Consensus Policy
The World U.P. Foundation

The World U.P. Foundation ("World U.P.") believes that decisions should be made in the best interest of everyone in the organization and community. As such, in alignment with our Bylaws and Ethics Policy, World U.P.'s default decision-making process is achieved through the process of consensus. This Consensus Policy is intended to provide the principles, process, and guidance on achieving consensus.

CONSENSUS PRINCIPLES

Consensus means working with each other rather than for or against each other and making decisions that take into consideration all opinions, ideas and concerns of diverse voices and backgrounds. Through honest and thoughtful listening, World U.P. aims to make decisions that work for everyone and to promote the following principles:

1. **Collective Control.** Consensus enables us to take collective control over the decisions that affect us. Through respectful dialogue and collaboration to meet everyone's needs, consensus empowers all individuals, Board Members, Staff Members, Volunteers, Partners, and Community Members to have as much control as possible over decisions that affect them.
2. **Building A Community of Trust and Respect.** Consensus decisions should meet everyone's most important needs, while finding a balance between a diversity of what people want. Through honest and respectful communication, all members can be honest about what they want, and trust they will be taken seriously. This engagement allows us to know each other better as people, and build open and respectful relationships that are the building blocks of genuine community.
3. **Dispersing Control.** Consensus allows everyone to have control, without having undue control over everyone else.
4. **Making better decisions.** Consensus involves looking for 'win-win' solutions that are acceptable to all. By going beyond the concepts of compromise and unanimity, we are provided the opportunity to weave together everyone's best ideas and key concerns to identify inspiring and innovative solutions.
5. **Inspiring Action.** Group decision and agreement inspires members to act sooner and faster.
6. **Trust & Longevity.** People are also more likely to stay involved in volunteer groups that hear their voices and listen to their needs.
7. **Empowering Diverse Voices.** When only the majority voices rule, only majority perspectives are heard. In consensus, anyone can 'block' a proposal - and prevent it from going ahead - by not giving their consent, providing a safety net for situations where a proposal would seriously hurt the group of people in it.

If these principles are not being met, a complaint or concern should be brought to the World U.P. Board of Directors in accordance with the World U.P. Complaint and Conflict Resolution Policy.

This Policy should be reviewed and updated to adopt additional guidelines and principles as needed.

GUIDELINES FOR CONSENSUS
1. For Consensus to be achieved, the Board must offer a vote, wherein all members of the Board vote to agree or disagree in support of a decision that is in the best interest of the whole group or common goal.
2. The Board of Directors shall take into consideration, the opinions of other Board Members, which include but are not limited to Emeritus Board Members, World U.P. Staff, Volunteers, Consultants, Committee Members and Community Members, Community Partners, as matters of guidance and should be provided weight when making-decisions.
3. In consensus, anyone can 'block' a proposal - and prevent it from going ahead - by not giving their consent. This option should never be used lightly because it takes away the freedom of others to do what they want.
4. Those who block consensus shall share their concern and reason for the block with others. Individuals who block consensus without sharing their cause or concern for further discussion may be overridden by a Board vote.
5. In the instance of a shared cause or concern, it should be identified as potential risks and any of the following actions may be taken:
   a. Collect additional information to be shared to the Board that may validate or mitigate concern;
   b. An action plan may be made to take all steps reasonable to mitigate or avoid the potential negative risks and exploit positive risk;
   c. Identify and Explore alternative solutions or approaches to reach the same goal.
   d. Discuss the context in which the risk may occur and evaluate whether or not the circumstances are the same.
6. Once risks have been identified and evaluated, raise a new or revised proposal for a vote.

Individuals who have an approved conflict of interest in the vote are required to disclose the conflict to the group and remove themselves from the vote.

By definition, in consensus, no decision is made against the will of an individual or a minority. If significant concerns remain unresolved, a proposal shall be blocked and prevented from going ahead.