

# Why is it so HARD?

C/C NA 2024 Denver  
October 7-10

Craig Russell

Member, ASF

[clr@apache.org](mailto:clr@apache.org)

# About Craig

Joined ASF with Java Data Objects project in 2005

Elected to Membership in 2007

Served a few terms as Director

Currently serving as Director and Assistant Secretary

# ASF Has Rules...

That make it hard to do things

But rules are documented as policy

Understanding how stuff works is key

# About the ASF

25 year old institution

Public not-for-profit US 501(c)(3) charity

A community with

- > 300 projects

- > 800 Members

- > 9000 Committers

Uncountable users

# ASF Mission

provide software

for the public good

free of charge

free to use, modify, distribute, and sub-license

# ASF Governance

Staffed by Volunteers:

Board of Directors

Project Management Committees

President/ Executive Vice President/ Administration

# ASF is Safe/Reliable/Trustworthy

Users trust software that works

Contributors rely on legal shield

Downstream users rely on fair treatment

# Project Management Committees (PMCs) are key

set project direction

manage repositories/ build/ test/ release

vote new PMC members

vote new committers

vote software releases



# Why Vote?

An official act of a PMC is an act of the Foundation

Votes are required to document PMC decisions  
three binding +1 and more +1 than -1

Votes are binding or not binding

PMC Members: binding

PPMC Members: not binding unless also IPMC

Community: not binding

# So Hard to onboard New Committers

Discuss (real people not github ids)

Vote

Close the Vote

Invite

ICLA filing (invitee and secretary)

Account creation (infra)

Record

# So Hard to fill ICLA form

Only Humans need apply

Public Name not login

Postal Address personal not corporate

Requested id and Project if applying for committer

Signature not script font

detached GPG signature also accepted

<https://www.apache.org/licenses/contributor-agreements.html#submitting>

# Special Rules for Incubator Podlings

Infrastructure will create the account with incubator privileges

PPMC and Mentors must monitor private mail list for account creation

Mentors add new account privileges to podling resources

# So Hard to onboard New PMC/PPMC Members

Discuss

Vote

Close the Vote

Invite

Record

# So Hard to Release

Decide on content and release manager

Create release candidate(s)

Vote on public list: only binding votes count

Repeat until three binding +1

Publish download page, artifacts, checksums, signature(s)

Announce via Public Relations

# Special rules for Incubating Podlings

PPMC has no official standing

Incubator PMC must vote on releases

Releases are voted on dev@podling first

Once vote passes with three +1 PPMC votes:

- vote goes to general@incubator for IPMC members to vote
- if all Podling Mentors cast +1, vote passes
- if not, try to get IPMC Member votes

# So Hard to submit patches

Projects need "new contributor guidance"

- user documentation
- "how to contribute"
- "good first issue"



# So Hard to become a committer

Join project mailing list

Ask questions

Answer questions

Consistency

Quality

Respectful interactions with project

High committer bar?

# So Hard to Protect the Brand

Primary Issue is Name Confusion

Apache Foo® or Apache Foo™

Companies may use “Bar for Apache Foo”

Companies may use “Bar powered by Apache Foo”

Apache Foo != "open source edition of Acme Bar"

Eternal Vigilance is Key

VP, Brand is here to help

ASF web sites must be role models

- Apache Foo™ at beginning of all pages
- Trademark notices in footer of all pages

# ASF is first a community of peers

We exist to provide for the common good

We welcome everyone who wants to contribute

Come join us!

# Questions?

Craig Russell

[clr@apache.org](mailto:clr@apache.org)

# Thank you

Craig Russell

[clr@apache.org](mailto:clr@apache.org)