Arabeyes Handbook

Core Team, Arabeyes Project `<contact (at) arabeyes dot org>`

Version 0.1 $Revision: 1.4 $

Revision History

Revision 1.4	2004-10-06	nadim

Added amendment information; Added CVS access granting outline; Added 6-month nominee, 12-month voter info (along with various changes); Fixed miscellaneous spelling/grammatical mistakes

Revision 1.3	2004-09-29	nadim

Major reorganization of document along with some textual fixes

Revision 1.2	2004-09-28	elzubeir

Fixed date of elections and clarified eligibility requirement

Revision 1.1	2004-09-27	elzubeir

XML version of document (consolidation of docs)

This document is meant to serve as a guide for Arabeyes.

Table of Contents

License

Procedural Definitions

Term Definitions

- Team -- the Arabeyes active volunteers

- Core (or core-team) -- Arabeyes' internal meta-project management team

- Volunteer -- someone who voluntarily undertakes a task/work.

- Nominee -- any Arabeyes CVS account holder who has had CVS commit activity in the 6 months prior to elections.

- Voter -- any Arabeyes CVS account holder who has had CVS commit activity in the 12 months prior to elections.

- 3rd-party -- used loosely to indicate a third party (company, organization, group) which is interested in working with Arabeyes (in sharing resources, developers, contacts, etc) to achieve the same ultimate goal of spreading and preaching linux/unix to the Arab world.

- Contributors -- encompasses developers, translators and anyone who assists in any capacity.

- *ix -- used to mean linux/unix of all flavors.

Ratification

This document is an Arabeyes' internal working directive and rule book regarding all its development and translation work. This Constitution is effective of September 28, 2004 as was agreed unanimously by Arabeyes' management team.

Amendments

This document can be amended via a unanimous vote by Arabeyes' management team ('core') post a public discussion on those items that are to be added/modified/removed on Arabeyes' "forum" mailing-list. If there are any serious objections raised during the public discussion, proper assurances need to be given to address all points raised.

Identity

Definition

Arabeyes is a Meta/Umbrella project that is aimed at fully supporting the Arabic language in the Unix/ Linux environments. It is designed to be a central location to standardize the Arabization process under the Open Source license/mantra (in development, translation, documentation, etc). Arabeyes relies on

voluntary contributions by computer professionals and enthusiasts all over the world. Arabeyes is subject to all points noted within the document to sustain its existence as well as thrive and grow.

Aspirations and Ambitions

Vision/Aims

1. Bring forth Arabic support to all aspects of Linux/Unix to satisfy all end-user's needs.

2. Become a central repository/location for all issues with regards to Arabization and Linux/Unix/Open-Source.

3. To raise people's awareness about Arabeyes' work, its needs, its aims and all underlying Arabic-centric issues.

4. To recruit and find capable individuals so as to bring forth the required work and attain its goals while increasing people's abilities and raising their potential.

5. To find the proper support internally and externally to upkeep this project be it financially, technically or via any other means.

6. To get involved in various consortium organizations to better voice the Arabic viewpoint.

Misson/Goals

1. Increase the number of volunteers working on Arabeyes projects.

2. Encourage and support new volunteers by engaging all their needs for them to grow and to attain results.

3. Create an environment in which the work will continue to exist and even flourish without the said involvement of the original authors in hopes of ever keeping the various projects on-going and ever evolving.

4. Preach the virtues of Volunteerism and the ideals of Open Source and Free Software.

5. Increase the Arab industry's awareness and get them engaged in the important goals/efforts Arabeyes is undertaking.

Arabeyes' Composition

1. Volunteers are made of those who voluntarily undertake a task/work or a project with no regard to pay or any quid-pro-quo action.

2. Core-team (or 'core') is,

    a. Made up of elected individuals who are tasked with managing Arabeyes. These individuals have risen to the occasion and have proved their seriousness and commitment to this project and love for it.

    b. All 'core' members are equal with regard to responsibilities and position.

Openness and Transparency

1. All meeting agenda, minutes and decisions are to be available in a public location for all to view.

2. Certain sensitive issues/topics (as deemed by all of 'core' members) may be omitted given a mention is supplied in lieu.

3. All financial issues are to be noted in a public setting for all (or at a minimum all financial contributor/donors) to access or inspect. The finances include anything of monetary value coming into Arabeyes' general fund or leaving it.

Standards and Promises

The following are broad standards that Arabeyes will follow in order to attain its goals in accordance to its charter.

Arabeyes will remain 100% free

Arabeyes is chartered with working on systems and components that will be free and open under the Open-Source Initiative ("OSI")-approved licenses and definitions (OpenSource.org). Arabeyes, thus, promises not to engage in any work of proprietary nature to serve the needs of a select few. Arabeyes will support, through any means possible, people/entities who share similar goals with regard to Arabic software.

Arabeyes will give back to the free software community

When Arabeyes' developers/translators/contributors develop results, those results will be licensed in a manner consistent with the OpenSource.org Guidelines. Arabeyes will try its best to bring forth exceptional solutions so that free works with proper Arabic support will be widely distributed and used. Arabeyes will communicate matters such as bug fixes, improvements and user requests to any and all "upstream" authors of works deemed necessary and pertinent to Arabeyes' user-base.

Arabeyes will not hide problems

Arabeyes will conduct all its discussion of any substance in public for all to partake in. Arabeyes will also hold public 'core' meetings to address managerial and policy issues publicly in a periodic manner. Arabeyes will disclose any funding issues in a prompt manner sans concealment and will follow a complete transparent mode of operation in all regards.

Arabeyes' priorities are its users/contributors and free software

Arabeyes will be guided by the needs of its users and the free software community. Arabeyes will place their interests first in its priorities in an attempt to bring better, faster and more comprehensive solutions to the Arabic user.

Management

The 'Core' team

Definition

1. 'Core' exists to *serve* Arabeyes and its members.

2. 'Core' takes care of the managerial as well as financial aspects of Arabeyes.

3. 'Core' is in charge of outlining rules/laws with regard to its conduct given its charter is met and is applied.

4. 'Core' is made up of an odd number at all time. If for whatever reason a member is relieved or is inaccessible, his/her vote needs to be assigned apriori to an active member in writing.

5. An annual election is conducted at a preordained date to elect all 'core' members.

Meetings

1. Open meetings (which are publicized in advance) are to be held on a weekly basis on IRC.

2. A meeting is initiated given quorum is met which requires at least 1 more than 1/2 the number of the original 'core' members to be present (eg. with 5 core members, 3 would constitute quorum).

3. Only for/yes/yay and against/no/nay votes are accepted in the meetings.

4. The largest shear raw number of votes (yay/nay) wins.

Membership Loss

A 'core' member loses his privileges if,

1. He/She resigns explicitly (done in writing and confirmed by all other 'core' members)

2. If all the 'core' members vote a certain individual out at which point either a special election is called for or the teams selects a respected replacement.

Duties and Responsibilities

1. The global Arabeyes list of Project TODOs is inspected on a monthly basis by the 'core' team which encompasses Arabeyes' overall goals and most urgent attainables. This list is posted for all to view and inspect and to choose from. This list is what gets advertised to newbies for them to select something to work on.

2. The 'core' team is ultimately responsible for the new assignment of CVS access to individuals who have demonstrated their ability to contribute effectively (this could be done with assistance from the various project leaders to "approve" individuals).

3. The 'core' team is ultimately responsible for the proper maintenance and upkeep of Arabeyes' hardware and services (server maintenance, backups, mailing-list and database maintenance, software upgrades, etc). The list of all of these maintenance issues is to be compiled and made publicly available.

Member Characteristics

1. Is an avid believer in the Open Source ideals

2. Believes in the aims and goals of Arabeyes

3. Wants to see Arabeyes succeed, flourish and grow

4. Concerned about Arabeyes' future and its roadmap looking always to improve upon them

5. Is committed to the well being and preservation of Arabeyes, its goals and mandate

6. Persistent in attaining results and is goal oriented

7. Willing to sacrifice to attain results and progress

8. Is responsible for a subset of "managerial" tasks

9. Willing to spend the required time to complete his/her duties

10. Enjoys what Arabeyes is all about and really wants to be a part of it

Elections

1. Elections are held every 12 months to determine all the core-team members (ie. Arabeyes' managers).

2. Elections are to always be held on the last Thursday in October.

3. Elections are voted on by Arabeyes members that qualify based on the criteria outlined in this document's term definitions (1 person yields one vote per 'core' seat). For instance, if 'core' is constituted by 5 members, each voter is to cast 5 votes (a vote per 'core' seat) to different individuals (or parts there-of).

4. Each voter is to get an email confirmation noting his selections.

5. Each voter's vote is held in confidence on Arabeyes' server in case of any voter irregularities and/or recounts (individual users' selections are not to be divulged publicly) for a period of six months (the raw election results sans individual info is to be maintained at all times). It is the current 'core' team's function to ensure proper elections.

6. Any qualifying nominee (as defined in this document's term definitions) is allowed to nominate him/herself (ie. run for election).

7. Candidates can run (and rerun) for elections as many times as they like (there are no limits).

8. Candidates are to announce their candidacy (nominate themselves) via Arabeyes' predefined procedure (via its web interface) starting 2 weeks prior to election date and ending one week before elections. Any and all email correspondence regarding this topic are to only occur on Arabeyes' "forum" mailing-list.

9. Elections are to be held by Arabeyes' website (unless noted otherwise due to some unforeseen problems).

10. Elections are to be held for a minimum of 24 hours during the day of the vote.

11. Elections are considered valid and binding irrespective of total number of people who have voted.

12. The candidates with the highest raw number of votes that constitute 'core' are elected.

13. If a subset of 'core' members are elected (due to zero votes), the newly elected 'core' group recruits its remaining members within 2 weeks of election results.

14. In case of a tie between candidates, the tied-candidates will be given a one week period in which to discuss their fate in hopes of them agreeing on who is to proceed and who is to step aside. If no results are reached during that one week period, the current 'core' team takes a vote to break the deadlock.

15. If fraud (multi-voting/counter-error/hacks) is detected, the elections are voided until an expedient solution is found to the problem. 'core' is to remain as it were prior to the elections maintaining its duties until elections are re-held.

16. All notices, results, debates (if any) are to take place in an open public setting (preferably the "forum" mailing-list) to give all candidates equal opportunity to reply and/or voice their opinions.

17. No election mails will be accepted on any of the other lists and a blatant breach will constitute disqualification.

18. Core-team disqualifications can occur due to,

    a. 'core' ceases to have its mandatory weekly meetings or misses a month's worth consecutively.

    b. 80% of the CVS holding account members (ie. voters) vote "NO confidence" via emails to an individual who then verifies members' votes (via email again) upon which time that vote is conveyed to the core-team. In short, a vote and a confirmation are needed.

19. In case of core-team disqualification, "special" elections are called for (any CVS holder is then entitled to make that call) to be held 2 weeks from initiated action. General elections are to maintain their strict timetable.

20. In case of "special" elections and until new results are announced, the disenfranchised 'core' team will continue to attend to all of 'core's duties until official hand-over.

The Sub-Project Maintainers

1. A maintainer is found/elected anytime the job calls for it (due to vacancy or someone leaving a position). The selection is made by the 'core' members but is not exclusive to them.

2. Anyone can be a Project Maintainer including 'core' members given they attain and retain an active CVS account.

3. A project maintainers is to,

    a. Study said project, know enough about the external deadlines and demands to come-up with an internal schedule to present to his team.

    b. Follow his/her outlined schedule making adjustments when needed.

    c. Take full control of the project and is to track results, problems and be the bona-fide leader/ champion of the project. The maintainer is to also recruit and incentivise his own group as

well as maintain and create the relevant docs/instructions.

    d.   Keep his team members and Arabeyes volunteers privy of the status of his/her project by sending a "status" report at least once a month to the appropriate mailing-list.

4.   The 'core' team has the right to relieve a maintainer given he/she are not adhering to the set rules and/or are not proceeding in the best interest of the subproject or Arabeyes at large (slow to no action will not be tolerated).

Member Conduct and Behavior

Conduct/Demeanor

1.   What people say is their opinion and does NOT reflect Arabeyes' on both the mailing-lists, IRC and/or in private.

Even 'core' managerial members' comments are mere comments unless they qualify their remarks with "'core' has decided" and back them up with the relevant decision making votes/approval procedures within the 'core' "meeting minutes" archive.

2.   It is not the intent of Arabeyes to favor one social/economic or otherwise group over another, its goal is to serve the predominant Arabic market and user-base by bringing forth Arabic support to linux/unix in all its facets.

3.   Try to avoid using IRC to make decision or communicate new developments (else a summery of what was decided/agree-upon is to be sent to the appropriate mailing-list).

4.   The mailing-lists are to reflect all important communication and should house all relevant decisions and/or justifications

Mailing Lists

1.   Always mail using plain text (never use HTML).

2.   Never cross-post to multiple lists (ie. do not Cc or Bcc multiple Arabeyes' lists).

3.   Cite only relevant text in your email replies. Always trim your email messages as much as possible (be brief and to the point) to stay focused.

4.   Do not attach any documents/files/packages to your mails; upload your to-be attached work somewhere on the internet and provide a URL instead.

5.   Posting on Arabeyes' various lists should be done in English (not Arabic, not French, not German) except for 'doc' where Arabic is acceptable and even encouraged.

6.   Be professional, respectful and educated about your posts. Keep in mind that thousands (if not millions) will see and read your words.

External Assistance

Although Arabeyes wants to foster development and help the community at large, it's current constraints don't allow its hardware, bandwidth or resources to be utilized for anything but Arabeyes related tasks/ functions. We continue to accept inquires for help in hopes of future engagement.

Partnerships

This section lays down the ground rules for any kind of cooperation and/or collaboration Arabeyes will have with any other group/organization.

The Basics

Arabeyes' NO compromise points

1. Arabeyes will only contribute to Free/Open Software Projects in which source-code or any other relevant results are available to the general public at no charge and in which changes and modifications are allowed to be distributed and/or are echoed back the original author(s)'

2. Arabeyes will be driven by the users' needs and by volunteers' efforts

3. Arabeyes efforts will remain vendor neutral and distribution neutral

4. Arabeyes will maintain its independence/freedom to make its own choices and decisions (technical or otherwise).

    a. Arabeyes will retain its right to engage in any form of partnerships/cooperatives without the need to get permission from any third party (including but not limited to current/prior partners)

5. Arabeyes will only engage in equal partnerships/cooperatives

    a. Arabeyes will NOT dictate action, NOR will it be dictated to

    b. Arabeyes will maintain technical excellence at all times

Arabeyes Offers

1. An organizational hub for various Arabization development efforts

    a. Infrastructure for new as well as old Arabization projects

    b. Communication mediums for usage by/for projects and teams

    c. Ability to recruit developers and translators

    d. Bleeding-edge tools/apparatus ensuring world-wide team access

2. Advocation and education of the Arabization of *ix systems

3. Committed Talent (technical, organizational as well as motivational)

4. Successful track-record and history of accomplishments

Arabeyes Requires

1. Help in reaching more developers and interested parties (recruiting)

2. Help in making sure that the Arabeyes projects reach those who need it

3. Assistance in ensuring Arabeyes' continual existence, by:

    a. Covering the running cost of Arabeyes (currently volunteer-funded)

    b. Providing a means to Upgrade connection/hardware/space when needed

    c. Preserving the volunteers' interest in Arabeyes via the creation of an incentive-plan (reward volunteers who are contributing to Arabeyes)

4. Assistance in propelling the recognition of 'Arabeyes', by:

    a. Media coverage of Arabeyes' work (Tech features, News releases)

    b. Involving Arabeyes in Arabization committees/decision-making circles

    c. Having a presence in ALL *ix Arabization/development workshops/seminars

Manpower

Which project next

All projects, schedules and milestones relating to mutual work will be discussed and agreed-upon a priori. There might be instances where work will commence prior to final agreement, but agreement and consensus MUST be met before fully getting engulfed by technical details.

A representative or a contact person from each organization will act as liaisons and "contact-point" to ensure superior communication. A weekly "status-report" will also be required from each end which will be made available to the public noting "This week's accomplishments (did)" as well as "Next week's accomplishments (todo)". Each new project under-taken will have its own project page (on Arabeyes or elsewhere) to educate as well as ensure continued progress.

Any monetary involvement (or incentives for that matter) in any shape or form will need to be declared publicly and need to be announced prior to any agreement taking shape. The monetary involvement could include but is not limited to compensation to 3rd-party employees, donations or payment to various involved entities or organizations or quid pro quo arrangements among others. In short, if money is involved on either side in any level of the execution or management hierarchy, it needs to be declared.

How will work proceed

All details, technical and otherwise, will be subject to the project or sub-project maintainer's approval as regulated by Arabeyes rules and policies. The various details are thus outside the scope of this document and are likely to differ from one project to the next.

Where the work will reside

All files/code/translations/documents will reside on Arabeyes' CVS repository. That is important because it ensures the centralization of the efforts, making future parties more inclined to follow in-line. If Arabeyes is to mirror then 3rd-party should have CVS access for involved Arabeyes members.

Education and Backgrounding

It is expected that all 3rd-party contributors get informed of the virtues of Open Source and volunteerism (Arabeyes can assist in this effort if need be). It is also expected that the 3rd-party will encourage its contributors to further engage with Arabeyes via outlining the benefits to the overall community at large upon completion of agreed-upon tasks. The intent by all parties involved should be to contiguously grow this community and to foster a sense of constant renewal.

Communication

3rd-party contributors are expected to use Arabeyes' various mailing lists, to reflect and garnish support for any upcoming activities on a pre-determined specific sub-project.

3rd-party contributors are also expected to commit work in most instances (baring any technical extremes) on a regular basis. The contributors are expected to attain a sufficient level of tool usage to attain this goal.

Credit

Regarding any work that Arabeyes will do - credit for that work will first and foremost go to Arabeyes (as a project) and then the various individuals or entities per said agreement. Reason being - the Arabeyes project and its continued existence is far more important than any one person or effort and as such should be held in higher regard.

Donations

Detached Donations

A detached donation is one in which funds is donated to Arabeyes' general fund without any strings attached. In other words, the funds are given to Arabeyes to do with it as it sees fit given the donation expenditure guidelines within Arabeyes are met. All amounts, dates, donors (unless requested otherwise) will be publicly noted and available.

Attached Donations

An attached donation is that in which funds are only donated given these funds are spent on a particular project/task (not individual). In these instances Arabeyes requests that a minimum of 3 options (projects/tasks) are presented for Arabeyes' managers to select from. If agreement is reached and a schedule is adopted 50% of the donation will be requested prior to start of work with the remaining 50% to be delivered upon completion. All finances are to go to Arabeyes' general fund. Arabeyes is then free to dispose of any amounts deemed necessary per its expenditure guidelines. Any disputes and/or discussions with regard to payment or project delivery are to be made available to the public in a timely manner. All amounts, dates, donors (unless requested otherwise) will be publicly noted and available.

Attached Donations to Individual(s)

An attached donation to individuals is that in which funds are only donated given certain individuals are

to benefit from said funds. Arabeyes will not take any part of such transactions and is thus not liable nor responsible for them. Donations, as far as Arabeyes are concerned are for the benefit of the project and community at large and not select individuals.