

Meritocracy in KDE

Part of the “Companies are Community” series

Akademy 2012

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CWD: ~

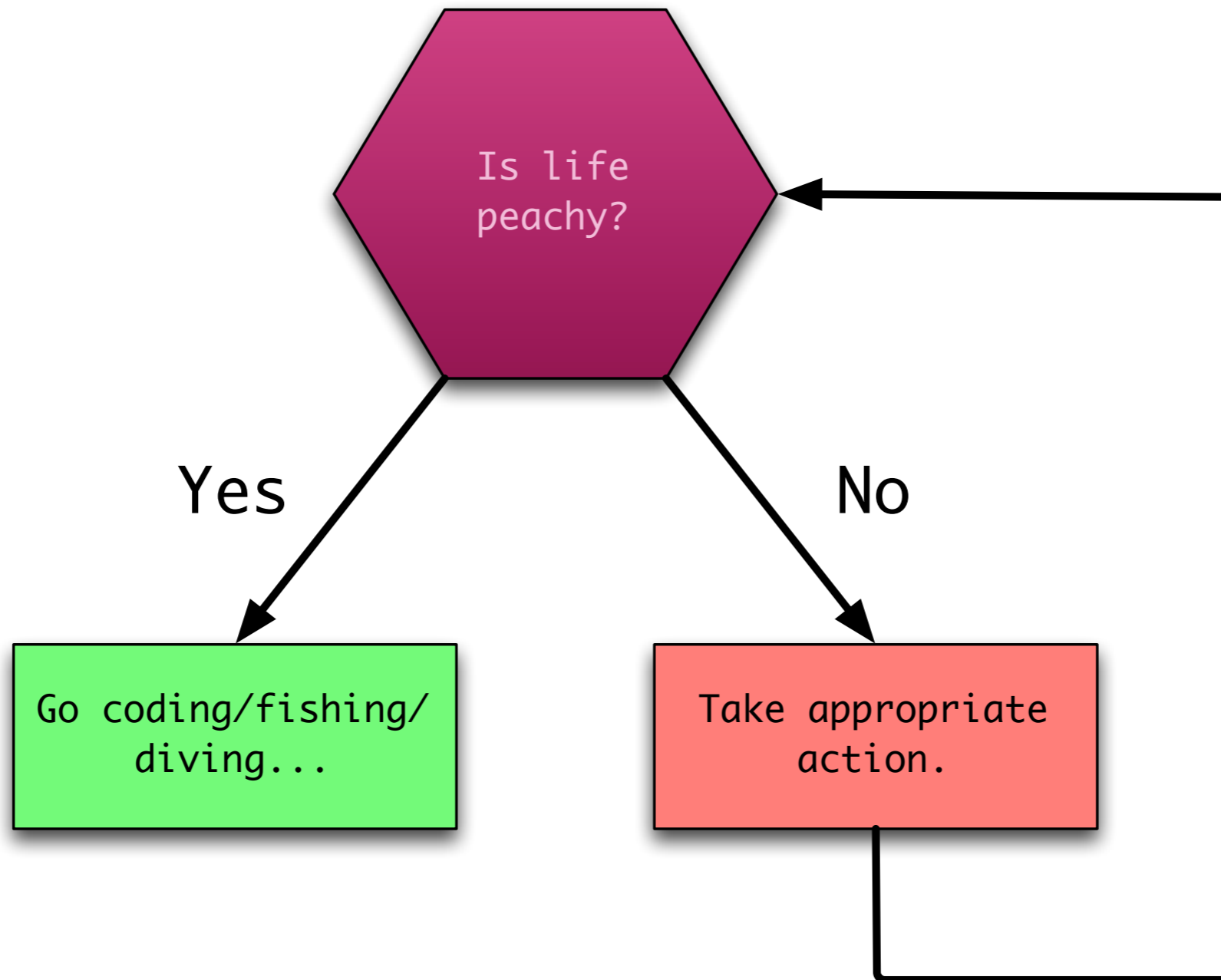
miroslav@silberpfeil: >whoami

- KDE Contributor since 1997:
 - Hacking (kdecore, kdepin, applications)
 - board member 1999 to 2006
 - Desktop Summit 2011
- FSFE Germany team member
- researching Free Software and Intellectual Property issues at TU Berlin
- married, two kids, lives in Berlin

CWD: ~

miroslav@silberpfeil: >

How things get better - an algorithmic perspective.



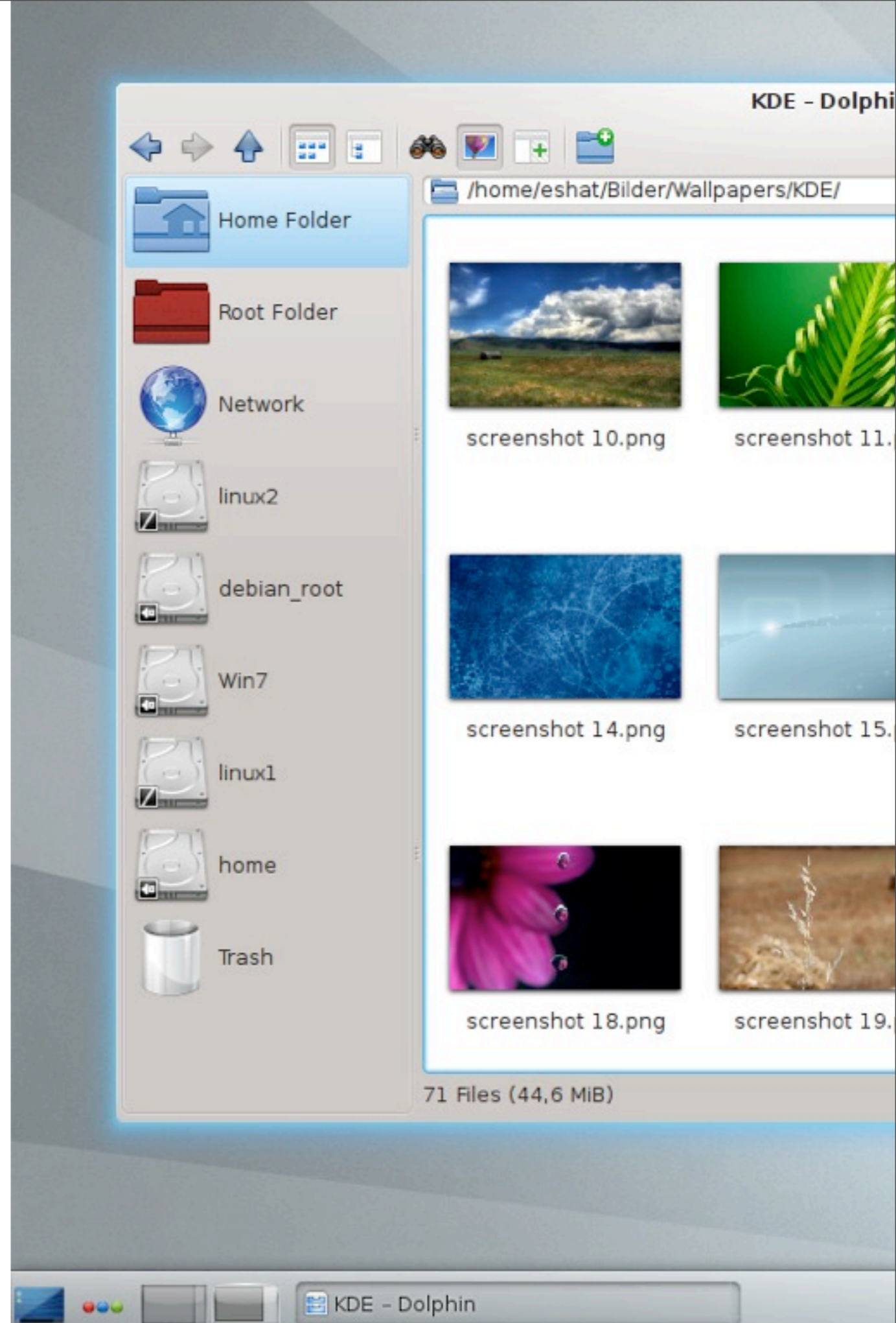


Observe

Part I

Is life peachy at KDE?

- Surprise: Yes, it is. (Mostly.)
- KDE - Largest meritocratic volunteer driven FLOSS community.
- Outstanding product.
- Stable contributor base, easy to join, healthy fluctuation.
- Role model for how communities work.

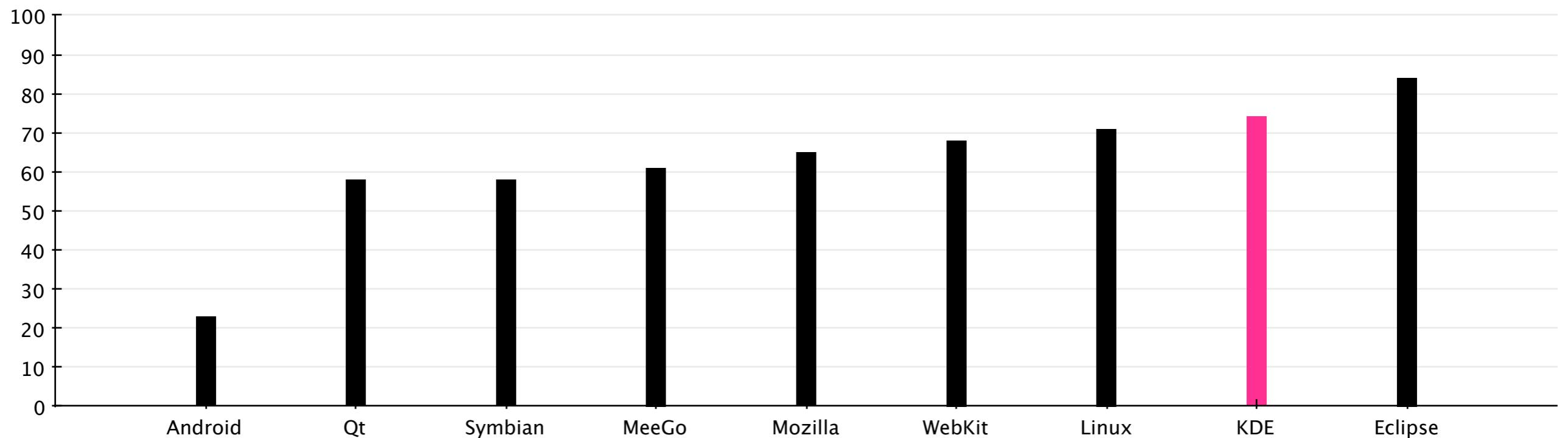


Symptoms of Friction

- Users complaining about lack of quality improvements.
- Users complaining about lack of transparency.
- Contributors leaving for non-technical reasons.
- Failure to integrate commercial ecosystem.
- Problems establishing vendor pickup.

How are others doing?

- Open Governance Index: “Equal and fair treatment of developers – ‘meritocracy’ – has become the norm, and is expected by developers with regard to their involvement in open source projects.” [1]
- Here is Sebas’ and my assessment of KDE’s rating: 74%, second best.





Reflect

Part II

Voice or Exit



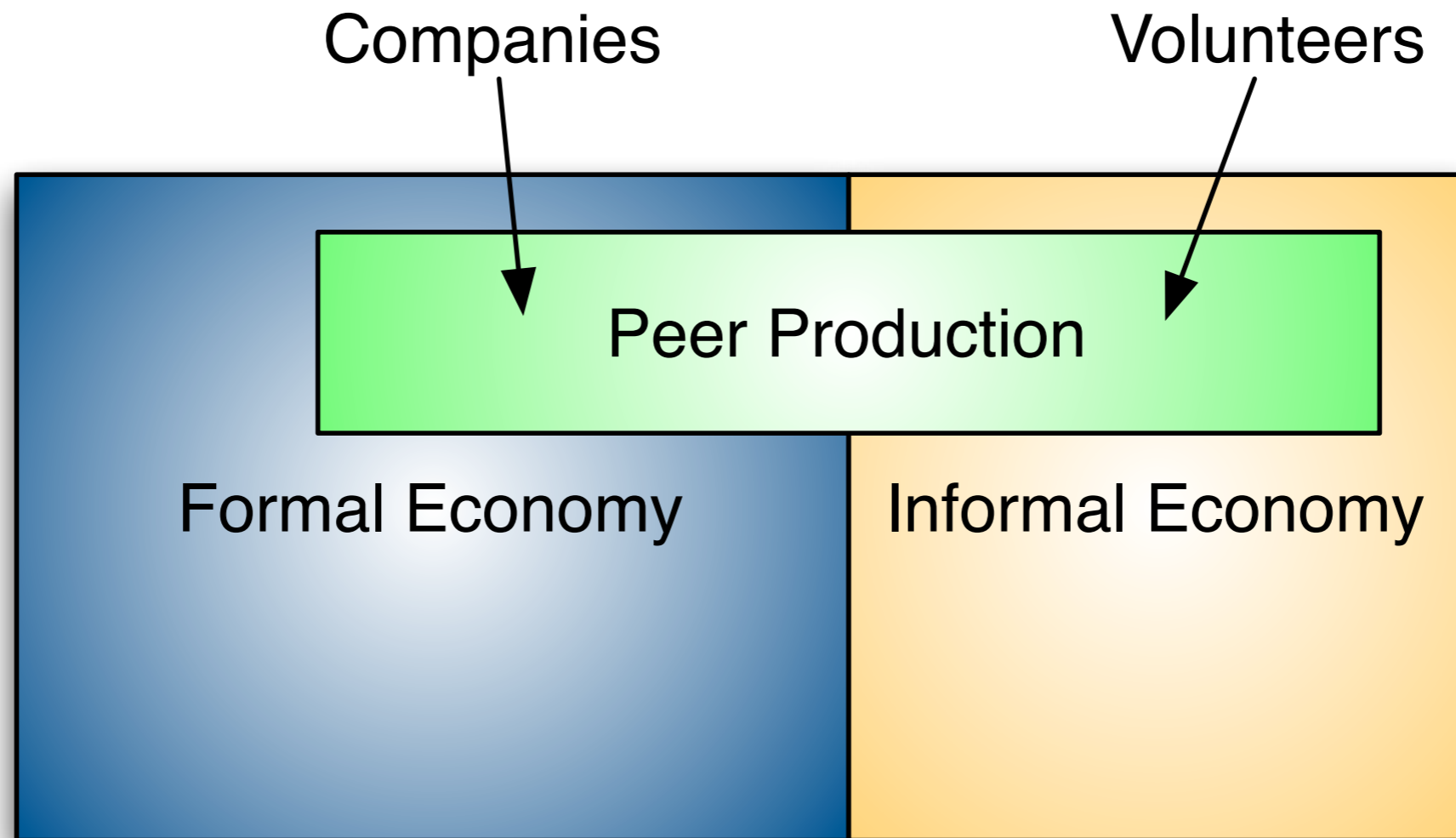
Community

- Meritocracy of all individuals who contribute
- Self-directed
- All doors open approach
- (S)He who does the work decides

KDE e.V.

- Stakeholder's association of *volunteer* contributors
- Only individual membership, no entities
- Invite-only membership
- Passive, supporting membership models
- Secret by default

The role of commercial contributors





Act!

Part III

Our vision: Improve by default

Get better in every iteration

Proposal: Extend the Code of Conduct

Contributor's Rights and Responsibilities

Contributor's Responsibilities

- Be open about goals
- Be transparent about activities
- Be committed longer-term
- Be generous
- Be humble

New: Contributor's Rights

- Influence development
- Be an equal among peers
- Benefit from own contributions
- Be part of the community, collaborate
- Exercise the Four Freedoms

Proposal: Open by Default

Improve Transparency

Minimize Discrimination

- Technical vs. non-technical contributors
- Volunteers vs. companies
- Users vs. contributors vs. e.V. members





Thank you for listening!

Questions?

References

- [1] <http://www.visionmobile.com/product/open-governance-index>
- Image: <http://www.flickr.com/photos/44523343@N00/474411576/>