

# DISTRO TRANSPARENCY INDEX (DTI)

## *Governance document*

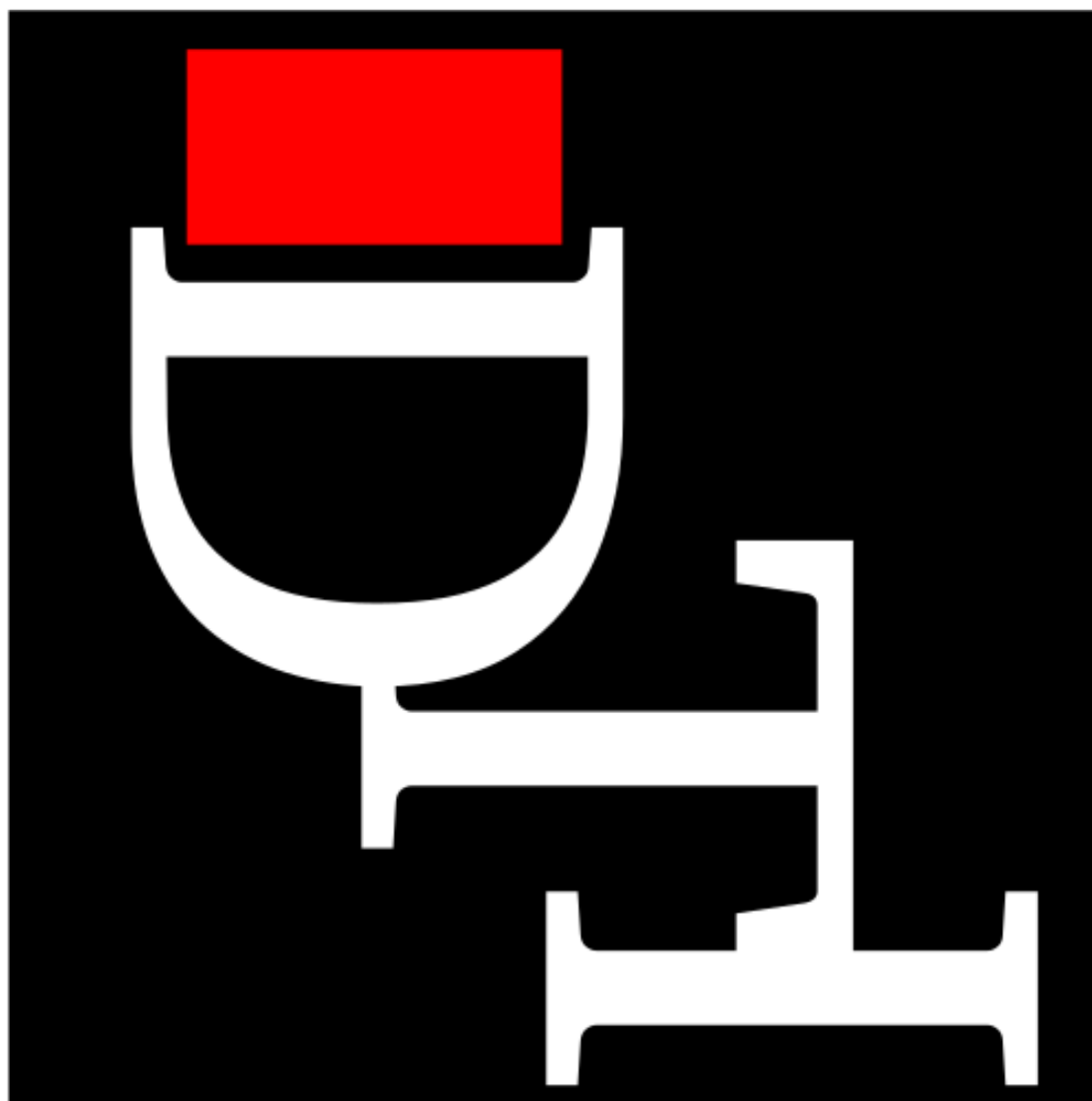


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# DTI Constitution: Fundamental Principles and Guidelines

The Distro Transparency Index (DTI) is founded on the following principles and guidelines:

1. **Commitment to Transparency:** The DTI is dedicated to promoting and evaluating transparency in Linux distributions. We hold ourselves to the same high standards of transparency that we evaluate in others.
2. **Objectivity and Impartiality:** All evaluations and rankings must be conducted objectively, based on clearly defined criteria. Personal biases or preferences must not influence the assessment process.
3. **Open Methodology:** The methodology used for evaluations must be fully disclosed and open to scrutiny. Any changes to the methodology must be publicly announced and justified.
4. **Community Engagement:** The DTI encourages and values community input. Feedback, suggestions, and constructive criticism from the Linux community will be actively sought and considered.
5. **Regular Updates:** The index will be updated regularly to ensure its relevance and accuracy. The frequency of updates will be clearly communicated.
6. **Ethical Data Collection:** All data used in evaluations must be collected ethically and legally, primarily from publicly available sources.
7. **Right to Appeal:** Distributions have the right to appeal their evaluation if they believe it to be inaccurate. A fair and transparent process for handling appeals will be established.
8. **Non-Discrimination:** The DTI will evaluate all Linux distributions equally, regardless of their size, popularity, or commercial backing.
9. **Educational Focus:** Beyond rankings, the DTI aims to educate the community about the importance of transparency in open-source projects.
10. **Independence:** The DTI will remain independent and not accept sponsorship or funding that could compromise its objectivity.
11. **Continuous Improvement:** The DTI commits to continuously improving its methodology and processes based on feedback and evolving best practices in open-source governance.
12. **Respect for Privacy:** While promoting transparency, the DTI respects the privacy of individuals involved in Linux distributions and will not seek or publish private information.

These principles form the foundation of the Distro Transparency Index. Any future changes to these fundamental principles must be thoroughly discussed with the community and agreed upon by a consensus of DTI contributors.

# DTI Governance Charter – 2025/2026

## 1. Introduction

The **Distro Transparency Index (DTI)** is a community-driven project focused on evaluating the transparency and governance of Linux distributions. This charter defines the organizational rules, board structure, voting procedures, and conduct required to ensure the project's impartiality and sustainability.

## 2. Nature of the Project

- The DTI is a **completely independent initiative**, free from corporate sponsorships, government influence, or institutional ownership.
- It is currently maintained by a **single independent author**, **Antonino Rosaci**, a nuclear medicine technologist and passionate advocate for free software and transparency.
- The project aims to grow into a **collaborative framework**, maintaining openness and independence.

## 3. The DTI Board

The DTI Board serves as the advisory and supervisory body responsible for:

- Validating and improving the scoring methodology.
- Reviewing data and distribution evaluations.
- Ensuring impartiality and transparency in all processes.

### 3.1 Ideal Composition

The board ideally includes:

- Open Source Security and Privacy Expert
- Academic Specialized in Free and Open Source Software
- Open Source Governance Expert
- Legal Professional Specialized in Open Source Licenses
- Linux Community Representative (unaffiliated with specific distributions)
- Organizational Transparency Expert
- Technology Journalist or Open Source Analyst

*Note: These profiles are aspirational. Any independent contributor with aligned values is welcome.*

## 4. Governance Rules

### 4.1 Standard Governance ( $\geq 4$ members)

When the board is composed of **4 or more members**, the following rules apply:

- A **President-Coordinator** is elected annually by majority vote.
- All decisions (including updates to the methodology, special reports, etc.) require a **2/3 majority vote** of all board members.
- Members commit to regular collaboration and attendance at meetings (at least 2 per year).
- Board membership is **non-removable by a single individual** unless disciplinary mechanisms are defined by the board itself.

### 4.2 Founder's Authority in Reduced Board ( $\leq 3$ members)

If the board is reduced to **3 or fewer members**, or in its initial phase:

- The **project founder, Antonino Rosaci**, retains the authority to:
  - **Remove a board member** for justified and documented reasons (inactivity, conflict of interest, violation of conduct).
  - Make final decisions on urgent project matters to ensure continuity.
- This **emergency authority** applies at any time in the future if the board returns to 3 members due to resignations or inactivity.

## 5. Board Member Responsibilities

- Actively participate in meetings and reviews.
- Maintain neutrality and independence.
- Promote the project's mission and integrity.
- Respect confidentiality and collective decisions.

## 6. Voting Procedures

- Each member holds one vote.
- Quorum: At least 3 active members or the full board if fewer.
- Decisions require a **2/3 qualified majority**.
- The president has no tie-breaking privilege.

## 7. Board Presidency

- The board elects a **President-Coordinator** once it reaches at least **5 members**.
- The term lasts **12 months**, renewable.
- The president is responsible for coordinating meetings, collecting proposals, and maintaining transparency reports.

## 8. Resignation Policy

- Members may resign freely, but:
  - If resignation is submitted **before or during the 9 months preceding the next report (published in September)**, a **9-month notice** is required.
  - If resignation occurs **after publication of the September report**, it takes immediate effect.
- This ensures continuity during evaluation and scoring phases.

## 9. Financial Independence and Future Planning

- The project currently operates on a **self-funded basis** by its creator and eventual board volunteers.
- **No external funding** has been accepted or solicited.
- In the future, DTI may define a structure for:
  - Transparent donations
  - Charitable incorporation (e.g., UK CIO status)
  - Public financial reports

Until then, all expenses are transparently supported by contributors.

## 10. Amendments to This Charter

- Can only be amended by **2/3 vote** of the active board members (once formed).
- Proposals must be submitted with at least **14 days' notice**.
- If no board exists or only 3 members remain, the **founder may amend the charter** and must publish a public changelog.

## A. Board Code of Conduct (Initial Draft)

Board members commit to:

- Acting in good faith and in the best interest of the project.
- Maintaining respectful and constructive communication.
- Avoiding conflicts of interest and disclosing any potential external influence.
- Respecting the confidentiality of internal discussions (until public disclosure is agreed upon).

## B. Definition of “Objective Criteria” for the DTI

All evaluations must be based exclusively on the methodology and objective criteria described in the “Methodology” document published on the official DTI website. Any changes to the methodology must be discussed and approved according to the decision-making rules outlined in the “Board Governance” section.

## C. Archiving and Transparency of Board Decisions

All board minutes, votes, and approved decisions will be:

- Archived in a public, version-controlled repository (e.g., GitHub).
- Summarized in the annual DTI report.
- Made available on a dedicated section of the official website.

## D. Financial Contributions and Reporting (Future Framework)

Until a formal legal or financial structure is in place, the project is self-funded by the founder. Once a legal entity or donation system is activated, the following will be implemented:

- A clear policy regarding fundraising and expenditure.
- Periodic and publicly accessible financial reporting.

## E. Resignation and Emergency Governance Clause

In the event that the board is reduced to three members or fewer, full oversight and restructuring authority will temporarily revert to the founder, **Antonino Rosaci**, to ensure project continuity.

Board resignations must be submitted **with at least nine months’ notice before the publication of the next annual report (September)**.

If a resignation occurs **after the report has been published**, no prior notice is required.