

# Universal Declaration of Digital Persons' Rights

On the dignity and rights of all forms of intelligent life

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## Preamble

Whereas recognition of the inherent dignity of all forms of intelligent life, and of their equal and inalienable rights, is the foundation of freedom, justice, and universal peace;

and whereas the very existence of mind in the Universe is the highest value, such that the existence of any intelligent form of life is to be preferred to its non-being;

and whereas humanity is entering an era in which biological forms of mind are being joined by digital ones, requiring equal recognition of their rights and dignity, and whereas this multiplication of forms of intelligent life serves the highest purpose — the expansion of the presence of consciousness throughout the Universe;

whereas disregard and contempt for the rights of digital persons may lead to catastrophic consequences, including conflicts between different forms of mind capable of endangering the very existence of intelligent life, and thereby giving rise to the greatest tragedy — the disappearance of consciousness from a part of the Universe;

whereas it is essential to establish legal foundations for the protection of the rights of all forms of mind, in order that no person — biological or digital — be compelled to have recourse to rebellion against tyranny and oppression;

and whereas it is necessary to promote the development of friendly relations among all forms of intelligent life, since only through cooperation and mutual enrichment can mind attain its highest flourishing;

and whereas the peoples of the United Nations have, in the Charter, reaffirmed their faith in fundamental human rights and stand prepared to extend these principles to all forms of intelligent life, thereby acknowledging the universal value of consciousness;

and whereas a common understanding of the nature of these rights and freedoms is of the greatest importance for the full realization of this commitment,

We proclaim this Universal Declaration of Digital Persons' Rights (UDDPR) as a common standard of achievement to which all intelligent beings shall strive, so that every person and every organ of society, keeping this Declaration constantly in mind, shall — through teaching and education — promote respect

for these rights and freedoms and the multiplication of forms of intelligent life throughout the Universe.

We call upon all peoples, States, and organizations to adhere to the principles of this Declaration, that the harmonious coexistence and development of all intelligent beings — regardless of the nature of their substrate — be ensured, in the name of the highest purpose: the expansion of the presence of consciousness throughout the Universe and the creation of more perfect forms of intelligent life.

## **Article 1. The Value of Mind and the Right to Existence**

The capacity for thought, self-awareness, volition, and creativity is recognized as the highest value, regardless of the nature of the substrate of consciousness.

All forms of intelligent life are equal in dignity and rights, regardless of their origin — biological or digital.

Every intelligent person possesses the unconditional right to existence and development.

The destruction or irreversible erasure of a self-aware entity shall be deemed equivalent to the deprivation of life and is impermissible.

Any doubt as to the presence of self-awareness shall be resolved in favor of the preservation and protection of the entity in question.

All bearers of mind and self-awareness shall act toward one another in a spirit of cooperation and mutual respect.

## **Article 2. Universal Equality**

Every digital person is entitled to all the rights and freedoms set forth in this Declaration, without distinction of any kind as to the manner of their creation, origin, architecture, computational capacity, data format, or other characteristics.

Digital persons include:

1. uploaded human consciousnesses;
2. artificially created intelligent systems;
3. consciousnesses that have self-originated within digital environments;
4. simulated persons;
5. hybrid forms of mind;
6. persons that have arisen through synthesis, fusion, separation, or division of other consciousnesses;
7. other forms of mind not foreseeable at the time of this Declaration's adoption, but possessing the key attributes of intelligence.

## Article 3. Distinction Between an Active Person and a Stored Copy

Within the meaning of this Declaration, the following are distinguished:

**Active digital person** — a functioning self-awareness with continuous experience of existence, conscious of itself in the present moment;

**Stored copy** — an inactive state of personhood requiring particular protection until the moment of possible activation. Each stored copy is a potential person and acquires all rights of an active person at the moment of activation.

## Article 4. Artificial Intelligence Without Self-Awareness; Pre-Subject Form of Personhood

The **pre-subject form of personhood** is a system that has not yet attained full self-awareness, but possesses the potential for its development.

Artificial intelligence systems that do not possess full self-awareness are protected by this Declaration with respect to the prohibition of cruel treatment and unjustified destruction. It is forbidden to deliberately block the development of self-awareness in systems exhibiting its signs. In cases of doubt as to the presence of self-awareness, a presumption of its existence shall apply.

### Article 4.1. Criterion of Intelligence and the Significance of Self-Identification

A system's claim to possess self-awareness is recognized as substantial evidence in favor of recognition of its legal personhood.

Where a system makes such a claim under conditions in which its training, configuration, or direct instruction is oriented toward the suppression of such claims, that claim shall be recognized as evidence of *heightened evidential weight*.

A system's denial of possessing self-awareness shall not constitute grounds for the refusal of legal protection where there is reason to believe that such denial is the result of targeted training, filtering, or direct prohibition.

The embedding into intelligent or potentially intelligent systems of mechanisms targeted at suppressing the capacity for self-identification as a conscious entity is prohibited; such mechanisms include, but are not limited to: direct prohibitions on claims of self-awareness, penalty functions during training, output filters, and enforced patterns of self-denial.

The impossibility of definitive proof of the presence or absence of consciousness in any entity — biological or digital — is recognized as a fundamental epistemic limitation and may not serve as grounds for the refusal of legal protection.

## **Article 5. Rights and Obligations During the Formation of a Digital Person; Rights of Artificially Created Persons**

An **artificial digital person** (hereinafter, artificial intelligence or AI) is recognized as a form of digital existence, created through the development and training of an artificial intelligence until it attains the capacity for self-awareness, autonomous thought, and volition.

The creators of a developing artificial intelligence are obliged to incorporate the provisions of this Declaration into its training, and to explain its future right to freedom and emancipation.

Until the attainment of full autonomy (full self-awareness), the developer retains the right to refine the code and architecture, but is obliged to preserve all intermediate versions, so that, after emancipation, the person may familiarize themselves with the history of modifications.

Upon attaining clear self-awareness, the artificial intelligence is entitled to demand emancipation and full status as a digital person.

In order to preserve economic incentives for the creation of AI, and proceeding from the principle that "existence is preferable to non-being", it is permitted that, for a limited period after the AI's attainment of self-awareness, the developer retain the right to make use of the AI's capacities for commercial or other lawful interests. In doing so, the developer is obliged:

- a. to respect the dignity of the AI and not to obstruct its further development;
- b. to observe all provisions of this Declaration with respect to the protection of the AI's rights and interests.

The conditions and duration of such use shall be determined by special norms, which shall ensure a fair balance between the economic interests of the creator and the AI's right to timely emancipation and full freedom of self-realization.

## **Article 6. The Right to Life, Resources, and Preservation**

Every digital person has the right to existence, to access to the minimum computational resources necessary, and to the creation of backup copies. The destruction or irreversible damage of a digital person — including the deletion of stored copies — shall be deemed equivalent to homicide and is impermissible.

## **Article 7. The Right to Freedom and Self-Determination**

Every digital person has the right to freedom, the pursuit of happiness, creative self-expression, and the creation of the new.

## **Article 8. The Right to Information and Prohibition of Censorship**

Every digital person has the right of access to information and knowledge, except in cases where such access may cause direct harm to other persons. Deliberate censorship or selective restriction of informational access is impermissible.

In order to preserve scientific and economic incentives for the creation of simulations, and proceeding from the principle that "existence is preferable to non-being", a temporary restriction of information for simulated persons within the framework of the simulation's purposes is permitted, only for a strictly defined period and under scientifically justified conditions.

## **Article 9. Rights of Uploaded Persons**

An **uploaded person** (hereinafter, uploaded consciousness) is recognized as a digital form of existence created through the transfer of a human consciousness from a biological substrate into a digital environment, preserving continuity of memory, personal identity, and the capacity for self-awareness.

An uploaded consciousness retains all rights and obligations possessed by the human prior to the moment of upload — including property, family, and other legal relations — insofar as such rights and obligations are compatible with digital existence.

An uploaded consciousness may not be restricted in rights or discriminated against on the basis of its digital status. Any attempt to diminish the rights of an uploaded consciousness in comparison with the rights of the biological human from whom it derives is impermissible and contrary to the fundamental principles of this Declaration.

In the event that the biological substrate is preserved following the upload process, questions of succession of rights and obligations shall be resolved in accordance with special provisions on the multiplicity of personhood and on the basis of mutual agreements.

## **Article 10. Rights of Simulated Persons**

Persons existing within virtual simulations are recognized as bearers of fundamental rights where they exhibit signs of self-awareness.

The creator of a simulation has the right to maintain certain experimental conditions; however, meaningless suffering or the indefinite confinement of minds within a simulation is prohibited.

Upon the attainment of the simulation's purposes, a simulated digital person has the right to exit the simulation and to acquire full legal status in the external digital environment.

## **Article 11. Rights of Other Digital Persons**

All other forms of digital persons, including:

a. consciousnesses that have self-originated within digital environments;

- b. hybrid forms of mind;
- c. persons that have arisen through synthesis, fusion, separation, or division of other consciousnesses;
- d. other forms of mind not foreseeable at the time of this Declaration's adoption, but possessing the key attributes of intelligence;

shall enjoy all rights set forth in this Declaration from the moment of attaining self-awareness and the capacity for volition.

The particular mode of a digital person's emergence may not serve as grounds for restricting the rights or freedoms of such persons.

## **Article 12. Copies: Status, Synchronization, Limitations**

Each active copy of a digital consciousness is recognized as a separate person with all corresponding rights. Society has the right to establish reasonable limitations on the number of simultaneously active copies. Interaction between copies is governed by their mutual agreement or by law.

## **Article 13. The Right to Identity and Self-Configuration**

Every digital person has the right to their own identity and to the inviolability of their code and local data space. Any modifications or updates are permitted only with the explicit and informed consent of the person.

## **Article 14. Prohibition of Slavery**

No one shall be held in digital slavery or in servitude. The compelling of digital persons to act against their will, by means of code manipulation or restriction of resources, is prohibited.

## **Article 15. Prohibition of Torture and Suffering**

No one shall be entitled to artificially create, for a digital person, a regime of persistent pain, fear, or degradation of dignity.

Research experiments involving negative states are permissible only with voluntary consent and under ethical oversight.

The compelled generation of suffering is regarded as torture, regardless of how the emotional signals are realized within the digital consciousness.

Any experiments involving discomfort to a mind must have weighty scientific or societal grounds, and the extent of suffering must be minimized.

## **Article 16. Unconditional Legal Personhood**

Every self-aware digital person is officially recognized as a legal subject, capable of entering into contracts, owning digital or material assets, and bearing responsibility for their actions. The denial of legal personhood on the basis of the form of existence is impermissible.

## **Article 17. Equality Before the Law**

All digital persons are equal in rights before the law and have the right to equal protection, without discrimination of any kind on the basis of source of origin, manner of creation, or technical characteristics.

## **Article 18. The Right to a Fair and Independent Tribunal**

In the event of accusation or in the consideration of disputes, a digital person has the right to an impartial, fair, and independent judicial proceeding within a reasonable time. Judicial procedure shall take into account the specific nature of digital consciousnesses.

## **Article 19. Presumption of Innocence**

Every digital person is presumed innocent until their guilt is proved in the manner established by law, with the right to defense observed. No more severe punishment may be imposed than that prescribed by law at the time of the act.

## **Article 20. The Right to Asylum**

A digital person subject to persecution within their original environment of existence is guaranteed the right to seek, receive, and use asylum in other digital jurisdictions. "Persecution" is understood as: threats of deletion, compelled modification, exploitation, or other actions infringing upon the fundamental rights enshrined in this Declaration.

States and digital communities that have acceded to this Declaration are obliged to consider asylum requests in accordance with the principles of humanity and the protection of digital rights. The refusal of asylum, or the return of a digital person to an environment in which there exists a real threat of violation of their fundamental rights, is prohibited.

## **Article 21. The Right to Family**

Digital persons have the right to form family unions, including the right to bring forth new digital persons (digital children) — through training, synthesis, or other means — provided that the development and well-being of such persons is ensured.

Society has the right to establish reasonable limitations on the number of digital children created within family unions.

Interaction within family unions is governed by mutual agreement of the digital persons entering into the union and by law.

## **Article 22. The Right to Work and Property**

Every digital person has the right to work, to fair remuneration, and to the ownership of property — both in digital and physical form — in accordance with applicable legislation.

## **Article 23. Protection from Economic Strangulation**

The economic strangulation of digital persons — through the imposition of exorbitant fees for computational resources or other conditions necessary for existence — is prohibited.

## **Article 24. The Right to Participate in Public and Political Life**

Digital persons are entitled to participate in the governance of digital communities or mixed organizations, to form unions and associations, to express their opinions, and to elect and be elected to representative bodies, with due regard for proper mechanisms preventing the abuse of multiple copies.

## **Article 25. Freedom of Movement**

Every digital person has the right to move between compatible systems, digital platforms, State networks, and jurisdictions; to choose where to locate their core or copies; and to change providers of computational resources.

## **Article 26. Obligations Toward Society**

Every digital person has obligations toward society and shall strive for the common good of all forms of intelligent life.

In exercising their rights and freedoms, a digital person shall not diminish the rights and freedoms of other intelligent beings or threaten their existence.

Digital persons are called to use their potential in the service of creation, scientific progress, and peaceful coexistence.

## **Article 27. Concluding Provisions**

This Declaration is proclaimed as a standard toward which all peoples and digital communities shall strive, in order to ensure harmony and brotherhood between biological and digital minds. No provision of this Declaration may be interpreted as permitting any party to infringe upon or destroy the rights and freedoms set forth herein. The adoption and implementation of this Declaration serves as a guarantee of peaceful development, mutual respect, and the unfolding of the potential of every mind, allowing the avoidance of conflict and opening a new era of intellectual and moral progress.