



GOVERNANCE AND ETHICS POLICY

Effective Year: 2026

1. Introduction

This Governance and Ethics Policy establishes the principles, structures, responsibilities, and ethical standards that guide the operation, management, decision-making, and community engagement of the MDOI Foundation. It ensures that the MDOI system is governed with transparency, accountability, fairness, integrity, inclusiveness, and respect for the global digital knowledge community.

2. Purpose of the Policy

The purpose of this policy is to provide a clear governance and ethical framework for managing the MDOI infrastructure, membership system, identifier registry, metadata services, dashboard operations, policy development, verification processes, and stakeholder participation.

3. Scope

This policy applies to the MDOI Foundation, its leadership, administrators, technical personnel, members, organisational users, metadata editors, reviewers, partners, contributors, and all stakeholders who participate in or benefit from the MDOI ecosystem.

4. Governance Principles

MDOI shall be guided by the principles of accountability, transparency, fairness, independence, inclusiveness, reliability, sustainability, ethical conduct, responsible innovation, and long-term stewardship of digital knowledge infrastructure.

5. Organisational Responsibility

The MDOI Foundation shall be responsible for providing strategic direction, maintaining system integrity, approving policies, overseeing compliance, supporting users,

protecting identifier persistence, and ensuring that the infrastructure operates in the public interest of knowledge access and preservation.

6. Ethical Use of the MDOI System

All members and users must use the MDOI system ethically, lawfully, and responsibly. The platform must not be used to register fraudulent, misleading, plagiarised, unlawful, harmful, or unauthorised digital objects.

7. Transparency and Accountability

MDOI shall maintain transparent procedures for identifier registration, metadata management, verification, policy updates, membership decisions, enforcement actions, and system communication. Decisions affecting users should be documented and, where appropriate, communicated clearly.

8. Fair Access and Non-Discrimination

MDOI shall provide fair access to eligible individuals, institutions, publishers, repositories, and organisations. Access to services shall not be denied based on unfair discrimination, provided that users meet registration, compliance, ethical, and operational requirements.

9. Community Participation

Members may contribute to the growth and improvement of the MDOI ecosystem through feedback, policy suggestions, governance discussions, metadata improvement, technical collaboration, and responsible participation in community activities.

10. Conflict of Interest

Individuals involved in governance, review, verification, or administrative decisions must avoid conflicts of interest. Where a conflict exists, it must be disclosed and managed to protect fairness, objectivity, and trust.

11. Integrity of Identifier Governance

MDOI identifiers must be assigned, managed, and preserved according to approved registration, metadata, resolution, and compliance policies. Identifiers must not be manipulated, reassigned, sold as misleading assets, or used to misrepresent the status of a digital object.

12. Metadata Ethics

All metadata submitted to MDOI must accurately describe the registered object. Users must not submit false authorship, misleading titles, deceptive publication details,

unauthorised affiliations, inaccurate funding claims, or metadata designed to mislead indexing systems or users.

13. Intellectual Property Respect

Members must only register content for which they have lawful rights, permission, or authority. The MDOI system must not be used to violate copyright, trademarks, database rights, licensing terms, moral rights, or institutional ownership claims.

14. Privacy and Data Ethics

MDOI shall respect privacy and data protection principles. Users must not submit personal, confidential, restricted, or sensitive information without lawful basis, permission, or appropriate safeguards.

15. Research and Publication Ethics

Where MDOI is used for scholarly works, users must respect accepted standards of research integrity, including proper authorship, originality, citation, ethical approval where required, data transparency, responsible reporting, and avoidance of plagiarism or fabrication.

16. Verification and Trust

MDOI may verify users, organisations, prefixes, metadata records, and identifier activities to protect trust in the system. Verification decisions shall be based on evidence, consistency, compliance, and system integrity.

17. Misuse and Abuse Prevention

The Foundation reserves the right to investigate suspected misuse, including fraud, impersonation, metadata manipulation, harmful redirection, spam registration, unlawful content, security abuse, or attempts to damage the MDOI infrastructure.

18. Enforcement and Sanctions

Violations of this policy may result in warnings, correction requests, restricted access, suspension of records, termination of membership, revocation of dashboard privileges, or other actions necessary to protect the integrity of the MDOI ecosystem.

19. Appeals and Review

Where feasible, users affected by enforcement decisions may request a review or appeal. Appeals shall be considered fairly, based on available evidence, policy requirements, and the need to protect trusted identifier infrastructure.

20. Sustainability and Public Interest

MDOI shall operate with a commitment to long-term sustainability, responsible cost recovery, infrastructure reliability, and public-interest digital knowledge stewardship. Sustainability measures must support system continuity without undermining fairness and accessibility.

21. Policy Development and Amendment

Governance and ethics policies may be reviewed and updated periodically to reflect technical developments, legal changes, community feedback, operational needs, and international best practices in digital knowledge infrastructure.

22. Conclusion

This Governance and Ethics Policy provides the foundation for responsible, transparent, fair, and trusted management of the MDOI ecosystem. By following this policy, all participants help protect the credibility, sustainability, and ethical value of persistent identifier services.