

## Streamlined Onboarding of New Contributors



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# About me

*Neofytos Kolokotronis*

- ♦ **KDE** Streamlined Onboarding goal
- ♦ **KDE Promo** team
- ♦ **ChakraLinux.org** team
- ♦ **Community & Project management** in FOSS & Open Data/Government projects

neofytosk.com, @tetris4



# Onboarding

*“ the mechanism through which new employees acquire the necessary **knowledge, skills, and behaviors** in order to become **effective** organizational members ”*

Wikipedia



# Onboarding

## *Organizational Socialization*

### **integration**

- ◆ relationships
- ◆ culture
- ◆ structure
- ◆ procedures



# Why should we care?

## *Vital for*

- ♦ a **healthy** and **vibrant** community
- ♦ increasing the **bus factor**
- ♦ **growing** a project
- ♦ attracting **new blood**  
(ideas, perspectives, solutions)



# Why should we care?

## *Great onboarding*

- ♦ **excites** newcomers
- ♦ creates **advocates**
- ♦ increases **retention**
- ♦ adds **value**



# Obstacles

## *KDE*

- ♦ decentralized
- ♦ diverse
- ♦ online & remote
- ♦ hundreds of contributors
- ♦ dozens of projects and teams



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**We are  
in this  
together**





# New contributors

*The periphery of your team*

- ◆ skillful enthusiasts
- ◆ committed individuals
- ◆ loyal users



# New contributors

*Be aware of individuals*

- ♦ less confident/shy
- ♦ troubles/doubts making the first step
- ♦ in need of guidance



# Progress so far...

- ♦ *Updated **Get Involved** page*
- ♦ *Junior **jobs***
- ♦ *Registering to **Phabricator***
- ♦ *Improvements to **Bugzilla***



# Progress so far...

- ♦ *Setting up a **development environment***
- ♦ *Contributors from **downstream distributions***
- ♦ *Forming a **welcome team***
- ♦ *Finding a **mentor** for each newcomer*



# Progress so far...

## *Plasma Mobile*

- ◆ set up a **development environment**
- ◆ interactive **get involved** page
- ◆ **descriptive** tasks



# Progress so far...

## *Descriptive tasks*

- ◆ **short and clear**
- ◆ **problem** and possible **solutions**
- ◆ recommended **skill requirements**
- ◆ links to technical **resources**



> attracting newcomers

*Are you and your KDE project/team  
**prepared**  
for new contributors?*



# Everyone is different

*Newcomers vary in terms of*

- ♦ skills
- ♦ knowledge
- ♦ time
- ♦ dedication
- ♦ motives
- ♦ interests
- ♦ need of guidance





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**Find their  
superpower!**



# Pave the way

## *The essentials*

- ◆ **Documentation**
- ◆ Guidelines for **getting started**  
(work/development environment)
- ◆ **Introduce** to people and procedures
- ◆ **Mentorship**



# What can we do?

*Be prepared*

- ◆ get to **know** your team
- ◆ understand your project **needs**
- ◆ **plan** for the long term



# What can we do?

*Be proactive*

- ♦ **reach out** to candidates
- ♦ **suggest** appropriate tasks
- ♦ make yourself **available**



# What can we do?

## *Be a mentor*

- ♦ **adopt** a newcomer
- ♦ be a great **host**
- ♦ fade out their **dependence** on you



# What can we do?

## *Relationships*

**newcomers ↔ experienced**

- ♦ intimidating to join an established group
- ♦ care for new people
- ♦ ↑ sense of belonging => ↑ retention



# What can we do?

## *Be strategic*

- ♦ goals → objectives → strategies → tactics
- ♦ behaviors
- ♦ emotions
- ♦ actions



# What can we do?

<b>Goal</b>	Improve onboarding of newcomers	
<b>Objective</b>	<i>Keep newcomers around after their first commit</i>	
<b>Strategy</b>	Make newcomers feel <i>confident</i> and <i>proud</i>	
<b>Tactic</b>	<i>Praise and acknowledge contributions within the team and in public</i>	<i>Assign simple tasks according to their skill level</i>





# What can we do?

*Part of the team*

- ◆ **feedback** welcome
- ◆ **opinion** valued
- ◆ **tasks** assigned



# What can we do?

*To sum up:*

- ♦ **Respond quickly** to people offering
- ♦ **Learn** about them
- ♦ Guide to **first contributions**
- ♦ **Praise** and **acknowledge**



# What can we do?

*To sum up:*

- ♦ **Introduce** to procedures, culture
- ♦ **Connect** to other contributors
- ♦ Keep **motivated** and challenged
- ♦ Turn them into **mentors**



# All these take time

*long term effort*

*=> reduce contributor turnover*

*invest in onboarding*

*=> higher value to your project*



- ◆ be persistent
- ◆ ask and learn
- ◆ share your opinion
- ◆ accept criticism
- ◆ build connections



@newcomers

- ♦ be persistent
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*act like you are  
already a member  
of KDE*



# Going forward...

*More feedback from*

- ◆ newcomers
- ◆ experienced contributors



# Going forward...

## *More KDE projects active*

- ◆ discuss onboarding with your team
- ◆ we are here to help each other





# The 1<sup>st</sup> Sprint

*Making it quick and easy to  
set up a development environment*

- ◆ Autumn 2018
- ◆ Athens, Greece



# The 1<sup>st</sup> Sprint

*Making it quick and easy to set up  
a development environment*

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**Join now!**

<https://phabricator.kde.org/T8484>



# BoFs at Akademy 2018

*Monday 10:30*

- **Conan.io**

Discuss how is best to use Conan in KDE

*Monday 11:30*

- **KDE's Goals**

retro and input for what's next

*Tuesday 14:00*

- **Streamlined Onboarding**

discussion on goal and upcoming sprint.



Thank you!

*Questions?*

