

Decision Making Procedure

Purpose of the procedure

This document outlines the method that the project uses to make all Project's decisions. This procedure forms the essence of the Project's governance.

Document content

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Document cross references

- Participating Process

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V1.0

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Decision Making Procedure

INTERPRETATION

- In this document, unless otherwise stated, "Participant" means Participant or Full Participant.
- "Full Circle" means the collective of Participants named in the definitive Participant list found in the Participants area of the website.

SUB-CIRCLES

Sub-circles are where the majority of the project work is carried out (and also a key part of community life). Sub-circles meet between Full Circle meetings to research, dialogue issues, generate solutions, and prepare proposals for the Full Circle. Once approved by the Full Circle, the sub-circles then carry out the proposals. While the Full Circle may delegate some minor level of decision-making to sub-circles, in general the Full Circle is the Project's primary decision-making body.

FULL CIRCLE MEETINGS

The Project will make decisions by the consensus of Participants present at Full Circle meetings. Full Circle meetings are to occur on a regular calendared basis. A quorum of 50% of Participants is required to make decisions. It may be possible to attend via video conferencing technology, but Participants understand that they are not able to send written carding "votes". Any Participant unable to attend a Full Circle meeting will send apologies to the Participant Coordinator in advance.

DECISION MAKING

While creating and passing proposals, the Full Circle will endeavour to seek agreement on the issues and solutions. All decisions are to be passed using the Coloured Cards Method, and the verbatim wording of each proposal, along with the number and colours of cards, are to be recorded in the minutes.

COLOURED CARDS METHOD

Each proposal is first recorded in the minutes and read out, before proceeding to a show of cards. A green card denotes support for the proposal, and a blue card denotes support for the proposal with a slight reservation. An orange card denotes non-support of the proposal but without blocking. Whereas a red card denotes: I am blocking this proposal because it does not serve the objectives of the Project.

If the carding yields only green or blue cards, the proposal is considered passed. If any orange or red cards are raised, those members get to summarise their concerns if they have not done so already. At this point the proposal may be amended to address these concerns, and then a second show of cards takes place. On the second carding a proposal is considered passed unless any red cards are still present. If consensus is not reached, the proposal is sent back to the appropriate sub-circle for more work.

FALL BACK VOTE

If consensus is not reached after two regular Full Circle meetings, or if the meeting considers that time constraints require, then a decision may be taken at a subsequent meeting by a 75% majority vote of Full Participants.

At least 72 hours notice of the meeting to hold a fallback vote must be given to all Participants. The determination that "time constraints require" is to be made using a 75% majority vote of Participants Present. Sending an email to the Participant's email address constitutes notice.

Any fall back vote shall be on the basis of one vote per Full Participant in attendance. A proxy vote for fallback votes, submitted in advance, in writing to the Participant Coordinator is acceptable.

REVISITING DECISIONS

A Participant absent from a meeting may request to revisit a decision made at that meeting, at the next meeting only. Otherwise decisions may only be reopened with the prior agreement of 50% of Participants. Except decisions made using a fall back vote, in which case it requires the prior agreement of 75% of Participants.

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MINUTES

The minute taker should endeavour to make a fair record of the meeting. Any personal comments from the minute taker should be prefaced as such. Include the full wording and card counts of each proposal plus a brief summary of the context of the decision and range of sentiment of the circle. Use the Minutes Template as a guide.

Minutes to be ideally distributed within 48 hours of the meeting end in the case of Full Circle meetings, and for sub-circle minutes at least 24 hours prior to the next Full Circle meeting. If the minute taker is unclear about what to write, they should consult with other Participants. Once distributed to the Participants, avoid sending updated versions, because this can cause confusion about which is the correct copy.

The minutes from the previous meeting are to be approved by a carding at the next meeting, and any corrections noted in the latter minutes. A complete sequentially ordered set of minutes of both the Full Circle and Sub-circle minutes are to be kept in a specified accessible location.