

# Digital Nations Charter

1. The Treasury Board of Canada Secretariat, the Agency for Digitisation of Denmark, the Ministry of Economic Affairs and Communications of the Republic of Estonia, the National Digital Affairs Directorate in the Ministry of Economy of Israel, the Ministry of the Interior and Safety of the Republic of Korea, the Office of the Presidency of Mexico, the Department of Internal Affairs of New Zealand, the Ministry of State Modernization and Public Administration of Portugal, the Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, and the Office of the President of the Oriental Republic of Uruguay, hereinafter individually referred to as “the Participant” and collectively as “the Participants” have reached the following understanding:
2. The Participants have mutually agreed to form the Digital Nations (DN), a group of the most digitally advanced governments in the world, to provide a focused forum to share best practices, identify how to improve the Participants' digital services, collaborate on common projects and to support and champion our growing economies.
3. The Participants have committed to working towards fulfilling the following principles as we advance our digital development, acknowledging that they will not be able to meet all the criteria on joining:
  - 3.1. User needs - Strive to ensure that the design and delivery of public services through the use of data, digital and other technologies, takes a human-centred approach, and promotes the global public good
  - 3.2. Necessary safeguards - Strive to ensure that the design, development and deployment of digital technologies, especially the use of data and artificial intelligence, is:
    - a. subject to adequate and necessary safeguards to uphold public trust, and protect personal data, and
    - b. underpinned by human rights, and guided by effective ethical, legal, or other frameworks
  - 3.3. Open standards - Promote interoperability of digital technologies, including by adopting a credible royalty free open standards policy
  - 3.4. Open source - Strive to create future Government systems, tradecraft, manuals and standards as open source and shareable between Participants
  - 3.5. Open markets - Promote competition in digital markets, for all enterprises regardless of size, including in government procurement, encourage and support a dynamic start-up/scale-up culture in the digital and technology sectors, and promote sustainable economic growth through open markets

- 3.6. Open government - Be a member of the Open Government Partnership, promote digital technologies to facilitate transparency and citizen participation, and use open licences to produce and consume open data
  - 3.7. Digital inclusion and accessibility - Strive to ensure the opportunities and benefits offered by digital tools, technologies and services are available to all by taking inclusive approaches to tackle digital divides, including through efforts to improve connectivity, promote access to digital infrastructure, and support high quality web and other accessibility standards
  - 3.8. Digital skills and training - Strive to support children, young people and adults in developing digital competencies and skills, and also promote innovative learning environments for public servants
  - 3.9. Co-creation and experimentation - Promote a culture of innovation and experimentation where new ideas and experiences take place, including through a multi-stakeholder approach inclusive of industry, academia and civil society's engagement and participation
  - 3.10. Sustainability - Promote a sustainable approach to digital government, make effective use of digital technologies to contribute to climate targets, and strive to reduce the negative environmental impacts of digital operations while delivering responsible, resilient digital services
4. The Participants acknowledge that digital government is evolving and will update these principles as work together refines them, and in the light of new challenges and opportunities.
  5. Each Participant agrees to lead by example and contribute to advancing digital government in other countries, and to work together to help solve each other's issues by sharing best practices and expertise.
  6. The Participants may organize working groups on themes of relevance, uniting experts from member countries to work together on common interests. The goals, outputs, and status of the thematic groups, led by one of the Participants, are to be reviewed on an annual basis.
  7. The Participants' collective goal is to harness the potential global power of digital technology and help each Participant to become an even better digital government faster and more efficiently, through sharing and learning from each other.
  8. The Digital Nations Summit will take place once a year. It will be supported by working-level meetings. These meetings may take place in an in-person, hybrid or virtual format. The Participants are expected to attend and participate in DN meetings. The Participants are supported by a small Secretariat.
  9. The Participants have mutually determined that, commencing in 2023, the Chair of the Digital Nations will rotate on an annual basis and in the following order: Portugal, Denmark, Mexico, Estonia, New Zealand, Israel, Uruguay, Canada, United Kingdom, Republic of Korea. Where necessary, and through arrangements with another Participant, a Participant may request a variation to the abovementioned rotation.

10. Upon consensus, the Participants will jointly establish principles and arrangements for expanding the circle of countries involved. The group will be open to including additional countries that meet the principles as stated above. The principles may iterate and evolve as part of this work.
11. The Participants will decide on a case-by-case basis how any joint initiatives will be funded and resourced.
12. Any differences arising from the interpretation or implementation of this Charter will be settled amicably through consultations and negotiations between the Participants without reference to any third party or international tribunal.
13. Each Participant may, as appropriate, designate another institution(s) to lead and (or) participate in the initiatives.
14. This Charter is not legally binding. It will come into effect on the date of the signature of all Participants, and will continue to have effect for a period of five (5) years. A Participant may terminate its participation by giving three (3) months prior written notice to the Chair.
15. Signed during the virtual meeting hosted in London, United Kingdom on 18 November 2021 in the English language. Each Participant will sign and retain their own copy of this Charter.