Getting Involved in Debian

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Two Misconceptions

1. You have to be a developer to contribute to Debian.
2. You have to be a Developer to contribute to Debian.
Debian Developer

(n) an official member of the Debian project who has the ability to:

• “Maintain” and upload software to Debian
• Vote in Debian matters
• Send email from @debian.org
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(n) an official member of the Debian project who has the ability to:

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...but you don't need to be a developer to be a Developer. And you don't need to be a developer to develop in Debian.
You don't need to be a developer

Debian badly needs people to do things that are not software development:

• providing support on mailing lists and IRC
• creating and reviewing translations
• creating and improving documentation
You don't need to be a developer

Debian badly needs people to do things that are not software development:

• helping maintain the Debian website
• helping organize events (like DebConf)
• helping represent Debian at local events
You don't need to be a developer

Debian badly needs people to do things that are not software development:

- handling bugs (bugmasters!)
  - filing good (i.e., reproducable) bugs
  - confirming the existence of bugs
  - finding out how to reproduce "unreproducible" bugs
Non-Developer developers can help too!

There are many ways to get involved in Debian development:
Non-Developer developers can help too!

There are many ways to get involved in Debian development:

- creating patches to bugs (especially release critical bugs)
- getting involved in a package maintenance teams (e.g., the KDE, GNOME, Perl, Python, etc)
Non-Developer developers can help too!

There are many ways to get involved in Debian development:

• maintaining packages through a sponsor
Non-Developer developers can help too!

There are many ways to get involved in Debian development:

- contributing to the development of Debian specific software (e.g., dpkg, apt, or DebConf)
- helping work on ports to an architecture you like and use
What if you want to become a Developer?

The first requirement is being advocated by an existing Developers. To be advocated, you've basically get involved in the ways I've suggested before.
Getting plugged in: Step 1

Find out what others are up to:

- join **mailing lists** (e.g., debian-announce and debian-devel-announce)
Getting plugged in: Step 1

Find out what others are up to:

• join **IRC** channels `#debian-devel` and `#debian` on OFTC (irc.oftc.net)

• follow **Planet Debian** to follow what people are up to
Getting plugged in: Step 2

Get Debian people to pay attention to what you want to do:

• **Debian Mentors** project (website, IRC channel)
Getting plugged in: Step 2

Get Debian people to pay attention to what you want to do:

- **SIPB** at MIT hosts periodic, public, in-person bug squashing parties
- Talk to me or other Debian people here
Resources and Next Steps

Helping Debian
http://www.debian.org/intro/help

Joining Debian
http://www.debian.org/devel/join/

Debian New Maintainers
http://www.debian.org/devel/join/newmaintainers