

# Wind Empowerment Charter

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This document outlines the mission, principles, structure and decision making process of the Wind Empowerment association. It is to be used in conjunction with the other governing documents for the association:

- [Wind Empowerment Association Model Constitution of a Charitable Incorporated Organisation with voting members other than its charity trustees](#)
- [Finance and Procurement Policy](#)

## **Association Name**

Wind Empowerment

## **Mission (Stated as “Objects” in the Constitution)**

Wind Empowerment (WE) supports the development of locally built wind turbines for sustainable rural electrification. This is achieved by strengthening the capacity of its members through:

1. Building and sharing financial and human resource connections
2. Performing joint technical research, sharing technical information and collaborating on key vendor relationships
3. Strengthening understanding of business and social models for effective implementation of small wind technology
4. Managing projects, offering consultancy services and developing/distributing products in line with the association’s guiding principles and in the interest of the members.

## **Guiding Principles**

1. Open information sharing
2. Respect licensing rights where they exist
3. Work together collaboratively
4. Accept different views and different communication and work styles
5. Work for the success of all
6. Inclusivity: get others to join and collaborate with association
7. Make a reasonable effort to build consensus on decisions
8. Act ethically

## **Strategic Planning Objectives**

In order to deliver its mission statement (“Objects” in the constitution) in an effective and efficient way, WE uses a strategic planning process to develop specific objectives, goals and activities. The Strategic planning process sets the long term objectives which cascade in medium term goals, and shorter terms activities and tasks. WE uses this process to ensure that all the undergoing activities are ultimately aligned with the mission, to resource and prioritize the activities of greatest impact, and to determine if new activities and/or project proposed should be taken into consideration or not. The agreed strategic planning objectives are:

I. [WE DO PROJECTS] Managing projects, building and sharing financial and human resources globally across the network.

II. [WE RESEARCH, DEVELOP AND SHARE] Performing joint technical, social and business research, developing, consolidating and sharing available knowledge and collaborating on key vendor relationships.

III. [WE OFFER SERVICES] Offering consultancy services and developing and distributing products in line with the association's guiding principles and in the interest of the members.

In line with these objectives, the goals and activities committed by the current Executive Board members can be found here: [WE board goals](#).

## **Ethical Criteria**

Sustainability has become a political idea, pertaining to the vision we have for human activity and our relation with the world. While it began with efforts to limit impacts of human activities on the environment, so that our activities can be sustainable, it soon (already from the Brundtland report "Our Common Future" in 1987) embodied also the vision of a just world, meaning that human activities should ensure that everyone's needs are met.

Wind Empowerment shares this vision for a sustainable and worth-sustaining world, which is very well depicted and described by Kate Raworth in her Doughnut presentation ([Appendix](#)) of human activity.

Wind Empowerment's criteria for decision making are guided by this vision, striving to act in ways that contribute to a sustainable and just world.

All major decisions are scrutinised by the board of trustees to ensure our ethical guidelines and interest of members are sufficiently considered.

## **Membership Criteria**

### Member Organisations

Must align with the association's full mission and adhere to its guiding principles. Can be for-profit or non-for-profit. Can have a legal structure or be an informal group. Approved by the Executive board on a quarterly basis, after the Executive board has read the applicant organisation's charter and/or constitution (where such documents exist), and after an informal interview with one of the organisation's representatives. It is the duty of a member organisation to inform the association if its legal status changes.

### Voting members

Among the organisations that have become members with the previously mentioned processes, only non-for-profit member organizations with a legal structure will have voting rights. All other members are 'affiliate members' and do not have voting rights. Each voting member organisation has 1 vote.

### Participants (Individuals)

Can be an individual, no voting rights, forum access, can just be an interested party.

## **Member Removal**

- A member organisation can be removed by 3/4 vote of other member organisations due to bringing disrepute upon the association.
- A participant can be removed by a majority vote of member organisations.

In the event of a member being removed due to bringing disrepute upon the Wind Empowerment Association, a public statement (on the website and Newsletter) shall be issued by the Executive Board to clarify the situation and distance the association from any disreputable actions.

Members are expected to contribute in some of the association's activities such as participation in conferences / working groups / executive board / WE projects / webinars, posting in forums, working with small wind turbines or any other kind of contribution. If they do not do any of these activities or if they cannot justify their participation in the association, in the period between two consecutive conferences, they will be considered inactive. The Executive Board will review existing members and remove members which are inactive, after each biennial conference. Removed members are entitled to reapply for membership providing their removal was for inactivity rather than other reasons. Members removed in this way will be contacted at their most recent contact details and given the opportunity to appeal against the decision one month prior to their removal being enacted.

## **Structure**

### Trustees

- Ensures Wind Empowerment fulfills its aims and objectives, adheres to the country of registration laws and remains financially solvent.
- 2 year voluntary post.
- Recruited by executive board, approved by members.
- Positions: Chairman, Treasurer, Secretary.
- Trustees are eligible for re-election to their roles, there are no term limits.

## Executive Board

- 2 year post - can be paid
- Manages day to day running of the association
- Meetings held every month, open to anyone
- Chosen by members at the biennial conference through consensus if possible, else through majority vote. Voting members that are not present can vote before the meeting via email or participate remotely during the meeting.
- Minimum of two (2), maximum of seven (7) positions composed of two or more of the following positions: Coordinator, Treasurer, Secretary, Fundraising coordinator, Working Groups (WGs) coordinator, Digital Communications. Any position can be shared between two people if necessary.
- Executive Board members sign a contract with WE at the beginning of their two year term. Executive board members will be asked to resign, similar to trustees as outlined in the constitution, if their obligations outlined in their contract are not being met.
- A call for Executive Board and Trustee positions is made public at least one and a half months prior to the vote, via the WE website. The call for applications is open for at least one month. The applications are then forwarded to the members with voting rights two weeks prior to the vote.
- If for any reason an Executive Board member resigns during the two year term, then the rest of the Executive Board makes a public call for this position, following the previously mentioned process.
- Executive Board members are eligible for re-election to the board and/or to specific roles, there are no term limits.

## Working Groups (WGs)

- WGs are open to active members and participants who wish to contribute, and give an opportunity to focus and collaborate on a specific theme of Wind Empowerments work.
- 1 coordinator, two year post.
- Report to the executive board.
- Workgroups consist of two or more members.

## **Language**

The association recognises its multi-lingual, multi-cultural membership. For practical reasons its official working language is English, but all reasonable efforts are made to translate into other languages given resource constraints. Every effort must be put to ensure the association's website has auto-translation solutions. Member contributions allowed in French and Spanish with no translation required.

## Meetings

- Bi-annual (every 6 months) trustee meetings, preceded by reports from the Executive Board to trustees on the status of WGs and administration issues.
- Executive board meetings held every month, and are open to anyone to attend.
- Biennial (every 2 years) in-person meeting for anyone involved in the association with remote participation optional for those who don't want to / can't travel.
- Regional / thematic / workgroup in-person and remote meetings as needed.

## Decision making process

For long-term strategic decisions, members should be consulted in line with the specifications outlined in the constitution. Non-controversial everyday decisions regarding the administration of the organisation or relating to specific projects can be made by the executive board or the WG coordinators. However, if a potentially controversial decision is identified, the membership should be consulted and given a voice in the decision making process.

Controversial decisions involve one or more of the following factors:

- If spending over €2000 of Wind Empowerment money that is not spent on a collaborative WE member-originated or -run project, a consultancy service or the development/distribution of a product as defined in the mission of the association.
- A new type of activity that is not included in the mission.
- If a potential conflict with one or more of the guiding principles has been identified.
- If Wind Empowerment would have to enter into a collaborative WE member-originated or -run legally binding contract worth over €2000 that is not a project, a consultancy service or the development/distribution of a product as defined in the mission of the association.
- If the proposed activity is likely to have a significant negative effect on the way in which one or more of our member organisations operate.

As outlined in the guiding principles, priority should be given to achieving consensus amongst all member organisations. However, if necessary, a majority vote should be taken. The process for decision making is as follows:

### **First round: Member Organisations**

- Make all member organisations aware of the need to make a decision and ask for timely feedback.
- Who can participate in the discussion?
  - Anyone with access to the executive board forum
  - All member organisations, with or without voting rights

- If consensus amongst member organisations that are active in the discussion is reached?
  - The proposal is passed.
- If consensus amongst member organisations that are active in the discussion is not reached?
  - Votes of voting members should be counted
- Who can vote?
  - Voting members (1 vote per voting member)
- Where to vote?
  - Executive Board Forum on WindEmpowerment.org
- Quorum (min. % votes from the total no. eligible voters):
  - 50% of voting member organisations
- Majority (min. % votes in favour of a proposal for it to be passed):
  - 50% + 1 (simple majority)
- If the decision is not reached?
  - Proceed to second round
- Deadline for voting:
  - Min. 1 week from the date of posting on the Executive Board Forum
- Process:
  - WE Coordinator should coordinate the decision making process, however they may appoint another member of the Executive Board who is more familiar with the issue in question to make the proposal.
  - A proposal should be made on the executive board forum and all member organisations should be notified about the need to make a decision.
  - The proposal should include the following:
    - Explain the decision that needs to be made.
    - Describe the pros and cons of any options.
    - Propose one option to be approved by the membership.
    - Suggest a deadline (minimum of one week) for when the decision needs to be made.
  - Up until the deadline:
    - Anyone can respond with their opinion.
    - Responses from member organisations should end with an approval or disapproval of the proposal.
    - Responses from anyone with voting rights should end with a vote (for or against the proposal).
    - Opinions and votes can be changed at any point up until the deadline.
    - The WE Coordinator should attempt to facilitate a consensus among the active members in the discussion
  - At the deadline:
    - If a consensus amongst all member organisations that are active in

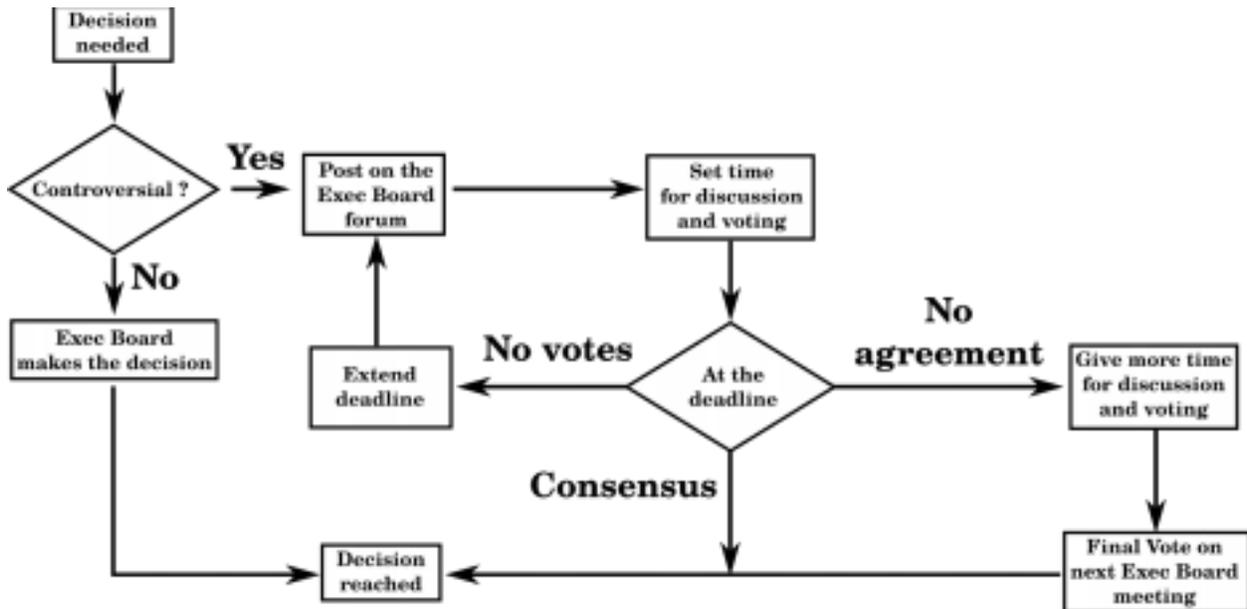
the discussion has been reached, the proposal is passed.

- If no consensus has been reached, the votes of the voting members should be counted.
  - If both the quorum and the majority defined above have been met, then the proposal is passed.
  - If either the quorum or the majority have not been met, then the proposal is taken to the second round.

### **Second round: Executive Board**

- Where to vote?
  - The next Executive Board meeting
- Who can attend?
  - Everyone, the meeting is open
- Who can vote?
  - Only Executive Board members
- Quorum (min. % votes from the total no. eligible voters):
  - 50% of Executive Board members
- Majority (min. % votes in favour of a proposal for it to be passed):
  - 80%
- Process:
  - During the next Executive Board meeting, the issue is raised by the coordinator, who facilitates a discussion between those present, ensuring that all viewpoints are heard, including those from the first round. All attempts should be made to come to a consensus.
  - If a consensus is reached, the proposal is passed.
  - If no consensus has been reached, votes should be cast:
    - If a member of the Executive Board is unable to attend the meeting, but has already voted for the Member organisation that they represent in the first round, then their vote should be included in the final round.
    - If both the quorum and the majority defined above have been met, then the proposal is passed.
    - If either the quorum or the majority have not been met, then a new proposal must be drawn up that takes into account the major concerns voiced throughout the process to date and the whole process begins again from the first round.

## The decision process flowchart



## Wind Empowerment Collaborative Projects

Wind Empowerment Collaborative Projects (or also called WE projects), are projects whose proposal has been written in the name of WE, WE manages the funds and the relevant contract with the funder, and the projects have been approved by the board, who has made sure that they meet WE's mission and Charter.

### Project overheads

All kinds of WE projects need to allocate 10% of the total project budget as overhead to the WE reserve fund in order to cover administration costs such as bank and transfer fees, fluctuations in exchange rates, web hosting costs, annual accounting costs, and additionally in order to contribute to Wind Empowerment's reserves to support projects where needed. This overhead will, in the first instance, be reserved as an emergency fund for the project it is sourced from, and will only be open to other activities upon the completion of the relevant project.

### Contracting

Participants in all kinds of WE projects need to be subcontracted by WE in order to create a framework which ensures the quality of the content, the time frame for deliverables and the duties of each side. WE projects are then implemented in close collaboration with the WE executive board.

### Collaboration

WE projects are essentially of a collaborative nature and will be promoted as such. Projects which include at least two of the following entities will be encouraged and prioritized by the WE executive board: WE member organizations and/or WGs. Any project being facilitated through Wind Empowerment must be led by an individual or organisation who is a member of Wind Empowerment.

### Open calls for collaboration

It is up to the WE project partners to decide if they want to make an open call within the membership of the WE association for the implementation of the project. If a WG participates then there is automatically an open call in the WG forum in the proposal phase.

### Single member projects

The opportunity to include a single member organization's project under the WE umbrella will be provided upon request of the organisation to the WE board, who will in turn make sure that the project adheres with all WE project guidelines and the association's charter and constitution. All previous requirements apply.

### Executive board member projects

WE projects can also be initiated by Executive board members, who will then need to make an open call to recruit within the WE association membership for the implementation of the project (all members need to be informed via email and with a two weeks notice before the deadline). The Executive board or one of its members manages the project and all previous requirements apply. During this process, if other board members have applied for participating in the project, the final decision on recruiting will be made by an expanded technical committee, which will be composed of more than 50% of WE members who are not part of the Executive board, such as the WG coordinators.

## **WE collaborations and funding sources**

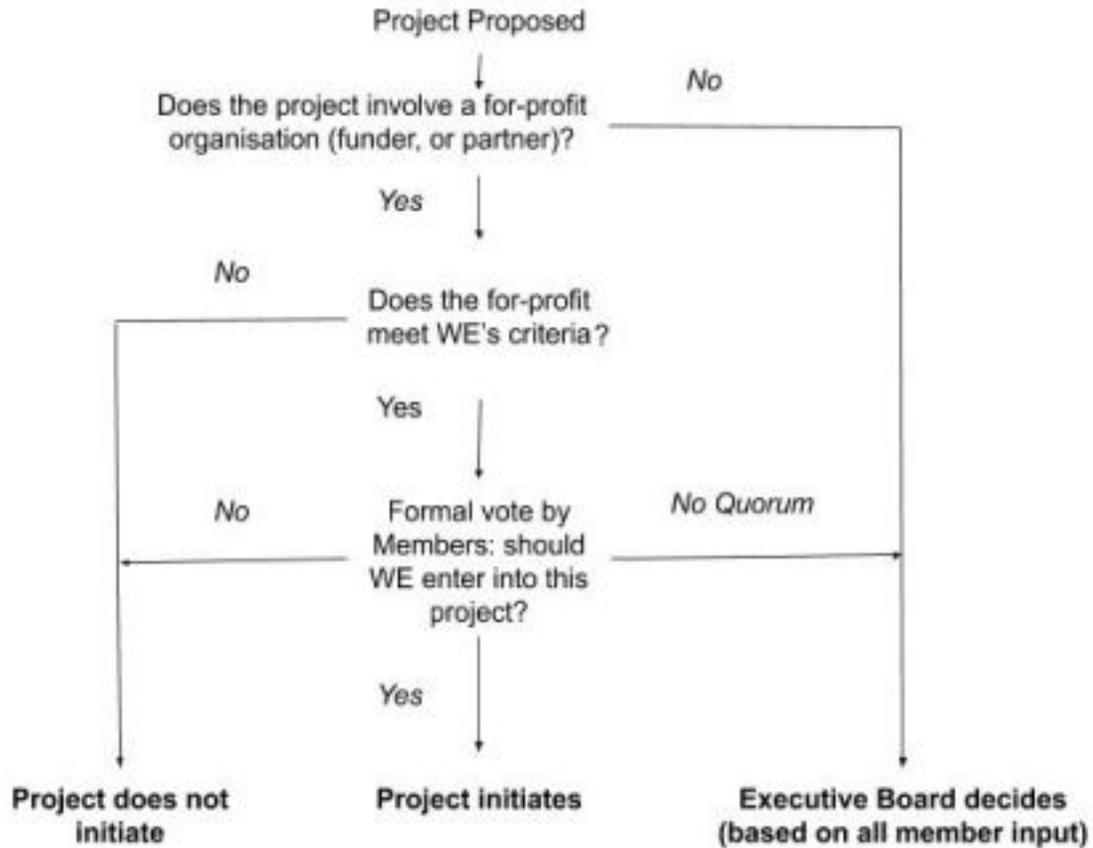
WE collaborations and funding sources need to meet the association's ethical principles as described in the association's charter and constitution. The following process describes how such collaborations can be initiated:

- The project is proposed on the Executive board forum for a two weeks period, where all WE members have access and can comment.
- If the project does not involve a for-profit partner then the Executive board

decides in its next meeting (consensus or majority vote) based on the content of the Executive board forum discussions, considering the members' input.

- If the project involves a for-profit partner then the Executive board decides in its next meeting (consensus or majority vote) if the proposed project is inline with the WE association's charter and constitution, along with the ethical criteria mentioned in the section 'Ethical Criteria' to be used as a decision making framework.
- If the Executive board decides that the proposed project is not inline with the WE association's charter and constitution, along with the ethical criteria, then the project is not initiated.
- If the Executive board decides that the proposed project is inline with the WE association's charter and constitution, along with the ethical criteria, then the proposed collaboration is put forward for a membership vote (i.e. Does WE go ahead with this project or not?), as described in the section 'Decision making process' of the charter.
- Members with voting rights have the right to veto a decision of this kind by posting their arguments on a single post on the Executive board forum. The aim of the veto would be to reframe the collaboration or project in a way that consensus can be reached within the association, during a second voting round. If the Executive board considers that a member is abusing their veto right (i.e. denying projects on dishonest grounds or with lack of adequate justification) on more than one occasion, this would bring their membership into review, as described in the section 'Member Removal' of the charter.
- If a quorum is not reached during the membership vote, then the Executive board decides in its next meeting (consensus or majority vote) based on the content of the Executive board forum discussions, considering the members' input.

The following decision making flowchart describes the process of how such collaborations can be initiated:



## Agreement of Charter

This document has been the product of an open consultation and has been agreed by all voting member organisations of the association, executive board members and trustees. This charter should be reviewed and updated if necessary, after each international conference and by the new executive board.

Date of next review: 2022

Signed on behalf of the association:

Executive Coordinator

Date: 23/12/19

## Appendix: The Doughnut of social and planetary boundaries



The Doughnut of social and planetary boundaries (2017, source: <https://www.kateraworth.com/doughnut/>)

Quoting Kate Raworth: *'Humanity's 21st century challenge is to meet the needs of all within the means of the planet. In other words, to ensure that no one falls short on life's essentials (from food and housing to healthcare and political voice), while ensuring that collectively we do not overshoot our pressure on Earth's life-supporting systems, on which we fundamentally depend – such as a stable climate, fertile soils, and a protective ozone layer. The Doughnut of social and planetary boundaries is a playfully serious approach to framing that challenge, and it acts as a compass for human progress this century.*

*The environmental ceiling consists of nine planetary boundaries, as set out by Rockstrom et al, beyond which lie unacceptable environmental degradation and potential tipping points in Earth systems. The twelve dimensions of the social foundation*

*are derived from internationally agreed minimum social standards, as identified by the world's governments in the Sustainable Development Goals in 2015. Between social and planetary boundaries lies an environmentally safe and socially just space in which humanity can thrive.*

*The doughnut sets a vision for an equitable and sustainable future, but is silent on the possible pathways for getting there, and so the doughnut acts as a convening space for debating alternative pathways forward'.*