Mentoring designers in open source — FOSDEM 2021

Eriol Fox · FOSDEM 2021, Open Source Design

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Mentoring designers in open Source Software.

What I've learned mentoring and supporting designers in OSS.

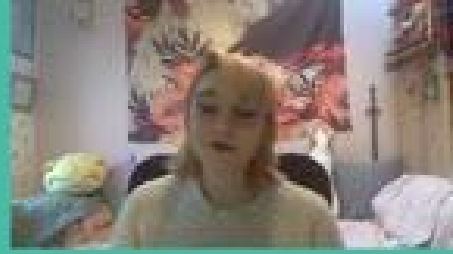
Eriol Fox

D.design

2021-02-06



Mentoring designers in Open Source Software.



Access slides here:
https://noti.st/eriolfox



@EriolDoesDesign @FOSDEM #FOSDEM2021

Hi, I'm Eriol. (Ehh-roll).

They/Them pronouns.

10 years in digital product design and UX.

7 years in humanitarian / third sector.

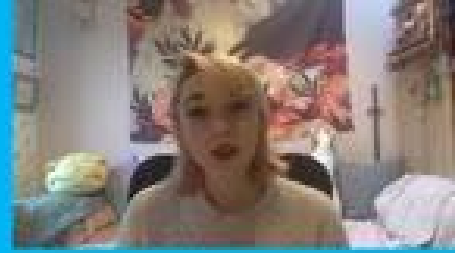
3 years in (FL)OSS.

PhD student researching Humanitarian OSS and Design.

Currently working at Open Food Network and helping out at Mutual aid World, Linux Public Health SIG Design, Open Source Design and probably more...

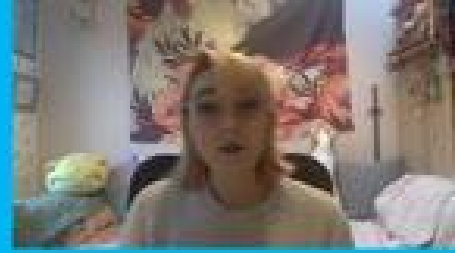


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I say this so much but I'll say it again...

Designers want to participate in OSS.
Lots of OSS in many different ways!



Why do designers care about open source?

They see how they can learn, grow, collaborate and communicate.

Learn more: https://opensourcedesign.net/



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"They'll have the opportunity to learn and collaborate with other designers"

Franklin Ohaegbulam

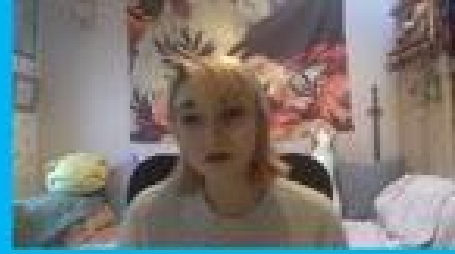




Why do designers care about open source?

They see a space where they can openly centre human needs with tech.

"OSS is part of our everyday lives. It deserves the same treatment that non-OSS gets which is a proper, user centred design process."

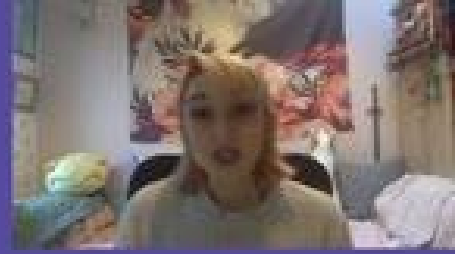




Florian Bölter

https://mutualaid.world/

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I'm struggling a bit in my UX role in my company and looking at OSS projects for my portfolio.

Can you speak with my community on OSS and Design?

Can you review my article about design and OSS?

Can you look over my talk proposal about design?

I saw a job post for a design on open source design.net, I'd like to know more about being a contributor.

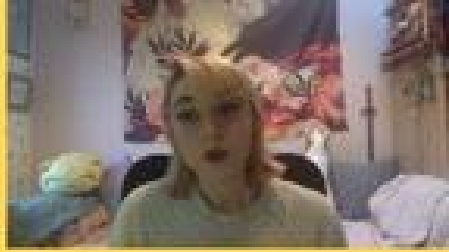
There's a project I'd like to contribute to - but I'm not quite sure how to start.

Will you help me with my application to this internship around design + OSS

Can we meet up and you tell me about design + OSS? Generally?



We need more OSS design mentors!



We need more OSS design mentors!

But this is a math problem!

Prepare yourself for a bad venn diagram...

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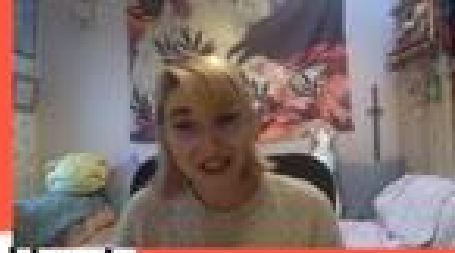


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Designers with OSS exp.
Designers that want to mentor.
Designers with time to mentor
Designers who can mentor as part of their paid role



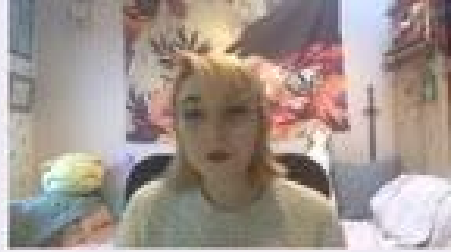
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Designers that want to mentor.



Designers with time to mentor

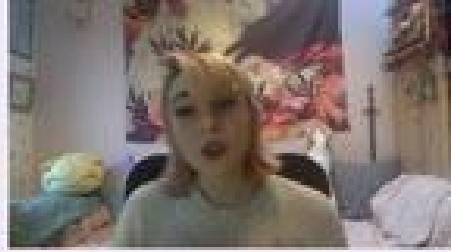
Designers who can mentor as part of their paid role



Project 1
Very deep international UX research, UI and visual design.

Project 2
Mostly UI, UX design and OSS volunteer Management.

Project 3
Design advocacy, UI, UX, Visual and Design QA.



Process

Process

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Very deep international UX research, UI and visual design.

Project 2
Mostly UI, UX design and Team Management.

Project 3
Design advocacy, UI, UX, Visual and Design QA.

Process

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Process





We need more OSS design mentors!

Burnout. Always and forever, burnout!



Burnout:
On design

Burnout:
On OSS

Burnout:
On repeating
info

Burnout:
On planning

Burnout:
On sharing

Burnout:
On speaking



The ways I've mentored designers.

Kicked off discussion, done workshops, reviewed designs, chatted about OSS history, contributed with them, suggested structures and processes, suggested issues, helped submit PR's, edited files, formulate research docs...



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What are the ways we can address this need?

How might we improve mentoring in OSS for designers?

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Photo by Blaz Erselic from Pexels

Eriol's ideas*

*These will be flawed ideas



Photo by Tsunami Green from Pexels

Investment in the existing OSS designers mentoring so they can do it as part of a role!

Flaw: Who funds this? How? for what time? For what kinds of activities?



Photo by Karolina Grabowska from Pexels

Mentees mentor a mentee - pay it forward mentoring.

Flaw: When does a mentee feel ready to mentor? What if they don't want to? Is this inclusive?



Photo by Jens Johnsson from Pexels

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Flaw: When does a mentee feel ready to mentor? What if they don't want to? Is this inclusive?



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Resources! documentation! Recording!

Flaw: Doing the mentoring is time consuming and hard...when will we get time to document?!



Photo by Anete Lusina from Pexels



The question format will be:

Question text

Your Initials or pseudonym: Your typed answer or reponse.

As a person being mentored (also known as a 'mentee') what do you need and value in this relationship?

As a FL/OSS project, what kind of support do you need when you have designers in your project that want guidance and/or mentoring?





How long should a mentorship last? or how long do you want to be mentored for or mentoring another?

What unique challenges do FL/OSS projects have when mentoring is invovled? How many of these also apply to design?





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