



## IMPLEMENTING PROVISIONS FOR THE COMMITTEE STRUCTURE – FEDERAL ASSOCIATION OF THE DIGITAL ECONOMY (BVDW) e.V.

Approved by the Executive Committee on 26 June 2025 in Berlin.

### Preamble

Efficient committee work is essential for the BVDW. Committees develop industry and market standards, formulate industry positions and are shaped by the technical expertise of their members.

These implementing provisions for the committee regulations define uniform standards for the various processes within the association and specify existing provisions of the BVDW committee regulations. The standardisation of recurring processes is intended to reduce the time and organisational burden on members and association staff and to make it easier for new members and staff to get started in the work of the BVDW committees. The aim is to improve coordination between the committees through transparent guidelines, thereby avoiding overlapping issues and defining processes clearly and uniformly.

### A. Procedure for new committees

#### § 1. Establishment of new committees

- (1) The establishment of an open working group, closed working group, initiative or lab is carried out exclusively at the request of members or the office<sup>1</sup> by resolution of the Presidium.
- (2) A request by members must be submitted in writing by email to the responsible programme manager at the office and must contain the following information:
  - (i) Type of committee (open working group, closed working group, initiative or lab)
  - (ii) Mission statement with definition, objective and planned activities,
  - (iii) Proposal for the composition of the committee leadership (chair and, if applicable, deputy chair).
- (3) The application should generally be supported by at least five members who are specifically named in the application. The application shall be made in accordance with the template in **Appendix 1** of these implementing provisions.
- (4) Upon receipt of the application by a member, the programme managers shall confirm its receipt and formal completeness in writing by email within five working days. If any information is incomplete, it must be supplemented by the applicant.
- (5) The programme managers shall review the content of the application within 10 working days, in particular to determine whether the member is eligible to submit an application or whether the topic requested is already being addressed by an existing committee in order to avoid duplication of content. If a committee already exists for the requested topic, the programme managers will recommend that the applicant participate in this existing committee. To ensure clarity, the programme managers maintain a central overview of all committees, which is updated at least once a quarter and published on the website.
- (6) If the review is positive, the programme managers forward the application with a recommendation to the management. The management decides within five working days whether to submit the application to the Executive Board.
  - (i) If the management rejects the submission to the Executive Board, the applicants will receive a written rejection with a brief explanation from the responsible programme managers within a further 5 working days.
  - (ii) If the management approves the submission, the application is forwarded to the Executive Board.
- (7) The Executive Committee decides on the application within 10 working days by resolution. The decision of the Executive Committee is communicated in writing by email by the programme managers:
  - (i) If the decision is positive, the applicants will be informed and the responsible programme managers will be named. BVDW members will be informed about the new initiative and invited to participate. This is usually done by adding them to an email distribution list, through which all relevant information is sent. Committee members are the persons listed in the email distribution list.
  - (ii) If the decision is negative, applicants will receive a written rejection with reasons.
- (8) The members of the newly established committee shall immediately convene a constituent meeting at which, if required, the chair of the committee shall be elected.
- (9) An initiative may be converted into an open or closed working group at the request of its members, provided that at least one market-relevant work result of the initiative has been published and a development concept for the long-term significance and further development of the topic has been submitted to the office.

#### § 2. Special features of labs

- (1) Labs are results-oriented and serve to implement specific content, services, products or work results. The work of a temporary lab should be limited to a maximum of 24 months. Upon justified request, the Presidium may waive this time limit.
- (2) A lab is established upon request by an existing working group or initiative by resolution of the Executive Board. The resolution is passed at the respective meeting by a majority vote of the members present. The programme managers coordinate the further process as described in § 1.
- (3) The establishment of new labs within a closed working group shall only be communicated within the respective closed working group responsible.

#### § 3. Special features of association- and cross-thematic working groups

<sup>1</sup> For the sake of consistency with the Articles of Association, the Rules of Procedure and the Implementing Provisions, the term "office" is used here. In everyday communication, the BVDW office is referred to as "Homebase".



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Spokespersons for cross-association and cross-thematic working groups shall be appointed from among the chairs of the participating committees.

## § 4. Advisory boards

Committees may set up independent specialist or project-related advisory boards to fulfil their tasks. The management and the executive committee must be notified of the establishment of an advisory board.

## B. Organisation of committee work

### § 1. Preparation and conduct of meetings

- (1) The responsible programme managers organise committee meetings in close consultation with the respective committee chair. They send out invitations (usually by email), agendas and meeting documents in good time. Meetings are usually held remotely, but can also be held in person or in a hybrid format.
- (2) Programme managers always participate in meetings. They provide organisational support, document results and monitor compliance with the association's rules and regulations. The participation of programme managers in lab meetings is optional. Members of the Presidium, the management and other expert staff from the office may attend all meetings.
- (3) After each meeting, programme managers prepare minutes within 10 days, which include the date, meeting results, decisions and next steps, and send them to the members by email. There is no obligation to take minutes for labs. The lab management decides independently whether and how results are documented and communicated to the lab.
- (4) Programme managers and committee chairs work closely together and exchange all relevant information in a timely manner. The committee chair is responsible for the content of the committee and its meetings. The committee chair forwards relevant information, topics and questions to the office in good time. The programme managers support the committee chair in strategic planning, internal coordination and the preparation of internal and external communication, in particular with the executive committee, the management and other committees.

### § 2. Decision-making, publications/ Publications by committees and positioning of the association

- (1) Committees are quorate regardless of the number of members present. This does not affect the rules of procedure of the closed working groups in accordance with Section B § 2 (5) of the BVDW Committee Rules. These may contain deviating provisions on quorum in individual cases.
- (2) Decisions in committees are made either:
  - (i) in meetings or
  - (ii) electronically by circular resolution via email.
- (3) Resolutions by circular resolution shall be passed within a period of no more than 10 days. Members shall be notified of the deadline.
- (4) The following principles shall apply to the association's positioning and to publications by committees:
  - (i) The association's positions should be presented to the public and stakeholders in an effective and unified manner. The administrative office and the executive committee shall assume a coordinating and leading role in this regard.
  - (ii) Association positions and publications must always have a sound technical and methodological basis.
  - (iii) The association must position itself effectively and promptly on issues relevant to its members and, above all, on current topics, using appropriate output formats (e.g. publications, events) in order to create added value for members and stakeholders. Professional project management in the implementation of output formats ensures the economical use of resources (especially time and finances).
  - (iv) The association is committed to moderating the exchange of opinions and to diversity of views within the association, which are discussed constructively within the BVDW, but not in public.
- (5) In order to implement output formats effectively and at the necessary speed, the responsible programme managers coordinate a time and project plan with the respective committee chairs, which defines milestones and sets binding deadlines for format and completion. The programme managers are generally responsible for project management. Together with the committee chairs, they determine the persons responsible for the technical and content-related development of the publication. The programme managers ensure that the milestones of the project plan are met and actively monitor this until completion.
  - (i) In principle, the jointly agreed project plan is decisive for the time frame until completion. As a guideline, the following time frames should generally be adhered to for different publications:
    - Articles: 4 weeks
    - White papers: 10 to max. 12 weeks
    - Position papers: 6 to max. 8 weeks
    - Studies and collective publications (e.g. magazines) are scheduled depending on the scope of the project. The project plan is decisive here.
  - (ii) If the project cannot be completed within the specified time frame, the relevant committee chairs and programme managers may agree on a revised time and project plan with new deadlines. In the case of publications of particular relevance to the association's policy, the member of the Executive Board responsible for the subject area will be informed of any delays and involved as necessary to expedite completion.
  - (iii) If the project is not completed within the adjusted timeframe, or if the chairpersons of the relevant committees and programme managers believe that a new timeframe and project plan would result in excessive delays, the Executive Board may, after consulting with the committee chairpersons, make a final decision on the type and content of the output format in accordance with the association's interests.
- (6) Before publishing work results, the responsible programme managers shall check the consistency of the work results with existing positions and publications of the BVDW. The communications department of the head office shall also be involved in this process, checking the publication for consistency and conformity with existing association positions. If



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a work result touches on topics that are also dealt with in other committees or are relevant across associations, these committees shall be informed by the programme managers.

- (7) If other committees raise justified objections to the positions or publications, the programme managers will attempt to develop a coordinated BVDW position that is acceptable to all committees by initiating a discussion between the respective committee chairs. This discussion, which should be organised within ten working days, shall be attended by the committee chairs, the respective programme managers and, if necessary, a member of the management board. The aim of the discussion is to develop a joint, consistent position. The results shall be documented by the programme managers and made available to all members of the committees involved for final decision.
- (8) Once a positive decision has been made, the results of the work shall be submitted to the Executive Board for approval. The Executive Board shall decide on approval within five working days.
  - (i) If approval is granted, the programme managers inform the committee leadership. The results of the work are communicated and published by the communications department of the head office in consultation with the committee leadership.
  - (ii) If the Presidium does not grant approval, the Secretariat shall immediately inform the committee chair or the cross-association and cross-thematic working group in writing of the reasons for the rejection. In this case, the work results shall be referred back to the respective committee for further discussion.
- (9) If no common position and agreement can be reached after the initial discussion between the committee management teams, the responsible programme managers shall initiate a second cross-committee discussion within a further ten days. The following persons shall be invited to attend the discussion:
  - the committee chairs of all committees concerned,
  - the responsible programme managers,
  - at least one member of the Presidium.
- (10) If no agreement is reached here, the entire Presidium shall make a final decision on the publication or position of the Association in the respective case, in accordance with the principles set out in paragraph 3.
- (11) If there is a competent cross-association and cross-thematic working group on a topic, the decision shall be taken exclusively within this working group, notwithstanding Section B, § 2 (3). In such cases, individual committees shall not take parallel decisions on the same topic.

## § 3. Cooperation and coordination between committees on projects and technical issues

- (1) If a committee deals with a topic or project that also affects the areas of responsibility of one or more other committees, there is an obligation to inform and coordinate. The committee chairs and the programme managers at the head office are responsible for identifying such overlaps. In case of doubt, the management shall be consulted.
- (2) The programme managers inform the committee chairs involved about the overlap and coordinate an initial coordination meeting. The aim of this meeting is to establish a common working method, avoid duplication of work and define a sensible thematic delimitation or bundling.
- (3) If no mutually acceptable position can be reached within the framework of this exchange, the programme managers shall inform the management. The management shall organise a moderated clarification meeting with the heads of the committees involved and the responsible programme managers within ten working days. The responsible members of the Presidium shall participate in this meeting.
- (4) The aim of this meeting is to agree on a common position or a coordinated approach to dealing with the issue. If no agreement can be reached, the management will prepare a written assessment and forward it to the Executive Board with a recommendation.
- (5) The Executive Board shall make a binding decision on how to proceed within ten working days of receiving the management's assessment. The decision of the Executive Board is binding on all committees involved. The decision shall be communicated by the management to the committee chairs and the programme/ managers involved.
- (6) If an issue arises that affects two or more committees and is of fundamental strategic importance to the association or needs to be coordinated across the association, the heads of the committees involved or the programme managers may propose the establishment of a cross-committee and cross-thematic working group in accordance with Section C § 1 of the Committee Rules. In an existing cross-committee and cross-theme working group, cross-committee issues are coordinated and decisions on these cross-committee issues are taken exclusively within this working group. In this case, individual committees do not take parallel or divergent decisions on the issue in question.
- (7) If the work of a closed working group must be kept confidential due to strategic considerations or developments that have a lasting impact on the business models of the participating member companies, the first project steps may be carried out confidentially within the closed working group and must in this case be disclosed exclusively to the Executive Board. A joint decision (closed working group and Executive Board) will be made on when other relevant BVDW committees will be informed about the project work and, if necessary, involved.

## C. Financing regulations

- (1) The committee management may encourage the office to seek third-party funding to cover the costs of implementing/realising projects/labs. This may take the form of subsidies/special levies on members/participants or sponsorship.
- (2) Income from projects/labs is association funds and is used exclusively to ensure the provision of the association's services. If income is required to continue the project from which it originates, the executive committee may, on the recommendation of the management, decide otherwise. The application must state the reasons for earmarking the required income.



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## **D. Procedure for dissolving committees**

- (1) Committees shall be dissolved by:
  - (i) Resolution of the members of the committee ( $\frac{3}{4}$  majority of the committee members),
  - (ii) Proposal by the programme managers or management to the Presidium.
  - (iii) Reasoned decision of the Presidium
- (2) In the event of a proposal by the programme managers or the management or a resolution to dissolve the committee by the Executive Committee, the office shall inform the committee concerned in writing by email at least four weeks in advance. The committee shall be given the opportunity to submit a written statement. The statement of the committee shall be taken into account by the Executive Committee when passing its resolution.
- (3) After the Executive Board has made its decision, the office shall inform all members in writing by email of the dissolution.
- (4) Temporary labs shall be dissolved automatically as soon as the project is completed. The programme managers shall inform the members and the management board in writing and archive the results. If necessary, the members of the lab may apply for a justified extension of the lab work.

## **E. Final provisions**

These implementing provisions shall enter into force upon approval by the Executive Board. Amendments also require the approval of the Executive Board and shall be communicated by the office. The provisions are binding for all members of the BVDW and shall be published on the association's website.