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CONSUL CON

DAY 3 - 15:00 - Main Stage

CONSUL DEMOCRACY: Moving The Ecosystem Forward

JOE MATHEWS - Democracy Local
IRIS CABRERA - Usabi
JANNIK PFISTER - Hertie Foundation
KLAUS MÜLLER - Open Source Program Office, Munich

Session recap

At a glance

This final plenary panel brought together voices from across the ecosystem to discuss how to move CONSUL DEMOCRACY forward. The programme listed Joe Mathews (Democracy Local), Iris Cabrera (Usabi), Jannik Pfister (Hertie Foundation) and Klaus Mueller (City of Munich). Alexandros Melidis (GFOSS) also contributed.

Only the last ten minutes or so were recorded, covering reflections on the ecosystem's weaknesses, ideas for overcoming them and each panellist's wish for the community.

Key messages

- The community's greatest strength is its decentralised nature, which allows local adaptation and global spread.
- Decentralisation also creates challenges: sharing knowledge across the network and reintegrating improvements from different forks into the core.
- The Foundation needs stable, long-term funding rather than only project funding, to provide stability, knowledge exchange and stronger ties within a loose network.
- CONSUL should be understood as digital public infrastructure for democracy, closely aligned with European digital commons initiatives.
- In-person encounters matter: even neighbouring German cities using CONSUL had never talked to each other before the conference.

Facts, figures and references

- Proposed: a plugin and customisation marketplace for CONSUL.
- Proposed: a participatory strategy process for the Foundation's next three to five years.
- Proposed: cross-country peer learning hubs linking certified partners, regional partners and OSPOs.

Takeaways for the community

- Stable core funding and mechanisms for knowledge sharing and code reintegration are the community's top structural priorities.
- Panellists converged on a participatory, community-driven strategy and governance process for the Foundation.
- Regular in-person or intermediate gatherings are seen as essential to maintain momentum.