From Open Governance to Collective Ownership

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“Would you like to come to Lisbon…”

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“…to give a keynote.”

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Principal, UnlockOpen

"The irony of trying to solve the problem of ***collective ownership****, alone from this stage isn't lost on me."*

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“How do we build collective ownership?”

BoF session on Friday 3:30pm – 5:00pm

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Principal, UnlockOpen

PADOVA MARATHON
42,195
21,097
Polaroid
UniCredit
ASSINDUSTRIA SPORT PADOVA
Comune di Padova
NIKE RUNNING
POLIZIA

We'll start with a bit of theory

1. The importance of collective ownership*.
2. Why does it matter concretely?
3. What part open governance plays in that.

** collective ownership ~= community-owned ~= community-driven*

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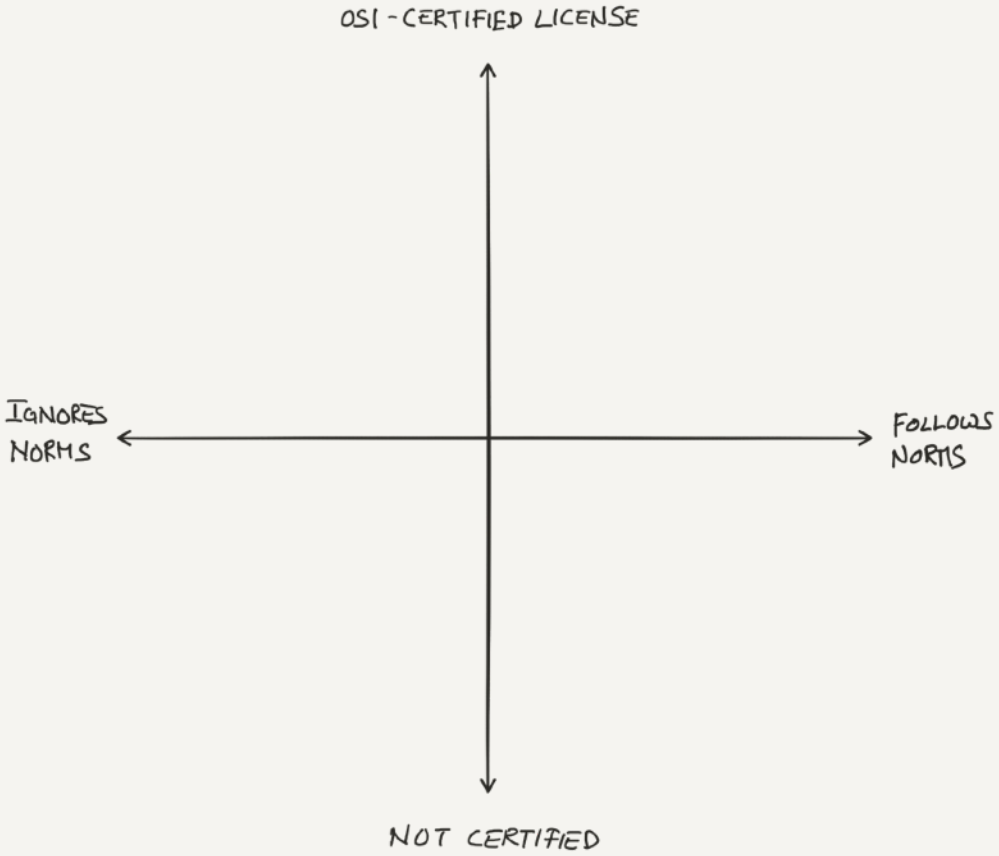
So… what *is* open source?



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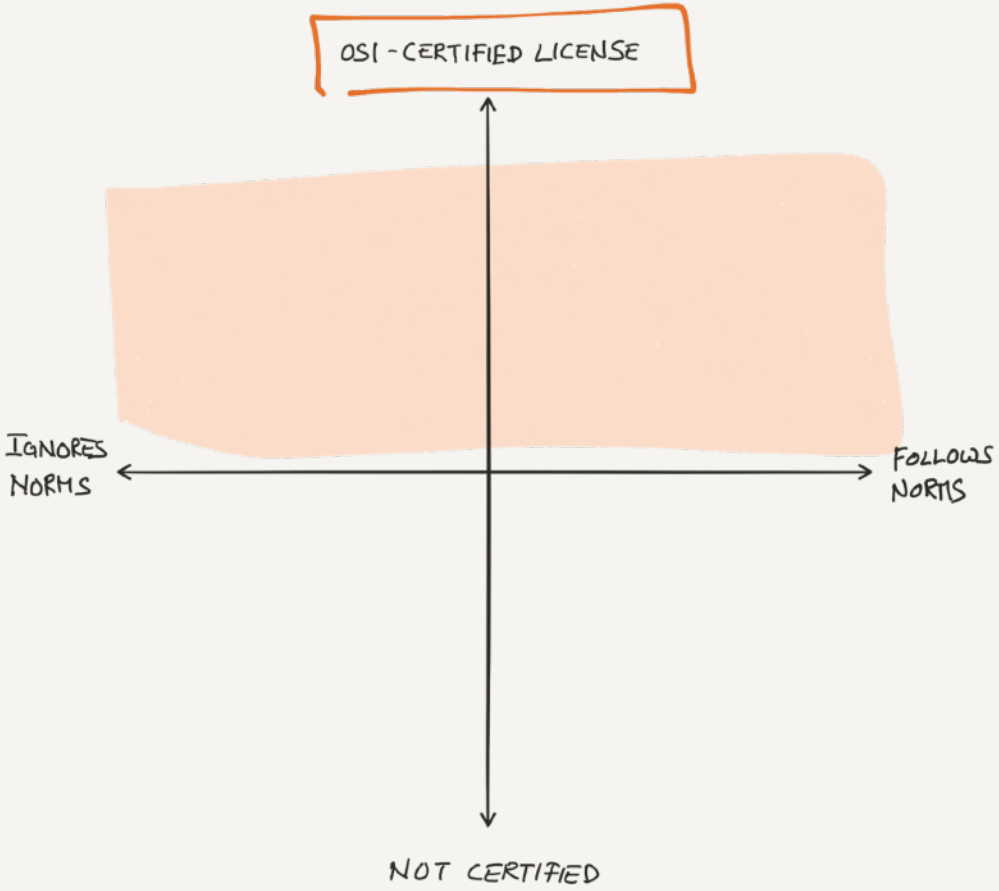

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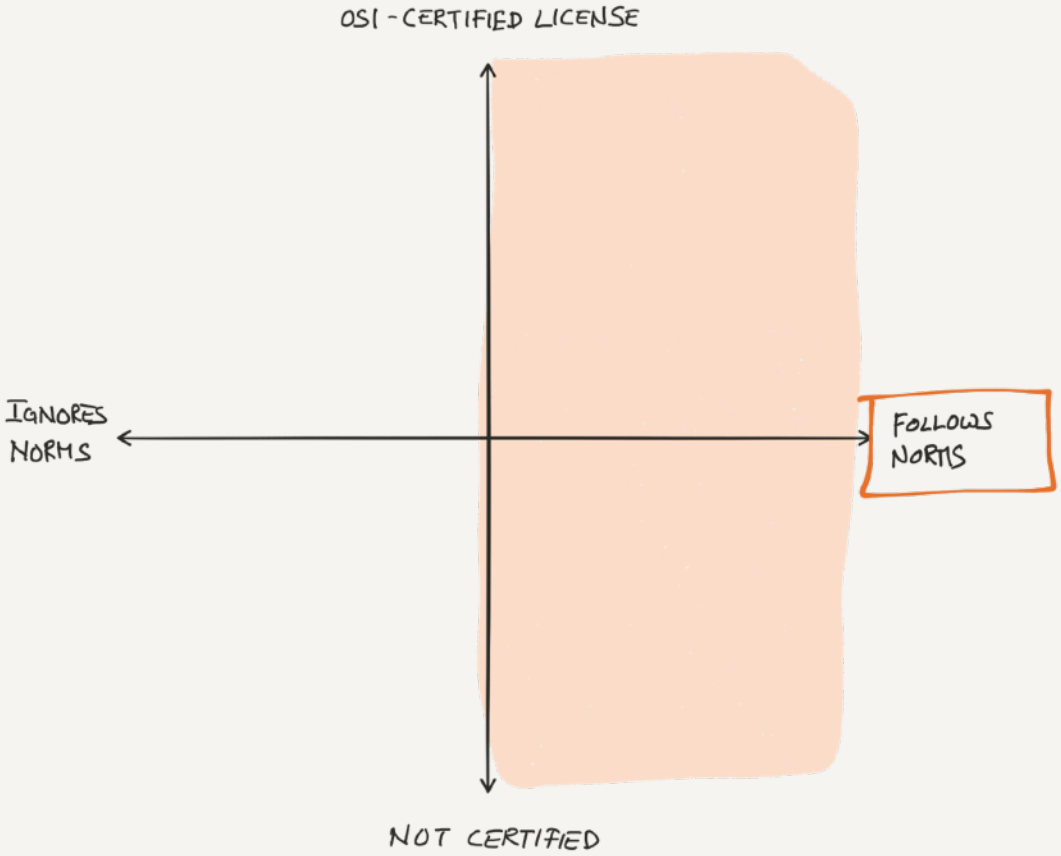

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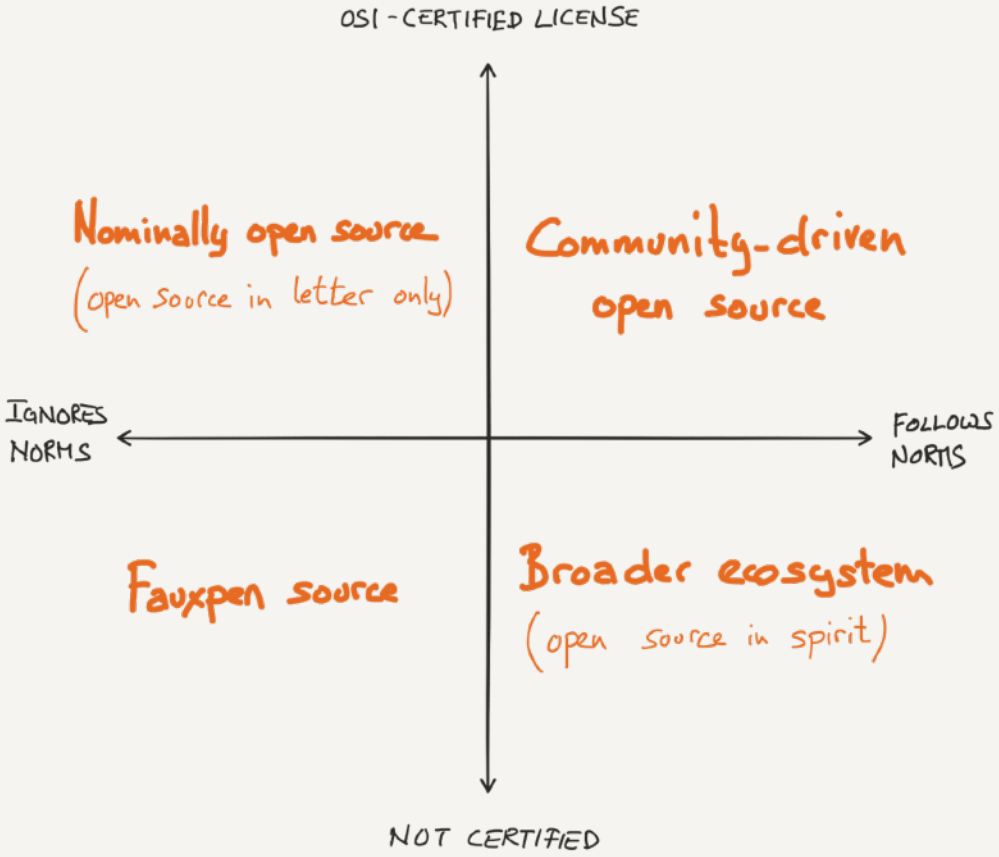

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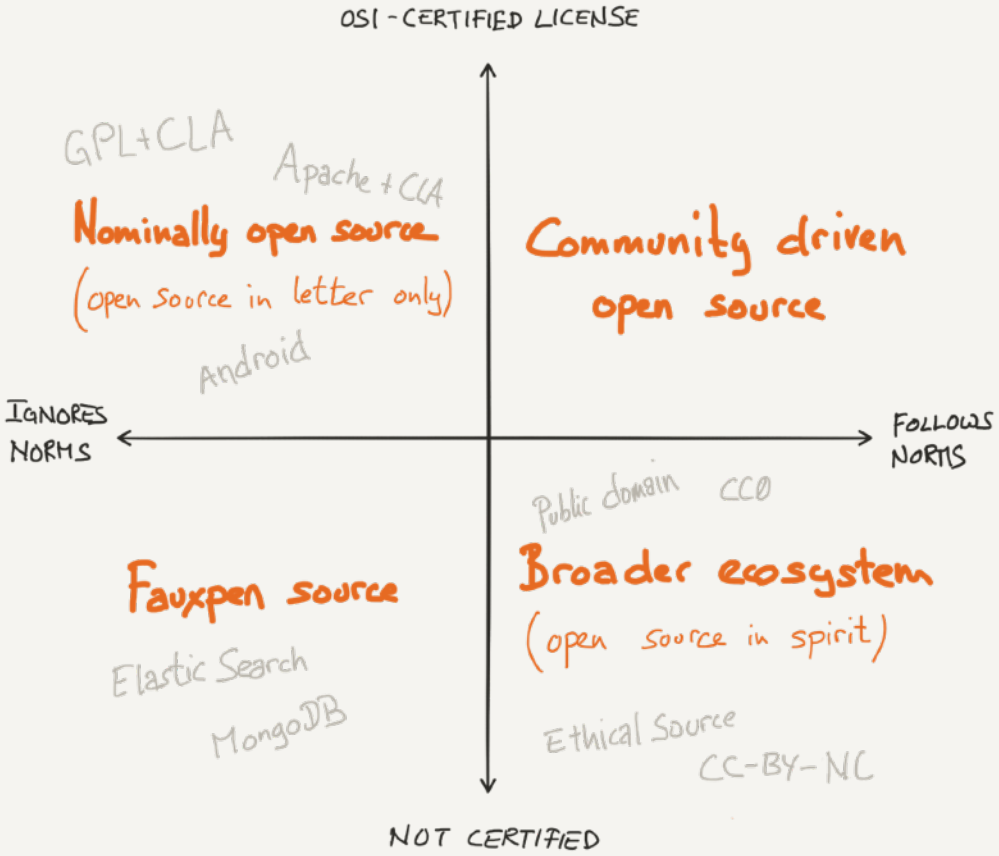

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Why is community so important?

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🤫 From a business perspective.

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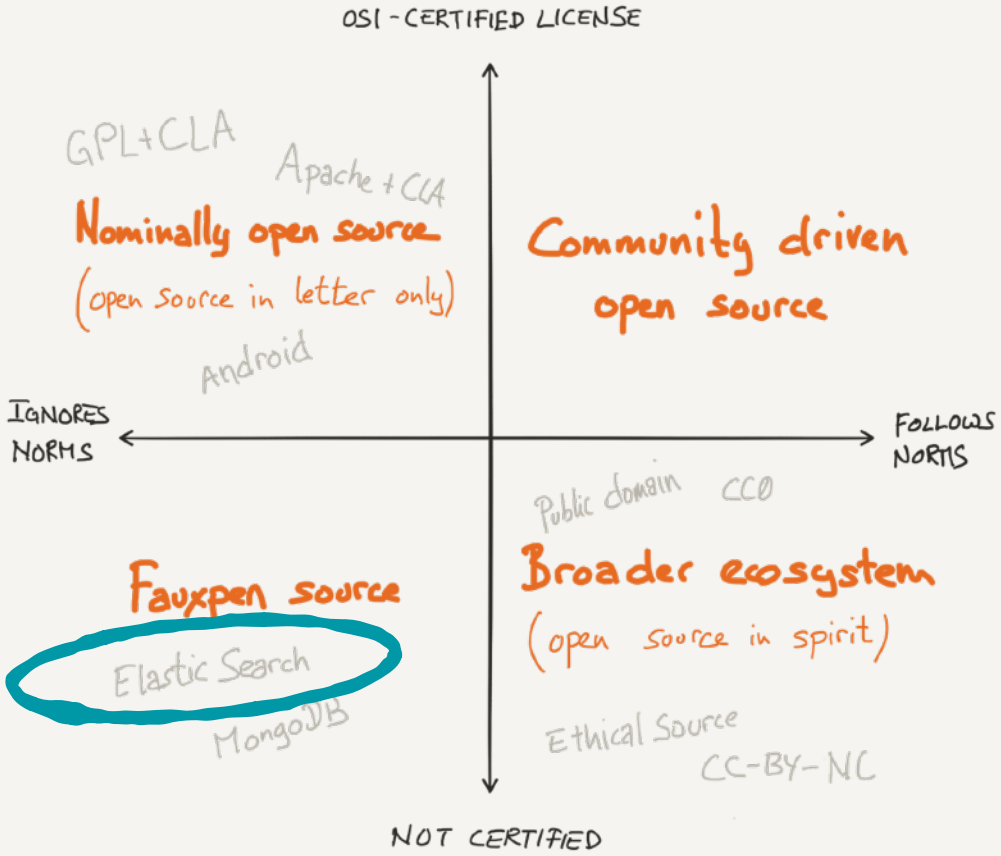

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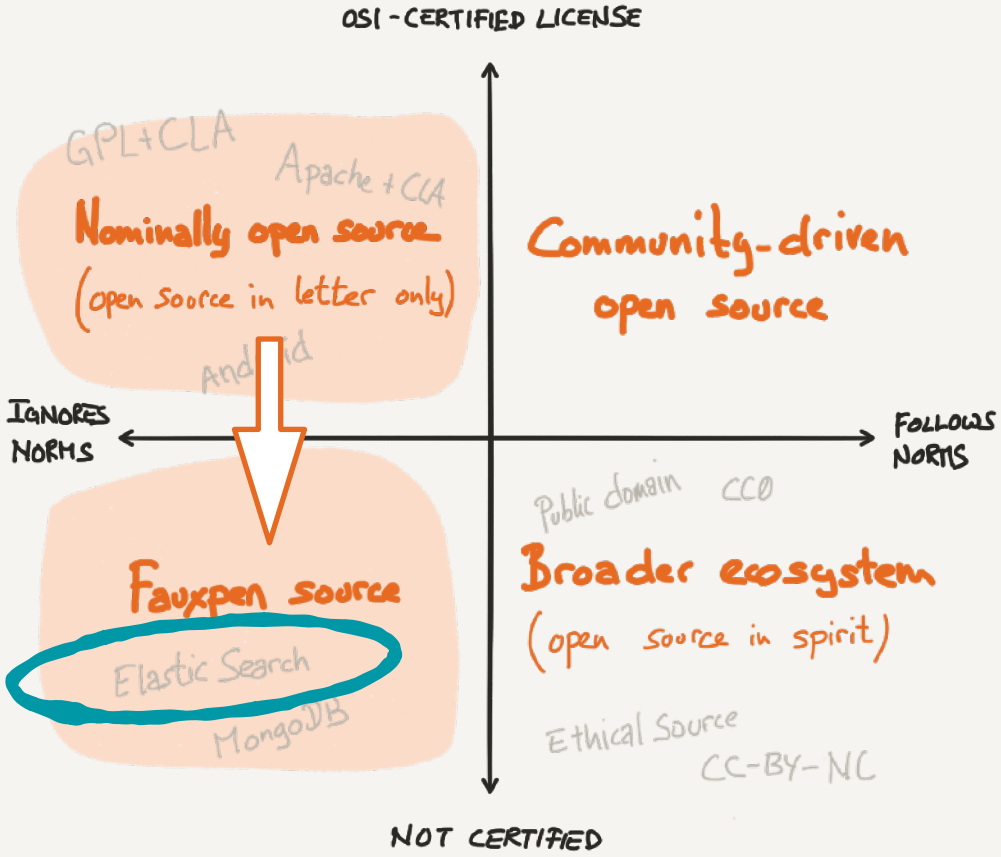

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“But I can always fork!”

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In practice, only the forks from very large players or **tightly-knit communities** succeed.

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Why is community so important?

🤫 From a business perspective.

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It protects your business investment.

Like licensing, **open governance** is **necessary** but **not sufficient** to enable community-driven open source.

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Community-driven open source is built **collaboratively**, in the **open**, and on an **equal footing.**

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In summary

Community-driven open source is the combination of:

1. an **open source license**,
2. **open governance**, and
3. norms and practices that enable **open collaboration** on a **level playing field**.

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Community-driven open source is the combination of:

1. an **open source license**,
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In summary

…this matters because community-driven open source is:

1. frankly just **a lot more fun**,
2. **more resilient**—and so **safer to adopt**—and
3. Helps create **better software**.

We're done with the theory now.

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Impact of "exit to community"

1. Concrete changes
2. Outline the work ahead

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Relationship shift

- **Before:** client/vendor relationship between edX and the community.
- **Now:** all equals with tCRIL as the orchestrator of this community.

Product / Project distinction

- **Before:** product and project decisions were made within the same closed group.
- **Now:** Specifics still to be decided, but it's going to be very different, e.g.:
  - Split between product and engineering as Open edX becomes more of an infrastructure project?
  - tCRIL takes on a Product Management role?

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Relationship with teachers & learners

- **Before:** product decisions could be data-driven and informed by user studies, etc.
- **Now:** who's going to run those and how is this data going to be shared with the community?

Huge opportunity for tCRIL to ***innovate****.*

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Assignment

1. 2U/edX
2. The broader community
3. tCRIL

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2U/edX

- Accept that you will have to **trade** some **development velocity** to enable a **level playing field**.
- **Internally:** spell out the **business value** of a thriving Open edX community.
- **On a day to day basis, resist the temptation of:**
  - giving fishes away instead of teaching others how to fish, and
  - taping your colleague on the shoulder to resolve internally a problem that concerns the broader community.

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The Broader community

- Understand that community-driven open source projects are “*do-ocracies*”—those that ***do*** get to ***decide***.
- **Internally:** spell out the **business value** of contributing to Open edX.
- **Resist the temptation of:** asking for fishes instead of figuring out how to fish.

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tCRIL

- So. Much. To. Do.
- Did I mention the BoF session en Friday?
- **Huge opportunity**.
- You have **great talent**, **ambition**, and… **money**!?

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Thank you!

OPEN edX 2022

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