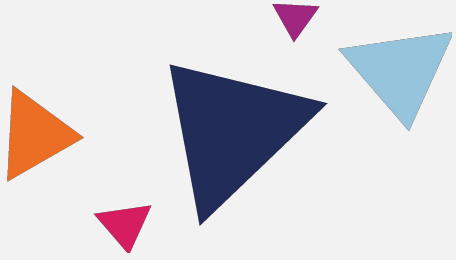DrupalCon
BARCELONA **2024**
24-27 SEPTEMBER

Refactoring the DrupalCon Submission Review Process

A mini-retro with a focus to improve for next year

Objectives

- Review the results of the DrupalCon Europe Submissions Survey
- Share key takeaways and actions
- Get community member insights and experiences
- Discuss the Review Process for DrupalCon Europe 2024

All of the information will be used to restructure the submissions and review process for DrupalCon Europe 2025.
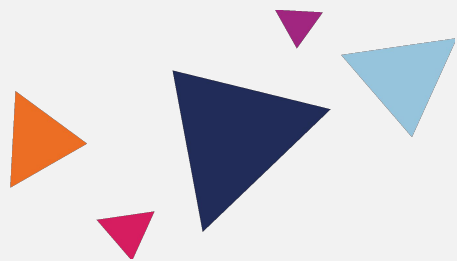
Please know

- Track Leads log >100 hours
- Track Reviewers log > 20 hours
- These volunteers receive a free DrupalCon Europe ticket & photo on the website. It is the only compensation.
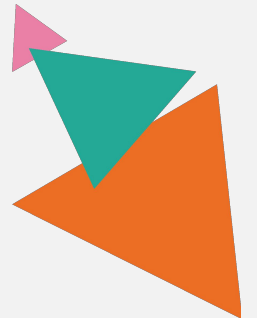
Presenters

Aikaterine Tsiboukas (bletch)

Jeremy Chinquist (jjchinquist)

Antonella Severo (antonellasevero)

Collaborators:
- AmyJune Hineline (volkswagenchick)
- Dan Lemon (dan2k3k4)
- Fedor Lukianov (fedor.lukianov)
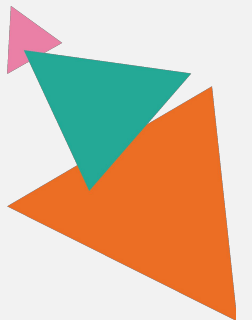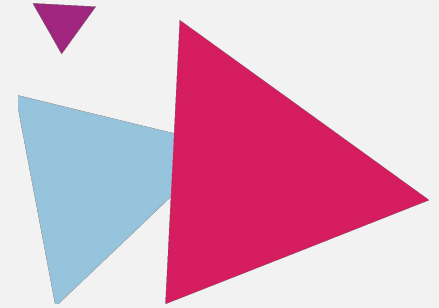- Nicolas Montet (Kuoni)
- Will Huggins (zoocha will)

DrupalCon Europe
Submissions Survey Results

Survey Parameters

- Total of 454 session proposals
- Survey sent to all session proposal presenters
- 104 responses out of 314 recipients (= 33.12%)
- Results
  - Margin of error: 8%
  - Confidence interval 95%
  - → Within acceptable limits to consider the results indicative of the population surveyed
- Published survey results are available via https://www.drupal-austria.at/blog/drupalcon-europe-2024-bof-refactoring-drupalcon-submission-review-process
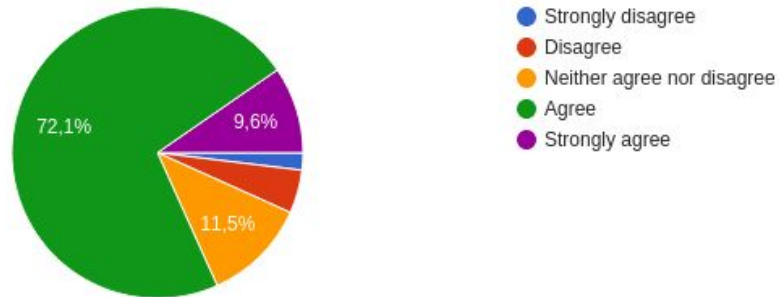- This talk focuses on learnings & changes

The session submission process was straightforward.

104 Antworten

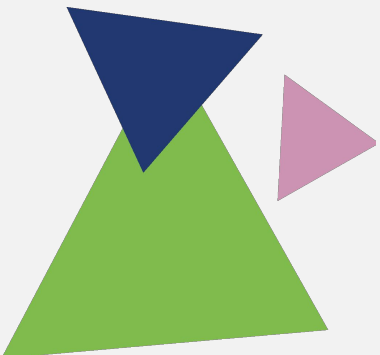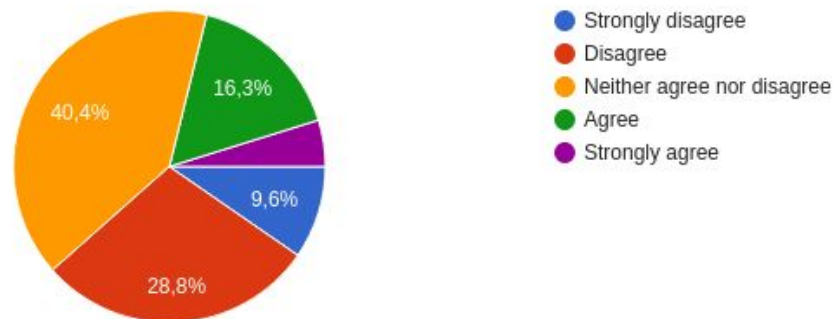- Strongly disagree
- Disagree
- Neither agree nor disagree
- Agree
- Strongly agree

72,1%   9,6%   11,5%

The support resources (e.g., Slack, FAQs) during the submission process were helpful.

104 Antworten

- Strongly disagree
- Disagree
- Neither agree nor disagree
- Agree
- Strongly agree

40,4%   16,3%   9,6%   28,8%

Takeaway:
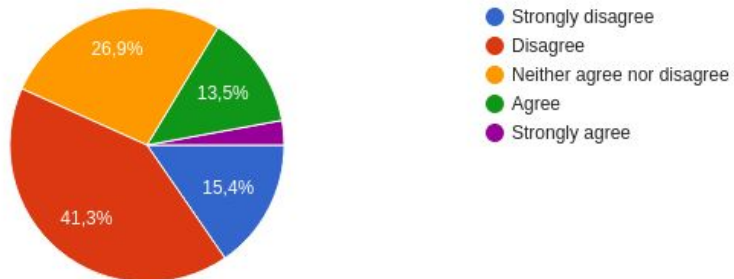Although the submission process was rated well, communication needs improvement.
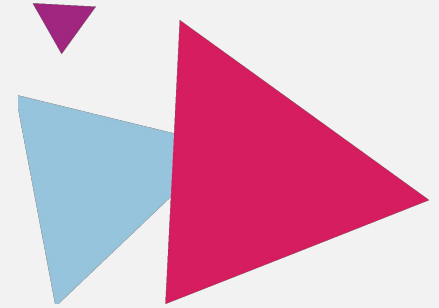
Part 2: Review Process

2.1 Fairness and Transparency

The session review process is transparent.

104 Antworten

⧉ Kopieren

- Strongly disagree
- Disagree
- Neither agree nor disagree
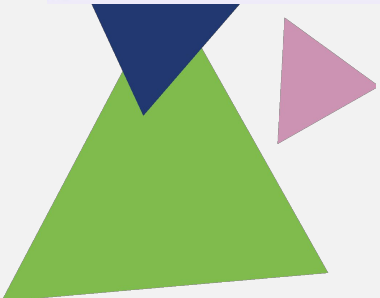- Agree
- Strongly agree

26,9%

13,5%

15,4%

41,3%

Takeaway:
Acceptance / rejection of the proposal
was not transparent, little feedback given.

See slides:
- Summary of the Review Process 2022 - 2024
- Considerations for Changes to the Review Process

Takeaways:
- 3 / 5 tracks had primarily positive ratings.

Note: of those
who *proposed* sessions:

Key Takeaways and Actions

Considerations for Enhanced Communications

What:
Enhance communication about the structure and flow of the proposal submission process

Where:
Submission Entry Page
Submission Confirmation Email
Submission Response Email
Drupal Web Page

How:
Better instructions, timelines, templates, FAQs, periodic updates, awareness of all support resources, more communication touchpoints

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What:
Enhance communication for "Backup" Selections

Where:
Submission Confirmation Email
Submission Response Email,
New Backup Confirmation Form

How:
Rework communications and instructions for next steps, add special form for backups to accept/reject, more follow-ups, additional options (e.g., BOF)

What:
Enhance communication to those sessions not selected, ensuring they are informative and supportive

Where:
Submission Rejection Email

How:
Rework communications, provide a list of general reasons why sessions not accepted, offer additional options (e.g., BOF)

The overall quality of the sessions selected for each track is high.
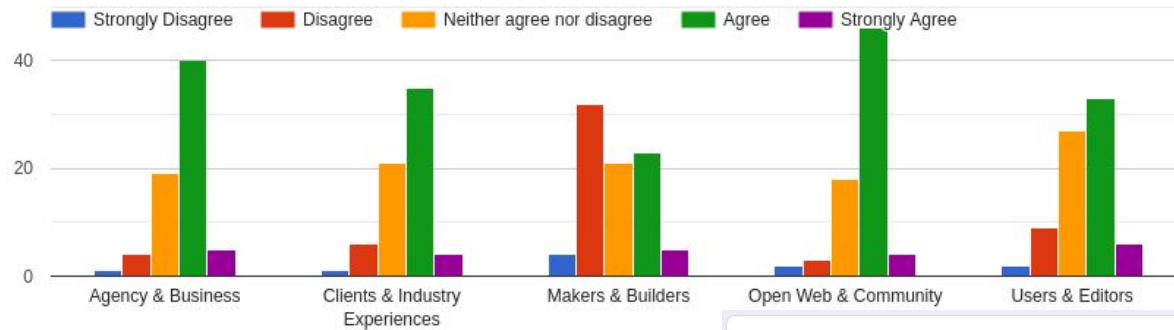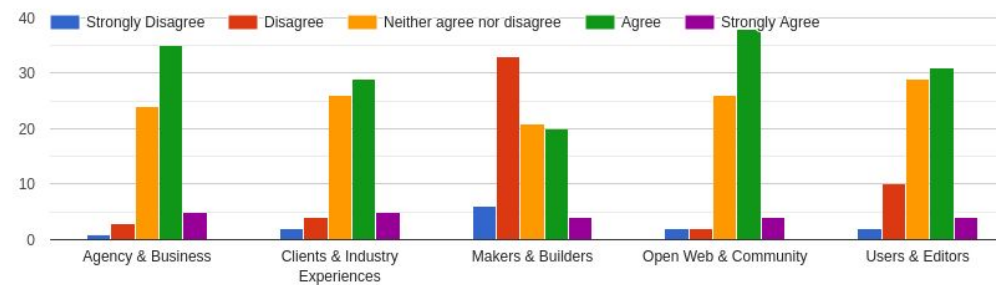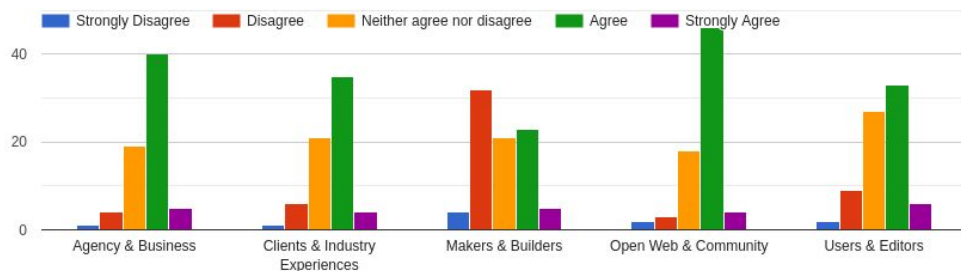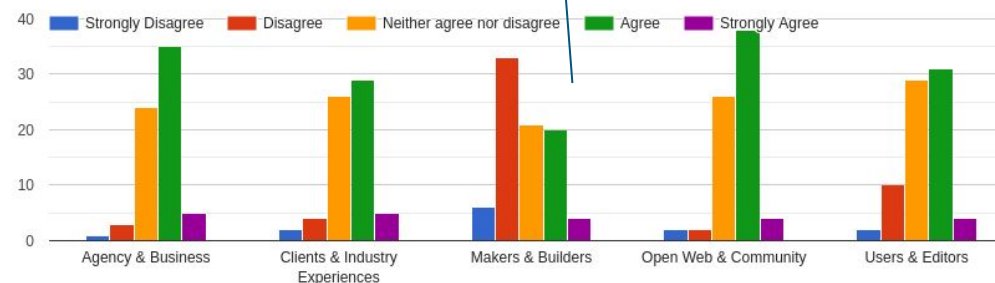
Note: of those
who *proposed* sessions:
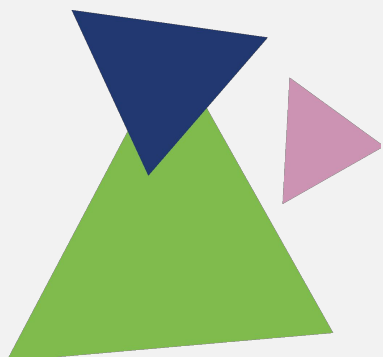
The selected sessions are valuable and help me to succeed in my work.

Our conclusions:
- M&B and U&E need improvement
- Some proposals would have a different rating, had the speaker data NOT been hidden.
- Re-evaluate selection process & tracks for 2025

Summary of the Review Process 2022 - 2024

The Current Timeline:
- 23.02. Call for Papers opens (Review 1 ongoing)
- 05.04. Call for Papers ends
- 15.04. Review Phase 1 ends / Phase 2 starts
- 27.04. Plagiarism check
- 29.04. Review Phase 2 ends
- 10.05. Authors informed (accepted, backup, rejected)

Review Phase 1:
- Submission text reviewed
- Presenter & metadata hidden from reviewer
- Trades (when presentation fits a different track)
- 5-Star rating

Advantages:
- Anonymous presenter ensures fair grading of submission *content*.
- Anonymous presenter data requires *all* speakers to create high quality submissions.

Disadvantages:
- Good & experienced speakers overlooked.

Review Phase 2:
- Rating averages shown to reviewers
- Presenter & metadata shown to reviewers
- Selections based largely on 5-star rating (Phase 1)
- 1 Session per speaker (2 if a co-speaker)

Advantages:
- Simple process
- Fast results

Disadvantages:
- Good & experienced speakers overlooked.

Considerations for Changes to the Review Process (a Proposal)

The challenge:
How do we (the reviewers) ensure that we remain fair for next year, give people chances who have not spoken (why we have anonymous reviews) and balance that with expertise we need?

In discussion:
Tracks updated for 2025
- M&B = too large?
- U&E = alter description?
- More tracks? = more choice = more overlap

Proposal 1: Phase 1
- Track Team: anonymous review of proposal text.
- Track Leads: Identify & rate returning & experienced speakers.

Advantages:
- Experienced reviewers (leads) evaluate speaker. Less experienced, the submission text quality.

Disadvantages:
- Complex
- Time consuming

Proposal 2:
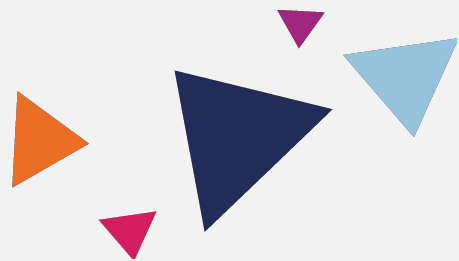-
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Advantages:
-
-
-

Disadvantages:
-
-
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Open Discussion

- Image here

Thank you!

Appendix A: Resources

- Published survey results available on the drupal-austria website: https://www.drupal-austria.at/blog/drupalcon-europe-2024-bof-refactoring-drupalcon-submission-review-process