

# **OpenDemocracy**

**Initial meeting agenda and minutes**

**(First draft)**

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# Project presentation and vision

## **A community-based hybrid between direct and representative democracy.**

The main concept is to present categorized data and decisions to the users of the system. For each category, the user can opt to assign his vote to “experts” of choice, whose votes will be strengthened by a weighted value specified by the user. If the users opinions differ from his/her expert, the user can override the vote with his/her own opinion. This system will allow for a more dynamic decision making process and (hopefully) the results will more closely reflect actual opinion.

### **Expert assignment:**

Anyone can claim to be an expert in any category. If you choose to be an expert in a category, other users can assign a level of trust to you as a representative in that category.

### **User profile:**

Users can use any OpenID account or create a new one in the system. Accounts can be integrated with social networks and other services.

### **Anonymous/Validated account:**

One can choose to remain anonymous and still have access to all parts of the system. However one can validate ones account using different trust systems, such as Internet banking services, secure identity providers etc. Validated account statistics can be accessed separately, in order to filter non-verified input.

### **Decisions:**

A decision database would archive data considered relevant by voters in any decision(s). A timeline user-interface would enable users to go back in time and see what data was available to voters at other points in time. Then one could ask why, if any critical information was ignored by decision makers.

### **Votes:**

A user votes in a decision by assigning a weight to each decision choice. Experts and users can choose to supplement their votes with motivations and references to data and publicly published science.

### **Groups:**

Inside the system, users can create groups. Groups can be used to associate data, discussion

and users together. When a user joins/subscribes to a group they get a feed from the group with the latest updates. This feature enables like-minded people to collaborate on issues relating to a area of interest. New and existing political parties can exist as groups within the system enabling their voters to see their representatives collective opinions and decisions.

#### **Discussions and journalism:**

Users and groups can initiate discussion threads, wikis and forums around any topic. Journalists can publish their investigations and data openly and anonymously using pseudonyms and blog-like feeds.

#### **Data relations:**

Associating data and meta-data together should be made dead-simple in the system. When creating any new data entry one needs to define categories, tags and other (meta)data that it relates to and the nature of this relation. Linking of discussions, decisions and data together using relevant semantics and ontologies eases the visualisation and processing of large data sets.

#### **License and standards:**

The system will be open-source and built around open standards. Where standards exist we should use them and if not we should initiate collaboration around sharing our data with other databases and systems. The W3C has already started the standardisation process of several relevant types of data. This should be taken into consideration in the implementation of this project.

#### **Moderation:**

Users can rate any content in the system. This can be used to achieve moderation and filtering of the content using the web of trust that one defines in the social decision making network. When using the system anonymously, the content presented is determined by popularity and user ratings.

## **- Project scope in course**

The required amount of work to achieve a functioning system of this kind is a bit hard to estimate. We should decide together what functionality needs high priority.

## **- Initial deliverables**

Project plan  
Technical Document v. 1  
- Product requirements

## **- Assignment of responsibilities**

Project manager  
Technology/API  
System Design  
User Interface  
Database  
Web  
Communication/Relations  
License/Documentation

## **- Next meeting**

Time  
Place  
Agenda

## **Open Government Data Principles**

Government data shall be considered open if it is made public in a way that complies with the principles below:

1. [Complete](#)

*All public data is made available. Public data is data that is not subject to valid privacy, security or privilege limitations.*

2. [Primary](#)

*Data is as collected at the source, with the highest possible level of granularity, not in aggregate or modified forms.*

3. [Timely](#)

*Data is made available as quickly as necessary to preserve the value of the data.*

4. [Accessible](#)

*Data is available to the widest range of users for the widest range of purposes.*

5. [Machine processable](#)

*Data is reasonably structured to allow automated processing.*

6. [Non-discriminatory](#)

*Data is available to anyone, with no requirement of registration.*

7. [Non-proprietary](#)

*Data is available in a format over which no entity has exclusive control.*

8. [License-free](#)

*Data is not subject to any copyright, patent, trademark or trade secret regulation. Reasonable privacy, security and privilege restrictions may be allowed.*

Compliance must be *reviewable*.

## **Definitions**

1.	<p><i>“public” means:</i></p> <p>The Open Government Data principles do not address what data should be public and open. Privacy, security, and other concerns may legally (and rightly) prevent data sets from being shared with the public. Rather, these principles specify the conditions public data should meet to be considered “open.”</p>
2.	<p><i>“data” means:</i></p> <p>Electronically stored information or recordings. Examples include documents, databases of contracts, transcripts of hearings, and audio/visual recordings of events.</p> <p>While non-electronic information resources, such as physical artifacts, are not subject to the Open Government Data principles, it is always encouraged that such resources be made available electronically to the extent feasible.</p>
3.	<p><i>“reviewable” means:</i></p> <p>A contact person must be designated to respond to people trying to use the data.</p> <p>A contact person must be designated to respond to complaints about violations of the principles.</p> <p>An administrative or judicial court must have the jurisdiction to review whether the agency has applied these principles appropriately.</p>

### References:

1. Open Government Data Principles. [https://resource.org/8\\_principles.html](https://resource.org/8_principles.html)
2. Voting Paradoxes, Voting Theory and Referendums. Publications by Hannu Nurmi (Political Sciences at UTU): <http://users.utu.fi/hnurmi/homepage/webpub.pdf>

### **Government Linked Data Working Group Charter**

<http://www.w3.org/2011/gld/charter>

## -THE DELPHI METHOD

The Delphi method can “be characterized as a method for structuring a group communication process so that the process is effective in allowing a group of individuals, as a whole, to deal with a complex problem.”(Linstone & Turoff 1975, 3). It does this by identifying the underlying reasons for different opinions, rather than aiming at high statistical validity with a large respondent group. With the Delphi method, it is possible to convert expert opinion in a case where no one right answer exists.

The Delphi method is not a tool for decision making, but rather a procedure mapping different aspects and options for considerations before decision making (Turoff 1975, 80; Bell 1997, 272). Gordon (2009a, 4, 11 - 12) phrases the value of the Delphi method as follows: “The value of Delphi rests with the ideas it generates, both those that evoke consensus and those that do not. The arguments for the extreme positions also represent a useful product... Does the method produce an accurate view of the future? It is no more accurate, probably, than any expert, single or composite. But suppose we wanted to form a scenario based on expert views of what might be possible. Or suppose we needed a judgment about whether or not we could mount a manned Mars mission and if so, how. Or suppose we wanted to explore the range of future events that could affect population growth or weaponry or war. No better way exists to collect and synthesize option than Delphi.”

## Minimal voting system

$C = \{ \text{Categories} \}$

$C_d = \{ \text{Grouping of decisions into categories} \}$

$D = \{ \text{Decisions} \}$

$D_c = \{ \text{Decision choices} \}$

$E = \{ \text{Experts} \}$

$C_e = \{ \text{Grouping of experts into categories} \}$

$V = \{ \text{Voters} \}$

$E \subseteq V$ , experts are voters

$R = \{ (v, e, c, w) \mid v \in V, e \in E, c \in C, w \in \mathbb{R} \}$  Representative trust

A voter can give an expert in a category a real weight  $w$  of trust.

$V_D = \{ (v, d, d_c, w) \mid v \in V, d \in D, d_c \in D_c, w \in \mathbb{R} \}$  Voting decision

A voter can give a decision choice a real weight  $w$  of support.