Lessons Learned from the Linux Kernel: Creating Sustained Healthy Communities

Keynote at SoHeal 2018

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ABSTRACT

The Linux Kernel is one of the most successful open source projects to date. After 26 years, the rate of code contribution continues to be high, new developers are still being attracted to participating, and the code is in widespread use. By analyzing the contributions, we can see how individuals impact the kernel's evolution as a whole, as do the organizations in the kernel ecosystem. So what lessons can we learn from this information? What information is relevant to software community health in general that is not being caught in traditional health metrics? This keynote will discuss how the insights from the Linux kernel are being applied to other Linux Foundation open source projects to create healthy vibrant communities producing useful code for us all.

CCS CONCEPTS

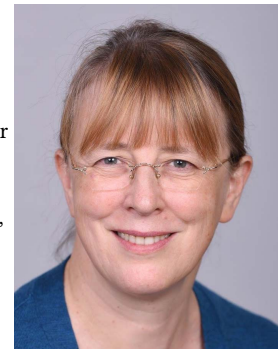• **Software and its engineering** → **Open source model**; **Programming teams**; *Software development methods*;

KEYWORDS

software community health, open source contribution, Linux kernel

BIO

Kate Stewart is a Senior Director of Strategic Programs at the Linux Foundation. Since joining The Linux Foundation, she has launched the CHAOSS, Real-Time Linux and Zephyr Projects. She is actively involved in the Open Source Compliance programs (SPDX, FOSSology, OpenChain, etc) and analysis of the Linux Kernel with cregit. With almost 30 years of experience in the software industry, she has held a variety of roles and worked as a developer in Canada, Australia, and the US. In the last 20 years, she has managed software development teams in the US, Canada, UK, India, and China. Throughout this period, the products developed were primarily based on open source. She has done release management for Ubuntu, product management for Linaro, as well as software ecosystem enablement at Motorola/Freescale. She received her Master's in computer science from the University of Waterloo and Bachelor's of computer science (co-op program) from the University of Manitoba.