

Years as a trustee of SocRSE UK: A retrospective

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SC23

Who Am I?

- Senior RSE @ University College London
- Ex-Trustee of SocRSE
 - EDIA
 - Role Diversity
 - Membership
 - Comms

Today

- What is SocRSE doing well? (or not)
- Representation of all RSE work
- Insights into volunteer management

These are my own opinions





- Formal programs (e.g. mentoring)
- Conference is fantastic
- Providing space & funding for new activities/groups
- Hosting & nurturing slack community



- Maintaining & scaling processes & systems
 - Website needs attention
 - Processes need attention
 - 🍕 Every process/webpage/document needs maintenance - do you *need* it?
 - Membership platform needs attention
 - 🍕 Invest time in choosing good tooling, anticipate needs & beware of lock-in
 - Opening up groups that were previously trustee-only
 - 🍕 Be open from the start

pt. 2

- Delegation and reducing workload on key individuals
 -  Pay some people
- Engaging well with non-trustee volunteers
 -  Trust non-trustee volunteers
- Representing RSEing beyond academic & adjacent work

Representation

- Represent well:
 - academic RSEs
 - ac-adjacent RSEs
 - *some* Gov/non-profit RSEs
- Represent poorly:
 - industry RSEs
 - industry RSEing
 - academia RSEing

Why?

- Status quo
- Language
- Who is represented in key SocRSE positions
- Little understanding of needs of underrepresented
- Little relevance to industry RSEs

The vision

- Representatives from missing groups
- Retention of RSEs moving to industry
- Make corporate membership easy
- Understand where we can provide *value*

But...

*Should the society represent these
groups?*

4 steps to happy volunteers

1. Recruit often

- Keep visibility high
- Maintain numbers
- Reduce work per person

2. Make the work meaningful

- Be ruthless with prioritisation
- Democratisise prioritisation
- Make it social
- If nobody volunteers, it doesn't get done

3. Reduce friction

- Have open & transparent groups/channels/meetings/docs
- Balance keeping meetings short & relevant and letting people chat/share/rant
- Use tiny agendas
- Keep meeting logs

4. Contribute to personal & professional development

- Less senior people generally have more time
- Make up fancy names
- Rotate chairs
- Make the work meaningful

Thanks for listening!