

# OpenTelemetry Contributor Experience

## SIG

### Meeting times:

Project leads and sponsors:

Zoom: <https://zoom.us/j/96885316517?pwd=rquPoD6vhW79Abc5qFWbpDeP0m2v6M.1>

Cameras "on" recommended.

**THESE MEETINGS ARE RECORDED AND AUTOMATICALLY POSTED TO**

[https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/1SYKfjYhZdm2Wh2CI6KVQaIKg\\_m4NhTPZqq-8SzEV06s](https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/1SYKfjYhZdm2Wh2CI6KVQaIKg_m4NhTPZqq-8SzEV06s)

Slack channel: [#otel-contributor-experience](#)

Project board: <https://github.com/orgs/open-telemetry/projects/97>

Artifacts: <https://github.com/open-telemetry/sig-contributor-experience>

## Oct 28, 2024 (17:00 UTC+8 meeting)

Attendees:

- Pablo Baeyens

Agenda:

- No other attendees, meeting cancelled

## Oct 21, 2024 (10am PT meeting)

Attendees:

- Zach Gonzales
- Severin Neumann
- Kayla Reopelle

Agenda:

- [Zach, Severin] Chat on Zach's experience as a new starter with the project
  - Calendar easy to find
  - New Contributor Guide not so much (-> good first issue)
  - What do all the repositories mean?
    - -core, -instrumentation, etc.

- Add it to the New Contributor Guide maybe?
- [Severin] Outreachy (Status Report)
  - Oct 29th is end of the application phase
  - Nov 7th is when we decide who is going to be the intern
  - Early December until early march will be the internship
    - OpenTelemetry Registry project
    - OpenTelemetry New Contributor Setup Guide
  - Write a report on outreachy from a mentors' perspective
  - Do we want to participate in outreachy again in early 2025?
  - **\*\*Action Item\*\***: Announce when we do the reviews of the applications, so other SIG members can help (i.e. Kayla offered help :- )
  - **\*\*Action Item\*\***: After Nov 7th let's have a sync on how we support the intern(s) as mentors
  - We could use the Nov 4th meeting to review applications. IMPORTANT: we need to do this in a private meeting, only maintainers should get the invite link
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## Oct 7, 2024 (10am PT meeting)

### Attendees:

- Marylia Gutierrez (Grafana)
- Severin Neumann (Cisco)
- Kayla Reopelle (New Relic)

### Agenda

- [Marylia] Draft message for maintainers:

Hi everyone! I wanted to share some context on some contributions you might be seeing on different repositories, regarding Outreachy applicants.

OpenTelemetry currently has 2 projects on [Outreachy](#). One project is being mentored by Severin, and will mostly be contained on the website repo (focusing on improving UX/UI for the registry). The second project, mentored by me, is about improving the contributor experience for OpenTelemetry. To be able to improve the process, they need to understand how it is to be a contributor to Otel. During the month of October they're in their contributing phase, and will be working on different repositories, looking for good first issues to work on and gathering experiences.

This project has 60+ applicants contributing at the moment, so you might see new faces around. I don't want the flow to be any different for them, because otherwise it would affect the results of the experiment, and it wouldn't be the same as any other contributor, but at the same time, this is the first time the majority of them is working in OpenTelemetry and even on an open source project, so if you notice an applicant struggling with something on the repo you maintain, I would appreciate if you can give them a hand. Also, if you can find more issues to tag with "good first issue" (and close no longer relevant ones), it would be great!

The goal is to improve the experience for all contributors, so more down the line of this

project I will be sharing with the repo how people were able to navigate, how easy it was to contribute and setup local environment, and then feedback on how it can be improved, templates for local setups, etc.

Thank you all for your collaboration, and feel free to reach out if you have any questions!

- []

## Sep 23, 2024 (10am PT meeting)

Attendees:

- Ted Young

Agenda

- [Ted] Stepping back from the SIG
  - I need to work with the Config SIG to help push forward DevEx projects.
  - I can only be in so many SIGs 😊
- [Ted] Contributor outreach

## Sep 16, 2024 (17:00 UTC+8 meeting)

Attendees:

- Pablo Baeyens (Datadog)
- Severin Neumann (Cisco)

Agenda

- Last meeting
  - Discussed
    - <https://github.com/open-telemetry/sig-contributor-experience/issues/16>, will be Outreachy project
- Discussion of <https://github.com/open-telemetry/sig-contributor-experience/issues/20>
  - Pablo shared his perspective, will update the issue accordingly
- Discussion <https://github.com/open-telemetry/sig-contributor-experience/issues/17>
  - Pablo: What motivates companies to pay employees to contribute?
    - <https://smallcultfollowing.com/babysteps/blog/2023/11/28/project-goals/>
    - <https://blog.rust-lang.org/2024/08/12/Project-goals.html>
  - We have 3 assignees now and want to kick this off
    - Define the scope since it is very broad?
      - What kind of new contributors?
      - Contributor Monthly Call

- Look what other projects are doing: K8s, Wikipedia
      - Wikipedia Mentorship program:
        - [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Wikipedia:Growth\\_Team\\_features#Mentorship](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Wikipedia:Growth_Team_features#Mentorship)
    - Let's do experiments and see what works
  - Action Item
    - Brainstorm on what “new contributor outreach means”? What is in scope? What is it we want to do?
      - Spaces for new contributors (Slack channel, Monthly Zoom call, GH Discussions...)
      - Mentorship program
      - <https://up-for-grabs.net/#/filters?tags=opentelemetry>
        - Filters on “help wanted” or “good first issue”
        - There are some projects who give a lot of meaning to those labels, Like the issue is well scoped, helps the project, easy for beginners BUT also they commit resources to help newcomers that are going to work on it.
      - Interview/Feedback for first time contributors (could be a form, but also a 1:1 slack conversation)
      - Way to identify type of contributors we have (paid/non-paid, one-time-solve-my-own-problem or interested in continuous contribution)
        - They have different needs, we need to address differently
          - Paid contributors are “here to stay”, but still might run into headwinds, so we should help them to have a good and rapid onboarding
            -
          - One time solve my own problem contributors just need their thing to be fixed
            -
          - “Volunteer”, Casual/Non-Paid contributors ... (maybe related to <https://github.com/open-telemetry/sig-contributor-experience/issues/20?>)
            - Potentially a component owner? Give them their thing to do + the right amount of recognition (they need to be seen otherwise they might go away once again)?
              - Tiny things like including them in the release notes, etc.
              - What else?
        - This is of course not a fixed set of groups, people are moving from one to the other or there are some

boundaries (someone might be paid to work ~5hrs per week on the project, vs a volunteer who spends ~10hrs into the project)

- On the membership issue, ask more about the people? What type of contributor they are? What motivates them?
  - How many members does the Org have and how many of them are “active” contributors (have contributed in the last ~3months)

## Sep 9, 2024 (10am PT meeting)

### Attendees:

- Marylia Gutierrez (Grafana)
- Severin Neumann (Cisco)
- Caitlin Halla (Splunk)
- Kayla Reopelle (New Relic)

### Agenda

- [marylia] Submitting a project to Outreachy to help with the setup env documentation task <https://github.com/open-telemetry/sig-contributor-experience/issues/16>
- Discussion of <https://github.com/open-telemetry/sig-contributor-experience/issues/24>
  - We can create a default template that can be used by all repos that don't have their custom template
- Discussion of <https://github.com/open-telemetry/sig-contributor-experience/issues/20>
  - How easy is it to gather this info (about code owners)?
  - We would need to add the codeowner role on the membership doc <https://github.com/open-telemetry/community/blob/main/guides/contributor/membership.md> defining responsibilities, role, etc
  - Should we have a team for each repo with the code owners?
    - This doesn't seem useful
  - Should we add to the new page about the Members <https://github.com/open-telemetry/opentelemetry.io/pull/4970>
  - Adding to the read me of repo the list of owners, or at least point to the code owners file
  - A lot of components don't have owners, so maybe take advantage of a list and advertise components that are looking for an owner
  - Follow up with Pablo on his goals for this task
- Discussion <https://github.com/open-telemetry/sig-contributor-experience/issues/17>
  - This is a very core issue for this group, but also a very broad task, that we would need to find concrete steps
  - Example on JS SIG: there is a bot that suggest you becoming a code owner of components without owner when you open a PR on that component

- Are all maintainers making the life easier of new contributors? Reaching out, etc
- Looking at different personas: the ones getting paid and will contribute anyway VS people doing that for others reasons (e.g. on their free time)
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#### Meeting Summary:

- We discussed the issue <https://github.com/open-telemetry/sig-contributor-experience/issues/16>, which is currently the only one in progress. Marylia has submitted a project to Outreachy that hopefully will help us find an intern that we can collaborate with, so we moved to a new column (Blocked) until the results of Outreachy come out. If we can't find an intern, we will pick up back this issue and find a new contributor to collaborate with
- Then we looked into a few of other issues to check on progress or have new ideas
- Discussion of <https://github.com/open-telemetry/sig-contributor-experience/issues/24>: we could leverage a template on the org, so all repos that don't have a custom issue template would use the default one
- Discussion of <https://github.com/open-telemetry/sig-contributor-experience/issues/20>: we think make sense to add the code owner definition, responsibilities etc into <https://github.com/open-telemetry/community/blob/main/guides/contributor/membership.md>, but we don't think creating team for it would be useful. We also discussed other advantages of having the owners listed somewhere, for example, allowing contributors to easily find people to get help from and also identify components without owners that should be prioritize when looking for new owners
- Discussion of <https://github.com/open-telemetry/sig-contributor-experience/issues/17>: this is one of the core reasons for this working group, but this is a very broad task that is hard to decide on concrete steps. We discussed personal experiences from people on the call on how they started, if they were approached and if they normally approach other people. We believe we should have some type of handbook for different personas: one for people that are paid to contribute (so their job will be to work on OTEL anyway, and we can guide on paths to become triager/approver/maintainer) VS the persona of someone casually contributing (they can have different motivations and levels of commitment, so priorities would be different and needs to be advantageous to join the community)

**Aug 19, 2024 (17:00 UTC+8 meeting)**

#### Attendees:

- Just Pablo!

#### Agenda:

- n/a

# Aug 12, 2024 (10am PT meeting)

## Attendees:

- Marylia Gutierrez (Grafana)
- Severin Neumann (Cisco)
- Kayla Reopelle (New Relic)
- Adriel Perkins (Liatrion)

## Standing Agenda Items

- What happened in the last meeting?
  - Recap of timezone
  - Recap of not burden current maintainers with more process
  -
- Anything relevant happened between meetings?
- Action Items: Are all the places updated with summaries as needed?

## Agenda:

- Discussion on existing issue:
- Create up to date setup to contrib:
  - How to start?
    - Message sigs on slack
    - Create issues on each repo
  - Some pairing between a person who never worked on that repo, to know if they can setup + a person with knowledge that will know some "tribal knowledge" that doesn't exist there
  - How to find new contributors
    - DMs?
    - Some OSS projects have automation for each release that welcomes the new contributors within the release notes.
  - This issue is also related to the outreach issue, since having a good setup process is a good start for them to start contributing
  - Next steps:
    - Severin to share template on the issue itself
    - Marylia to create issues on all repos to share the template
    - Find a SIG to do a test version
- New contributor outreach
  - Define the outreach itself:
    - Just a hi
    - Help with current issue
    - Use structured questions (created by this group)
    - Using issues itself (e.g. bots) to find people that have knowledge area
    - Using slack channel with donut meetings
  - How to find people

- Using [https://opentelemetry.devstats.cncf.io/d/52/new-contributors-table?orgId=1&var-repogroup\\_name=All](https://opentelemetry.devstats.cncf.io/d/52/new-contributors-table?orgId=1&var-repogroup_name=All)
- Using the contributors that create a "member"
- Can we use new people joining the slack?
  - Challenges: find the people that want to contribute vs just users asking questions
- Review in 3 months the process chosen, so see if is working or needs to be updated

#### Meeting summary:

- We started a recap of what was discussed on prior meetings, then we picked 2 issues to discuss (that had 2 people assigned)
- Issue on [creating setup guide to new users](#): we discussed concrete steps to make this possible. First creating a template that we can share with SIGs of what a good setup should have, then we can create issues on all repos with this template. The next topic was thinking on how to work on this: we found that a combination of a new contributor that would need to go over this from the start + a person that has knowledge on that repo would be a good match, but for that we need to find new contributors. Finding a new contributor could be somehow combined to the issue of outreach. This issue was then moved to "In Progres"
- Issue on [contributor outreach](#): we first discussed what is an outreach (e.g. saying hi, help with open issue/PR, use structure questions created by this group, using open PRs/issue bots to call for people, create a donut channel to pair new people with more experience/maintainers), then we discussed how to find them (e.g using the "adding new member" PR, using [stats](#), etc). We haven't came to a conclusion on those questions, but whatever is chosen we want to do a review in 3 months to make sure it made sense or if any adjustments need to be made.

## Aug 5, 2024 (17:00 UTC+8 meeting)

#### Attendees:

- Pablo Baeyens (Datadog)
- Adrian Cole (Elastic)
- Severin Neumann (Cisco)
- Fabrizio Ferri-Benedetti (Cisco)

#### Action Items:

- Circulate the things we are planning to work on



## Standing Agenda Items

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## Agenda:

- Please review the timezone PR:
  - [https://github.com/open-telemetry/community/pull/2249#discussion\\_r1699706210](https://github.com/open-telemetry/community/pull/2249#discussion_r1699706210)
- How do we want to operate
  - <https://github.com/open-telemetry/sig-contributor-experience/issues/15>
  - <https://github.com/open-telemetry/sig-contributor-experience/pull/21>
- What do folks want to work on?
  - [severin] New contributor outreach (#17)
  - [severin] Review options for contributor recognition (#10) (especially the Credly Thing)
  - [pablo] Ensure community roles represent the current practices (#20)
  - [pablo] Formalizing promotion to triagers/approvers/maintainers in repositories (#13)

## Meeting Summary:

- Timezone PR
  - Looks good to most people, we quickly talked about the reasons for PT + UTC+8 (see Severin's previous comment on the related issue, [here](#))
- How do we want to operate:
  - The proposed process is good to get started, but we should make sure that we re-evaluate it after ~6months, when the SIG is more active, because it appears to an outsider very process heavy ("I need 3 assignees to get anything done")
  - As immediate change, we want to make sure that the wording in our README ([#21](#)), provides more insights on why we are doing that, that this is self-imposed and that we do not want to discourage people from taking action, e.g. for things that an individual could do on their own
- Circulate the things we are planning to work on
  - We as SIG should make sure that we regularly circulate with other maintainers, that we exist and especially also what we work on to invite additional contributors, such that people do feel invited/not left out.
- What do folks want to work on
  - People should not shy away from picking things they do to serve themselves (or their SIG), e.g. the collector SIG needs #20 and #13, so Collector Maintainers can work on that
- We picked one from the assigned issues from "what do folks want to work on", and discussed #13 (formalizing promotion to triagers/approvers/maintainers)
  - Collector SIG can be the "test SIG for that"
  - This is not about creating a policy, but guidelines and best practices for SIGs
  - We talked about the "self-nomination" issue, having a sponsor nominate and also say good things about the person that steps up, would be great

## Jul 29, 2024 (10am PT meeting)

### Attendees:

- Ted Young
- Marylia Gutierrez (Grafana)
- Jamie Danielson (Honeycomb)

### Action Items:

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### Standing Agenda Items

- What happened in the last meeting?
- Anything relevant happened between meetings?
- Action Items: Are all the places updated with summaries as needed?

### Agenda:

- Timezones are hard
  - Working on the experience of lots of async comms, and find how to get unblocked in the way you typically would during a sync meeting.
  - It seems to be becoming too common where too much is done in the meeting itself, potentially slowing things down.
  - Also, make sure notes are taken! It's the only way to ensure context is not lost between sync meetings and async conversations.
  - Bringing things from meetings to issues (or wherever) is often best done like "As discussed during the meeting, here is a summary of what we talked about, how we decided to move forward, etc")
- Should we save meeting summaries somewhere?
  - TC gets posted in maintainers slack channel and added to Maintainers meeting
  - Do something similar. Regular discussion around issues should happen on the issue itself.
- Interesting book for folks working in open source
  - [Working in Public](#): The Making and Maintenance of Open Source Software
- Sometimes it's awkward if there are too many processes
  - How do we ensure we don't go too far with new processes?
  - We want clear steps forward for folks who want to do something, who are motivated.
  - Many problems in open source (and generally in communities) is that it's not just a need for a rulebook on how to shovel, we need someone to pick up a shovel
  - Is this something that needs a process, or does something just need to get done?
- RE Starting to contribute, 2 areas confusing:

- What is the process to start contributing? What are the steps? This was different depending on the SIG.
- Where are docs on how to develop? Not “how to use this API”, but how to run this test locally or build something.
- We need to know what is missing... and then do it if you can.
  - This is especially common because people who work frequently on a repo or project aren’t always aware of the problems or what is missing for new people.
  - If the GC can have additional people help reach out to new contributors and ask how they’re doing, what their questions are, etc.
- Getting that “known” institutional knowledge out of people’s heads and written down
  - Updated Contributing Guides
- There are open source devs, and there are end users of the project
  - The former is more involved, longer term, wanting to work on the project
  - The latter is a more casual contributor who needs to get their item solved.
  - They will have different needs and levels of attention that we can provide.
  - If we can have a small set of priorities, point to them to help set expectations and show why something can’t fit in right now.
  - “If you want this faster, take a look at the stuff above yours in the queue and help out there.”
  - And so if it’s really hard to set up a dev env... you are not going to get the help you need.
- Added issues to project board.
- We can’t do and talk about all the issues at once. How do we figure out what to focus on? How to we prioritize next steps?

### Meeting Summary

- A major talking point was deciding how we can coordinate across different meetings, issues, timezones... how do we coordinate asynchronously?
  - We added all of our ideas for SIG work as issues to the repo. And we put all of the issues onto the project board.
  - How do we prioritize what issues we want to tackle in this SIG?
    - We can’t do everything all at once.
    - If we try to have 30 simultaneous conversions, we will go crazy.
    - We suggest that we use the “In Progress” section of the Project Board to organize the set of issues we are currently trying to tackle.
    - We’re not sure what the best way is to pick those issues as a group.
  - At the end of each meeting, we should create a meeting summary for other SIG members to read.
  - If specific GitHub issues/PRs are discussed, a summary of that discussion should be added to the issue/PR as a comment.
- We discussed what areas we could focus on for making things easier for new developers
  - Updating the contributor guides based on contributor feedback
    - How to setup a local dev environment is often missing
    - Roadmap/backlog/priority queue is not always obvious

- Based on interviews, identify other "tribal knowledge" that needs to be written down
  - Reaching out to new contributors directly to make them feel welcome, answer their questions, and get feedback on the experience of joining the project.
- We discussed how to avoid the bureaucracy trap
  - Committees want to solve every problem by either creating rules and processes for other people to follow, or by creating artifacts like books, guides, pamphlets, etc.
  - But often, the problem is a lack of available resources.
    - Most maintainers are well versed in OSS development. What they lack is time.
    - For example, it is not helpful to tell the PHP SIG that they should encourage new contributors. What would be helpful is putting effort in to help them find new contributors.
  - We should be on the look out for problems that we should be solving directly with elbow grease, vs just writing down processes and hoping someone else will magically appear to implement them.

## Jul 22, 2024 (9am UTC meeting)

### Attendees:

- Pablo Baeyens (Datadog)
- Severin Neumann (Cisco)
- Adrian Cole (Elastic)

### Action Items:

- Create issues for the activities below
  - [Adrian, Pablo, Severin] Share on Slack that you tackle one, create the issue as written below, feel free to add more context

### Agenda:

- How do we want to operate this SIG?
  - Do we want to establish a "charter"? (see [ContribEx @ K8s](#))
    - This would help us to write down some of the guiding principles we identified already (i.e. "work async"),
    - make sure that this is for contributors and not for end-users or developers
    - Have at least something in the repo README.md
  - We have a repo now!

- Create labels + issues. Suggestion: have a “quick win” label for things that are easy to implement and that can help us to show value to the community quickly.
    - Find orphaned issues around contributor experience and move them into that repository. (Juraci and Severin (and other GC members) should have permissions to move
      - Help to validate if an issue should be moved by having an (early) charter
  - Create a “contributor journey” (using what we have already + imagination), use that to label Issues and see what we can do to help people at different stages
    - Implies defining stages
    - Outsider -> First Contribution -> Continuous Contributor -> Established Member -> approver -> maintainer -> “and beyond” -> emeritus
      - Sometimes it’s about the transition
    - For labeling tasks (see below) but also for documents that allow members in a certain spot to jump to the right documents/material/etc.
      - Example: “how do I get to the approver state”
      - Make it easier to get around implicit assumptions
- Do we want to meet and learn from SIG Contributor Experience @ K8s? CNCF TAG Contributor Strategy (<https://contribute.cncf.io/about/>)
  - [Severin] I will reach out and see how we can interact
- Suggested Activities/Tasks
  - Maintainer's hand book
    - How to promote people to approvers, and eventually, maintainer
      - Best practices!
      - What to look for
      - What not to do
        - Be clear about expectations around PRs, issues...
        - Give feedback when you say no
      - How to ask for help
      - What docs to have about this in each repository
    - How to distribute this, so that individual SIGs can customize their sections?
    - Maintainer responsibilities
      - “Day in the life of a maintainer”
      - It's not just about being able to write quality code
      - You are responsible for the health of your SIG
    - Resources available (internships, machines, help from other SIGs, ...)
    - “what do I need to know?”
    - How to determine what's a good balance?
    - Which resources can we share with them?
      - Books?
      - Presentations?
  - LFX internship is around the corner! Who's in to be a mentor?

- Help writing things?
- Help specific SIGs (Ruby, Operator)
  - What can we do in general?
  - What can we do for the specific SIGs?
    - Operator needs more approvers: who's in to help them figure out a plan?
    - Ruby needs more contributors in general: who's in to help them figure out a plan?
- Share your experience:
  - What have you tried and worked?
  - What didn't?
- Implementing SIGs <> Spec/SemConv interlock
  - How can we improve collaboration?
  - How can we make it easier for implementing SIGs to address their needs?
  - How can we help the Spec/SemConv to find SIGs that provide reference implementation?
- Review options for contributor recognition
  - "Featuring" SIGs (or individuals) via the blog
  - **Credly or Holopin via CNCF**  
[\(https://contribute.cncf.io/resources/project-services/hosted-tools/\)](https://contribute.cncf.io/resources/project-services/hosted-tools/)
    - Reach out to Linkerd and see what they do here
      - Do we know someone there?
    - Figure out how we can get started with Credly ourselves (CNCF Service Desk issue?)
  - [Contributor Awards](#)
  - **Check if SIGs already have ways to recognize contributors?**
    - Do they reach out to contributors via slack, etc?
    - Personal recognition from maintainers ("hey here is a discount code, we know you are near by")
  - Discount Coupons to CNCF events?
- Semantic Conventions is a mono-repo but has multiple SIGs contributing to it, it is confusing, how it works, how do you end up being an approver, etc? Work is limited to slack and google docs. No way to collaborate as a group outside of that (as far as I know)
  - Experiments of those semantics can be very very long time
  - No path to be "recognized" for your work until stuff is materialized
  - Similar issues with code owners in collector (and language contrib repos)
  - We can not tell SIGs how to operate, but we can consult/support (similar to End User SIG does)
  - Do we need a "labs area", so contributions can materilize earlier (people can start their journey earlier, their contributions get recognized earlier)
    - <https://github.com/open-telemetry/oteps/issues/231>