Contributing to Debian for dummies

Christian Perrier

FOSS.IN, Bangalore, India
Contributing to Debian

Debian is a volunteer project

Work is done when someone does it

We need contributors, not only developers
Some legends about Debian contribution

This is for hard-core hackers only

This is for developers only

This is for strong skins
Some legends about Debian contribution

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Andrew Mc Millan, Debconf 7
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Holger Levsen, Andreas Schuldei, Debconf 4
Some legends about Debian contribution

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This is for strong skins

Erinn Clark and Martin Michlmayr, Debconf 4
Debian is fun!
The 7 steps to heaven

Hacker path

- Station 1: Install
- Station 2: Use
- Station 3: Help using
- Station 4: Help fixing
- Station 5: Help maintaining
- Station 6: Debian Maintainer

Dummy path

- Station 4: Translate
- Station 5: Document
- Station 6: Drink beer

Station 7: Debian Developer
The 7 steps to heaven

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Station 7: Debian Developer
Common path, stations 1/2: use the system

Installing Debian: the first contributor experience

Use Debian, learn to use it, ask questions, participate

All Debian contributors started by using it
Common path, stations 1/2: use the system

Installing Debian: the first contributor experience

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All Debian contributors started by using it

Raphaël Hertzog, Aurélien Jarno, Solutions Linux 2006
Common path, stations 1/2: use the system

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Sam Hocevar and new Debian users, Solutions Linux 2006
Common path, stations 1/2: use the system

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All Debian contributors started by using it

Old Debian users: Joey Hess, Jeff Licquia, Petter Reinholdstem, Ian Murdock, Konstantinos Margaritis, Debconf 4
Common path, station 3: help using the system

Share experience

Find (and report!) bugs
- As simple as sending a mail
- Use reportbug/reportbug-ng
- Only good systems have many bugs

Make (good) suggestions to enhance the system
Common path, station 3: help using the system

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Make (good) suggestions to enhance the system

Nicolas François teaching French keyboard to Anthony Tows, Debconf 5
Common path, station 3: help using the system

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Make (good) suggestions to enhance the system

Meike Reichle, Debconf 6
Common path, station 3: help using the system

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Make (good) suggestions to enhance the system

Aurélien Jarno, Goto Masanori, Debconf 5
Hacker path, station 4: help fixing the system

- Report bugs
- Fix bugs
- Participate to Bug Squashing Parties
- Join the QA team
Hacker path, station 4: help fixing the system

Report bugs

Fix bugs

Participate to Bug Squashing Parties

Join the QA team

Bruno Barrera (and chilean wine), Debconf 6
Hacker path, station 4: help fixing the system

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The Debconf 7 organ
Hacker path, station 4: help fixing the system

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Margarita Manterola, Maximiliano Curia squashing pancakes, Debconf 6
Hacker path, station 4: help fixing the system

Report bugs

Fix bugs

Participate to Bug Squashing Parties

Join the QA team

Debian QA meeting, Extremadura 2006
Hacker path, station 5: help maintaining packages

Spot abandoned/poorly maintained packages

Join maintenance teams

Help triaging bugs
Hacker path, station 5: help maintaining packages

Spot abandoned/poorly maintained packages

Join maintenance teams

Help triaging bugs

Debian developers spotting abandoned bottles W packages, Debconf 6 (Enrico Zini, Daniel Glassey, Miriam Ruiz, Keshi Muto)
Hacker path, station 5: help maintaining packages

Spot abandoned/poorly maintained packages

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Help triaging bugs

The Spanish-English dictionary maintenance team, Debconf 6
Hacker path, station 5: help maintaining packages

Spot abandoned/poorly maintained packages

Join maintenance teams

Help triaging bugs

bubulle and Margarita Manterola triaging cable bugs, Debconf 4
Hacker path, station 6: become a Debian Maintainer

- Simplified procedure to maintain packages
- Can only maintain specified packages
- No other rights (vote, debian-private...)

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Hacker path, station 6: become a Debian Maintainer

Simplified procedure to maintain packages

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Mark Shuttleworth, Debconf 4
Hacker path, station 6: become a Debian Maintainer

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Phil “mine is smaller than yours” Hands, Debconf 6
Hacker path, station 6: become a Debian Maintainer

Simplified procedure to maintain packages

Can only maintain specified packages

No other rights (vote, debian-private...)

Benjamin “Mako” Hill, Debconf 5
Dummy path, station 4: translate

Join existing localization teams
- debian-i18n
- debian-l10n-french
- debian-l10n-spanish
- ...
- debian-l10n-english

Learn about team processes

Review, translate
Dummy path, station 4: translate

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Learn about team processes

Review, translate

Table with SA, ES, US, IN, BE, UK, LV, IR, FR, BR. Extremadura i18n 2006
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Valentina Comissari, Debconf 4
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Learn about team processes

Review, translate

Debian installer in Punjabi, Solutions Linux 2006
Write documentation

Review documentation and texts

Work on Debian Installer
Write documentation

Review documentation and texts

Work on Debian Installer

Joey Hess writing doc, Debconf 7
Dummy path, station 5: document

Write documentation

Review documentation and texts

Work on Debian Installer

bubulle reviewing D-I documentation, Mexico airport, Coke machine close to VIP lounge, free WiFi.
Write documentation

Review documentation and texts

Work on Debian Installer

Joey Hess and Frans Pop, D-I release managers for sarge and etch
Common path, station 6: become a Debian Developer

New Maintainer Process

Learn patience

Maintain package(s), documentation or translations and help newcomers
Common path, station 6: become a Debian Developer

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Nicolas François, Madrid Barajas airport
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Niv Sardi, Solutions Linux 2005
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Margarita Manterola, Debconf 6
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Common path, station 7bis: become the DPL
Join the dance!

Moray Allan, Christine Spang, Debconf 7
Pick up your task!

- Admin machines
- Translate
- Do QA work
- Write software
- Security work
- Maintain web site
- Test installs
- Prepare releases
- Rebuild packages
- Talk on lists
- Help new users
- Write doc
- Work in NewMaint
- Talk about Debian
- Drink beer
- Build CDs
- Organize BSPs
- Run booths
- Organize DebConf
- Sponsor maintainers
- Review English
- Triage bugs
- Come to FOSS.in
- Maintain wiki
- Evangelize LUGs
- Argue with Stallman
- Report bugs