

Your remote PostgreSQL DBA team

data egret

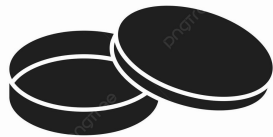


Not Just Altruism: Selling PostgreSQL Contributions to Your Employer

Valeria Kaplan



Academia



Pharma



Databases



- Significant Contributor
 - PGconf.EU 24/25/26 Organising Committee
 - Funds Group
 - PostgreSQL Europe Advocacy Committee
- Past
- PgUS User Group Committee (Chair)
 - PostgreSQL Europe Diversity Task Force
 - Program Committees (PGConf.DE, PgDay Paris)



Valeria Kaplan

Data Egret GmbH



Securing your PostgreSQL database availability and high performance



MIGRATION
POSTGRESQL SUPPORT
CLOUD COST MANAGEMENT



data egret

Your PostgreSQL DBA team



EXPERTISE

- DBA with 10+ years of experience in PostgreSQL administration.
- Significant Contributors



EDUCATION

Co-founders of Open Alliance
for PostgreSQL
Education



OPEN SOURCE ADVOCATES

Accompanying you on your journey
to Open Source
PostgreSQL



COMMUNITY

Recognised as Significant
Contributing Sponsor
to PostgreSQL.

COURSES
FOR DBA
AND DEVELOPERS

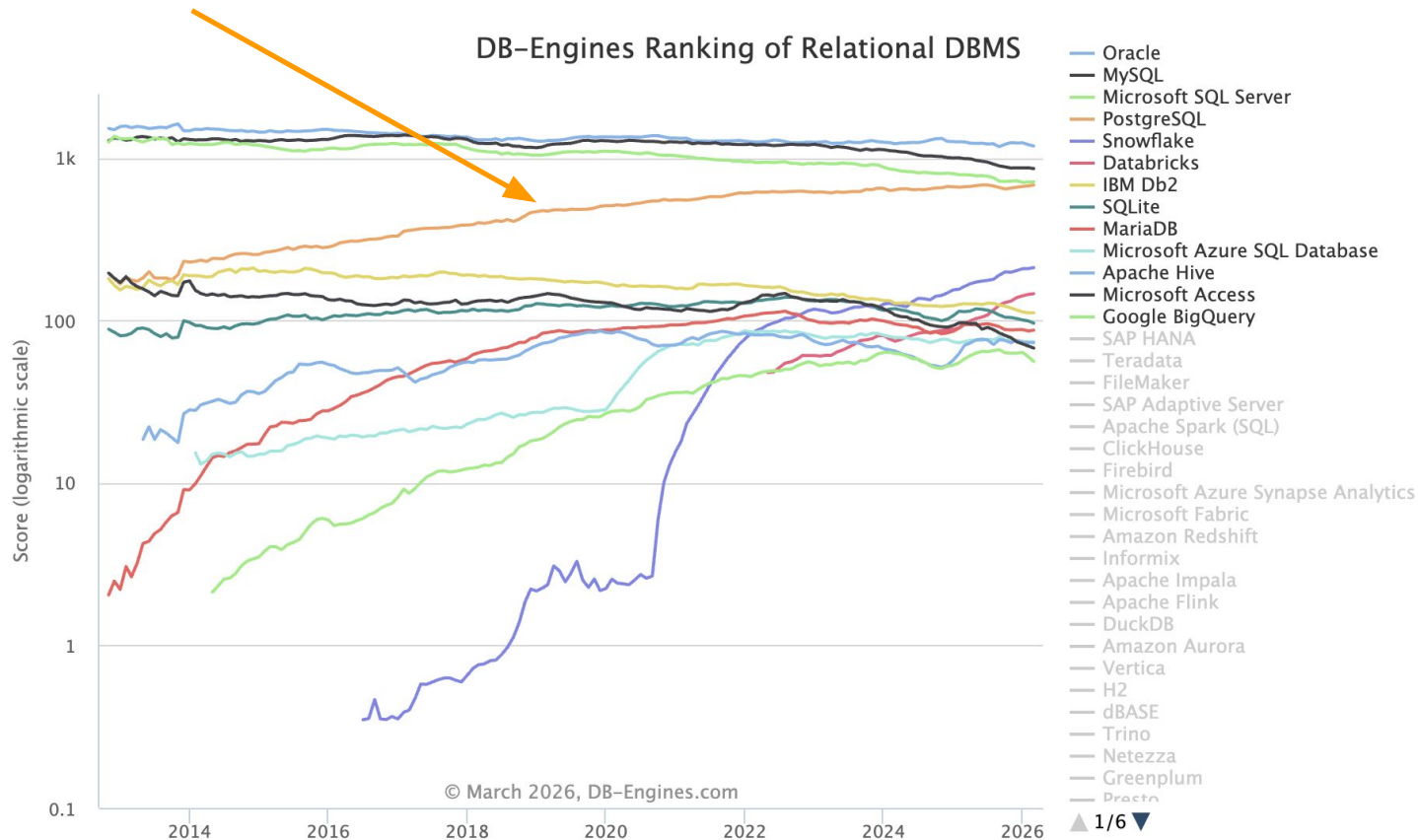
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**PostgreSQL is
very popular**

Postgres is ranks 4th in popularity among relational DBMS



How DB-Engines Measures Popularity

- 1. Number of mentions on websites**
via Google and Bing search results
- 2. General interest**
search frequency on Google Trends
- 3. Frequency of technical discussions**
Stack Overflow and DBA Stack Exchange questions and interested users
- 4. Number of job offers**
mentions in job listings on Indeed and Simply Hired
- 5. Number of professional profiles**
mentions on LinkedIn
- 6. Relevance on social networks**
mentions on Twitter/X



Beyond Rankings: Indicators of PostgreSQL Adoption

1. Cloud Provider Adoption

- a. Default choice for cloud-native applications
- b. Available across all major cloud providers (AWS, GCP, Azure)
- c. Native support in managed services (RDS, Aurora, Cloud SQL)

2. GitHub ecosystem size

- a. 80,000+ PostgreSQL repositories on GitHub
- b. Massive ecosystem of extensions, tools, and integrations

3. Job market demand

- a. Top-tier database in backend & data roles
- b. Widely required across startups and enterprises
- c. Strong and growing demand for PostgreSQL skills (LinkedIn)

4. Used by Leading Companies

- a. Powers business-critical systems at global scale
- b. Apple, NASA, Instagram, Spotify, Reddit, GitLab, Zalando

5. Distribution & Infrastructure Adoption

- a. Default database in major Linux distributions
- b. Embedded in open-source infrastructure stack
- c. Standard choice in Debian, Ubuntu, and beyond



**How many people
are contributing to Postgres?**



How people are contributing to Postgres?

Have a guess!



Community-recognised contributors

Release' contributors - **1778****
(as patch authors, reviewers,
testers...)

157 of those are already in the list
on the right =>

- Core Team - **7** (from 6 companies)
- Major Contributors - **53** (from 18 companies)
- Significant Contributors - **125** (at least* 19 companies)

Total: 1,806

*Based on the PostgreSQL contributors list; company attribution is partial, as 64% of significant contributors use non-work email addresses.

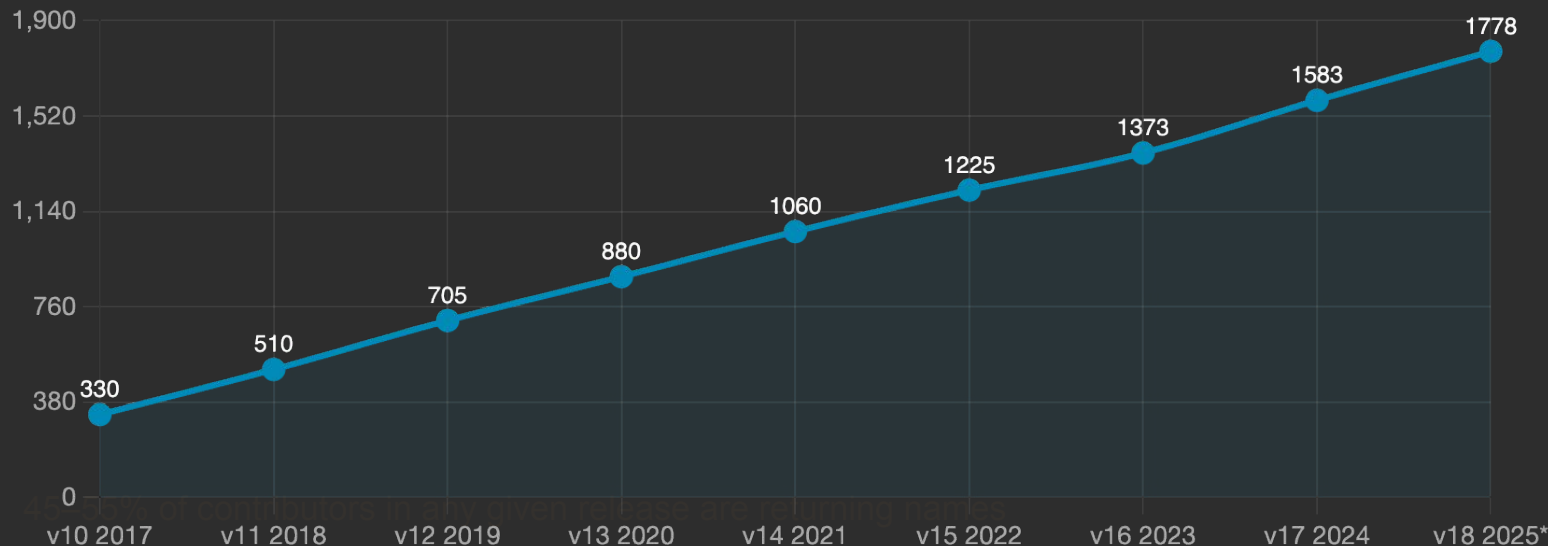
**Covers major versions 10–18; minor discrepancies possible due to name variations



Contributors per release

Cumulative unique contributors — v10 to v18

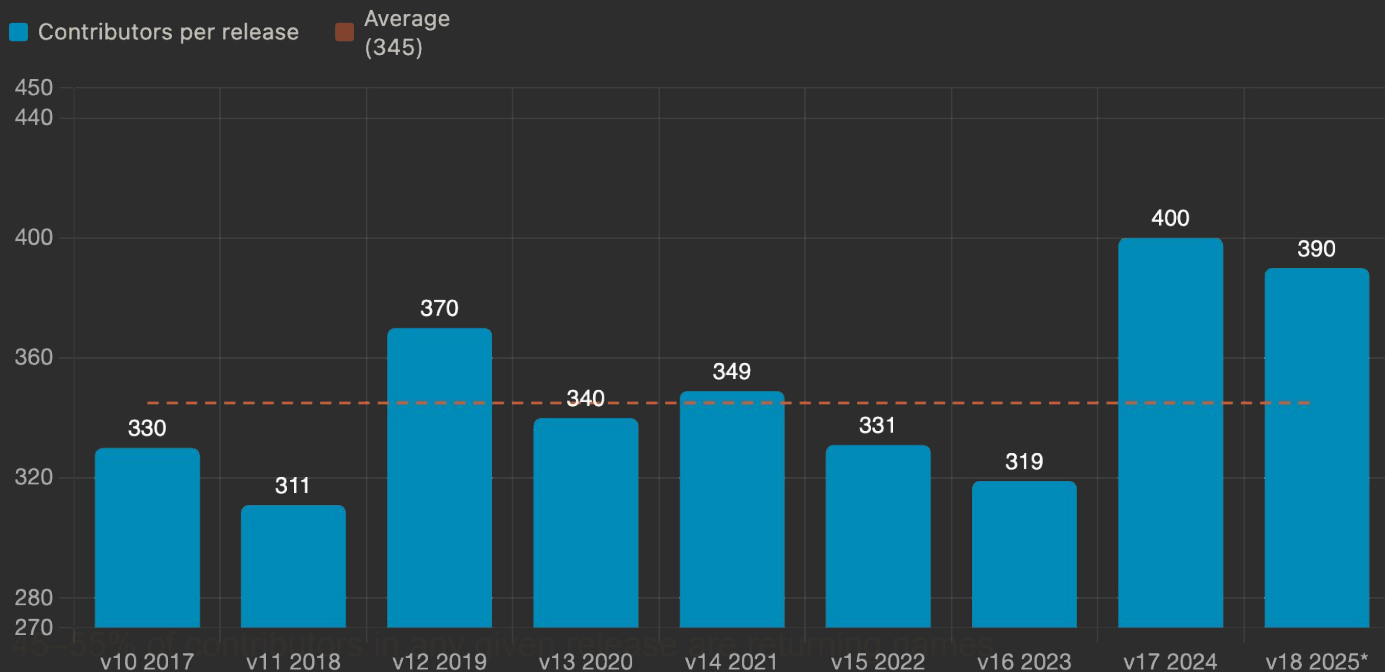
■ Cumulative unique contributors



1,778 unique individuals contributed to at least one release between v10 and v18



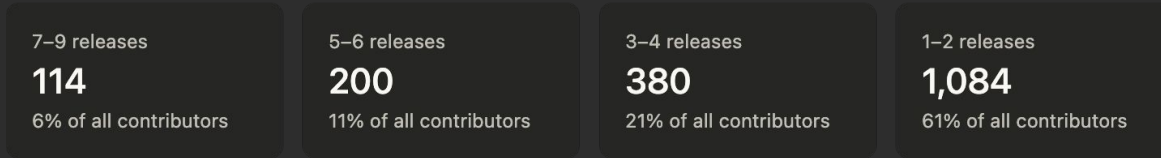
Contributors per release



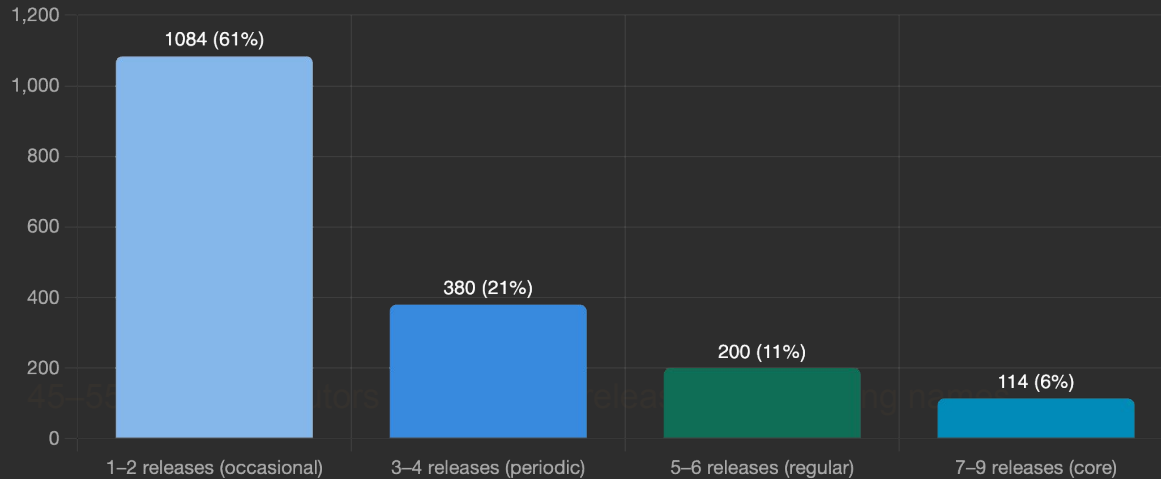
* v18 released 2025. contributor count range: 311–400 across all releases.



Contributors per release



■ Number of contributors ■ % of total



Based on 1,778 unique contributors across v10-v18 (2017-2025). 7-9 release count verified by manual cross-reference; 1-6 bands are estimates.



Contributors per release

Total unique contributors

1,778

across all 9 releases

Ever-present core

45

in all 9 releases
(v10 - v18)

One-release contributors

~61%

appear in max. 2 releases

Peak release

v17

400 contributors

Aleksander Alekseev, Álvaro Herrera, Amit Kapila, Amit Langote, Amul Sul, Andres Freund, Andrey Borodin, Antonin Houska, Ashutosh Bapat, Atsushi Torikoshi, Bruce Momjian, Corey Huinker, Dagfinn Ilmari Mannsåker, Daniel Gustafsson, Daniel Vérité, Daniel Westermann, Dave Page, David G. Johnston, David Rowley, Dean Rasheed, Dilip Kumar, Etsuro Fujita, Euler Taveira, Fabrízio de Royes Mello, Heikki Linnakangas, Jakub Wartak, Jeff Davis, Jeff Janes, Joe Conway, John Naylor, Jonathan Katz, Julien Rouhaud, Kyotaro Horiguchi, Laurenz Albe, Magnus Hagander, Masahiko Sawada, Michael Paquier, Noah Misch, Peter Eisentraut, Peter Geoghegan, Robert Haas, Simon Riggs, Stephen Frost, Tom Lane, Tomas Vondra





Self-reported contributions

Advocacy, Bug reports, User group meetup host, Documentation, Donations, Mentorship, Conference committee, Code commits, Code review, Extension maintenance, Non-profit board, Website development, Social media management, Program administration (GSoC, GCI, GSoD etc.)...



Self-reported contributors

Out of **688** people answering the State of PostgreSQL 2024 survey **289** contributed in some way.

- Survey participants were recruited through existing PostgreSQL channels, mailing lists and user groups in addition to TigerData own channels. As a result, many will be reflected in community recognised contributors number.
- Self reporting, so commitment over long or short term is not distinguishable.

Where to find more stats/names

What's in a Postgres major release? An analysis of contributions in the v17 timeframe (Claire Giordano)

Who Contributed to PostgreSQL Development in [year]? (Robert Haas)

postgres-contrib.org (weekly updates on PostgreSQL contributions)



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- Self reporting, so commitment over long or short term is not distinguishable.

Total: 289



How many of those are contributing to Postgres?

Estimated total:

2000



Could we have more?

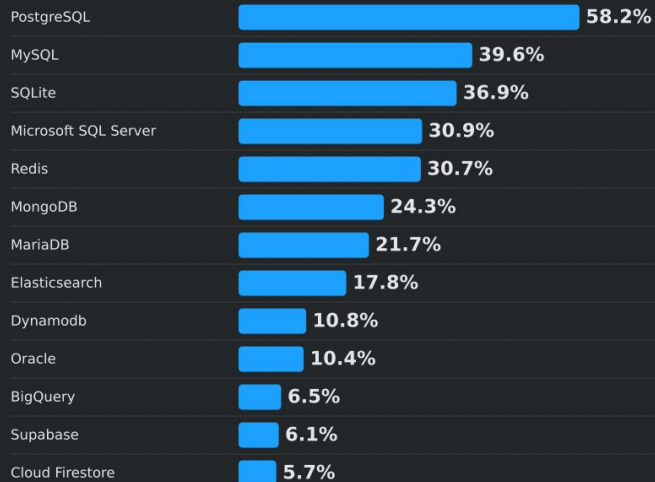
**How many developers are actually
using Postgres?**



58% of developers worked with Postgres over past year

Most popular technologies / Professional Developers

Databases



Source: survey.stackoverflow.co/2025
Data licensed under Open Database License (ODbL)



We can estimate

Total number of developers worldwide

~30 million developers globally* **

% using Postgres

~58%***

Developers using Postgres

~17,400,000

seventeen million four hundred thousand

* Evans Data Corporation <https://evansdata.com/reports/viewRelease.php?reportID=9>

** DistantJob (2025). How Many Software Developers Are There in the World? <https://distantjob.com/blog/how-many-developers-are-in-the-world/>

*** Stackoverflow developer survey 2025 <https://survey.stackoverflow.co/2025/technology> (based on 49,000+ responses from 177 countries)

Which database environments have you done extensive development work in over the past year, and which do you want to work in over the next year?



We can estimate

Total number of developers worldwide

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~58%**

Developers using Postgres

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~17 million!

* Evans Data Corporation <https://evansdata.com/reports/viewRelease.php?reportID=9>

** Stackoverflow developer survey 2025 <https://survey.stackoverflow.co/2025/technology> (based on 49,000+ responses from 177 countries)
Which database environments have you done extensive development work in over the past year, and which do you want to work in over the next year?



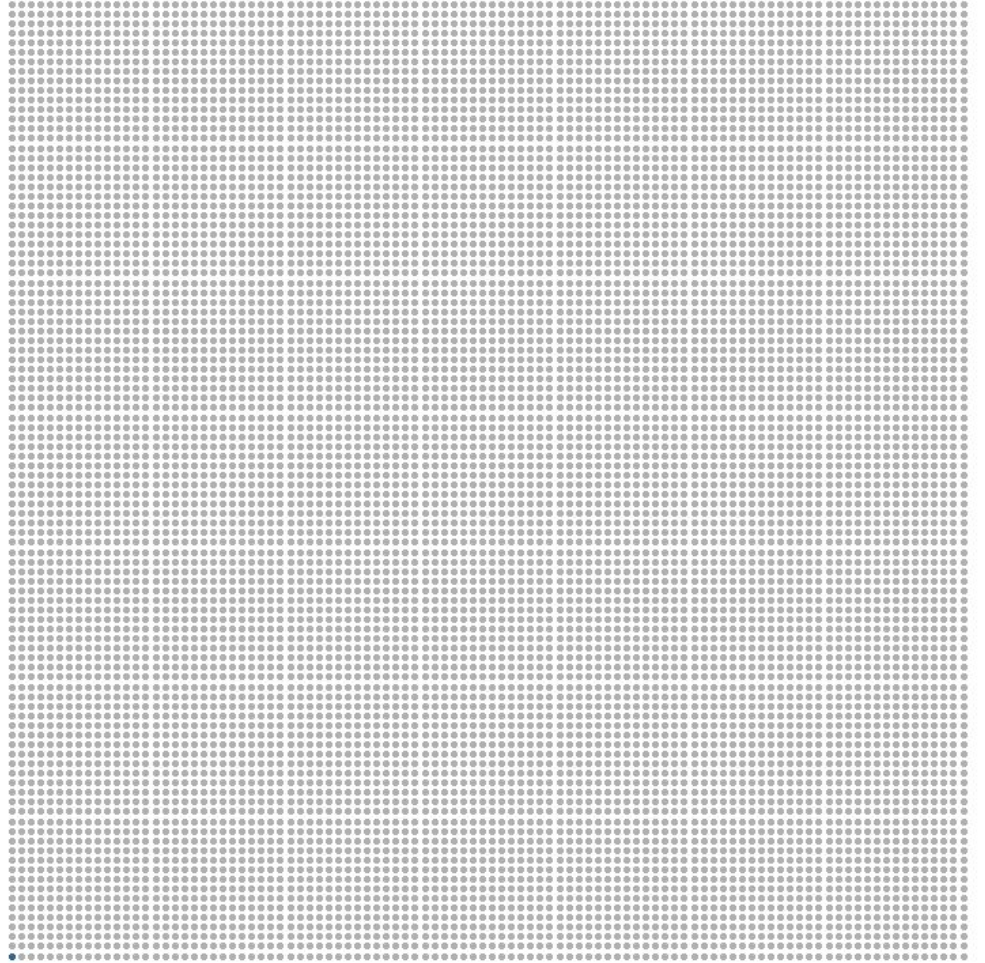
~17 million users

vs.

~2,000 contributors



Only 1 out of 8,500
contribute to
PostgreSQL



Individual Perspective: Motivations & Challenges



“Contributing is one of the best ways to stay sharp technically.”

“I am a Data nerd”

“If they don’t get involved with the Open Source software they’ve built their businesses on, nothing guarantees that software will still be there in the future.”

“Fame, recognition, pay rise, fun”

“Working regularly with others who are as committed to the success of the project is invigorating and exciting.”

“As consumers of the project... we have a responsibility to do what we can to contribute.”

“The company gains visibility and credibility... When engineers from a company are active in the community, speaking and contributing, it signals real expertise.”

“There is the networking angle, it’s really useful to get to know people who you might need help from when things go wrong.”

“Better understand the product that you’re using”

“You’ll gain new perspectives on how to use and operate PostgreSQL.”

“We firmly believe that we should contribute to PostgreSQL, ‘paying our way’ and not just taking what we want without giving back.”

“When you contribute to PostgreSQL, you’re helping people build systems they otherwise couldn’t afford.”

“We believe in giving back to the project, because the project gives us the reason for our company.”

“Keeping Free / Open Source software viable is essential if businesses want to keep innovating.”

“There is a simple argument, that you’re going to learn things from attending an event.”

Individual motivations

Extrinsic



"I contribute because it benefits my career, pays better, or gets me noticed."

Intrinsic



"I contribute because I love it. The problem-solving, the community, the craft."

Internalised extrinsic



"I contribute because giving back to open source is part of who I am and what I believe in."



Individual motivations - Extrinsic



Recognition & visibility

"When engineers from a company are active in the community, speaking and contributing, it signals real expertise."

In a crowded Postgres ecosystem, customers pay attention to those signals."

"Contributing is one of the best ways to stay sharp technically."

It gives early visibility into what's coming next, deeper insight into how things actually work, and sometimes even the opportunity to influence decisions."

Rewards & career

"Dedicated time for contributions is a strong way to attract and retain experienced PostgreSQL DBAs and engineers."

"I consider my work in Postgres to be my 'currency' by which I am valued."

"Fame, recognition, pay rise, fun."

Work-related benefits

"Contributing is the top achievement inside the company. We all know how hard it is. All engineers are free to contribute."

"I use it as a hook in conversations and to demonstrate that my company really knows what it's doing in PostgreSQL."



Individual motivations - Extrinsic

🏆 Recognition & visibility

- Recognition (formal acknowledgment, status)
- Visibility as an expert (talks, conferences, presence)
- Building a professional reputation

💰 Rewards & career

- Salary / pay rise linked to contribution
- Career progression / promotion
- Increased employability / market value

🧑 Work-related benefits

- Expectation from employer or role
- Employer support (conference travel, time allocation)
- Learning that directly improves job performance
- Ability to better serve clients



"I contribute because it benefits my career, pays better, and it gets me noticed."



Individual motivations - Intrinsic



Curiosity & Learning

"I am a Data nerd"

"Contributing is one of the best ways to stay sharp technically. It gives early visibility into what's coming next, deeper insight into how things actually work, and sometimes even the opportunity to influence decisions. That level of understanding is hard to achieve otherwise."

Growth & Mastery

"For me, dedicated time for contributions always comes up during the interview process. It's a key factor in choosing a company where I know I can grow and bring value."

Enjoyment of the Work Itself

"Being connected to others in the community is one of the things that is best about working with Postgres. Working regularly with others who are as committed to the success of the project is invigorating and exciting."

"Relationships are essential in open source communities where roles are not as clearly defined and no one is directly managing anyone else."

Personal Meaning

"Ultimately, Postgres provides me with purpose."

"On a personal level, contributing is also what keeps the job engaging long-term. Without it, it would feel more like just using PostgreSQL rather than being part of its evolution."

Passion & Interest

"If you hack on postgres you do good for the world — because people that don't have resources can use it."

Social Enjoyment

"I work almost exclusively on open source, so people in the community are my closest co-workers. It is wonderful to have a network of people spanning companies who I see regularly."

"Being part of the group that continues to develop and grow Postgres — both the software and the community — provides value to the project and to our company."



Individual motivations - Intrinsic

🧠 Curiosity & Learning

- Joy of learning / curiosity
- Joy of solving puzzles
- Intellectual challenge

🔧 Enjoyment of the Work Itself

- Joy of making / fixing things
- Enjoyment of collaboration

❤️ Passion & Interest

- Passion for databases / “I am a data nerd”

👉 Social Enjoyment

- Camaraderie of the community
- Sense of belonging / community connection

☀️ Personal Meaning

- Doing good for the world

🌱 Growth & Mastery

- Personal growth / mastery



*"I contribute because I love it.
The problem-solving, the
community, the craft."*



Individual motivations - Internalised extrinsic

Values & Beliefs

"As a PostgreSQL company, we firmly believe that we should contribute to PostgreSQL, 'paying our way' and not just taking what we want without giving back."

"I always liked a quote from Simon Phipps: 'Open Source is how competitors can collaborate'."

Identity & Belonging

"I consider my work in Postgres to be my 'currency' by which I am valued."

Commitment to the Ecosystem

"Open Source projects like PostgreSQL only survive through contributions from the community, whether individuals or companies that rely on the software."

"Keeping Free / Open Source software viable is essential if businesses want to keep innovating, the price tag for that is contributing in anyway to projects."

Responsibility & Giving Back

"We believe in giving back to the project, because the project gives us the reason for our company. We support the project because the project supports us. Without Postgres, there wouldn't be [company name]."

"I also think it's important for companies to realise that if they don't get involved with the Open Source software they've built their businesses on, nothing guarantees that software will still be there in the future."

"Look at it this way if a company had to develop postgres on its own it would be millions of dollars, so why not just pay people who are already working on it to keep it going?"



Individual motivations - Internalised extrinsic

🌍 Values & Beliefs

- Belief in open source principles
- Trust in open, collaborative development models
- Contributing because it's "the right thing to do"

👉 Responsibility & Giving Back

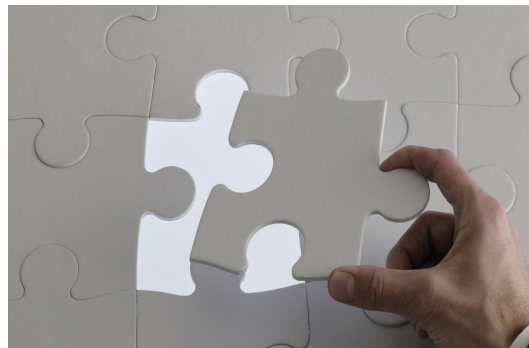
- Sense of responsibility to give back
- "Paying back" to the community
- Desire to support sustainability of the project

🏠 Identity & Belonging

- Contribution as part of professional identity
- Pride in being part of the PostgreSQL ecosystem
- Feeling of ownership toward the project

🏗️ Commitment to the Ecosystem

- Commitment to community values
- Desire to help maintain and grow the project
- Supporting long-term health of the ecosystem



"I contribute because giving back to open source is part of who I am and what I believe in."



Personal Barriers to Contribution

Time & Energy Constraints

- General time constraints
- Often unpaid or done in personal time
- Requires long-term energy and persistence
- Sacrifices (family, hobbies)
- Continuous effort to stay engaged

Entry Barriers & Learning Curve

- Don't know where to start
- Steep learning curve
- Uncertainty about how to contribute
- "I'm good where I am" (comfort zone / inertia)
- "I'm too introverted to go out there"
- Imposter syndrome

Recognition & Career Trade-offs

- Recognition is not immediate or obvious
- Benefits take time to materialise
- Need to justify effort vs. return

Commitment & Sustainability Challenges

- Inability to make long-term commitment
- Difficulty maintaining consistent involvement
- Contribution requires ongoing engagement

Workplace & Structural Barriers

- Lack of employer support
- Internal company barriers (legal, management, business priorities)
- Contribution not prioritised within role
- Dependence on company culture



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Company Perspective: Benefits & Concerns



Company - Concerns

“What’s the ROI?”

- Hard to quantify immediate business value
- Benefits are indirect and long-term

Time allocation

- Contribution takes time away from product work
- Managers worry about missed deadlines
- Lack of accountability

Lack of internal understanding

- Investment in people that may leave and continue working on that open source project
- Contributions seen as “nice to have” vs strategic

Control & priorities

- Work happens outside company roadmap
- Harder to prioritise compared to internal tasks

Risk perception

- “What if engineers focus on community instead of product?”
- “What if we expose IP?”



**Contribution is often seen
as personal or altruistic.**





**In reality, it creates value
across the entire business.**

Leadership

Finance

Sales

Marketing

HR

Operations

Technology

Product / Service Delivery

Customer Success

Contribution in Action: Impact Across the Business



Company benefits - Deep technical expertise

Product / HR

- Contributors **understand internals** (not just usage)
- Stronger **in-house expertise** in troubleshooting, performance tuning, or strategic DB decisions

Service Delivery

- **Faster debugging, better architecture decisions**
- Ability to **influence feature development** and fix issues upstream
- **Better internal capability** → fewer external firefighting costs
- Higher quality systems → **fewer incidents**

HR/Sales

- New skills development - **communication, persuasion, and collaboration skills** through contributing alongside engineers from other organisations



Company benefits - Deep technical expertise

Service Delivery

*"Being actively involved means **we can work for improvements and address pain points brought to us by our clients.** We found a bug when working on a client's system. Not only could we report it — which anyone can do — **we could also communicate in real time with the Hackers who were creating the fix about what was going on with our client's system.**"*

*"We hear about **what our customers' need from Postgres and what the gaps are and that informs our (community) work.** There would be less work being done to improve the performance characteristics of Postgres to work in modern cloud environments if I stopped contributing."*

Marketing

*"Contributing is essential to truly serve the target audience — **it makes me part of that audience and helps me stay connected.**"*

HR

*"There is also huge value in your staff learning, directly from talks, but also in the hallway, having the chance to **meet and chat to PostgreSQL hackers,** is something you don't get in other events."*

Customer Success / Product

*"**Contributing is one of the best ways to stay sharp technically.** It gives early visibility into what's coming next, deeper insight into how things actually work, and sometimes even the opportunity to influence decisions. **That level of understanding is hard to achieve otherwise and directly benefits the work we do with clients.**"*



Company benefits - Early insight & influence

Business Strategy / Product

- **Visibility into upcoming changes**
- **Ability to shape features** relevant to business needs
- **Less “surprise”** from upgrades or ecosystem shifts



Company benefits - Early insight & influence

Client services / Product

*"We get to help **define the direction of the projects we rely on and ensure their success.***

*Additionally, we expand our own expertise and knowledge in the process, allowing us to **better serve our customers.**"*

Staff expertise / Product / Planning

*"Contribution is what signals **deep expertise**, not just operational experience.*

*(The lack of contribution) would weaken the company's connection to the community and reduce **early access to knowledge and influence on the ecosystem** — both of which are real advantages when advising clients."*

*"Influence on software direction, and **add desired features.**"*

*"(Without contribution) Companies would lose **valuable insights from the community**, especially regarding how things work and evolve."*



Company benefits - Credibility & Trust

Sales/Marketing

- Builds **trust** with customers - seen as a **well-established PostgreSQL player**
- Builds **trust** with the community
- Strong marketing & sales narrative (“we contribute, not just use”)

Leadership

- Supports **digital sovereignty** (aligns with EU push for independence from proprietary solutions)

HR

- Elevates employees into **recognised experts** and **influencers**, strengthening the company’s position in the ecosystem



Company benefits - Credibility & brand positioning

Marketing

“When engineers from a company are active in the community, speaking and contributing, it signals real expertise”

“Contribution is what signals deep expertise, not just operational experience.”

Customer Success

“Customers pay attention to those signals: contributions, presence, expertise.”

Sales

“Customers want to know their vendor is not an open source parasite.”

“We should contribute to PostgreSQL, ‘paying our way’ and not just taking what we want without giving back.”

HR

“Open source communities run on something deeper than code contributions. They run on trust, stewardship, and a long term commitment to the health of the project.”

Leadership

(If stopped contributing) “We would lose the ability to demonstrate our involvement and expertise to customers and prospects.”

“If no one contributes... the logical conclusion is that PostgreSQL won’t exist and your business won’t be able to use it.”

Product / Service Delivery

“We can provide good information to our clients based on personal experience... that gives us an advantage over other companies.”



Company benefits - Talent attraction & retention

HR

- Strong signal to senior engineers (“we invest in you”)
- Helps retain people who want to grow, not just deliver tickets
- Differentiates in hiring vs competitors



Company benefits - Talent attraction & retention

"I was clear from the start that I wanted to stay active... and that was supported."

"Dedicated time for contributions... is a strong way to attract and retain experienced PostgreSQL DBAs and engineers."

"A lack of time for contributing... is definitely something that made me turn down offers."

"Raise it during the interview... this is when you have the most leverage."

"I consider my work in Postgres to be my "currency" by which I am valued. So it's non-negotiable that I can't continue to work on it."





**Opportunities
to contribute**

Opportunities to contribute

[So, you want to be a developer?
\(PostgreSQL Wiki\)](#)

[Why mentor Postgres developers with
Robert Haas \(Talking Postgres Ep24\)](#)

[Open Source Contributions to Postgres:
The Basics | POSETTE 2024](#) Elizabeth
Christensen

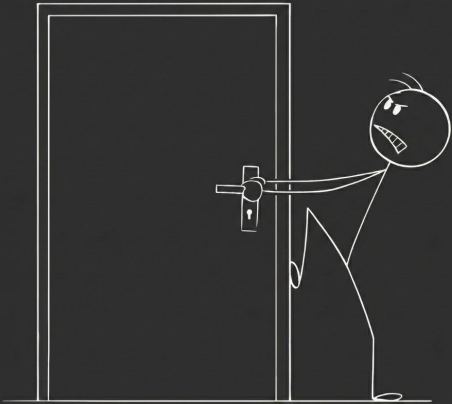
[Elephant in a nutshell Navigating the
Postgres community 101 Valeria
Kaplan](#) pgDay Paris 2024

[What I learned interviewing the
PostgreSQL Community - Andreas
Scherbaum](#) 2025

[Becoming a Postgres committer with
Melanie Plageman](#)

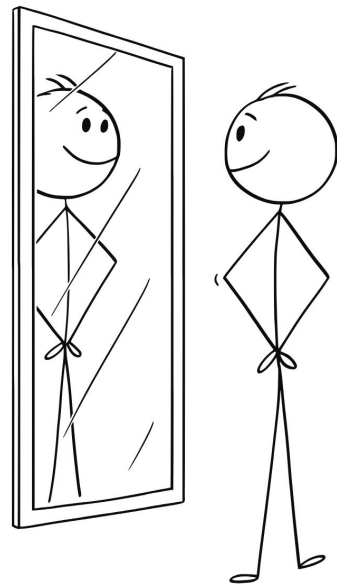


Making the Case for Contribution



Start with Yourself: Do You Really Want to Contribute?

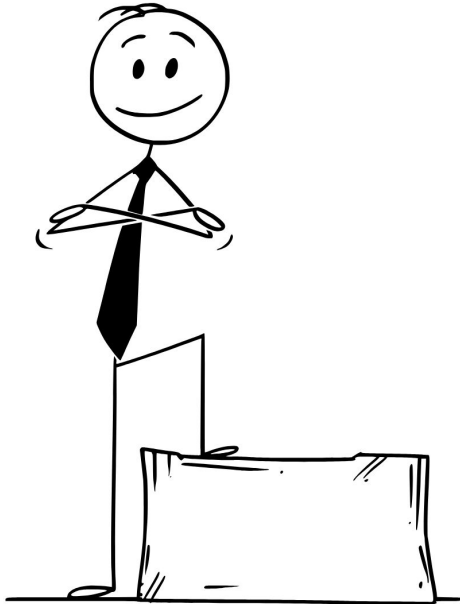
- Why do I want to contribute? What motivates me?
- What do I want to achieve in the next 2–3 years?
- How much time can I realistically commit?
- What am I willing to prioritise or sacrifice?
- What types of activities do I enjoy?
 - Fixing technical issues
 - Writing / documenting
 - Organising / community building
 - Speaking / sharing knowledge
- What skills do I want to develop?
- What can I bring to the community?
- Where are the gaps or opportunities in the PostgreSQL ecosystem?



👉 *Not everyone has to contribute, but if you do, be intentional about it.*



See It from Your Employer's Perspective



- How much time will this require?
- When will this work happen (work hours vs personal time)?
- How does this benefit the company?
- What risks or concerns might they have?
- ROI
- Focus / priorities
- Reporting about your activities - accountability

👉 *Your goal is to translate contribution into business value.*



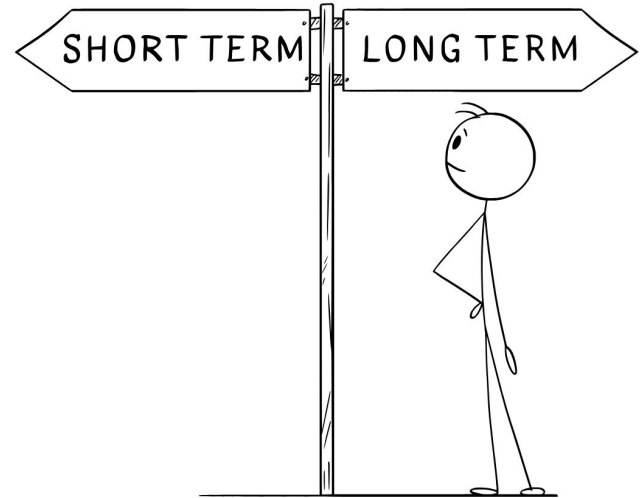
Define a Clear Contribution Plan

Be specific:

- What type of contribution will you focus on? Code, documentation, community, events, etc.
- What is the expected time commitment?
- Would non-compete clauses affect your ability to continue contributing if you switch companies?
- What is the minimum duration (e.g. 3–6 months)?
- What outcomes do you expect?

Connect it to business value:

- How will this improve your expertise?
- How will it benefit your team and/or product/service?
- How does it strengthen the company's position in the ecosystem?



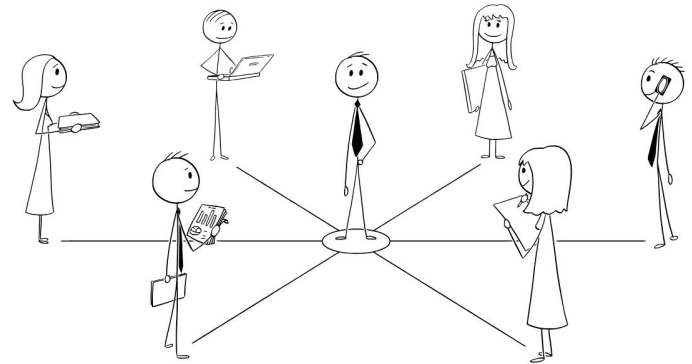
👉 *Clarity reduces uncertainty and builds trust.*



Make Your Case: Have the Conversation

- Be clear and structured
- Show that you've thought this through
- Address concerns proactively
- Start small if needed

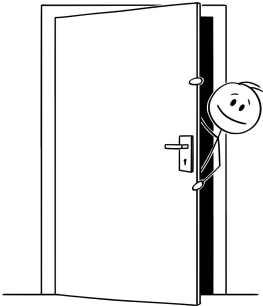
👉 You're not asking for permission, you're proposing an investment.



1. PostgreSQL runs the world's data
2. But only a small number of people actually help build it and grow
3. Whether you become one of them is your choice
...not everyone should, and that's okay...
4. How you contribute should align with:
 - how **you** see yourself and your personal goals
 - **your company's priorities and vision** (where your company sees itself in relation to PostgreSQL, now and in the future)

**One
last
thought**

1. PostgreSQL runs the world's data
2. But only a small number of people actually help build it and grow
3. Whether you become one of them is your choice ...not everyone should, and that's okay...
4. How you contribute should align with:
 - how **you** see yourself and your personal goals
 - **your company's priorities and vision** (where your company sees itself in relation to PostgreSQL, now and in the future)



👉 **And honestly...**
it feels pretty awesome
when you do.

**One
last
thought**

Thank you!

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and other supportive and generous PostgreSQL folk!

Feedback





Thank you!

