



# Collaboration Instead of Competition

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# AdaLovelace on LiberaChat

🐦 @sjkriesch

The Linux Distributions Working Group at the  
Open Mainframe Project

# Agenda

- About me
- Mainframes
- The Open Mainframe Project
- The Linux Distributions Working Group
- Goals
- Reasons for Founding a Working Group
- Collaboration versus Competition
- Benefits
- Q & A



# About me



- Sarah Julia Kriesch
- openSUSE Contributor since around 10 years
- Member of the Release Engineering Team (s390x)
- Teamlead for s390x
- Bachelor Thesis at IBM
- DevOps Consultant (+ Open Source Contributor) at Accenture
- Founder of the Linux Distributions Working Group

# Mainframes

- Large high-performance computer systems
- Big Endians
- Architecture s390x
- Used for mission-critical data
- Thousands of VMs can run on such a system



<https://www.ibm.com/it-infrastructure/z/hardware>

# The Open Mainframe Project



- Founded 2015
- Focal point for deployment and usage of Linux and Open Source in a mainframe computing environment
- Project under the Linux Foundation



# Mainframe centric Projects



# Working Groups



OPEN **MAINFRAME** PROJECT

## COBOL

*Working Group*



OPEN **MAINFRAME** PROJECT

## OPEN z/OS ENABLEMENT

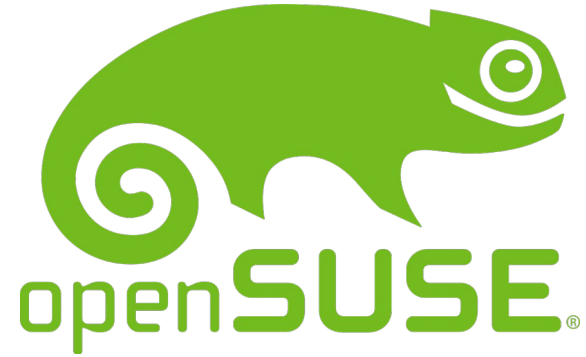
*Working Group*

## Linux Distributions Working Group

# Kick-off with Community Distributions



Dan Horák



Sarah Julia Kriesch



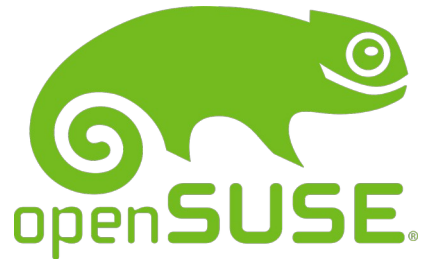
**debian** Rajendra Nayak



Elizabeth K. Joseph



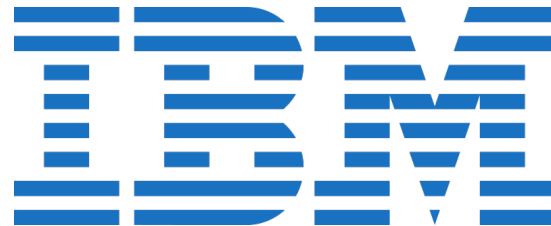
# Planned Expansion



debian



alpine  
Linux



# Structure



- Founders:
  - Sarah Julia Kriesch (openSUSE, Accenture)
  - Elizabeth K. Joseph (IBM)
- One Representative for every Linux distribution (required for input)
- Sponsor: Mark Post (SUSE)

# Our Goals

- Create a place to collaborate across Linux Distributions via an OMP mailing list, wiki, and chat
- Provide a space for distributions to request for help on their port
- Ensure any and all infrastructure required is available for supporting the ports
- Better support from IBM to fix s390x specific bugs

<https://wiki.openmainframeproject.org/display/LinuxDistrosWG>

# Reasons

- IBM handled every Linux distribution separately
- Community distributions have run into same issues
- Linux distributions were called Competitors
  - Better collaboration and equality

# zLinux Collaboration



Enterprise  
Distributions



**Red Hat**



**SUSE**



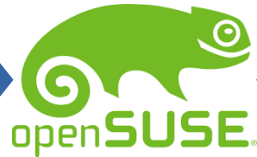
**ubuntu.**



Community  
Distributions



**fedora**



**openSUSE.**



**debian**

# LinuxONE (OSS) Community Cloud



- Vms on LinuxONE sponsored by IBM
- Free access (120 days) for single open-source contributors (SLES, RHEL, Ubuntu)
- Long-term access for open-source projects available
- Contact person for long-term access:  
Elizabeth K. Joseph at [lyz@ibm.com](mailto:lyz@ibm.com)

# Example: Compiler Bug in PostgreSQL



- Reported by openSUSE at LLVM (upstream)
- IBM: “We do not fix that. That should be fixed by application communities!”
- Hint from Product Owner (IBM):  
“That is a temporary problem. That will be self healing, if all distributions will build with z13.”
- Integrated non-accepted patch into openSUSE
- Debian has got the same issue

# Competitor Thinking



“Don’t contribute upstream!  
Other Linux distributions may have a benefit of that. “

*IBM*



# Collaboration Thinking



“~~Don't~~ **C**ontribute upstream!

Other Linux distributions may have a benefit of that. “

*Linux Distributions Working Group*

# Collaboration as a benefit

- Upstream contributions available for all
- Lowering research & development costs  
(at IBM and in the community)
- Same solutions for all Linux distributions
- Sharing knowledge between communities
- Increasing innovation (diverse community ideas)
- Accelerating Linux development for s390x

# Benefits of Cross-Community Members

- Better communication
- Visibility
- Trust (Partnership between distributions)
- Transparency
- Knowledge sharing (visiting other conferences)

# Results of Open (Cross-)Collaboration



- Better Performance:
  - Cooperative Behavior (one approach for all)
  - Sharing of work and solutions
  - Openness
- Heterogeneity of Participants:
  - Life-giving (maintenance together)
  - Cooperation as interaction
  - Diversity

# Open Collaboration for Innovation

- Different views
- Open access to contribute (to s390x)
- Interaction and exchange (monthly meetings)
- Creation of economic values for all
- Better development experience
- Collective Intelligence

Levine and Prietula: Open Collaboration for Innovation: Principles and Performance (2014)

# Inclusion

- Bringing communities and companies together
- Do not exclude any Linux distribution!
- Every Linux distribution can join (also Enterprise)
- Creation of open source diversity
- More ideas “how to improve”

# Do you want to join?

- Wiki:

<https://wiki.openmainframeproject.org/display/LinuxDistrosWG/Linux+Distributions+Working+Group>

- ML:

<https://lists.openmainframeproject.org/g/wg-linux-distros>

- Monthly meetings on Monday  
(invitations are sent to the mailing list)

# Questions?

# Q & A







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