Role of Tiki Software Community Association

Tiki Software Community Association

General Role

The broader Tiki community is a fluid entity that changes day by day as is the nature of open source communities. The Association, on the other hand, is a more stable legally recognizable entity representing, supporting, and servicing the community. A legal entity is necessary for certain activities, for example, registering trademarks, having a bank account for a community pool of funds.

In addition to achieving legal necessities, as a direct by-product of it being an official legally recognized entity, the Association also plays a role in presenting the Tiki software community as continually more professional and trustworthy to users. As part of this role, the Association will support community events and oversee communications and public relations with third parties. Both of these activities use community trademarks extensively. The Association will offer guidelines without being a bottleneck. For example, guidelines like these Mozilla logo guide, Policy for use of the Plone trademark, allow community contributors to go ahead and do things without any need to ask for permission (zero bureaucracy) while safeguarding the community from misuse (individual misuse cases can be addressed transparently and fairly, and clarification can be made in more unique cases not covered by the guidelines).

In both these areas, the Association would rather that the wider community step up and volunteer to do things than the Association itself doing things. For example, the Association would rather that individual community members volunteer to organize events, or say, to make t-shirts for TikiFest than for it to do so itself. Nevertheless, it is the Association's role to help coordinate and encourage such things. The larger, major international TikiFests will more likely have Association direct effort involved.

Community Funds

More importantly, the Association should facilitate fair and transparent disbursement of community funds. In using any funds available, the Association will follow the principle to first spend on items that benefit a wider/larger part of the community rather then a narrow segment. Realistically for the near future, the most significant support of community events will probably be limited to providing travel subsidies in a fair and transparent way for major TikiFests.

Community Communications

Similarly, in community communications with other organizations and community public relations, the wider community should be able to operate independently once the Association has provided clear guidelines. Guidelines like Firefox Messaging help to safeguard against confusing messaging without adding bureaucracy, and allows fair and reasonable action to be taken in any rare cases of misuse.

Community Hardware Infrastructure

The Association will support community shared hardware infrastructure where possible. This primarily refers to supporting/funding servers for TikiWiki websites, which will be necessary as the community grows (making the burden too high for any one single individual community member). The priority will be for the most heavily loaded sites.

What about Coding or Documentation?

The Association based on its stated goals and objectives currently does not have a mandate to fund any coding or documentation (which falls outside events, oversight of community communications with third parties, and shared hardware infrastructure). If in future, the Tiki community develops a system that is able to fairly and equitably channel funds towards coding/documentation that benefits all users, and if there is community demand, theoretically the Association could in future consider this. However, funding software/documentation from a common pool is harder to justify than for hardware, because the nature of software/documentation is (1) zero cost to scale with number of users (unlike hardware), (2) the task to develop it can be broken down into many small pieces and shared among many contributors organically.

Membership

Membership will allow people to get involved in the Association. To maintain the current way of working within the Tiki Community, the Association will initially consist of members of the Tiki Admin Group as its only VOTING members. This is consistent with the Tiki Admin Group's current system of voting on issues. Subsequently, new VOTING members can only be added by successful vote of the Board of Directors.

For purposes of fund raising and involving more people in its day-to-day operation, the Association will offer NON-VOTING memberships to individuals, non-profit organizations and corporations, for a fee which will differ depending on whether the member is an individual, non-profit, or corporation (will depend on size of corporation). These members join out of their self-desire to contribute to the Association and to be associated with it on a regular basis. The Association will organize special meetings (online/offline), provide a special newsletter, etc..., to help keep in touch with members in a more formally recognized way, and to make their ongoing fee contribution worthwhile. We hope that many from the extended user and contributor base of Tiki will sign up to show their support for Tiki, individuals, non-profits, and corporations alike.

While anyone can apply to be a NON-VOTING member, as a safeguard the Association has the right to reject individuals, non-profits, or corporations where there could be perceived or real conflicts of interest with that of the Tiki Community.

Donations

Ad-hoc donations can be submitted by individuals and/or organizations anytime. Donations do not get any promotions or the right of association to Tiki as a brand. Donations are simple sums of money given completely out of love in order to support the Tiki project.

Contribute to Tiki

Sponsors

Corporations that are looking to promote themselves by associating their brand with Tiki will be encouraged to sponsor various activities organized by the Association. This will provide specific benefits depending on exact nature of the sponsorship on a case-to-case basis. For example, a sponsor of a specific TikiFest might have their logo printed on T-shirts for the event. The Association has the right to reject sponsors they find unsuitable. For example, an organization that supports PHP and open source might be suitable, but not organizations with limited involvement in and support for open source. Sponsorship differs from non-voting membership as it is a one-time case-by-case thing, while the latter is ongoing.