

Engineering Documentation

Lorna Mitchell, Aiven



**Engineering is about
solving problems and
helping people**

Documentation enables customer success

Colleague enablement

Share the secrets with your team, on their level

Diátaxis <https://diataxis.fr>



Content structure

Consistent navigation patterns

- products
- tools

Put developers in control by offering really good search

- we use Aiven for OpenSearch
- indexing multiple sources

Style guide

- use a specific template
- add hyperlinks
- use active wording
- formatting guidelines
- positive and respectful language
- titles, verbs and sentence case
- screenshots and example values
- what not to do

Docs as Code

Use the same tools and workflows as for code

Source control

- easy to work on many parallel changes
- identify of author and reviewer are known
- full change history for all pages
- collaboration tools for big or small changes

Text-based markup

- static site generator
- separate content and presentation
- reuse content (single sourcing)
- handle large changesets easily

Text-based diagrams

Using <https://mermaid-js.github.io>

Connect Apache Kafka® to OpenSearch® with Terraform

This example shows how to use a Kafka® Connector to take data from Apache Kafka® and ingest it into OpenSearch® using [Apache Kafka Connect](#). As a use case, the data here is application logs going onto a Kafka topic, and being put into OpenSearch for short term storage and easy inspection, if needed. Aiven has a concept of service integrations to manage the relationships between components. [Aiven Terraform Provider](#) has a specific resource type in Terraform for service integration.

Before looking at the Terraform script, let's visually realize how the services will be connected:



Automating a docs platform

Continuous integration

Pull request build does the work

- verify the build
- generate preview
- check hyperlinks
- prose linting with Vale

Vale

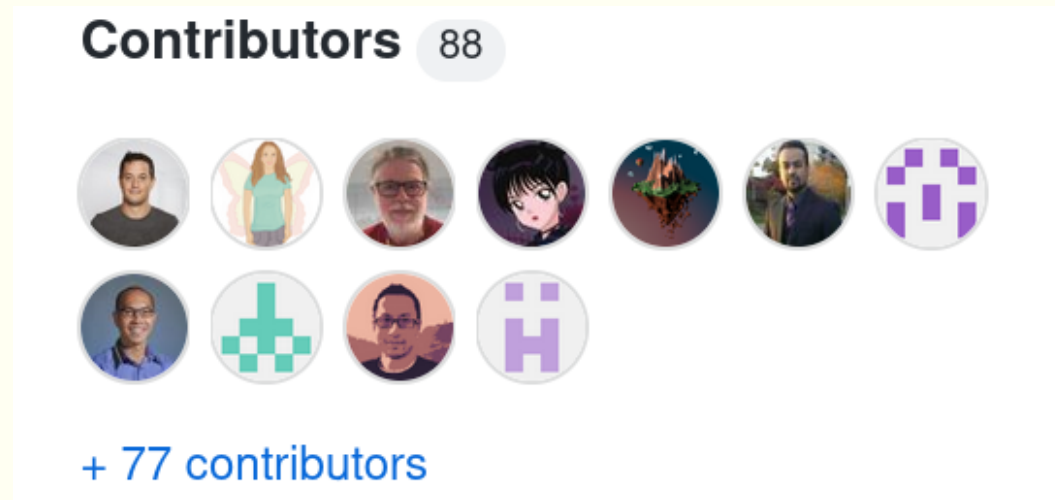
Prose linter <https://vale.sh/>

- checks for valid words and can be taught technical terms
- checks for correct use of trademarked terms
- requires all headings to be in sentence case
- suggests replacements for frequent mistakes

Continuous deployment

- immediate deploy on merge to `main`
- build static site and deploy
- repeat often

Open Source Operation



Contributors

Encourage contributors (internal or external)

- well-tended repository
- contributor guidelines
- office hours for internal contributors
- good review practice

Maintainers

Principle of shared responsibility

- reviewer guidelines in the repo
- pull requests need a single approver
- all git-enabled Aiveners can merge
- editorial review is available

Gatekeepers have no place in collaboration

Engineering Documentation

Resources

- <https://docs.aiven.io/>
- <https://github.com/aiven/devportal/>
- <https://lornajane.net>
- <https://docsfordevelopers.com/>
- <https://idratherbewriting.com/>