

Global Digital Collaboration Council - Terms of Reference

1. Purpose and Scope

The Global Digital Collaboration (“GDC”¹) is a platform for public-private engagement on technical and policy matters. The GDC Council (“the Council”) advances dialogue to support trusted and interoperable digital infrastructure – including wallets, credentials, payment systems, and the use of cybersecurity and AI in these contexts – by bringing together UN Member States, companies, Intergovernmental Organizations (IGOs), and Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs) (“Council members”).

2. Composition

The Council consists of four groups of Council members, with each group including up to ten members:

- UN Member States,
- Companies,
- IGOs, and
- NGOs, including standards and open-source organizations.

The initial membership is selected by GDC. Requests for membership from prospective new Council members are decided by agreement of the Council, subject to final approval by GDC.

Council members may terminate their membership at any time upon written notice to the Chair of their respective group. GDC may terminate a membership for good cause. Council members participate through one or more representatives of the applicable entity, whom they may designate or redesignate at any time.

3. Responsibilities

Council members are expected to provide independent, non-binding advice to the GDC on the following matters:

- Overall strategy, priorities, and guidance,
- Nominating co-organizers for the GDC Conference,
- Proposing agenda items for the GDC Conference and the High-Level Meeting,
- Discussing the annual budget and fundraising opportunities,
- Facilitating special projects, such as the initiative to enable free access to the ISO/IEC 18013 standard.

4. Chairs

Each group elects its Chair. The chairs from the two public sector groups (UN Member States and IGOs) and the chairs from the private sector groups (companies and NGOs) will independently decide who assumes the positions of Co-Chair and Vice-Chair for the public and private sectors.

¹ GDC is currently represented by the Swiss Confederation, with the expectation that it shall later become an independent legal entity.

5. Meetings

Unless otherwise agreed, the Council convenes four times annually, with dates and details determined by the Council:

- Q1 – In-person High-Level Meeting (remote participation available),
- Q2 – Virtual meeting,
- Q3 – In-person Global Digital Collaboration Conference (remote participation available),
- Q4 – Virtual meeting.

Meetings follow the Chatham House Rule², unless the Council agrees otherwise in advance. Agendas are circulated at least seven calendar days in advance of each meeting. Meeting minutes are distributed after each meeting, and Council members will be given the opportunity to submit corrections. Where appropriate, the Co-Chairs may request the Council to consider matters between meetings, including by email.

6. Decisions-Making Procedures

The Council makes decisions primarily by consensus, defined as the absence of sustained opposition from any Council member after reasonable notice. If consensus cannot be reached, decisions require a two-thirds majority of current Council members voting in favor. A Council member may abstain from any vote. No Council decision is binding on the GDC. All decisions made by the GDC are made at its sole discretion and remain its sole responsibility.

7. Publications

Meeting reports and other relevant documents will be published under the Chatham House Rule. Draft documents will be circulated to Council members for a comment and review period of at least seven calendar days.

8. Intellectual Property and Compliance

Participation in the Council does not grant any license to a Council member's intellectual property. The Council and the GDC will not use any Council member's name, trademark, logo, or copyright without that member's prior written consent. Council members shall not share non-public or commercially sensitive information with the Council. Members must comply with applicable competition, antitrust, export-control, and sanctions laws.

9. Compensation

There are no membership fees. Participation is voluntary and not remunerated. Council members are responsible for their own costs.

10. Amendments

These Terms of Reference are public and may be amended by the Council.

Adopted by the Council on December 2, 2025.

² <https://www.chathamhouse.org/about-us/chatham-house-rule> (as of December 2, 2025).