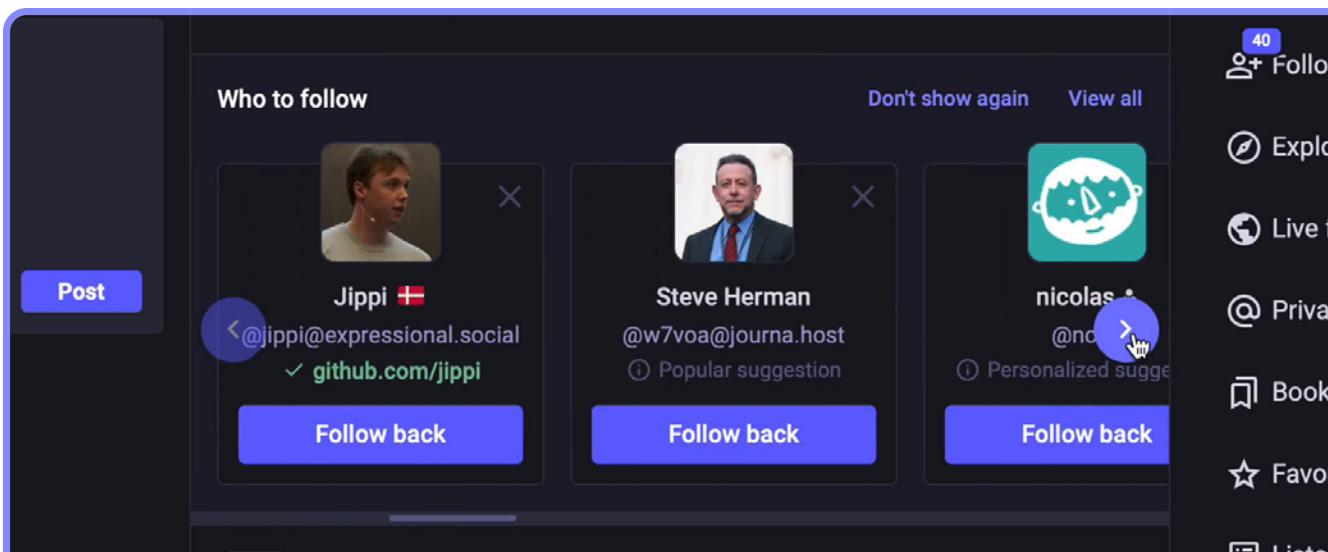
## FEDISCOVERY



75%  
Launch the Fediscovery project and establish foundation for improved content discovery.

In 2024, we launched Fediscovery, a new project funded by the European Commission through the NGI Search programme. This initiative aims to create infrastructure for improved content discovery across the Fediverse while respecting user privacy and instance autonomy. The project is funded through 2025.

We launched the project website at [fediscovery.org](https://fediscovery.org) and published the "[Fediverse Auxiliary Service Providers](#)" specification, which was presented to the broader community in an online session at Fediforum. We built a proof-of-concept provider implementation, developed Mastodon integration for the provider system, and began work on reference provider software.



# 2024 REVIEW GROWTH

## USERS AND SERVERS

The Mastodon software includes an API endpoint that exposes certain statistics, such as monthly active users on the server, as well as its identification as a Mastodon server and a list of other servers it knows about.

We operate an aggregator that crawls servers that identify themselves as running the Mastodon software and periodically collect these public statistics.

Within the Mastodon software, a monthly active user is defined as a user that has accessed Mastodon through the website or its API within the last 30 days. This number may include accounts that were subsequently deleted or suspended, and due to its aggregate nature no guarantees can be made about its mapping to individual people.

On 1 January 2024, we were aware of 9,446 servers running the Mastodon software, with a total of 8.67 million registered accounts and 1.51 million monthly active users.

By December 31, 2024, we were aware of **8,851 servers** running the Mastodon software, with a total of **9.10 million** registered accounts and **938,000 monthly active** users.

## MODERATION



Continue improving moderation tooling and handling increasingly sophisticated spam.

Mastodon saw continued growth in 2024, and along with that came ongoing moderation challenges. We continued to improve our moderation tooling to assist server operators with handling spam and abuse, focusing on proactive measures to identify and remove bot accounts before they reach users.

	2023	2024	Change
Total reports received	69,715	49,419	-29%
Reports leading to local suspension	50,034	25,621	-49%
Total local accounts suspended	90,849	113,728	+25%

The moderation team dealt with increasingly sophisticated automated spam attacks, which required close collaboration between the moderation and development teams.

Mastodon gGmbH is responsible for operating the [mastodon.social](https://mastodon.social) and [mastodon.online](https://mastodon.online) servers. Over the course of the year, between these two servers, we gained 537,844 new users (not counting those subsequently suspended). We received and processed 49,419 reports, of which 25,621 led directly to a suspension of a local account. Overall, 113,728 local accounts were suspended in 2024.

The decrease in reports received and reports leading to suspension, combined with an increase in total suspensions, reflects more proactive moderation approaches and improved automated detection systems that identify problematic accounts before they generate user reports.

## Key Network Metrics (as of Dec 31, 2024)

**8,851**

Servers running Mastodon  
(-6% vs. 2023)

**938k**

Monthly active users  
(-38% vs. 2023)

**9.10M**

Registered users  
(+5% vs. 2023)

### U.S. NON-PROFIT ENTITY

100%



In April 2024, we successfully established our 501(c) (3) non-profit entity in the United States. This milestone—nearly a year in the making—enables us to receive tax-deductible U.S. donations, qualify for larger grants from U.S.-based donors, and expand our presence in the U.S. market.

We established a physical office, set up banking infrastructure, and assembled our Board of Directors. The board was selected based on the values they share with Mastodon, their experience, and their commitment to building and growing the Fediverse:

- **Esra'a Al Shafei** - Human rights advocate and founder of Majal.org, serving on the boards of the Wikimedia Foundation and the Tor Project.
- **Karien Bezuidenhout** - Founding Partner at Philanthropy Matters and former director of the Shuttleworth Foundation.
- **Amir Ghavi** - Partner at Fried Frank leading core technology practices.
- **Biz Stone** - Co-founder of Twitter with experience scaling social media platforms.
- **Felix Hlatky** - Mastodon's Chief Financial Officer since 2020.

Shortly after establishing the entity, we launched GiveButter as our U.S. donation platform, enabling tax-deductible contributions. We also opened a Benevity account, allowing employees of companies that use that service to donate through their payroll with employer matching.

### GERMAN NON-PROFIT STATUS

In 2024, we faced an unexpected challenge when the German tax office withdrew our non-profit status without advance warning or explanation. This decision came despite a successful tax audit earlier in the year that resulted in favourable adjustments, as we had been paying too much tax.

Our activities have remained consistent since 2016: producing free, open-source software, running public services like mastodon.social, and furthering the cause of decentralised, privacy-friendly social media. Our tax adviser immediately submitted an appeal, and we continue to work towards a resolution.

Importantly, our day-to-day operations were largely unaffected, as our primary income through Patreon does not require non-profit status. The significance of non-profit status lies in communicating our commitment to creating social media that serves users rather than shareholders. With the 501(c) (3) established in the United States, we now have robust infrastructure to continue our mission whilst we work to resolve the situation in Germany or explore alternative European structures.



# 2024 REVIEW MARKETING

## EVENTS & COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

100%



Increase visibility through events, community engagement, and transparent communication.

In 2024, the Mastodon team made events and outreach a priority for the first time, in order to broaden the audience to groups that may not yet have heard of us. In previous years, the team had little bandwidth to accept invitations to speak or to be at events, so Mastodon appeared mainly as a logo on slides. This year, our aim was to own our story wherever people were talking about Mastodon; to grow awareness of the opportunity to quit legacy alternatives; and also, to build stronger connections with developers, users, and server administrators.

### Key Events (listed by date)

- FOSDEM (Brussels)** - The team attended FOSDEM, the world's largest free & open source software conference for the first time. Our presence included a stand where we raised funds through merchandise sales, and where we heard directly from the community. Attendees told us that they wanted content related to Mastodon and the Fediverse at a future FOSDEM. The team's presence at the stand played a vital role in creating relationships with other Fediverse projects. The time in Brussels also enabled us to forge direct connections with several European agencies who visited our stand to learn about Mastodon's mission and capabilities.



- **"Trunk and Tidbits"** - We launched a monthly blog series providing behind-the-scenes updates on code changes and team projects, while also spotlighting community contributions and apps. This is an ongoing series, and demonstrates our choice to be transparent about what the team is building as it takes shape, as well as celebrating the community that supports us. The series has proven popular: one reader posted "Love this new feature showing the Mastodon development process as it moves forward!"
- **New York Meetup** - Eugen, Inga, and Felix organised a community meetup (with generous support from Biz Stone) that offered the first-time chance to meet up with many of our Americas-based friends. This trip took place at the end of the process to establish our 501(c) (3) non-profit in the U.S., and included a dinner with around 30 potential donors. This was also the first time we met most of our board members in person, and laid the groundwork for the board's cohesion throughout 2024 and beyond.
- **San Francisco Trip** - Eugen and Andy travelled to San Francisco (with generous support from Flipboard) on a partnerships and media engagement tour. Eugen

shared his vision for Mastodon in several 1:1 meetings with prominent journalists. We also hosted a community meet-and-greet event for around 40 friends of the project from across the Bay Area, strengthening our relationships with local supporters.

- **RubyWorld Conference (Japan)** - Andy delivered the 2024 keynote to an audience of almost 1,000 Rubyists, with the Mayor of Matsue City and the Governor of Shimane Prefecture also in attendance. Reflecting Mastodon's popularity in Japan, the talk included a video introduction from Eugen, discussing his choice of Ruby as a technology. Andy's presentation highlighted global tensions, and the need for greater freedom of choice with social platforms.



- **Additional Appearances** - Andy presented remotely to the DeWeb Conference in Buffalo; attended both FediForum events in 2024, delivering a presentation about the Fediscovery project; and, was featured on FLOSS Weekly Episode 805 to discuss and promote the release of Mastodon 4.3. These activities enabled us to grow awareness of Mastodon's progress, and to demonstrate strong engagement with the Fediverse community.

# 2024 REVIEW MARKETING

## MERCHANDISE

100%



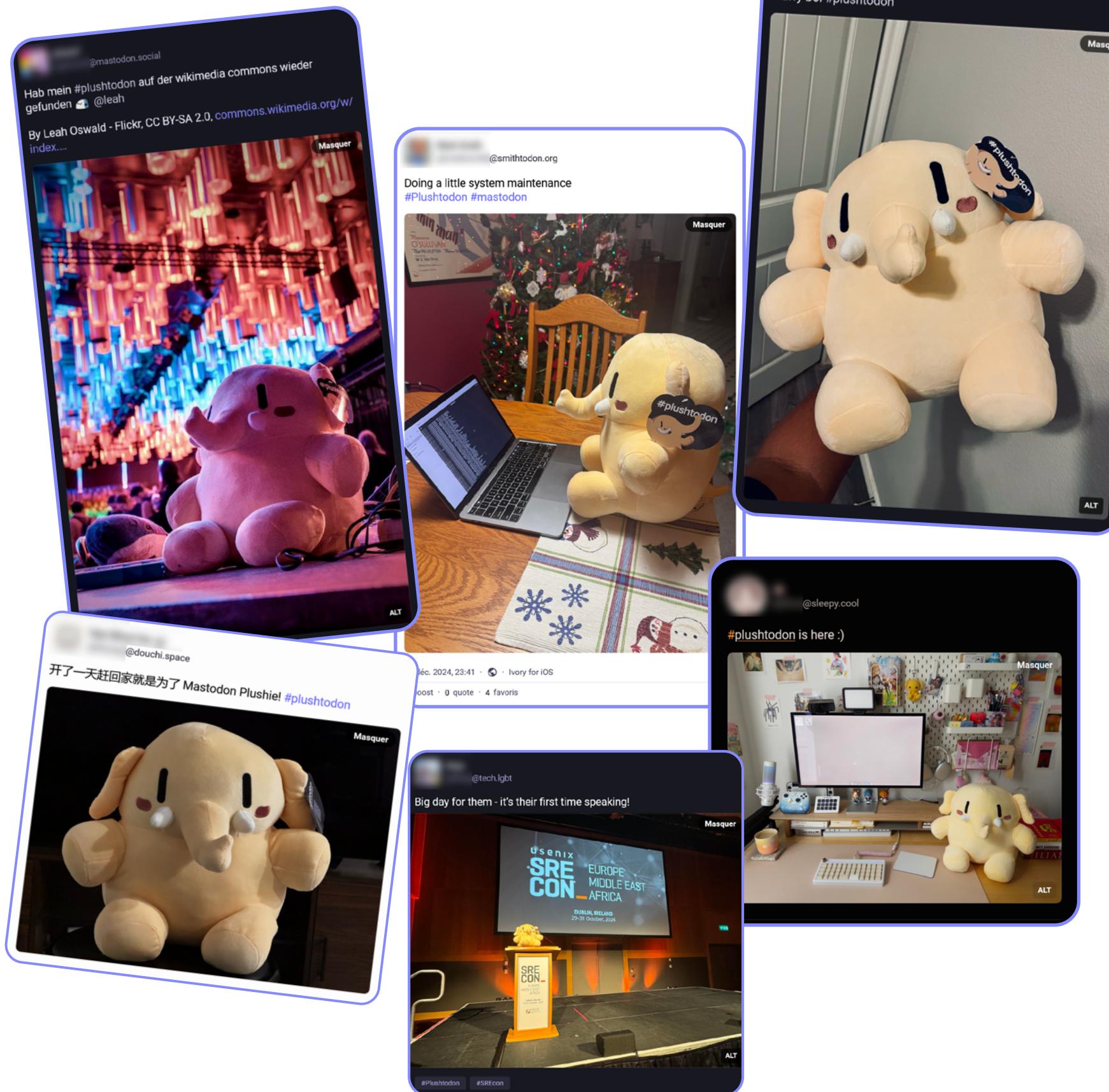
The highlight of our merchandise programme was the Mastodon plushie. When we sat down with our artist, Dopatwo, we had only three requirements: the plushie had to be cute, cuddly, and round.

The plushie went on sale on 15 October 2024 and the EU stock of 610 units sold out within days. UK and U.S. batches followed. The hashtag #Plushtodon became widely used as people shared photos of their plushies in their new homes. For many, the plushie became more than a toy—it became a work companion, emotional support, and cuddle buddy during the cold winter months.

### 2024 ONLINE MERCHANDISE SALES

- **Total revenue:** €36,152 from 718 orders
- **Plushies:** 751 sold (the overwhelming favourite)
- **Other items:** 14 sticker packs, 11 mugs, 8 elephant pins, 4 logo pins, 4 tote bags
- **Geographic distribution:** Germany (236), USA (226), UK (62), France (42), Netherlands (28), other countries (130)

The strong international demand demonstrates Mastodon's global community, with customers from over 30 countries supporting the project through merchandise purchases.



# 2024 REVIEW RECRUITING



Expand the team with strategic hires to support development and operations.

## David

### Senior Backend Developer

We reopened the Senior Web Developer position on 1 April 2024 and filled the role in nine weeks. David officially joined in July as our second full-time developer working on the core Mastodon product.

Total applications: 98

Hiring timeline: 9 weeks

Start date: July 2024

## Philip

### Finance & Operations Associate

Recognising that Eugen and Felix needed additional support with accounting and legal paperwork, we opened a part-time Finance & Operations Associate role in May. Philip joined in October and has been instrumental in updating cashflow forecasts, creating financial reports, and supporting operational processes.

Total applications: 120

Start date: October 2024

## Shannon

### Senior iOS Developer

We sought a full-time Senior iOS Developer to lead the development of our official Mastodon iOS app.

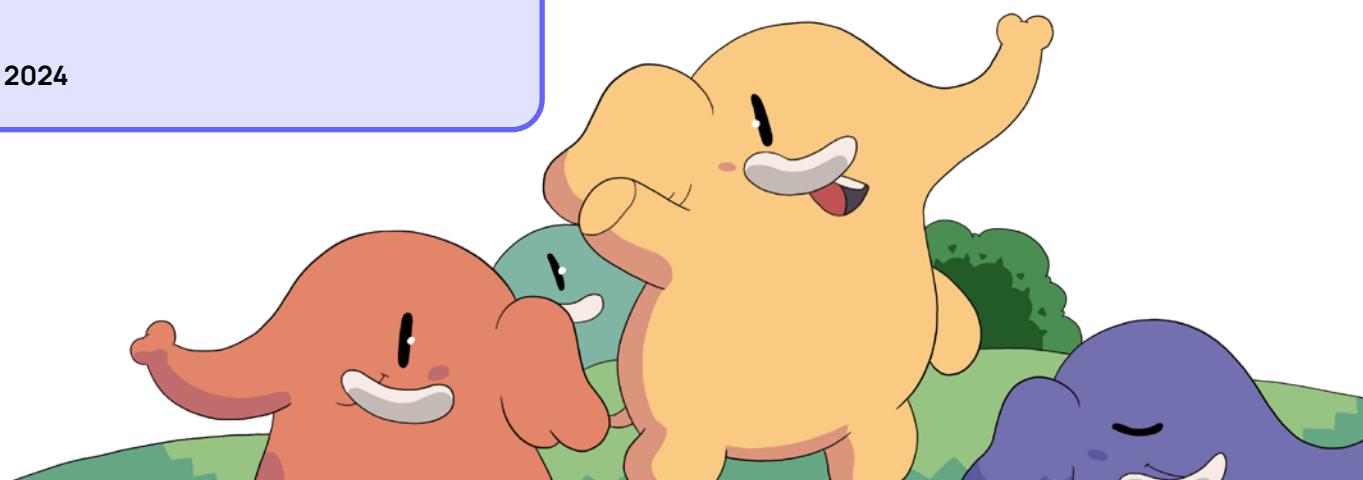
Total applications: 46

Interview rate: 39%

Start date: October 2024

### Frontend Developer Role

In December 2024, we began hiring for a Frontend Developer position—someone highly skilled in HTML, CSS, and JavaScript to be solely dedicated to elevating the UI/UX experience for users of our web interface. This role remains open as we enter 2025.



# 2024 REVIEW

## TEAM

Name	Role	Type	Average monthly cost to the organisation	Average workload	Country
Eugen Rochko	CEO	Payroll	€5.000	100%	 Germany
Renaud Chaput	CTO	Freelancer	€5.200	75%	 France
Felix Hlatky	CFO	Pro Bono	-	Not disclosed	 Austria
Amelia Rochko	Customer Support	Payroll	€500	25%	 Germany
Andy Piper	Developer Relations	Freelancer	€1.600	20%	 UK
Claire	Core Web Developer	Payroll	€5.400	100%	 France
David Roetzel	Core Web Developer (Backend)	Payroll	€5.000	100%	 Germany
Dopatwo	Illustration	Pro-bono	-	Not disclosed	 Brazil
Gregory Klyushnikov	Android Development	Freelancer	€1.000	20%	 Russia
Inga Driksne	Operations	Freelancer	€5.500	35%	 Mexico
Marcus Kida	iOS Development	Freelancer	€3.600	20%	 Germany
Philip Schroepel	Finance & Operations	Freelancer	€2.000	40%	 Germany
Shannon Hughes	iOS Developer	Freelancer	€5.000	75%	 USA
Tim Campbell	DevOps Engineer	Payroll	€6.900	100%	 Germany
Not named	Moderation	Freelancer	€150	Not disclosed	 Not disclosed
Not named	Moderation	Freelancer	€150	Not disclosed	 Not disclosed
Not named	Moderation	Freelancer	€150	Not disclosed	 Not disclosed
Not named	Moderation	Freelancer	€150	Not disclosed	 Not disclosed

Freelance remuneration fluctuates month-on-month. Figures represent average salaries across the period each team member worked in 2024.

# 2025 OUTLOOK

As we enter 2025, Mastodon is embarking on its most ambitious transformation yet. In January, we announced a bold vision: Mastodon must never be owned by a single individual. This commitment, alongside our focus on growth and sustainability, defines our path forward.

Our mission remains unchanged: **to ensure that our online social spaces belong to the people forever, and provide a safe place for public discourse.** To advance this mission, we've established three strategic priorities for 2025.

## ORGANISATIONAL RESTRUCTURING

Mastodon will transition to a foundation model, creating a new European non-profit entity (likely a Belgian AISBL) to own Mastodon's assets, including the trademark. This structure ensures no single person controls the project's future.

True decentralisation requires more than technical architecture—it demands governance that reflects our values. By moving away from individual ownership to community governance through a board of directors, we're building the organisational foundation for Mastodon's long-term independence.

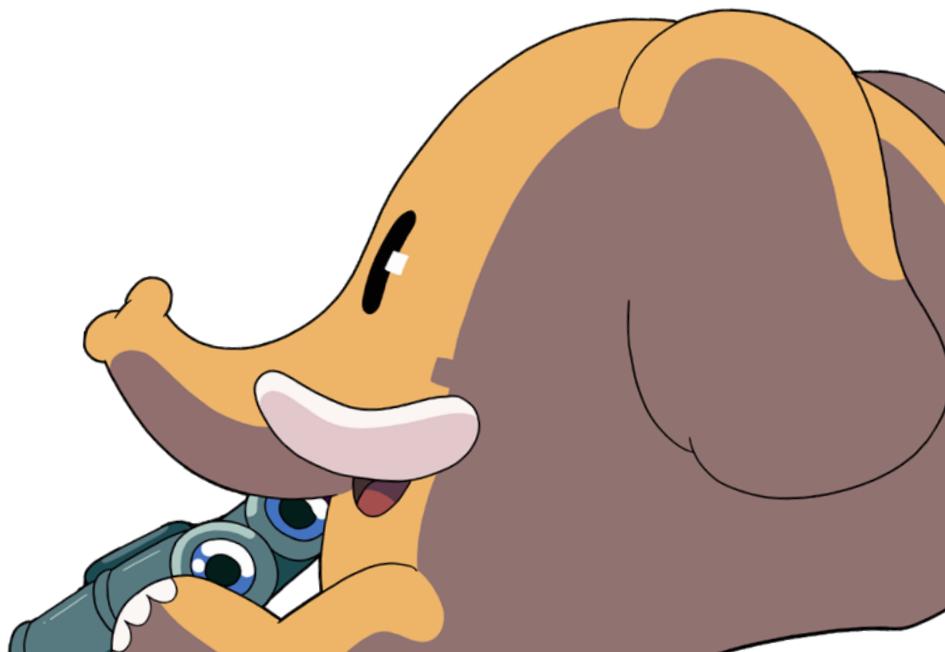
We've engaged Paul Hastings as pro-bono legal counsel and designed a two-phase implementation approach. Our goal is to establish the new entity by the end of Q2 2025, complete the management transition, and convert long-term contributors to full-time positions where possible.

## USER GROWTH

We aim to grow the Mastodon network from 1 million to 2 million monthly active users whilst maintaining our values and community safety. Growth isn't just about numbers—it's about reaching more people with an alternative social media model, providing content creators with meaningful reach, and demonstrating that ethical social media can thrive.

### 2025 GROWTH GOALS

- Increase network-wide MAUs from 1M to 2M
- Ship priority growth features (starter packs, digest emails)
- Expand presence at community events and conferences



# 2025 OUTLOOK

## FINANCIAL SUSTAINABILITY

We're building a diverse, sustainable funding model emphasising recurring revenue whilst maintaining independence from corporate influence.

### 2025 REVENUE TARGET: €4.2M



## PRODUCT DEVELOPMENT PRIORITIES

For Mastodon 4.4, we're focusing on Quote Posts (specification complete, implementation underway with NLNet funding), block list improvements, text formatting, starter packs, and link preview federation.

On mobile, we'll be implementing grouped notifications and updated post layouts for iOS, with continued polish and new backend feature adoption for Android. For Fediscovery, we'll complete the trends capability, launch the reference provider, and expand instance adoption.

## COMMUNITY CONTRIBUTIONS

Throughout 2024, we reviewed and merged approximately 2,000+ pull requests from both core team members and community contributors. The community was especially helpful in working on backend modernisation, test coverage improvements, and issue/PR triage. Thanks also to community contributors across backend, frontend, mobile apps, and documentation; security researchers and the BSI (German Federal Office for Information Security) for comprehensive security review; translators on Crowdin; and third-party developers building on the Mastodon API.

The strength of our open-source community continues to be a cornerstone of Mastodon's development.

We recognise that this Annual Report for 2024 is arriving later than we had intended. As a small team navigating significant organisational changes, fundraising efforts, and ambitious product development, it simply took longer to gather and present this information comprehensively. Going forward, we remain committed to releasing these reports in Q1 of the following year.

Thank you for reading, for being part of this journey, and for supporting us!

THE MASTODON TEAM

# HELP US TO REACH OUR GOALS, DONATE!

We develop and maintain the free and open-source  
software that powers the social web.

**There is no capital behind this—we rely entirely on your  
support through platforms like Patreon,  
GiveButter and Benevity.**

[joinmastodon.org/sponsors](https://joinmastodon.org/sponsors)

