

Ep#366-Interview-PHP-Foundation

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SPEAKERS

Sebastian Bergmann, Joe Watkins, Wasseem Khayrattee, Sara Golemon, Cal Evans

Cal Evans 00:00

Hi, and welcome to another episode of voices of the elephant. My name is Cal Evans and yes, I'm back as the host for this special episode. In this special episode, I've got friends of mine, and we're all going to talk about the newly formed PHP foundation and instead of trying to tell you who all these people are, I'm just gonna go around. I'm gonna start with you, Sebastian, introduce yourself. Tell us a little bit about you. And we'll just go around make sure everybody does it.

Sebastian Bergmann 00:29

Hi, I am Sebastian Sebastian Backman. I've been in I've been doing things with PHP and to PHP since 1998. Around that time, I came out of high school I was preparing for university did an internship right after my military replacement service where somebody contacted me that I knew from the Amiga demo scene, which is where I was socialised with anything regards to computer. So I started off as assembly and C, real time 3d 2d graphics on the Amiga. And around that time, I was asked to do a website, like a dynamic website, and I fell into the rabbit hole of PHP. And now I'm 20 plus years later, hopefully, these days I know what I'm doing. But back then, I just started and went on the mailing list asked questions asked really stupid questions. And yes, the internet does not forget that still out there. That correctly turned into answering questions and fixing bugs, because I realised, hey, because PHP thing is written in C, I know a little c, I fixed some bugs. And around that time discussion started for PHP five, I brought in some ideas into that. And around that time, 21 years ago, I started to work on this little open source project called PHP unit. And that's me.

Cal Evans 01:51

Excellent. Sarah, tell us a little bit about yourself. I am

Sara Golemon 01:56

S Sara Golemon 01:56

Sarah Goleman. I am currently one of the PHP release mentors for 8.0. Best release ever sorry, 8.1. Team. I've been working on PHP for 18 years working with PHP just a little bit longer than that since three Oh, 16 days sort of thing. And, yeah, really excited to be able to, to move PHP into its next era with foundation.

C Cal Evans 02:23

Excellent. Joe, tell us a little bit about yourself.

J Joe Watkins 02:28

Hi, I'm Joan. I do Paige finished off. What more do you want?

C Cal Evans 02:37

He's a great podcast guest. Thank you all so much. Now you. Everybody knows me. Nobody knows karate. So we'll skip hours. So the audience knows everybody has pretty much seen the questions that we're about to ask. So there's no spontaneous scotches or anything like that. So without having good set, I'm going to launch right in, I'm going to just ask a question. I expect one of you to stand up and answer and it doesn't matter if all of you answered first question is fine. Why after? We've got we're in version eight, you know why now set our why set up the PHP foundation.

S Sebastian Bergmann 03:12

I would like to start because I would like to start off. Joe just stopped, because he said, I'm Joe, what do you want? And I have a good answer what I want, I want more people like Joe, I want more of Joe's time. I want somebody to pay for Joe's time, I want more people like Joe like Nikita like others who are working their asses off maintaining PHP, fixing bugs, fixing, fixing performance issues, improving performance, all the plumbing that goes on, that is not the thing that you that gets you have any fame or recognition because you do fluffy new feature development. But the stuff that keeps the ship of PHP of core PHP, ploughing forward, and we need more of that. And one thing that I noticed over the last couple of years only after doing 20 plus years of open source development. Only recently, people started talking about compensation for open source. And this is a big issue. We had a good past we had a good run in the in the past for the PHP project that off and on. There were big companies that could afford hiring developers to work full time on the core. But that is not something that is sustainable, that not something that is reliable, so we need a more reliable foundation. Ha play on verse sorry for the development of PHP and that is what I want That's not necessarily have to be what everybody else wants.

S Sara Golemon 05:07

I think that's definitely the the gist that that's that's come into the creation of this foundation. Certainly JetBrains was previously one of those companies who was paying a salary to

Certainly JetBrains was previously one of those companies who was paying a salary to somebody to work on PHP that somebody was Nikita, he did some amazing work. I think everybody loves me here, he doesn't need any more talking up past that. But now that he's moved on to, you know, the greener pastures of LLVM, because apparently, PHP is not real language, nevermind, no, I kid there, then, you know, they've got they've got this, this bucket of money to go around and still try to help PHP in some way. And they, they could have said, like, okay, we're just gonna find somebody else to hire, maybe, maybe maybe Joe wants to go and work for JetBrains instead of what he's doing now, or something like that. Because there are certainly people who love PHP and why care for PHP. And if they can manage to pay the bills and keep food on the table and keep the lights on at the same time. That's even better. I think it's weird, where we found ourselves in these, this open source model and software engineering, where, you know, we do this for a living, too, we make money writing programmes, but for some reason, we also say, hey, let's make some programmes, not for money, didn't try to put ourselves out with a job, I guess. Not directly, of course, but you know, we, we certainly provide a very powerful piece of software that a lot of companies make a lot of money using, I mean, Facebook, Wikipedia, Slack, there's, there's a long list of very large companies making quite a lot of money off of PHP, and I realised to the ones I just named have HHVM behind them, but never mind that it's semi PHP, it was php. Anyway, it's an odd thing, that we almost seem to want to put ourselves out of business by doing this thing for free. But we do it out of love, obviously, for the love of the thing. But you know, if we can pay the bills at the same time, that's even better. So that's, that's, I think what I wanted the foundation two is a way to, to help people who love software and love creating things, to not have to sacrifice their personal lives to do it.

 Cal Evans 07:15

Joe, you own anything?

 Joe Watkins 07:17

Yeah, I think, um, ya know, it would seem like we don't need a foundation that PHP is getting on fine. That if Nikhil were to disappear, nothing bad would happen. And we just carry on the same. But that is not true. The truth is that since someone was employed, since in fact, it's not true to say that one person was employed, Dimitri is employed to work on sand. But he's got a narrow scope of performance, he doesn't generally anymore do general features and general fix ups. So essentially, we've got one person working on the broad, the broad product of PHP. And since we've had that, what we've been shown that this is the kind of pace we need. And this is the kind of quality of work we need. And in order to get that you don't get it for free. In order to get that you have to have money and money buys dedication, and that breeds skill. And that's the only pathway to it, that we know. So it why now it is because it right now is when it needs to happen. If Nithya had never worked on PHP, we be struggling along exactly the same as we were before a person was employed. And maybe you could make the argument that we don't need a foundation because that's the status quo. But the status quo at the moment is of such a higher level that we need to maintain that level. And so why now is because now is the only time to do it really not now that the NPS is strong to do to do something about it. Yep.

 Cal Evans 08:10

 Cal Evans 09:19

Well, they say the the best time to plant a tree is 20 years ago, the second best time is right now. So and since Joe actually answered my second question, let's go ahead and throw that out. Why now let's I we were talking before I hit the record button there have been several efforts by very good people to try to make this happen. But have just for so one reason or another have not one of those efforts that nobody knows about except me and a couple other people was by me, but um, we never we never really got the traction. Y'all have actually got the traction now. But what was the what was the kicker? Why why are we doing this now.

 Sebastian Bergmann 10:02

I think it's one of those cases where the idea has been in the air so to speak, I don't know if that's a term in the English language. So if it's not sorry, maybe I made it up to right now. But it's an idiom in German, like an idea that in the making, it's being burst. But nobody just does it. And there have been several attempts in the past, but only ever when there was like a motivation, like, there was this feeling, oh, we need to do something. We don't know. What's going to happen to then fix up this Dimitri. And Nikita is soon finishing university, what what will he do? Well, he saved his PHP, will he do something else. Around that time, something in Germany happens, where we found it a couple of years back under German law for EIN, which is an association that as one of its goals, had figuring out how we can get sponsorship for core development. We went through the legalities found the thing. And then suddenly, the pressure for sponsoring core development was gone, because Nikita was hired by JetBrains. And Dimitri state is then. So the SS that that entity focused on doing things for the German user base of PHP, which is perfectly fine. 20 years before that, give or take another attempt was made. And given the the thing that Cal talked about, that he plans to do, and that others plans to do over the years, the idea was there. But we never got enough pressure on on the cooking pot, if you will, to really get it to boiling and actually get something done. And that happens. And it happens in in a hectic way, if you will. Not hectic and like, oh God, we need to scramble and we don't really know what we're doing. But it needed to happen. Yeah, I still don't know what we're doing. But I seem

 Cal Evans 12:27

to have come together pretty quick. I woke up one morning, it's like, Oh, hey, we've got a foundation. Before we go on to the next question, I want to say I think the most work out of anybody outside of this group that has gone into this was by Ben Ramsey. And I do not want to discount anything Ben did, Ben, thank you for the work that you did, I think you kind of laid the groundwork of the idea for the rest of us. So I just really want to say thank you to all the work that Ben did, even though his wasn't the final one. So hey, there's a lot of questioning about since all of y'all are core, is this the core stepping in and saying this is now how PHP is done? Or is this? Is this foundation gonna be separate from core? Or how's that relationship going to work?

 Sebastian Bergmann 13:16

I am not core. I would not consider myself to be part of core. I know some races here and there.

C Cal Evans 13:25

You've been around and you've been a force in this community so long, it just never hit me. But I knew you had contributed. So you know. Yeah.

S Sara Golemon 13:36

In my head. That wasn't like, of course, you're part of the the core crowd. But yeah, I guess most of your work has been in testing and userland stuff. Yeah, yeah, I

S Sebastian Bergmann 13:45

got the QA team for PHP started a long time ago, I helped this documentation and did some small features here and there. But by no means did I contribute on the C level to the PHP compiler runtime core, as Sara Jo did.

S Sara Golemon 14:04

Well, so you do have voting karma, though. I think that speaks to

S Sebastian Bergmann 14:08

Yes, I have voting karma. But coming back to the things that I do not understand. I do not understand why I have that that happened a long time ago.

C Cal Evans 14:17

You're part of the old guard, then let's put it that way. But how are you going to work with corps? You know, a lot of people were concerned about this.

J Joe Watkins 14:29

We don't know yet. But what the foundation and core are separate unambiguously, they are at the moment. They're separate things, the way that internals works is not change. And we don't know what level of interaction in terms will want from us, but we're going to offer it. For example, we might offer a way for internals to elect people to some position in the foundation that we haven't gotten For yet, because we don't know anything. So we're going to offer the the opportunity, but even channels, if we collectively decided internals, we just want to keep this separate, let's not complicate our process, then that's what we'll do. If we decide we want to elect some people to some positions, then we'll decide what their roles are, and all of that stuff going forward. But right now, it's separate, they're totally separate. And how we're going

to work is yet to be decided. by normal means, I mean, we will have the discussion will have RFCs will have votes will will decide by normal means how much interaction there's going to be in the future?

S Sara Golemon 15:37

Yeah, I mean, I would say like, think about what the process is on development of PHP, right now, you know, somebody has an idea, like, I want to put generics in the language, okay, so I'm not going to just write a patch and commit it, because this is not 10 years ago, I am going to come up with my idea, plan it out. And I'm never gonna write an RFC, and say, hey, does this sound like a good idea? Does my proof of concept invitation look reasonable, and we're going to discuss go back and forth, we're gonna vote on it like, that is not going to change. And the existence of a foundation literally cannot change that, it would take a decision by all of internals, and literally, its own RFC, in order to change that into any other process. But there's no need to change it, there's no reason to change it. So anyone being paid by the Foundation to work on stuff in PHP is still going to go through that same like, Okay, here's my idea. By the way, I'm also being paid for this work. But here's my idea. And I'm doing this and let's vote on it, like, so they don't get

C Cal Evans 16:39

special commit rights that can slam a commit in I know, that's never happened before in the history of PHP, but

J Joe Watkins 16:45

nobody has.

S Sara Golemon 16:48

Um, so as we select people to give these grants to, one of the things we are looking at is people who already have commit access, because they have already been doing work for PHP. And thus, they've proven that, you know, they know how to work within the process. They know how to write code that fits within PHPs internal frameworks, and they already have all of these pieces. They don't necessarily have to have commit access, but it really makes things easier. Because otherwise you're going to have to start to do some things to earn that because it's still a meritocratic sort of system, where you have to prove that you know what you're doing before you're giving the keys to the car.

C Cal Evans 17:21

Yep, I totally agree that okay, um, so, you, Tara, you touched on, but I want to throw it out to Sebastian and Joe, um, you touched on actually paying people to work? And that seems to be a running thread. And I'm all for that. Is that the primary function of the foundation? Or are there other things that y'all hope to accomplish?

J Joe Watkins 17:46

Right now, the scope, the scope of our operations right now is just to hire core developers, because we want to maximise our chances of success, but doing that, and we don't want to spread our focus on other enterprises right now. Also, there are other projects in the works that may do a better job may have a better. Okay, one of the problems with trying to take on community efforts and things like that is at the moment, we've assembled in the fellows of Board of experts and their technical experts in PHP, but they are not marketing experts. And they aren't, they're not marketing experts. And they're not all the other different kinds of experts that you need. In order to make good decisions about these other things. We can make good decisions on technical stuff to do with PHP. And that is all. So that's all we want to do right now. But as as we grow, and we get more funds. In five years time, we've got a working foundation and surplus funds, why would we not entertain in the absence of anyone else doing it? Why would we not entertain doing widening the scope to include community enterprises and things like that? Interesting.

C Cal Evans 19:04

Sara Sebastian, don't add anything to that

S Sara Golemon 19:07

I was just gonna add to that. One of the things in fact, Joe's had in our first kickoff meeting, and I don't even want to address this in this to keep an eye on your hat. But this idea of, I don't want to use this word scholarship, but like a, basically, a means to help bring in new blood to the project, I think is a really important thing for us to think about. As you said, the best time to plant a tree is 20 years ago, like we need to think about ways of getting new people who care to care about PHP and to care about her long term. We made a joke before we start recording about how great my hair is. Now, you know, we're all getting on in years. We read during our intros, we talked about having worked on PHP for 20 plus years, you know, we're not going to do this forever. God knows my knees are giving out already has nothing to do with programming. But you know, you sit down for a long time you stand up again, anyway, we need to get new people into the pipeline and one of the ways we may do that is through some sort of a funny effort. What exactly that looks like we have no idea His future plans this is, you know, couple three years hence kind of kind of timeframe. And we also need to think about how we can increase our funding. And that may involve spending money to make money outreach, sort of things, finding, you know, giving some some legwork and time in with potential donors to be able to fund the foundation a little more broadly. So that is another potential place, we may spend money, but that's probably at least a year off as well. Right now, it's really just about, you know, getting the work we're doing now, you know, more sustainable

C Cal Evans 20:33

overhead specials,

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Sebastian Bergmann 20:34

sorry, I think one thing that could be somewhere in the middle between those, like getting new people in and hiring people to work on PHP, something in the middle, could and maybe should be getting the knowledge out of the heads of some very specific core developers into more heads, a lot of knowledge with or most of the knowledge with regards to how opcode cache works, how the just in time compiler works, and so on, is a single point of failure, which is the mitre sprain. And we need to get that knowledge. And that goes all the way back to one, at least for me, one of the catalysts for the foundation. Yes, one part was, Nikita is no longer going to be paid full time to work on PHP. The other part was Joe's excellent blog posts or series of blog posts, about the bus factor. And currently opcode cache, and the just in time compiler have a bus factor of one. And we have similar things for different parts of essential critical infrastructure, parts of PHP, like PHP FPM. And we need to get knowledge like that into multiple people. And that requires two things that needs that requires people that want to learn these things. And maybe they need to be paid to learn that. And that requires people to provide that knowledge and guidance and coaching to get started in those areas. Maybe that needs funding to I would prop. But we are getting into dangerous territory here dangerous, in a sense, because Dimitri is already paid to work on PHP, and I think it should be part of that work to get that knowledge from his brain into other brains. But that's just the idea that I wanted to put out there and not get lost into way too many technical things. Sarah, you wanted to say something? No, I

S

Sara Golemon 22:52

wasn't I wasn't trying to say so I was, as you were talking about things I was just fingering in the in the air for those not watching the video, the letters J it like that is that is the thing that is stuck inside Dimitris head and needs to get out and you have actually made me think like, gosh, maybe I need to do a deep dive. So I can do a conference presentation on it, because that's the best way to get it into my head and maybe get it in a few others at the same time. Also, if

C

Cal Evans 23:16

we only had a book that would help people understand how to write extensions to PHP, I mean, I think that would be just wonderful. So

S

Sara Golemon 23:25

I mean, we got one, but it's like, God, what is it now? 15 years old?

C

Cal Evans 23:28

I know. That's the joke. Yeah. You wrote one back, the early days of five kami leads upgrading for five to it is all set,

J Joe Watkins 23:36

when it but I just wanted to add to that answer to that last question. When it comes to the education question. Sorry, I just sort of alluded to it that she could do a conference presentation on it, given the time with it. She doesn't actually need Dimitri to meet her and have a mind meld session, all of the knowledge in these people's heads is available for the taking, given the dedication, interest and time and buying that interest and dedication is the best way to do that. So it's always we're paying people they're going to read and they're going to learn and they're going to expand their knowledge. And if they're interested in the geology, that's what they'll read. And we don't necessarily need to expect any extraction from Dimitri. And if we did, what would that cost us in terms of his normal job? You know, I think that's a question for much later on. But it's not like we've got no answer to it. Now, education is going to happen as a byproduct of how we're operating. So So yeah, there's, there's there's that

C Cal Evans 24:44

the point, hey, I feel like I've been doing a lot of the talking here and I've got a another host with me my co host karate, so I'm gonna let karate ask a few questions. I'm just gonna shut up.

W Wasseem Khayrattee 24:55

So I want to host now that we have a concrete action we know why We want, I want to know how easy or difficult it is right now based on your current context to find people to offload that knowledge. And if it is difficult, is it possible to have an incubator because I am not sure that if we wait for people who will get them, but there are a lot of geniuses coming out of school of universities, but they need the proper surrounding to get them on board. But that is only facilitated by a proper framework, like an incubator. You guys go to a lot of conferences, you meet a lot of curriculans, you meet a lot of people that have that fresh blood, new thoughts and those

J Joe Watkins 25:45

saw I mentioned earlier, we've got this idea of it's been floated for kind of scholarship programme. And that would form a kind of incubator, where we reward people for their time, but their primary goal is not features or bug fixes their primary goal is learning so that we can pay them more so that they can do more. And so that would be our answer to that. But whether we're actually going to do that, from the offset, or whether that's something for a following year, we just don't really no yet. When it comes to attracting brains and these geniuses coming out of school, it's remarkable how many of them do come to PHP that Nikki is not the only one. There's up and comers right now that given the dedication that Nikita has been able to show. But because he was paid to they'll be just as skillful. And there'll be just the same kind of asset given enough time and money. So yeah, maybe in the future, you could think of it as a kind of incubator. Yeah.

W Wasseem Khayrattee 26:52

Just before we sidetrack away from Nikita. since we are talking about him. I have not seen any

communication from him personally. So I was wondering if anyone of you has sit down with him try to understand, because I respect and understand that Nikita does not open up publicly. So I wonder if any one of you has had a personal conversation with him? What could have been done to keep him on board? Because he has been here for quite long? And just to get him a way like this? Can we the CO can we try to keep him to persuade him to stay? And? Yeah, have anyone Have you talked with him? Well, because I haven't seen him docking.

S

Sara Golemon 27:36

aisle three, are actually in a in a common sort of chat area with him. So we do talk to him on a regular basis. Anyway, personally, I haven't gone that deep into this topic with him. But I actually don't see any reason to doubt the the official story is that he wants to go and work on LLVM. It's a really interesting project that has some really deep sort of sort of good engineering in it. And I'm sure he's going to make that way better, which by the way, is also going to speed up all your other programmes, because that drives C and C++ and so many other languages. And if anything, it has to make that better, it's going to make everything better, including PHP in the long run. But I think the one important thing to consider here is that the narrative that's going around is that is that Nikita is just leaving, like he's just out the door, goodbye, not going to talk to you anymore. Done with his PHP BS. I think that's not an accurate take on the situation. I think it's that because he's going to be focusing a lot more of his time on things that aren't PHP, he has quite right fully and ethically said, I am not going to take JetBrains as money to do stuff for PHP, and then not do stuff for PHP. Like, I think that is the main thing he's leaving, he's leaving JetBrains along with that, because he's not being paid to work on PHP anymore. He's not going to be, you know, spending 40 hours a week working on making PHP better, he's going to be I don't know who's paying him next. I don't know where he's going next. But he's going to have other duties. And his his time is going to be split in different ways that don't involve PHP as much. I'm sure he's still going to continue caring about PHP. I mean, I don't want to put words in his mouth, but I believe I hope he's going to continue working, caring about PHP, and, you know, chiming on our threads and maybe even you know, doing patches from time to time. I don't think he has gone

J

Joe Watkins 29:27

gone. Yeah, the key is going to work for Red Hat or no. Okay. So what I would say is that we were all expecting this. I mean, we were all expecting it years ago, for him to say, I found something more interesting. I mean, that we might learn more from asking, why did he stick around for so long when he was basically all on his own, but so it's It's no surprise when someone like that loses interest in something. It was expected. And we're lucky that it that JetBrains managed to sustain his interest for so long with rewards. But obviously he's on to bigger and better things. And but it what we're losing is dedication, the 40 hours a week, like like Sarah said, he's not going to be spending 40 hours a week, but we don't lose his expertise. And his, you know, he is a friend of the project, and he will continue to be so.

S

Sara Golemon 30:32

Yeah, yeah, I think another thing to mark talk there is that, you know, in our introduction, we talked about having, you know, been working on PHP for 20 years, like not, nobody has worked on PHP continuously for 20 years. You know, we drift in and out of the project over time as we

on PHP continuously for 20 years. You know, we drift in and out of the project over time as we work on different parts of it over time. I don't think I've done a commit to PHP source that wasn't released related it about three years at this point, just because I haven't, you know, I haven't been that's not how I've been interacting. And I had a few other drive periods at various points. So we can think of Nikita as being in a dry spell, as much as anything.

C Cal Evans 31:12

I like to think that way. I like to think he's going to be back. I, you know, I've been around the community, I am not in any way, involved in core, I stopped reading internals back in 2006. I just don't get involved in that. But I've been around the community long enough to see the core developers come and go. And it's always exciting to me when I see them come back. And because in your heart, I do I do one day, that's going to come back, you know, Dr. Dave's gonna buy it back from Microsoft, and world's going to be rich. So anyhow, hey, thank you for those answers. I've got one from social media, I posted on social media that I was going to be talking to y'all and somebody asked a question, and I cannot pronounce this gentleman's name, but I'll throw a link in the show notes. By the way, karate will also dig up Joe's articles, because those were excellent articles. And we'll throw those into the show notes as well. So the question is, right, now PHP is a better language than node, Python, etc. But we're losing the marketing chair, because the others are extremely good at some things. What is the direction of PHP? Is it going to be client side like Node ml and Python or business side like Java and C Sharp?

S Sara Golemon 32:26

So the first thing I want to respond to here is that first sentence right now PHP is better language, etc. I think that's always a dangerous. generalisations

C Cal Evans 32:36

are always dangerous. I may believe that but I didn't actually

S Sara Golemon 32:39

say that. So we only speak in absolutes. But PHP is a great language at certain things, just like the person who asked the question in college, these other languages are great at certain things. I think PHP excels quite well, at the web. And a few other things. It's okay at, and Python excels quite well, at data science and a few other things. It's quite good. And system administration scripting, I guess it's also quite good at getting getting into x is better than Y is really language worse sort of territory, and it's probably less productive.

C Cal Evans 33:13

I think his his main focus was, where's the language headed? Are we shooting forward? Are we shooting for the projects that node and Python are shooting for? Are we shooting more for the Java and C Sharp type things?

S

Sara Golemon 33:29

So the quick answer to that is there is no roadmap. He has never had a roadmap, I think probably individually, engineers might have some ideas about what they want to do with PHP next. But it has never been a sort of thing where you said like, oh, we need to get these, you know, shell scripting market. So we need to go after, excuse me, people who write shell scripts, and we need to improve the backtick operator, because that's, that's where it's going to be at. Nobody is thinking that I think so. I can't tell you what is next for PHP in that respect, only that we are each just going to do what we can to make PHP better in the ways that sound right at the time. Excellent. But okay, but if the person asking the question has an idea, bring it to internals and let us know where you think we should be going.

C

Cal Evans 34:19

That's a good one. Okay. Now, we've talked about a little bit about sponsorships. And I want to spend all the time talking about that. Because obviously, sponsorships are going to be very important. Not the kind of sponsorships I do, which is promote things, you know, because that's worth nothing to you whatsoever. actual money coming in is what you're looking for. So when you're talking with companies about sponsorships, what's the selling point? What's the one thing that they can walk away and say, This is what I get if I donate

J

Joe Watkins 34:52

X? Anybody? We're asking them to be altruistic basically. We're asking them, we're not promising anything in return.

C

Cal Evans 35:04

I mean, that's fair, you know. But

J

Joe Watkins 35:07

on. On the other hand, we can't promise them anything in return, all we can promise them is engagement and a conversation. And that they'll get, we'll listen to them, the developers we hire, we listen to them, there'll be an ongoing development of the relationship between sponsors and the administration and the developers that we hire. So they're not going to get a direct magic wand to do anything, but they're doing something altruistic. And they're going to be part of a broad conversation about what what we choose to do. But no one's sponsor is going to be able to say where they're going to have no special power.

S

Sara Golemon 35:57

They can tell people that they helped sponsor the PHP Foundation, and by extension, various developers that we've been helping out, and for whatever value that adds for it, to go to Open

collective, a PHP foundation page, that has got a list of all the sponsors, it's all just public record. So

S

Sebastian Bergmann 36:15

I was about to say that on the one hand, it's, it's an altruistic thing to do, which means it is the right thing to do. I'll come back to that in a second. Sarah has a very good or made very good point, just now. It's Employer Branding, developers that I talk to, and I talk to a lot of developers and when they look for a job, they, of course, compensation and benefits, and whatever that that is important. And that will always stay important, but it's a market where the developers have more choices than vice versa. And I know, from experience, and I know for a fact that more than more often than not, the decision is made like does this employer do something good for, I don't know, for the environment for the society, for the for the for the software ecosystem that they're operating in. And you have employer branding, you have the altruism, but And finally, you have, it's in the company's own best interest, to keep the open source projects of the supply chain that they use to build the software in which they generate their revenue working. And it doesn't matter if that's PHP as a programming language, I mean, the stack is really big. If you look at all the software that is involved in building a web application these days, and if they choose to support the programming language that they use for that, great in the past, the PHP ecosystem, only made offerings to them to give back in the form of associations and foundations that we had for turnkey solutions, such as WordPress, or Joomla, type of three nails, whatever. And now it's time to trickle down in the stack, that it also goes into the infrastructure that is used by all of these solutions.

S

Sara Golemon 38:25

So to map that out to a concrete example, how many copies of PHP storm is JetBrains going to sell? If people stop writing code in PHP, because the project stagnates. Good point it tight circle there.

C

Cal Evans 38:39

So and I'm fairly sure y'all have a lot of interest because I had one vendor that I've had a relationship with for a while, come to me and basically say, What the hell, why didn't anybody invite us to be one of the initial sponsors? And so, and they were looking at me, and I'm like, I woke up this morning and found that we had this so I, I'm still figuring things out. But I'm guessing that y'all are getting some, some good initial traction. And I'm hoping that this continues, because I overall, I see this as a very positive thing for not only the language, but for the companies that are sponsoring it. Having PHP stick around is going to be important.

S

Sara Golemon 39:20

Yeah, the initial responses have been fantastic. I think JetBrains initial contribution has about about trebled by all the other contributions that have made sense, which is super impressive. And yeah, I mean, there's, you asked earlier about why now. I mean, there has been this appetite from companies again, who are been making money, essentially off a Petri for a long

time of how they can give back about how they can contribute back. And from, you know, the official project stance was always like, we don't know what we would do with your money if we had it. And we kind of don't want to deal with the taxes. So thanks, but no thanks. We've got servers and bandwidth, and that's really all we need. So this, this is a release valve for that honestly, like the the desire to get back to PHP is there. So this is giving us outside of the project, a means to do that in a way that helps support the project.

C Cal Evans 40:16

Excellent. Well, since we're talking about the money, have you now that you've started collecting the money, I know that one of the things you got to figure out how to do is disperse the money equitably? Obviously, 10% goes over the top goes across the top to podcasters. But beyond that. Do you have a thought on I know y'all have not officially organised so anything said here can you know is taken with a large grain of salt? But do you have a thought or a plan that you'd like to share?

S Sebastian Bergmann 40:47

So before we go into details on that, and I leave that probably to Joe, just wanted to pick up on what Sarah just said, the response has been phenomenal, not only from sponsors that give us the money. And with that, a lot of trust, of course, and we one of probably the most important goal is to earn that trust going forward and do sensible things mister money so that people continue to give us money. But we also got phenomenal response. I would say that the others can correct me if I'm overstating that. But we also got some really good response from people who want the money. Right, who wants to contribute? Who made who approached us and wants to get hired, contracted for whatever the correct, legal fiscal term is there. That's one of the things that we need certainly to figure out. Right. But some damn some really good candidates that I hoped would be interested and intrigued by the Foundation. And excellent. I'm very happy about that.

C Cal Evans 42:01

Okay, whatever. Joe, you want to talk about dispersing the funds of it?

J Joe Watkins 42:07

Yeah, the only good answer is, we don't know. Because we're still making the decisions. And at the moment, it's all just, it's not a matter of numbers, it's a matter of communication and trying to align our goals and understand what the applications that we've got good, but a lot of them are quite brief. So we want to have extended conversations, and we're not looking for people to work on a specific thing. We're looking for people that we can we can build a relationship with and what our goals are aligned with. So at the moment, we're not talking about numbers. So the answer is got to be we just don't know. Yeah.

C Cal Evans 42:52

Okay. I mean, that's, that's fair enough. That leads me into the the we don't, we don't know yet. That leads me into a question that I skipped. Because it didn't fit, what we're talking about the member, I'm gonna go back to it. Um, you've set a goal of, or you've given yourself a timeline of six months to get organised. Um, once you get organised. Do you went well, I'm trying to figure out how to say this. What does get organised me does get organised mean? It's gone. Each of you and though there's other members of this committee, y'all were the ones that answered the call. But does that mean that it's gonna new and make you all part of the permanent Security Committee and everybody else comes and goes? Or is there going to be a voting? Or what are your thoughts on how this is going to be organised?

J Joe Watkins 43:46

Me, in six months, we're gonna have to say, we don't know a lot less. But there may be still some things we still don't know at that point. But at the six month point, we should be able to answer questions like our internals and foundation when we interact, for example, we should be able to answer questions that we get from candidates about arrangements, tax arrangements, employment arrangements, and that sort of thing. These things we're learning, and we don't know the answers to yet, but in six months, we should know that we should have that level of knowledge. But we still might have to say we don't know to some things, but we'll say less.

C Cal Evans 44:27

Very cool. Um, do you have any thoughts on the governance structure? And I made the joke about the the permanent members of Security Council, but you know, maybe, maybe that's what you're thinking? I don't know. You know, do you have an idea of where you're going in that

S Sara Golemon 44:44

I get the vibe is, is that we are planning to have an election at some point. Okay. It is not 100% clear who the voting parties of that election are going to be. If it's going to be everybody if it's going to be you know, there's going to be some bar for that. It's not clear who's actually going to want to stand at that point. The one thing I will say is that you hope to make as much of this as transparent and public as possible. Sort of our first few initial meetings, we're not recording just because we are so inept and have no idea what we're doing. We don't want our buffoonery recorded for posterity. But once we have some of the more basics worked out, we definitely want to have all the notes in a nice GitHub repository where people can see the minutes of the meetings and what decisions are made. We would like to even have these things may be broadcast on YouTube, we've been using Hangouts for our first one, we'll probably will probably continue doing that. You know, there's no reason for any of this to be happening behind closed doors and in secret, apart from areas where people's personal information is involved, we we're not going to, you know, list the email addresses of everyone who applies for a grant, for example, but, you know, we want to be as open as we can, as we figure out what that plan is, because as Joe said, we just don't know.

C Cal Evans 46:02

And I do appreciate that. I know, I knew when I was started to write these questions down, that a lot of these is we don't know, we've got to figure this out. Knowing most of you all, you know, Joe, I know who you are, but I don't think we've interacted that much. But Sebastian, Sarah, I've known y'all for 15 plus years and had full faith in why you're doing this. And when you say you're going to be open, I honestly believe that. That's where you guys are headed. I do appreciate that. Hey, um, final question. What question did I not ask that you wanted? asked? Wow, crickets? Come on. I'm not that good.

S Sara Golemon 46:48

Well, I had one, but I literally just burned it on talking about how we were planning to be open. So yeah,

C Cal Evans 46:53

you did that one up? That's okay. Okay, well, I'm gonna go around and do then Lisu closing comments, you know, Sarah, do you want to start us off? You know, we're wrapping it up? What do you want people to wait, what do you want the PHP community to do to help support this,

S Sara Golemon 47:13

um, continue to be an awesome, like, I, you know, it's not entirely about the money, but the money is what's going to drive a lot of this, and I just checked out the open collective page for PHP Foundation. And I noticed we have over 1000 contributors already. Wow, you know, some of those are, like, I think about half of those are at the \$5 month level, which is part of my French, fantastic, and others are, whatever levels people feel comfortable with. If you feel comfortable donating, you know, we will do our best to make sure that goes to something that helps make PHP better. If you want to just get involved in PHP, you know, the foundation doesn't have to be involved in that the internals is there. It's a mailing list, emails existed as a protocol for, I don't want to think about how many decades now, come join us in the conversation. If you need help learning how to do stuff in PHP, there are some great gateway drugs to get into that. Just in terms of, if you look at the runtime, anything in the exe folder is the actual API that you use from user space. So you know, what these functions supposed to do, you can suss out a lot of meaning. So there's opportunities to get involved at that level, or in documentation, we used to have what 2030 active translations, they have the manual, I think we're down to seven or eight. Now, maybe seven or eight are enough. Because, you know, they cover a lot of the world's languages. But you know, hey, if you know a language, in addition to English, and you can help with the translation that services, the language fantastically, even the primary languages we have, some of the pages are a little out of date. So definitely help out with that. There's, there's tonnes of opportunities to get involved into give back to PHP, either financially or non financially. So PHP is your language, man.

C Cal Evans 49:06

Excellent. Job, same question. What can I as a PHP developer, not a C developer, I'm not a core anything. What can I do to help make this a reality?

anything. What can I do to help make this a reality?

J Joe Watkins 49:18

We know if you put your hand in your pocket, that's really great. But I don't really want you to do that. What I want you to do is make a proposal to your boss and make it over and over again until they listen and convince them that this is the best thing to do. And maybe one put their hands in their pockets. That

C Cal Evans 49:39

excellent, very succinct, Sebastian, same question to you. What can we do to help?

S Sebastian Bergmann 49:45

And I was about to say the very same thing. There's different versions, though, that Joe just said, spread the word. Make sure that more people know about the foundation, talk about it at your user group, and other people Let's talk about it to your coworkers at your employer, talk to your boss about it, they should be the ones opening their pockets and invest in the supply chain that they're that their business runs on. If you are a PHP developer and want to contribute to PHP, learn how to write tests for PHP. That is a good starting point, write tests for parts of PHP that are not tested yet, or that could be tested in a better way. That is one way hold us the temporary boards of the foundation accountable for our actions. We are here in a very agile process, trying to get our legs under us figuring out things as we go. We are humans, we have the best intentions. We want to be as transparent about this as possible, as Sarah just mentioned, but we are humans, we make mistakes. If you make mistakes, point us to them, we will we will try to do better. And as we already mentioned, eventually there will be an election. And I would have not a problem at all with not being elected into this position. Again, I am here to serve in this initial bootstrapping of the thing as best as I can. providing input on technical things. I'm not an expert at marketing, I'm not an expert at tax, or legal or whatever. We are here to earn your trust. And you can watch us fail or not as we go along, please spread the word and help us making the PHP ecosystem sustainable and ready for the next 26 years.

C Cal Evans 52:07

Excellent. Well said, I know. Since my career for the past 20 years has been based on PHP. Yes, I will be reaching into my pocket and putting donating what I can. But um, yeah, anybody who is working at a company that uses PHP, professionally, okay, the company has anything running on PHP, go to your boss, ask them to pony up either on a monthly basis or a one time gift get involved in this because it behoves all of us for PHP to continue. And I'm going to be sad that Nikita is stepping away because he's been a frickin force of nature for the past, what 510 years, just been everything, every time I turn around, he's doing something new. And I was so proud of JetBrains for stepping up and saying we're gonna pay him to do this. And I actually wrote a blog post on it, because it just made me made me feel good because somebody was finally stepping up because others had dropped the ball. So, you know, I'm hoping more and more companies will get involved in at the level that they're comfortable with. If all of us get together and pony up a little bit, we can really make a difference because last time Andy made up a

number it was 5.5 million PHP developers out there. You know, if we all chip in a little bit, we can make this happen. So, audience I want to thank you for being with us here for this. I hope you have found this as fun as educational. My panellists I really can't thank y'all enough. You know, like I said, Sebastian, Sarah, we've been hanging around for 1516 years. I love every time I get to talk with y'all, Joe, it is so good to make your acquaintance. loved having you on and I hope that karate will bring you back on as things progress and new things happen in PHP. because aside from your opening, I do PHP. Your answers were beautiful and intelligent, and they really, really did help me understand what's going on. So I really appreciate your participation in this audience. Thank you. And we'll see you next week right here on voices of the elephant