

Introduction

How the survey was conducted:

A mail was sent to developers@ asking people to raise all the topics that they believe the Foundation should focus on doing and/or funding.

A curated list of all the topics raised was put into a form and the same people (developers@) were asked to rank them.

This absolutely is not meant to tell the Foundation what they should be doing, but more to communicate what the community of developers (limited to the people behind developers@) understands about the role of the Foundation and what developers expect from the Foundation.

Note: for the ordered list, the tool randomized the order of topics for each person to limit bias.

Survey Results:

We got 65 voters!

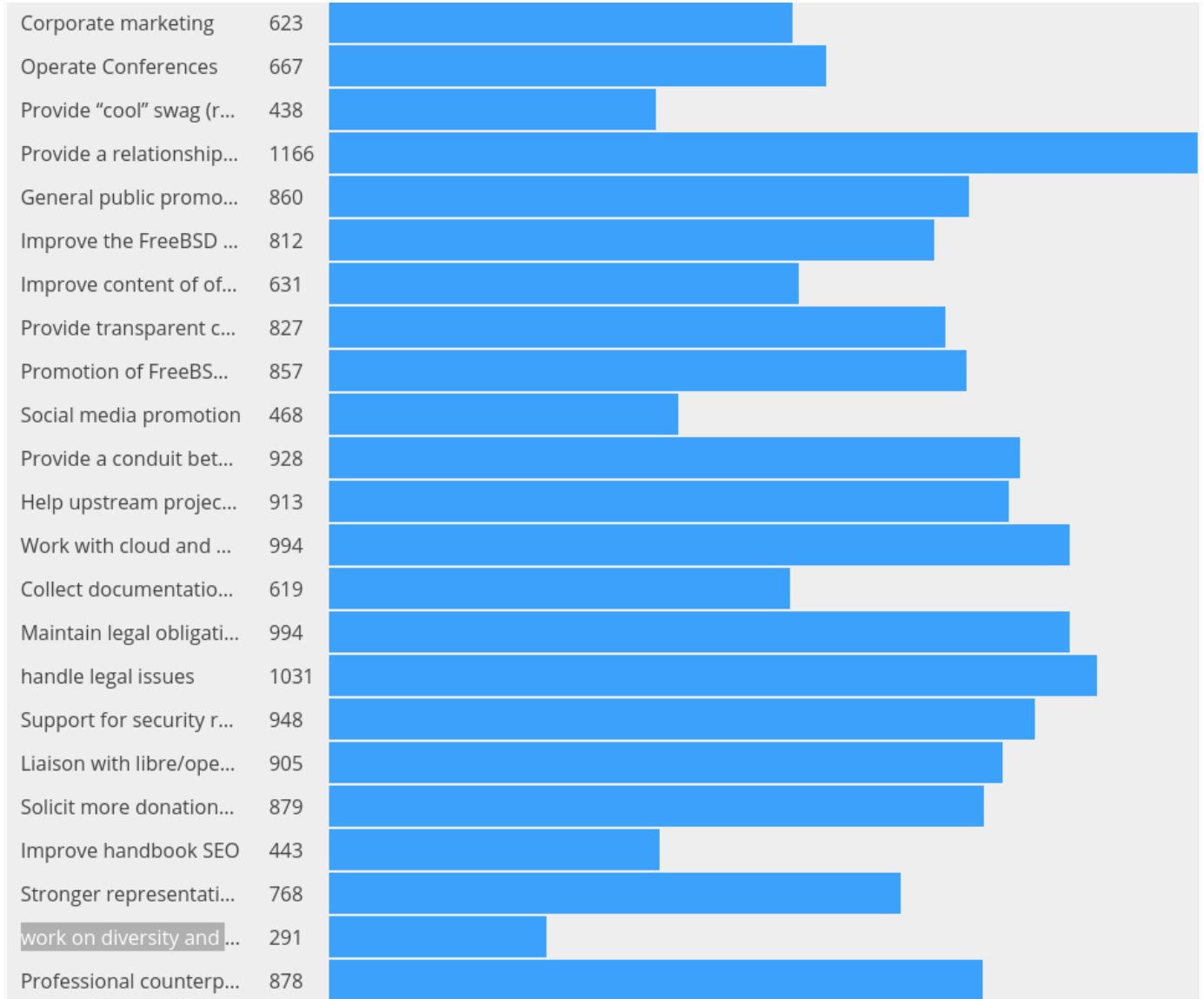
What should the foundation focus on

(ordering with Condorcet method Schulze)

1. Provide a relationship between vendors and developers (for specs, hardware, NDA execution): 1166
2. handle legal issues: 1031
3. Work with cloud and VM hosts to ensure they provide FreeBSD options (Hetzner, OVHCloud, Digital Ocean etc.) 994
4. Maintain legal obligations (copyrights, trademarks, other IP) 994
5. Support for security response 948
6. Provide a conduit between funders and developers seeking sponsorship, especially small sponsorships (e.g. personal development server) 928
7. Help upstream projects connect with FreeBSD developers 913
8. Liaison with libre/open computer makers (desktops/laptops/embedded) to improve support for FreeBSD 905
9. Solicit more donations / enhanced fundraising 879
10. Professional counterparty to companies: relationship, guide contributions and interaction with the project 878
11. General public promotion of and advocacy for FreeBSD 860
12. Promotion of FreeBSD to students via Universities, Colleges, Schools 857
13. Provide transparent calls for funding 827
14. Improve the FreeBSD desktop experience 812
15. Stronger representation of the FreeBSD project in relevant non-BSD events 768
16. Operate Conferences 667
17. Improve content of official documentation 631
18. Corporate marketing 623
19. Collect documentation and turn it into official docs, make sure they are indexed 619

- 20.Help upstream projects connect with FreeBSD developers 613
- 21.Social media promotion 468
- 22.Improve handbook SEO 443
- 23.Provide “cool” swag (refreshed FreeBSD Mall, branded products) 438
- 24.work on diversity and inclusion initiatives 291

Raw results:

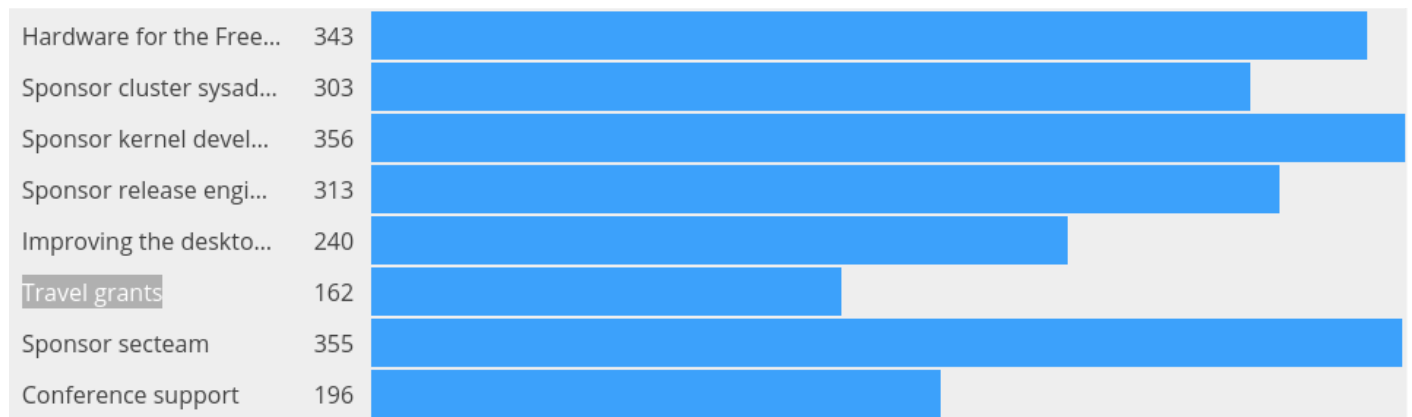


What should the foundation provide funds for:

(ordering with Condorcet method Schulze)

1. Sponsor kernel development 356
2. Sponsor secteam 355
3. Hardware for the FreeBSD cluster 343
4. Sponsor release engineering 313
5. Sponsor cluster sysadmins 303
6. Improving the desktop experience 240
7. Conference support 196
8. Travel grants 152

Raw results: (note 2 persons did not reply)

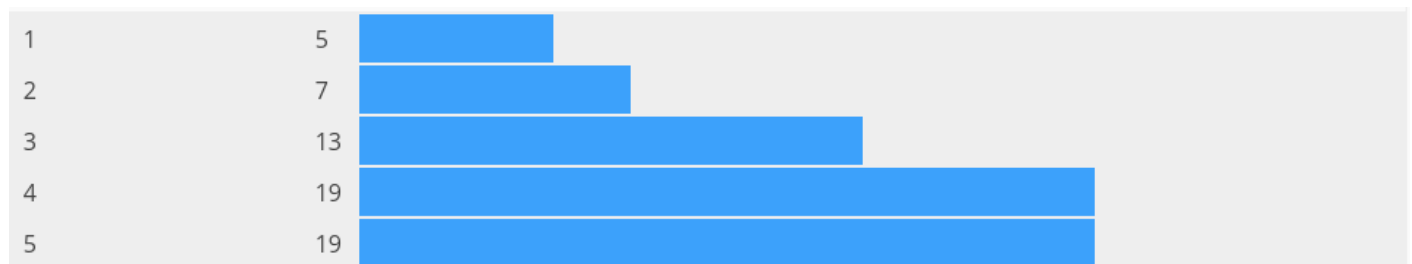


Rate the importance of funding

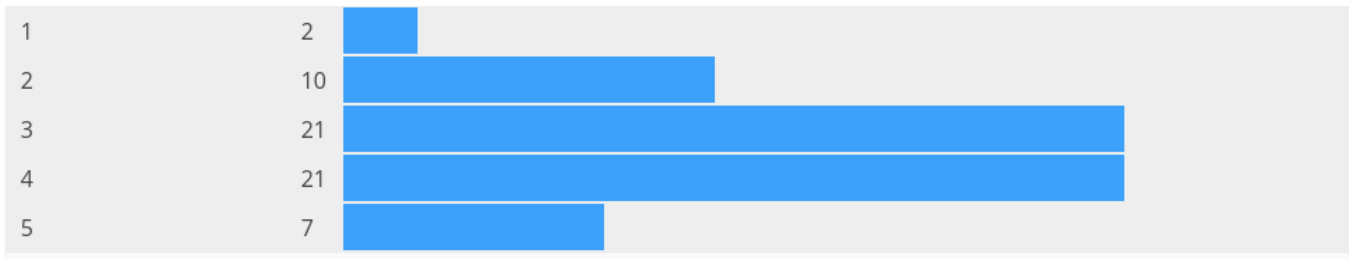
1 being the least important, 5 the most important

(Note that 1 person did not reply)

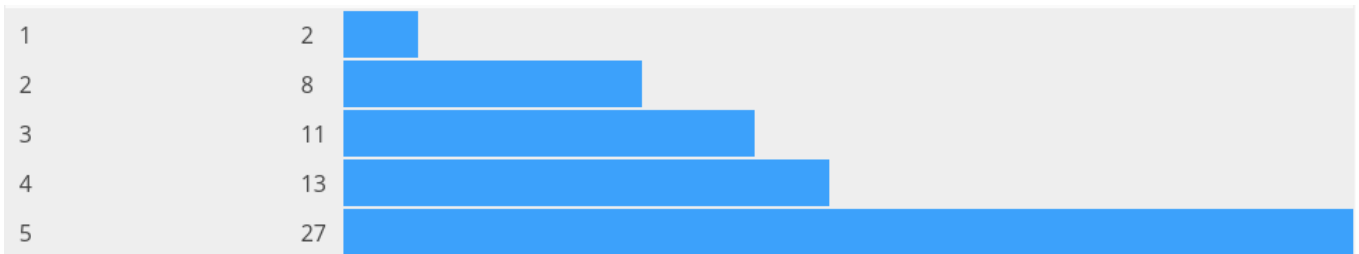
Hardware for the FreeBSD cluster



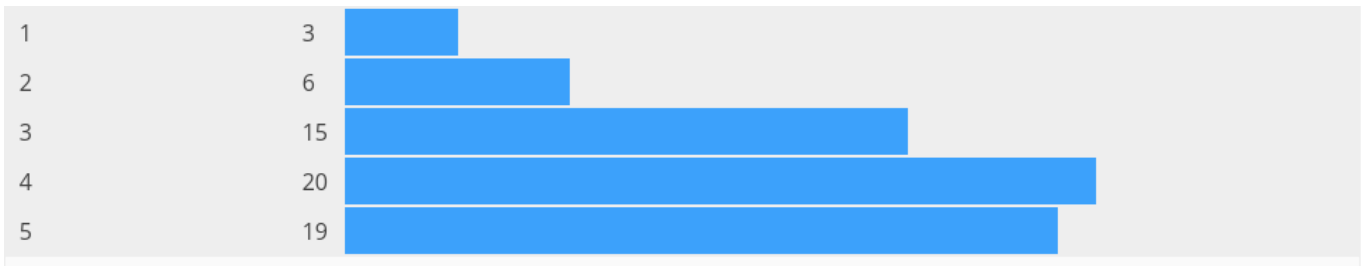
Sponsor cluster sysadmins



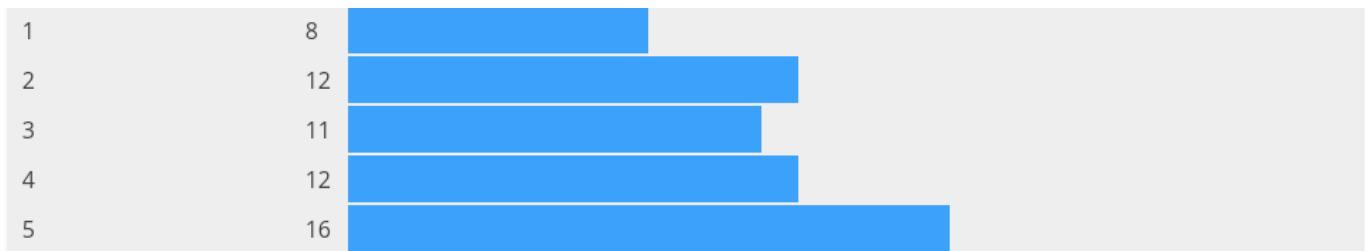
Sponsor Kernel development



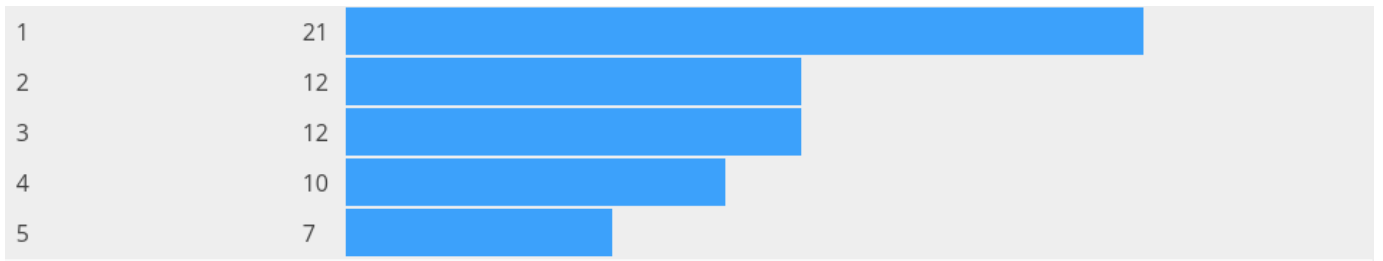
Sponsor Release Engineering



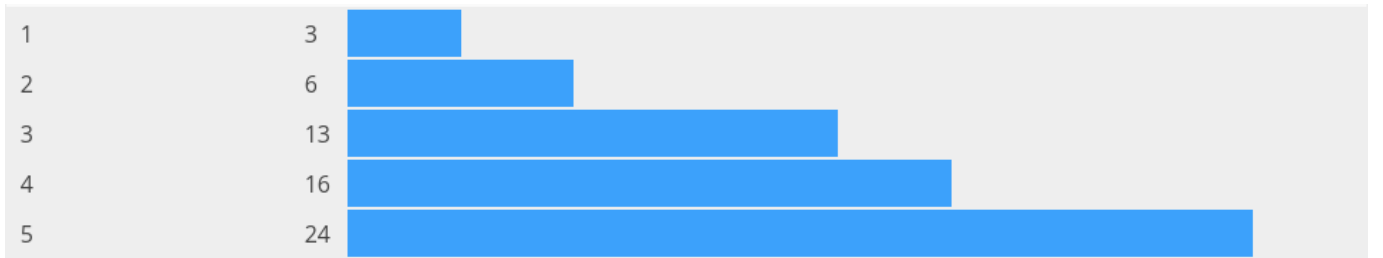
Improving the Desktop Experience



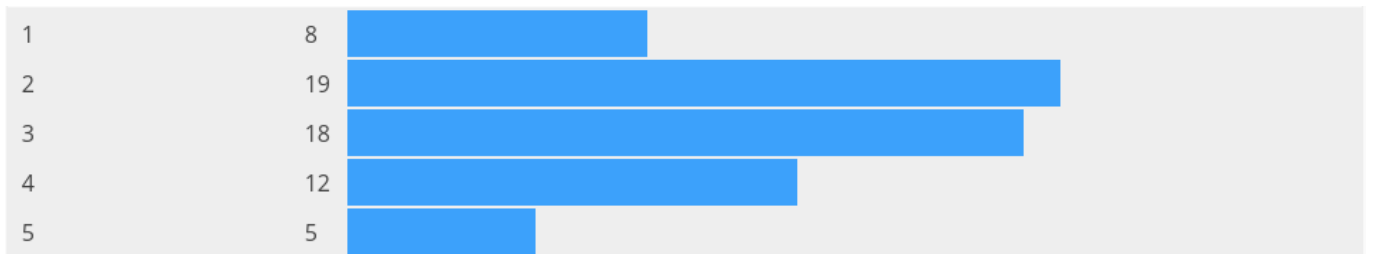
Travel Grants



Sponsor Secteam

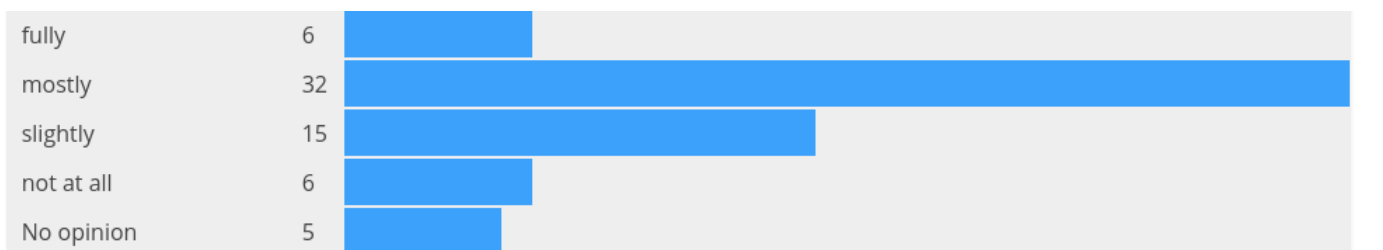


Conference Support



Do you trust the current organization

(Note that 1 person did not reply)



Other feedback

In addition to the list of priorities, we received various other feedback and anecdotes. We have summarized some of that feedback into the following list of concerns:

Concern 1: Transparency of finances

While the P&L and Budget look good and already give an oversight of how the Foundation is using donated funds with a good balance between funding solicitation, program, and administrative part, they could be improved to make it clear to an auditor what specific tasks or items are really behind each of those topics.

The current form is very hard to analyse.

More verbosity (this was publically asked also by Colin on the developers@ mailing list).

The Foundation's score on Charity Navigator is not great. Several of the current dings look easy to fix, but we are surprised at such a score for a US-based non-profit:

<https://www.charitynavigator.org/ein/841545163>

Concern 2: Poor representation of the community in the board

While there are no issues with the current board members, it feels like it is not representative enough of the 2023 community (lack of active members, lack of european representativity).

Concern 3: Counter-productive documentation

The FreeBSD Foundation website has a lot of documentation on FreeBSD which is good, but much of it is either outdated or would be better if hosted directly on the FreeBSD site. In general, it would be better if the Foundation's site could just point at the official documentation when it is relevant instead of duplicating

Concern 4: Presentations by members of the Foundation don't always suit the audience

A common bit of feedback is that talks from the Foundation at BSD conferences spend time on topics that developers find less interesting. Developers are mostly interested in the technical work the Foundation is funding and enabling. It is easier for developers to see value from that work and to be motivated to donate, etc. Some developers feel that other topics are either a waste of funds or promote the Foundation rather than the project. In some cases developers feel that Foundation speakers are out of touch with the community or not knowledgeable about FreeBSD.

Concern 5: The Foundation represents the Foundation more than the project

While the foundation is representing the FreeBSD project, everything from the visual identity, swags, logo and even talks which are done during conferences seem to be more about the Foundation than the project. One suggestion from core@ might be to more closely align the Foundation's logo with the project. The old

Foundation logo (Beastie in a suit) was clearly related to the project's mascot at the time, but the current Foundation logo doesn't have any clear relation to the FreeBSD "orb" logo.

Concern 6: Micro-management

Multiple contractors who have worked directly with the Foundation (who requested anonymity) reported issues with getting paid. In particular, folks claimed that after a technical monitor had approved a project milestone or invoice, additional non-technical questions or objections were raised that delayed payment. This seems really odd. The terms for payment, milestones, etc. should be set in the SOW and in contract negotiation before the project starts. Once a project has started, approval from the technical monitor should be sufficient (assuming it doesn't require a contract change, e.g. if it has exceeded budget).

Others have reported there are people which are actually in a "nofunding" list even if they are designated by other members as actually the best qualified person due to personal conflicts with staff members.