Prospectus

Support future development
of **Perl** and **Raku**

02

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Why Perl and Raku matter:
A call for support

The prevalence of Perl is often understated. However, we cannot stress enough how important the role of funding and community involvement is in its development. These things are essential to ensure it is sustainably maintained and developed. Raku is less well known than Perl yet derived from many of the same sources; it was created for modern and future computing needs.

Perl is a critical part of many modern digital applications and is available for almost every computing platform. Many GNU/Linux operating systems rely on Perl to operate.

Raku is a modern language built for ease of use and modern computing demands. Larry Wall designed Raku to build a 'hundred-year language', a language powerful and flexible enough to be used for decades to come.

The languages are developed and maintained by volunteers all around the world, although grants are made by The Perl and Raku Foundations (the Foundation) to some individuals to support specific projects.

If your organization relies on **Perl** or **Raku** (it probably does at some level), please read more to find out how you can financially support the languages and associated events and conferences. You can make donations via the Foundation website: perlfoundation.org/donate

Stuart Mackintosh
The Perl Foundation President
2019-present

perlfoundation.org/donate

Your contribution to Perl and Raku development

Your donations all contribute to the growth and development of both Perl and Raku, either through grants for a particular project undertaken by one or more individuals, or through funding people to give time as mentors.

Funding projects within the greater Perl and Raku communities enables developers, educators, and the Foundation to advance the use and understanding of Perl and Raku in the wider software development community.

Grant recipients have the opportunity to focus their considerable talents on important projects that can directly benefit tens of thousands of Perl and Raku users around the world. Grants support a variety of areas, from core language improvements to documentation and tutorials.

Since 2020, 12 grants were approved to support Perl and Raku development:
:: **6 for Raku totalling $62,000**
:: **6 for Perl totalling $52,000**

Annually, the Foundation supports Outreachy and has also taken part in Google Summer of Code and Google Season of Docs.

Outreachy internship program
Outreachy provides internships in open source and open science, specifically to people subject to systemic bias and impacted by under-representation in the technical industry where they are living. The Foundation has regularly taken part in this program and has funded mentors from the Perl and Raku community. Most recently, interns have been mentored through the process of improving the quality of Perl code quality of Open Food Facts, a free, online and crowdsourced database of food products from around the world.

Google Summer of Code
The Foundation took part in the Google Summer of Code program as a mentor organization. We have a long history of participation in the Google Summer of Code and Google Code-in, resulting in very successful applications and experiences. Many of the GSoC students have become well known Perl programmers developing projects, libraries and modules.

Google Season of Docs
The Foundation was among 30 open source software organizations that Google chose to participate in 2021's Season of Docs program. The Foundation used funds from Google to hire a technical writer and communications specialist to perform a gap analysis of

Perl documentation's content and presentation. The auditing project compared the documentation's present state with Perl's goal to put a new focus on newcomers, while retaining the documentation's role as a thorough reference for all programmers. This report gives Perl's developers a solid foundation for subsequent documentation projects, helping to shape Perl into a more approachable programming language. The project was managed by a team of volunteers from the Perl community.

Infrastructure costs
In addition to funding grants, your donations support the Foundation infrastructure costs. These include all legal fees, event insurance, and accounting fees, as well as the appointment of an administrator to support day-to-day Board and other Foundation committee arrangements (meeting planning, note taking, and some marketing support).

This infrastructure support is crucial too and donations needn't always be monetary. The Foundation needs all kinds of support to help in its day to day running. Can your organization provide tangible support? For example:

:: Legal advice
:: Web hosting and/or maintenance
:: Graphic design
:: Event planning
:: Marketing
:: Financial advice or accounting

Crucial volunteer community

The Foundation relies on volunteers to build support for Perl and Raku. Everyone who sits on the Board, joins the community engagement meeting, or any other Foundation groups, is giving their personal time free of charge.

Members of the community are dedicated to supporting the promotion of Perl and Raku, organizing conferences, managing the grants and funds we have for special projects, and ensuring the language development progresses. We also have mentors; people dedicated to supporting others learning and developing Perl and Raku.

With support from our volunteers we are able to continue to promote and develop these languages. Can your organization give time to employees to support any of these areas?

:: Conference planning and promotion
:: Mentoring
:: Sharing social media content
:: Adding blogs to the website
:: Joining the grants committee to review grant applications and / or manage grants
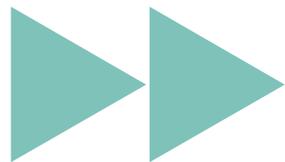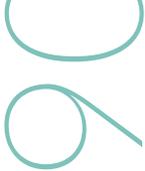
Future plans for Perl development

Release Perl version v5.36.0
During 2022, Perl v5.36.0 will ship. According to Rik Signes, this is going to be the most exciting release of Perl in almost ten years. The focus has been on making all the best features of Perl as easy to use as possible.

"By declaring you want v5.36, your program will have diagnostics turned on, will shed a bunch of weird anti-features that we've been discouraging for years, and will enable subroutine signatures, a feature that has been lacking in stable Perl since its inception. Fortran had signatures, but not Perl! We've also added new features (like n-at-a-time iteration) and improved facilities for adding new features, like the new 'builtin' namespace that allows us to add features without cluttering the namespace of every program."

Making life easier when working with non-ASCII text
The Perl Steering Council (PSC) anticipates that next year's release will continue along the same lines, building better features and making them readily available. The PSC is hoping to make it even easier to work with non-ASCII text in Perl an area where Perl is already extremely good.

**Fixing items on our list of "what makes Perl weird in a bad way"**
The PSC spent significant time over the last year collecting and curating a big list of items that "make Perl weird in a bad way". Over the next two years we will be carefully removing many of these.

Improving the performance of Perl
The Perl interpreter can still be made significantly faster by building on subroutine signatures to optimize subroutine calling. Perl is one of the fastest scripting languages, but its subroutine call overhead has always been high. It is hoped this can be cut down significantly.

The only
way you
can predict
the future is
to build it.

Alan Kay
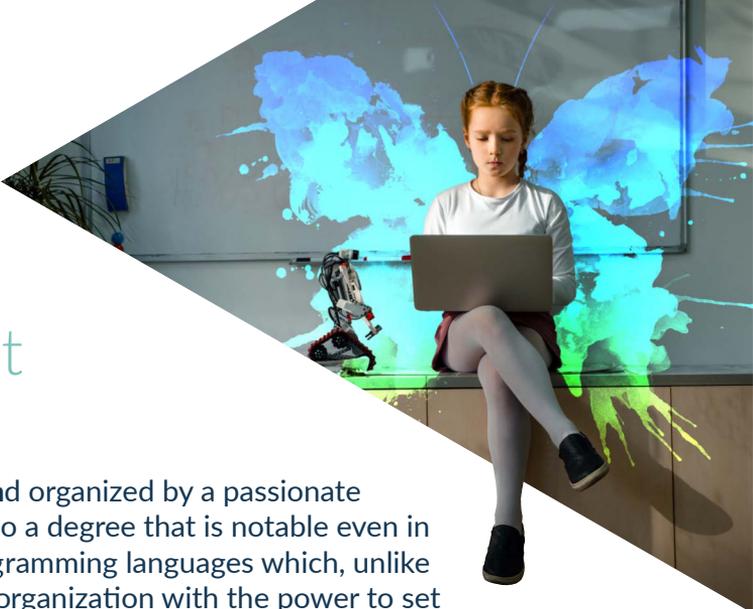
Future plans for Raku development

Like Perl, Raku's development is led and organized by a passionate community of volunteer contributors to a degree that is notable even in comparison to other open-source programming languages which, unlike Raku, often have a single company or organization with the power to set priorities. Because of the key role of the Raku community, the following roadmap is inherently even more subject to change than most, as the priorities or involvement of different Raku contributors constantly evolve.

With that in mind, here are some of the milestones that Raku users can anticipate in the near-to-medium-term future:

:: Release of version 6e with a new set of features in line with Raku's compatibility promises

:: Raku Abstract Syntax Tree, a new compiler frontend that will enable:
   : Custom compiler passes
   : Syntactic macros with full support for macro hygiene
   : Longer-term, this will also enable slangs (sub-languages with different syntax)

:: Enhanced security/ecosystem coherence by completing the migration to fez

:: Completing "The Complete Course in Raku" and other Raku learning resources

:: Updating/rebuilding the Raku documentation system (potentially including a new documentation website)

:: Additional progress towards filling gaps in the Raku ecosystem

:: Further development of Comma (the Raku IDE), as described at commaide.com/roadmap

:: Continuing to build out the Raku/Rakudo testing and CI process

:: Implementation of escape analysis, which will result in improved performance

:: Further performance improvements building on the recently-landed New Dispatch System

Supporting conferences and events

Corporate support for our conferences pays off in many ways.

Education
Educating your developers on Perl and Raku helps them create better, more efficient code, and exposes them to modules and techniques that they haven't seen before. And our conferences go beyond Perl and Raku, covering development tools and processes, other languages, and more.

Networking
Conferences let your developers expand their network, providing them with community support when they need technical assistance.

Corporate visibility
Having your organization's name associated with the conference advertises that your organization uses Perl, identifying you as a potential employer to the conference attendees.

Recruiting possibilities
Sponsors can participate in the conference job fair, a great chance to meet prospective employees and pitch them on the opportunities you have available.

Marketing to trade
Attending conferences also helps with marketing your organization's product or service to people who influence technical choices within their own organization.

The role of the Foundation

Yet Another Society is the official name of The Perl Foundation (TPF) and the Raku Foundation (the Foundation).

The Foundation does the essential but boring work to support Perl and Raku. This includes being the "bank manager", taking care of intellectual property like trademarks, and providing organizational support to conference organizers and the community as a whole.

The languages themselves are governed separately, having their own technical leadership, roadmaps, and development plans.

The Foundation Board meets every month and also hosts a monthly community engagement meeting which covers various subjects such as marketing, legal, grants, sponsorship and general administration.

Board members:
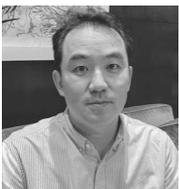
Stuart Mackintosh
President

Dave Rolsky
Board member at large

Peter Krawczyk
Treasurer

Daniel Sockwell
Board member at large

Makoto Nozarki
Secretary

How we manage your donations

Donations are added into funds within the Foundation: the General Fund and Specific Funds.

General Fund

Most donations are directly applied to the General Fund. This is used to support the Foundation's regular activities. Expenditures from the General Fund must be approved by a majority vote of the Board, and are not restricted in purpose.

Specific Funds

Specific Funds have been created at various times for events and projects that the Foundation has pursued, or at the request of a donor who wished to fund specific initiatives within the community.

Some examples of current Specific Funds include:

:: The Perl & Raku Conference Fund
:: The Raku Infrastructure Fund
:: The Google Summer of Code Development Fund

Donate today

Billions of people around the world use products that rely on Perl and Raku

▶ Ensure Perl and Raku are sustainably maintained and developed

▶ Gain valuable education opportunities for your teams at conferences

▶ Engage in important networking opportunities and build your corporate visibility

▶ Recruit new and invaluable Perl or Raku developers to your team

▶ Associate your brand with support for Perl and Raku

perlfoundation.org/donate