LibreOffice
The Document Foundation

LibreOffice'26
PORDENONE
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The foundation behind LibreOffice - Lessons learned from 14 years

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REGIONE AUTONOMA FRIULI VENEZIA GIULIA
CONSIGLIO REGIONALE

UNIPORDENONE
moltiplica il valore della formazione

IO SONO FRIULI VENEZIA GIULIA

Comune di Pordenone

POLO TECNOLOGICO ALTO ADRIATICO
Andrea Galvani

About Florian

- **free software enthusiast** since 2004
- former international marketing project lead at OpenOffice.org (volunteer role)
- founding member, statute co-author, executive director of **The Document Foundation**



Terminology



Double meaning

- **LibreOffice** is
  - the leading free (speech **and** beer) office productivity suite
    used by over 210 million people worldwide
  - a worldwide community (“project”)
    with hundreds of contributors from around the globe



- **The Document Foundation (TDF)** as legal entity
  - is a nonprofit ”Stiftung” (foundation) based in Berlin
    *”The objective of the foundation is the **promotion and development** of **office software** available for use by **anyone**”*
  - does **not contain a product name** on purpose



Our philosophy

- support the development of **both software and community**
  events, knowledge sharing, infrastructure
- built on the community's **values** and **ideals**
  *through statutes that vouch for **openness and transparency***
- **independent** from one **single** sponsor
  thanks to the support of many
- **ecosystem** for contributors and commercial stakeholders
  certification, joint development efforts
- lower **entry barriers**: Easy Hacks, Hackfests, mentoring, workshops
- **cooperation** with other entities: e.g. OASIS, OSI, FSFE



The Foundation

How we are structured

gives advice

Adv'Board
currently suspended,
not formal body of TDF

Board of Directors
foundation's legal representative

7 members and 3 deputies, term of 2 years
from around the globe, currently: France, Hungary, United Kingdom, Brazil, Luxembourg, Germany

organizes elections

M'Commitee
5+4 members
term of 2 years
max. 10% of members

(re-)election of volunteer board

(re-)election of volunteer committee

approval/ revocation

Board of Trustees ("Members")

currently 127 individuals working on foundation's goals - approved for one year, once per quarter -
meritocracy: active in community for 3 months, 6 more planned, **donations do not qualify**

What the Foundation is about

- **enduring** and **stable** (“built for eternity”)
- **foundation’s objective** can **not be changed**
- **safety** for community, end-users and the ecosystem
- acts as **”trustee”** for trademarks and domains
- handles **donations** and manages budgets
- is not part of the commercial ecosystem itself
- **guarantees rights** for all participants

Public by default



In the statutes

- **“one-third rule”** to prevent conflict of interest
- **openness** and **transparency**
  - all **board meetings** are public
    https://community.documentfoundation.org/tags/c/board-discuss/26/minutes
  - all **decisions** of the bodies are public
    https://community.documentfoundation.org/tags/c/board-discuss/26/decision
  - the **accounting** is public
    https://wiki.documentfoundation.org/TDF/Ledgers
  - the **board’s mailing list** is public
    https://community.documentfoundation.org/c/board-discuss/26
    private decisions are public as soon as confidentiality is resolved

Our annual report

- **jointly written** with the community in English and German
- turned our legal obligation into a marketing activity
- overview on foundation, community,
  project, software, events, budget
- 2025 report being published on the blog
  https://blog.documentfoundation.org/?s=TDF+Annual+Report+2025

Lessons learned

Food for thought

- money is needed, **contributor time is invaluable**
- **transparency** requires a lot of effort, but is key
- **legal obligations** grow and **can become a challenge**
- things you don’t understand **can be important**
- **trust is the anchor** of open source and free software
- the **human side of things** cannot be underestimated
- further reading
  - https://effenberger.org/en/texts/ten-thoughts-on-community-leadership/
  - https://effenberger.org/en/texts/what-do-open-source-and-cooking-have-in-common/
  - https://effenberger.org/en/texts/what-the-open-source-community-means-to-me/



Thanks, Questions?



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