

# Building Sustainability: A Case Study in Funding Diversification for Decidim

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**FOSDEM**



# Structure

1. Introduction to Decidim
2. The origin: Why we develop a Sustainability Plan
3. Developing a Sustainability Plan
4. Key aspects of our Sustainability Plan
5. How is it going
6. Learnings and challenges





# Decidim is a digital platform for citizen participation

Free/libre, open and safe technology.

With all democratic guarantees.

Reprogramming democracy is now possible with Decidim.



# +450

democratic organizations  
are using decidim today

30 countries  
240 cities and govern organizations  
180 social organizations



# The origin

A funding crisis that nearly jeopardized the project

- 2019: Creation of the Decidim Association
- 2022:
  - Two contracted workers paid
  - Two public grants (€50k each one)



## And then...

- Barcelona City Council does not pay us a grant that was due to us.
- That gives us a negative balance of 50k.



**We realized that...**  
**we should diversify our income sources.**



# Developing a Sustainability Plan



# Main goals

- Explore sustainability strategies that make us **resilient** by having different income avenues
- Define an Action Plan for a 5 year span
- Prepare projects and programs to be ready to apply for new funding opportunities
- Knowledge on how the funding world works

## Acompañamiento en el Plan de sostenibilidad y desarrollo de alianzas estratégicas de Decidim

Diseñado por La Sobremesa, Marzo 2023



# 5 workshops

- Workshop #1: Internal diagnosis
- Workshop #2: External analysis
- Workshop #3: Donor analysis and sustainability models
- Workshop #4: Definition of goals and activities
- Workshop #5: Reviewing the Action Plan

The screenshot shows a web browser displaying a Decidim Plan de Sostenibilidad interface. On the left, a vertical video gallery shows three participants: Anca, Ana Gabriel, and Elisabet Vives. The main content area features a flowchart with various funding and service categories, including Crowdfunding, Donantes / Filantropía, Fondos públicos, Open Collective, Donantes de nuevos modelos o ecosistemas, Donantes de otros países, Grants para investigación, and Servicios (2%). A pink circular callout labeled 'Estación 3 PRIORIZAR' is positioned at the top right. The bottom of the screen shows a meeting control bar with a 'Share' button and a notification that 'meet.jit.si is sharing your screen.' The browser's address bar shows the URL 'app.mural.co/lasobremesa3763'.



# Sustainability Plan



# Needs

-  Reduce dependence on public funding and diversify funding sources.
-  Achieve a stable income base in the medium to long term.
-  Overcoming the limitations of the current development model, dependent on public contracts.
-  Have a team that allows to gain operational capacity.
-  Improve external communication and storytelling.
-  Encourage participation in the community.
-  Fostering the project's alliances with its environment.

*Strengthening the operational capacity of the Association's Team is an urgent necessity in order to be able to fulfil all its responsibilities, ensure sustainability and allow Decidim to grow.*

*(pg. 8)*



# Income alternatives

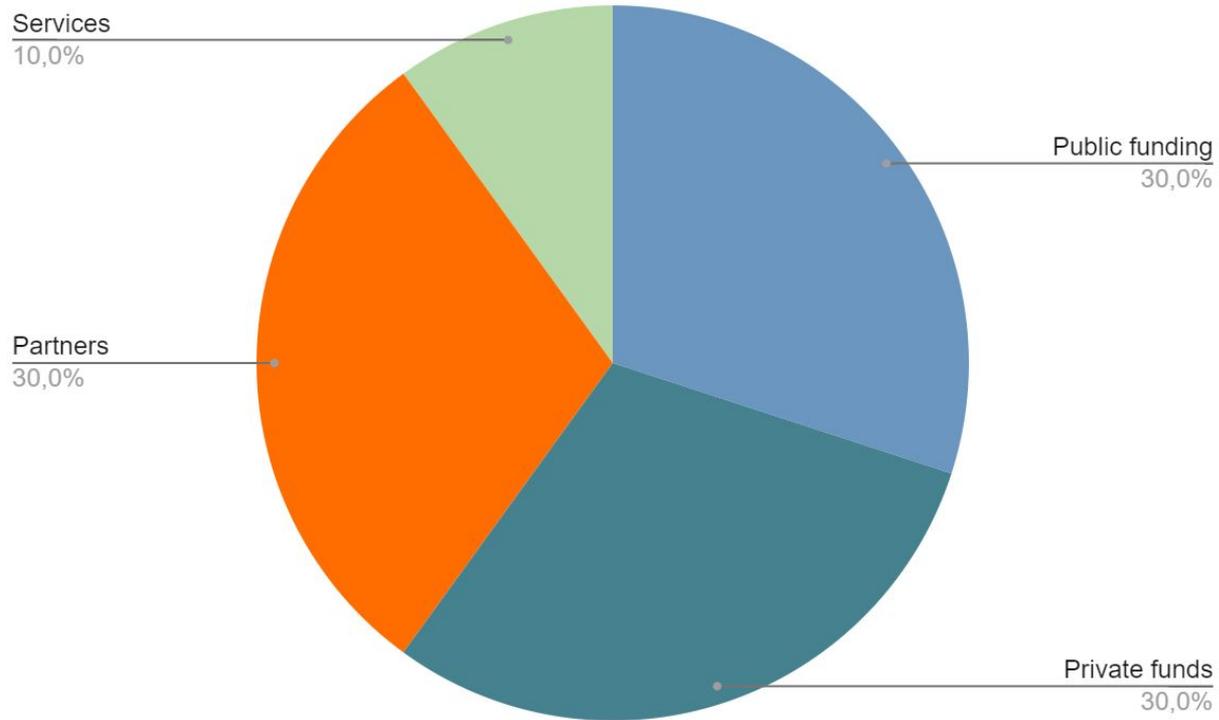
 Public funding

 Private funds (Philanthropy, research and other funds)

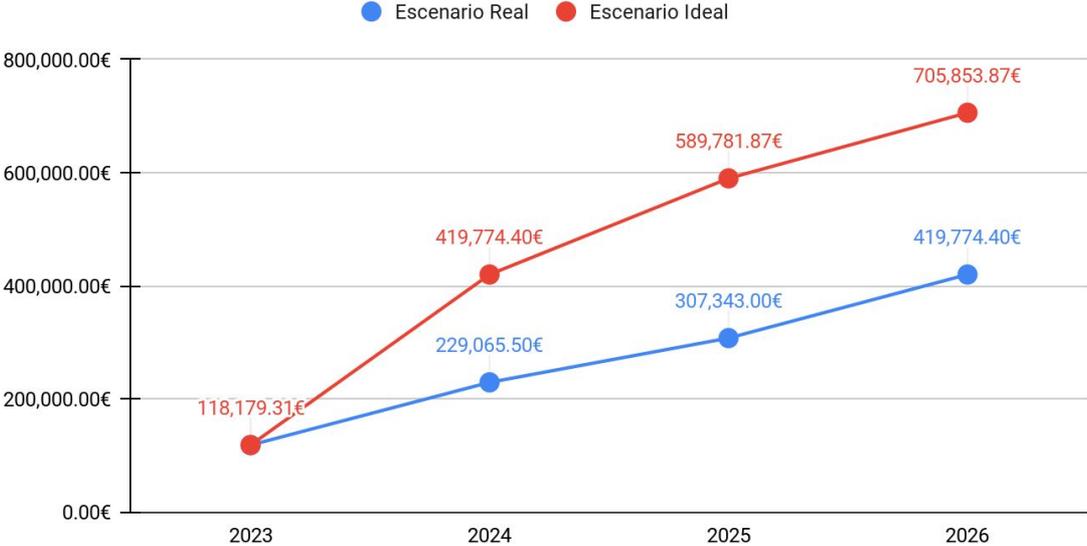
 Services

 Donations and partners

## Ideal distribution outlined in the sustainability plan



# Costs escenarios



### Realistic scenario

- The aim is to reach a budget of around **400,000 euros** by 2026.
- With a team of **6 people** paid by the Association

### Ideal scenario

- The aim is to reach a budget of around **700,000 euros by** 2026.
- With a team of **10 people** paid by the Association



# How is it going

Reviewing the SP two years after



# Action Plan

- Partnership policy
- Donations
- Fundraising
- New alliances with Public Organizations



# Partnership policy

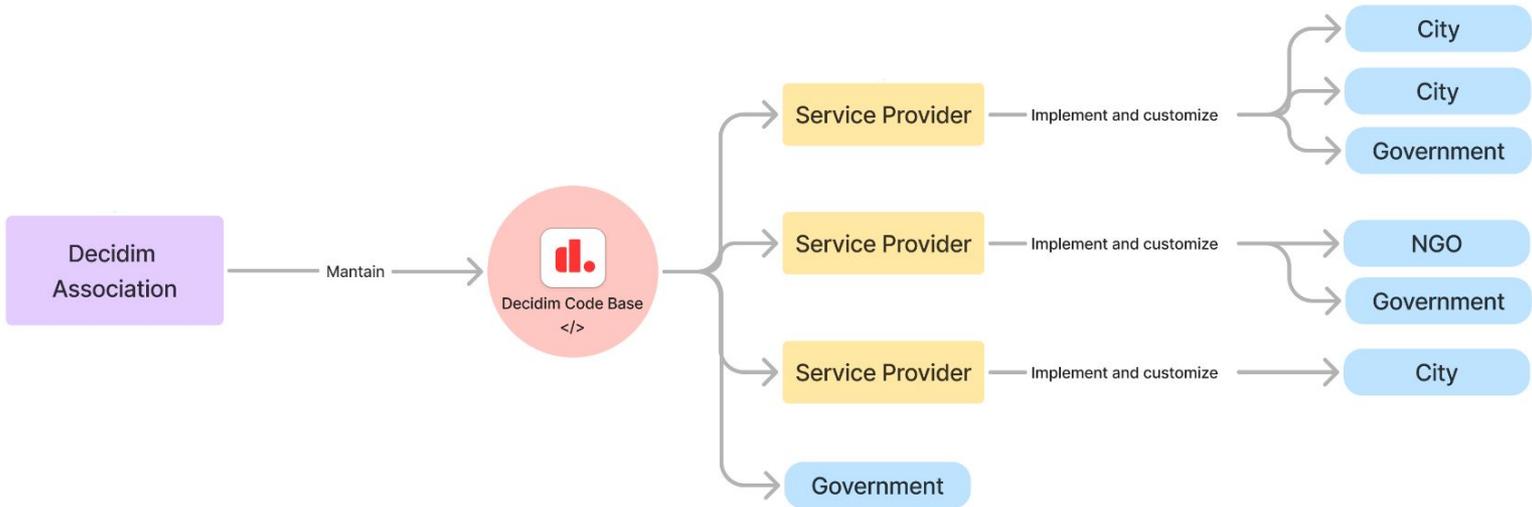
Why?

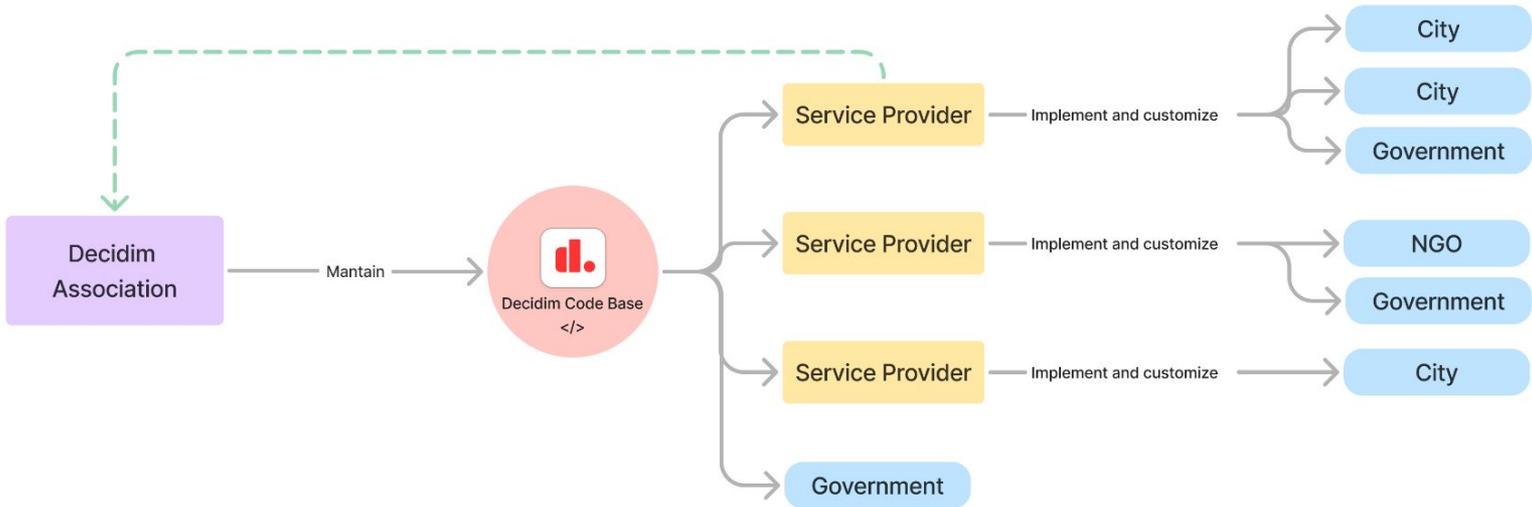
To ensure the sustainability of Decidim as a digital commons.

Conditions:

- Contribute back to the Decidim Association
- **Fee of the 3% of the yearly income** generated by Decidim activities.
- Every Decidim Partner will be made publicly visible in the Decidim website







PokeCode<sup>YO</sup>

octree

Colectic

PIPELINE  
TO POWER

CodeandoMéxico

opensourcepolitics  
l'expérience démocratique

mītgestalten  
Partizipationsbüro

Code for  
Japan

urb  
an equ  
ipe

DIGIDEM LAB

aLabs\*

KOMUNIKATIK:  
KOMUNIKAZIOA ETA PARTAIDETZA



# Top financial contributors

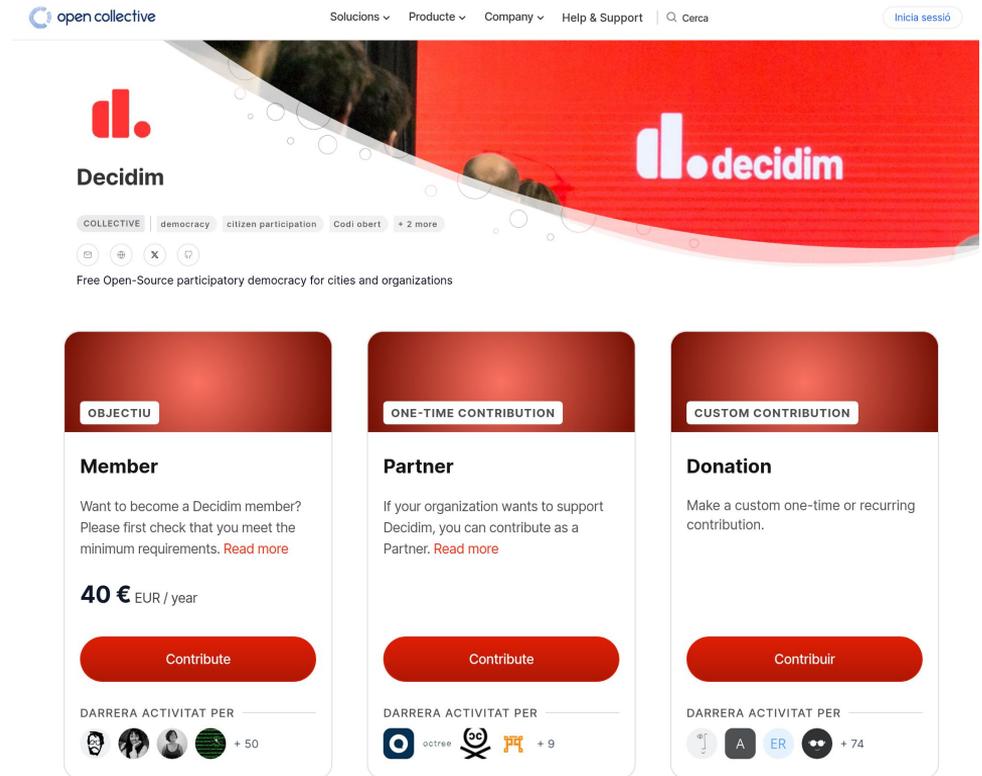
## Organizations

- |   |   |  |    |  |   |
|---|---|--|----|--|---|
| 1 |  | <b>Open Source Politics</b><br>€60.000 EUR since maig del 2023 | 2  |  | <b>Octree</b><br>€14.300 EUR since des. del 2022          |
| 3 |  | <b>Pokecode</b><br>€3.000 EUR since nov. del 2022              | 4  |  | <b>CodiTramuntana</b><br>€1.500 EUR since set. del 2023   |
| 5 |  | <b>Code for Japan</b><br>€1.359 EUR since febr. del 2024       | 6  |  | <b>Urban Equipe</b><br>€1.011 EUR since febr. del 2024    |
| 7 |  | <b>Colectic</b><br>€1.009,25 EUR since des. del 2022           | 8  |  | <b>Partizipationsbüro</b><br>€865 EUR since gen. del 2024 |
| 9 |  | <b>altagamma srl</b><br>€200 EUR since maig del 2023           | 10 |  | <b>Digidem Lab</b><br>€180 EUR since abr. del 2024        |

# Open Collective

- Membership fees
- Partners donations
- Economic transparency

<https://opencollective.com/decidim>



The screenshot shows the Decidim project page on the Open Collective platform. At the top, the Open Collective logo and navigation menu are visible. The Decidim logo is prominently displayed on a red background. Below the logo, there are social media icons and a description: "Free Open-Source participatory democracy for cities and organizations".

The main content area features three contribution options, each with a red header and a white body:

- OBJECTIU (Member):** "Want to become a Decidim member? Please first check that you meet the minimum requirements. [Read more](#)  
**40 €** EUR / year  
[Contribute](#)  
DARRERA ACTIVITAT PER: [Profile icons] + 50
- ONE-TIME CONTRIBUTION (Partner):** "If your organization wants to support Decidim, you can contribute as a Partner. [Read more](#)  
[Contribute](#)  
DARRERA ACTIVITAT PER: [Logos: octree, etc.] + 9
- CUSTOM CONTRIBUTION (Donation):** "Make a custom one-time or recurring contribution."  
[Contribuir](#)  
DARRERA ACTIVITAT PER: [Logos: A, ER, etc.] + 74



# Fundraising work done

- 15 Projects submitted 
- 9 Refused 
- 6 Accepted 



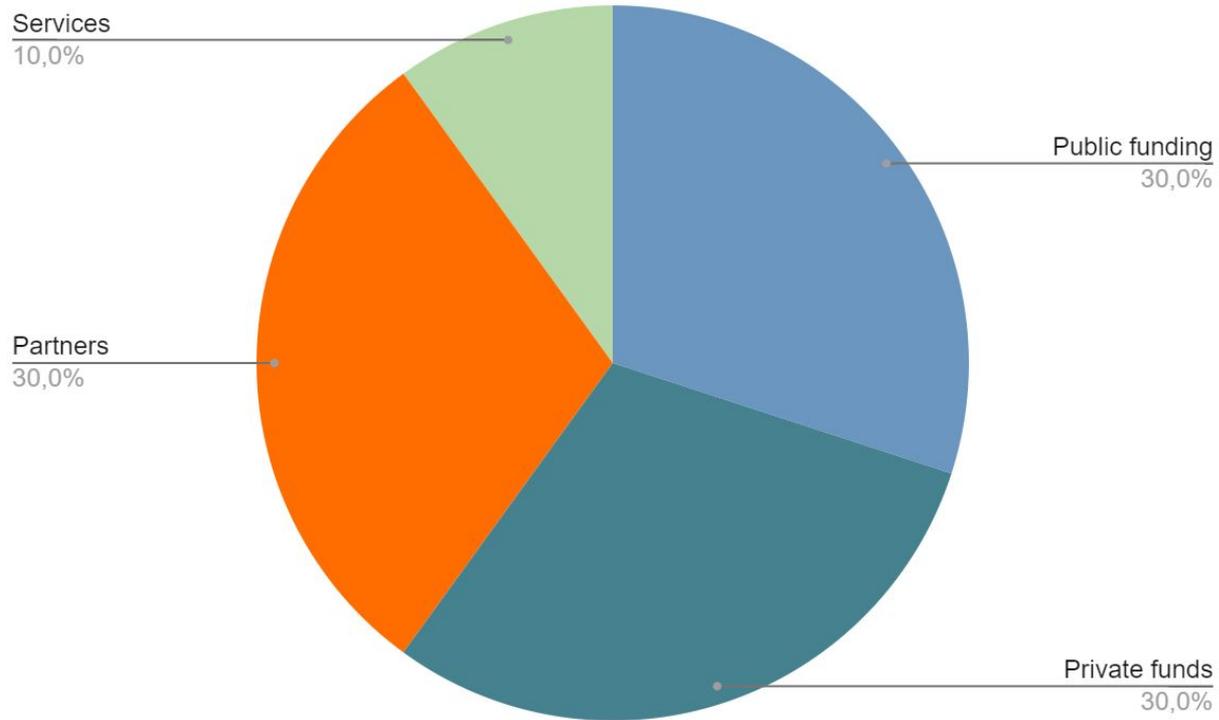
# Accepted projects

Total = **213.000 Euros**

- People Powered DDA - *Public Money, Open Software* (15k)
- Metagov Interoperable tools - *CSV interoperable exports/imports for participatory objects like on Decidim* (30k)
- BSC VCity Project - *API and Open data enhancements* (50k - 2 years)
- MultiPoD (EU Project) - *Political participation in multilingual spaces* (100k - 3 years)
- NGI Zero Commons Fund - *Decidim Revamp* (18k)

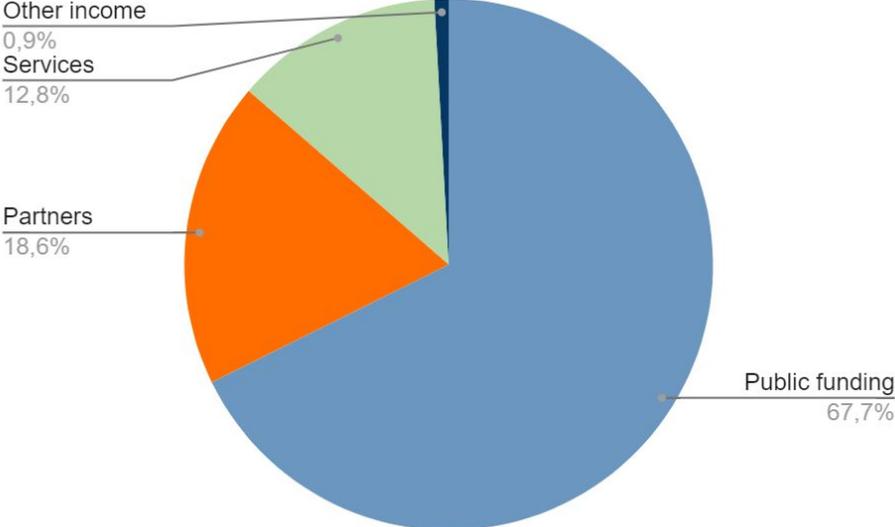


## Ideal distribution outlined in the sustainability plan

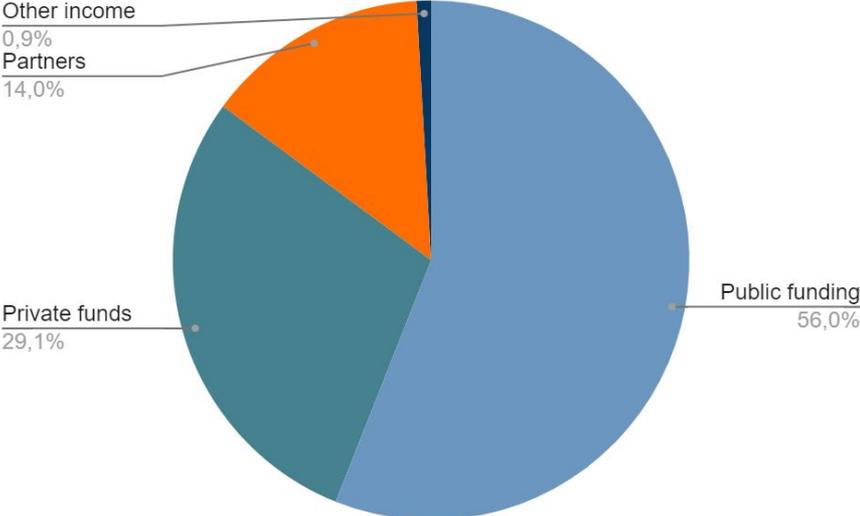


# Evolution in the distribution of income sources

2023



2024



# Challenges and learnings

## Funding FLOSS

1. From a local-based project to an global community
2. Receive grants from public organisations from other countries.
3. How do we finance maintenance work?
4. Submit projects that do not divert you from your core mission.
5. We need to internationalize our legal and financial structure.
6. We need a Public Agency for funding FLOSS.



# Thanks!

More info at: [decidim.org](https://decidim.org)

Contact: [hola@decidim.org](mailto:hola@decidim.org)

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With the support of:



Localret

