

Sovrin Technical Governance Board Charter

Version 4
2019-03-27



<https://sovrin.org>

Technical Governance Board (TGB)

This charter contains the content required by [Sovrin Governing Body Policies](#). This charter was approved by the Sovrin Foundation Board of Trustees on 27 March 2019 and is listed in [Sovrin Governing Bodies](#). All terms in First Letter Capitals not defined in this document are defined in the [Sovrin Glossary](#).

To participate directly in this Sovrin Governing Body, please visit its [meeting page](#).

Charter Version and Date

Version: 2

Date approved by Sovrin Board of Trustees: 2019-03-27

[Link to the Sovrin Board of Trustees meeting minutes](#)

Governing Policies

All Sovrin Governing Bodies inherit the base set of policies defined in [Sovrin Governing Body Policies](#), including chartering, membership, chairpersons, facilitators, subgroups, funding, voting, intellectual property rights, meetings, and meeting pages. This charter defines extensions to these policies specific to this Sovrin Governing Body.

Status

This Sovrin Governing Body is organized as a **council** as defined in [Sovrin Governing Body Policies](#).

Purpose

The purpose of the Technical Governance Board (TGB) is to govern the technical design, architecture, implementation, and operation of the Sovrin Network as a global public utility for self-sovereign identity.

Principles

All Sovrin Governing Bodies operate under the Core Principles in section 2 of the [Sovrin Governance Framework V2](#).

Activities and Duties

The TGB is responsible for:

1. **Design and architecture.** Oversee the development and public documentation of the technical design and architecture of the Sovrin Ledger and the Sovrin Network, including the consensus protocol(s), agent protocol(s), and client protocol(s).
2. **Open source code.** Oversee and provide policies and procedures for approving code contributions to the Sovrin Open Source Code.
3. **Open standards.** Oversee the development and adoption of open standards for the interoperability and portability of Sovrin Identity Data.
4. **Security review.** Foster peer review of the Sovrin Security by Design architecture, policies, and practices.
5. **Privacy review.** Foster peer review of the Sovrin Privacy by Design architecture, policies, and practices.
6. **Data protection review.** Foster peer review of the Sovrin Data Protection by Design and Default architecture, policies, and practices.
7. **Technical input to the Sovrin Governance Framework.** Coordinate with the Sovrin Governance Framework Working Group to identify, analyze, and document technical policies and procedures that need to be included in the Sovrin Governance Framework, and specifically manage the following Controlled Documents:
 - a. [Sovrin DID Method Specification](#)
 - b. [Sovrin Ledger Transaction Data](#)
 - c. [Sovrin Steward Technical Policies](#)
8. **Technical community development.** Lead the development of a healthy and vibrant technical community to support the Sovrin ecosystem.

Membership

1. Members of the TGB are appointed by the Sovrin Board of Trustees (BoT) based on their technical expertise in blockchain technology, cryptography, cryptoeconomics, distributed networks and agents, security, privacy, data protection, and other technical subject matters pertinent to Sovrin Infrastructure.

2. In appointing members, the BoT shall strive to reflect the Core Principles of Diffuse Trust and Collective Best Interest.
3. The Chief Technology Officer of the Sovrin Foundation shall be an ex-officio member.
4. TGB members shall serve one-year terms, renewable annually at the option of the member and the BoT.

Chairperson(s)

The TGB shall have one chairperson appointed by the Sovrin BoT who is either an existing Trustee or who shall serve as an ex-officio member of the BoT. The members at their option may elect up to two additional chairperson(s).

Facilitator(s)

The TGB shall have at least one member of the Sovrin Foundation staff designated as Facilitator.

Voting

All Sovrin Governing Bodies shall strive to reach decisions by consensus. The TGB operates under a defined set of [Rules of Order](#) and uses a consensus-based decision-making process that progresses through three possible steps. A decision is accepted as soon as it passes the requirements of any step. The steps must be taken in the following order:

1. **Working Consensus.** The first step is to seek general agreement about a decision—indicated by no members responding with “strongly opposed” to a straw poll. Working consensus decisions may be made via discussion on the mailing list, in a webmeeting, or in a face-to-face meeting without a formal vote. Working consensus decisions must be recorded on the TGB’s meeting page. If working consensus cannot be reached, proceed to step 2.
2. **Chair Decision.** If working consensus cannot be reached, the Chairperson(s) shall propose that the matter be discussed further via the mailing list, a webmeeting, or a face-to-face meeting. After such discussion, if there is a request from a member to assess consensus, after due consideration of different opinions, the chairperson(s) or facilitator shall record the decision and any objections (with reasons if these have been expressed) on the meeting page. However, if at least one-third of the members agree to take the matter to a formal vote, proceed to step 3.
3. **Formal Vote.** When a formal vote is necessary, only members of the TGB prior to the

call for a vote may participate in the vote. Within 7 days of such a request, the Chair must announce the starting date, ending date, and venue for the vote. No advance notice is required for an online vote, however, if the venue for the vote is a webmeeting or face-to-face meeting, at least 7 days notice is required. An online vote must be open at least 7 days and should be open for no more than 14 days, using a structured online voting solution that ensures that no member votes more than once. A vote passes if a simple majority of the members vote in favor of the motion. Any additional voting policies shall be as specified in [Sovrin Governing Body Policies](#).

The chairperson(s) are accountable to both the Sovrin Foundation and to TGB members to ensure that all deliberation and decision processes are fair, respectful, and aligned with these guidelines, and that they neither favor or discriminate against any participant or their associates, including their employer.

Funding

The TGB may seek funding for consultation with outside experts as required to fulfill its duties. Such funding requests must be approved by the Executive Director of the Sovrin Foundation.

Meeting Schedule

The TGB shall hold regular virtual meetings either monthly or as frequently as needed on a day and time determined by consensus or a vote of the members and recorded on the meeting page. The TGB shall also hold face-to-face meetings as needed with notice and details provided on the meeting page.

Meeting Page

All Sovrin Governing Bodies are required to maintain a meeting page with full information about the group, current documents, and how to participate in meetings. [Follow this link to the TGB meeting page.](#)

Version History

As required by [Sovrin Governing Body Policies](#), this table is a history of all previous versions of this charter.

| Version | Date | Link and Description |
|---------|------------|---|
| 4 | 2019-03-27 | This document |
| 3 | 2018-01-31 | Sovrin Technical Governance Board V3* |
| 2 | 2016-12-12 | Sovrin Technical Governance Board V2* |
| 1 | 2016-12-04 | Sovrin Technical Governance Board V1* |

* The link is to the same Google doc—previous versions are all in the version history.