

## Principles for Developing Technology for the Third US Social Forum

The following principles were collaboratively drafted on March 26, 2009 in Detroit by approximately 30 representatives of the local organizing committee, local anchor organizations, the National Planning Committee, and [May First/People Link](#). These draft principles were proposed for approval by the National Planning Committee as an urgent initial step to developing the technology for the social forum. Over the course of 10 months, these principles were edited into their final form with input from countless organizers. The [World Social Forum Charter of Principles](#) has been referenced where appropriate. Not only are these principles of technology for guiding the organizing work of the US Social Forum, but they can provide a political platform for organizations and individuals with a strategic approach to online organizing. These principles, with slight modifications, were re-approved for use in the organizing of the third Social Forum in the United States.

1. We provide free and open access to all, including people unable to travel to the forum or organizing meetings. Ease of use must mitigate the online technology divide in addition to the incorporation of multiple means of communication. (consistent with Charter of Principles 3, 8 and 14)
2. The technology that is collectively developed in this environment is useful beyond the Forum itself. It will continue to provide the means to collaborate and share information among participants and their organizations. (consistent with WSF Charter of Principles 2)
3. All technology users and developers commit to transparency, thus empowering cooperation and collaboration at every level of the organizing process. (consistent with WSF Charter of Principles 11)
4. Technology decisions implement and build free and open source software, which is free of corporate control, non-proprietary, and owned and maintained by communities of developers and users. (consistent with WSF Charter of Principles 4)
5. Technology is integrated into the process of organizing. USSF organizers recognize technology as an organizing process in itself. Technology is integrated with offline, face-to-face communications whenever feasible. (consistent with WSF Charter of Principles 14)
6. Multiple languages, accessibility for people with disabilities, and cultural expression informs our decision-making. It is essential that people of color and directly-impacted communities have access. (consistent with WSF Charter of Principles 9)
7. Technology and media is organized by a culturally diverse working group of the USSF, empowering the collaboration across gender, race, class and geographic region. (consistent with WSF Charter of Principles 9)
8. Technology decisions promote a safe participatory experience that allows broad contribution and respects diversity of opinion and experience, while doing no harm to others. (consistent with WSF Charter of Principles 8, 10)
9. Online outreach between participants and their organizations strategically proliferates, shares, and exchanges information about the USSF with blogs, document libraries, FAQs etc. While critically using

popular culture and applications such as Facebook, Twitter & YouTube, the USSF commits their energy to developing free and open source alternatives.

10. Information is power. Participants must have control over their own data. Data policies guide how contacts collected for the USSF are made available for organizing purposes.