DRAFT: DWeb Principles

This version is for Mai and John to incorporate suggested edits and comments resulting from the focus group discussions.

PURPOSE

These principles define the values of a decentralized web based on enabling agency of all peoples, and carrying the values of transparency, respect and ethics. It is the basis for behavioral norms and mutual accountability for the new web’s participants.

These principles originate from members of the DWeb Community — those involved with and convened by the Internet Archive’s work on the decentralized web. These stand alongside other sets of principles that share or expand upon these values, in recognition that our effort to build a more just and equitable world are interdependent.

PRINCIPLES

1. Technology for Human Agency
   I. We stand for technology that enables self-governance among people and communities, as opposed to enabling external, political forces or optimizing only for financial outcomes.
   II. We stand for coexistence, interoperability and discourage walled gardens, to resist user or partner lock-in or centralization of control.
   III. We advocate use of open source code.
   IV. The ideal of data as a commons is important, as is the central value of preserving the privacy of information about people.
   V. We aim for peer-to-peer relationships, rather than hierarchical control and power imbalance.
   VI. We encourage organizational methods that assure trust in and among users.
   VII. We value tools that suit specific needs and conditions, for people and organizations to develop, modify, and use.
   VIII. Our algorithms must minimize surveillance of user behaviors, avoid manipulation of users and optimize for social benefits.
   IX. We believe that multiple technical means can be used to achieve ethical and people-centric outcomes.
   X. DWeb is not a forum for promoting or selecting technical approaches.
      A. Architectures: Outcomes should be independent of location
      B. Modularity something?
2. Respectful
   I. We support and encourage clear Codes of Conduct to ensure contributors and users abide by a standard guideline of respectful behavior while contributing to projects and attending events.
   II. We ask participants to remain mindful of, and take responsibility for, their speech and behavior, including: acting out of respect for others; actively listening to others and not dominating discussions and respecting physical and emotional boundaries.

3. Distributed benefits
   I. High concentration of benefits, including monetary benefits, is antithetical to the decentralized web.
   II. We believe that distributed technologies will be most beneficial to society when the rewards and recognition of their success, monetary or otherwise, are distributed among those who contributed to that success. If that is infeasible, commensurate benefit should flow to the community at large.

4. Transparent
   I. We stand for open and transparent organizational practices, motivations, and governance, in a manner that ensures equity, mutual trust, and respect.

5. Human Rights
   I. The objective of building a distributed web is to protect human rights and empower people, especially those that experience systemic inequity and prejudice.
   II. We stand for technology that gives people agency over their own data and relationships supports their rights to free expression, privacy, and knowledge, which are essential to human empowerment and dignity.
   III. We explicitly condemn the use of distributed tools for harmful purposes such as human trafficking; sexual, mental, or physical abuse; arms trading, and other activities antithetical to human rights.
   IV. We encourage building with harm-reduction in mind, and support the adoption of mechanisms that mitigate the potential for abuse.

6. Ecological Awareness
   I. We believe technologies that achieve decentralization through tradeoffs such as increased device storage and energy requirements should aim to decrease their ecological impact.
   II. We value systems that work towards reducing energy consumption and device resource requirements, while increasing device lifespan.

Last modified: 14th December, 2020
General comments:
- Dawn: This could be a lot BOLDER. Spice it up.
- Gerben: Where do we want to go with this? Just describe how people feel currently, or to shape the DWeb community?
- Ben Lau: You need boundaries - every layer needs to recognize equitable boundaries

Other Principles
- Design Justice Principles
- Feminist Principles of the Internet
- Decentralization Off The Shelf
- UN Declaration of Human Rights
- Shared Digital Europe
- Center for Humane Technology
- Glimmers Report
- https://www.manifestno.com/
- CARE Principles for Indigenous Data Governance
- “Principles to Guide our Work.” Detroit Digital Justice Coalition