Be a Starter, Not a Finisher: For Yourself and For the World

- **Speaker**: Deb Nicholson
  * **Room**: Room 332
  * **Time**: Fri Oct 23, 10:30 am – 10:50 am

- **Format**: Talk (20 min)
  * **Difficulty**: All Levels
  * **Track**: Community and Culture
  * **Additional Tags**: Leadership, Motivation, Open Source, Social Change
  * **Experience**: Executive Director at the Python Software Foundation; free software policy expert with previous experience at the Open Source Initiative, Software Freedom Conservancy, and Open Invention Network.

Description:

Starting new things is often undervalued; we tend to reward the “finishers” who reach the end of a project, even though the act of starting is frequently the hardest part. From the US civil rights movement to the push for community-controlled social media, progress has always relied on the groundwork laid by starters.

In this talk, Deb Nicholson argues that without new approaches and perspectives, our world—and our software—becomes change-resistant, allowing the largest and most comfortable entities to maintain the status quo. This session explores why many of us shy away from starting new things, why “starters” are the secret power that changes the world, and why the open source community should do more to recognize and reward those who take the first step.

Target Audience:

- Open source contributors and maintainers
  * Community advocates
  * Anyone looking for motivation to start a new project or habit
  * Leadership-minded individuals in the FOSS ecosystem

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