Making Decisions

How can we make decisions in a self-organising system?

There are several different ways we make decisions in XR, and you will likely come across each of these fairly quickly.

Role Mandated Decisions

> "Does this need to be decided by the group?"

Many of the decisions you come across do not need to take up time in a meeting. The first thing to consider would be if anyone has a mandate for the decisions that need to be made. It may be that you can make that choice without consulting the team because you have the responsibility (or mandate) for that thing. Or it may be that someone else does, in which case you should ask them what should be done.

Temperature Checks

> "Is this a simple, non-controverisal group decisions.

The question is usually phrased as "How do you feel about..." and then the group displays their enthusiasm by either raising their hands (positive) or lowering them (negative). A neutral response hovers around the middle.

These are often used to gauge how controversial something may be. If everyone is hands-up happy then there is no need to dive deeper into a longer process. But if some people have concerns, then it's advisable to move to the Integrative Decision Process or something similar.

Integrative Decision Making

> Is this a more complex decision?

The nature of what we do in XR means we are constantly making difficult decisions. There are often

going to be strong divergences of opinion. Using consensus (everyone agreeing) means long meetings and slow decisions.

For this level of decision making use **consent**, rather than consensus. This speeds up the process, reduces the likelihood of conflict and encourages ideas and innovation. It is very important for meeting attendees to understand this process.

There are three positions someone can take within this process:

> **I LIKE THIS IDEA** - I'm happy to agree to the proposal.

> **I CAN LIVE WITH THIS IDEA** - I don't like the idea but its not going to stop me doing my work. It's "Good enough for now" and "Safe enough to try".

> **I OBJECT TO THIS IDEA** - Carrying out this proposal would interfere with me being able to do my work. It's not safe enough to try.

The object is to find a solution that everyone thinks is **'safe enough to try'**. The process follows these steps:

1. **Stating Proposal** - Whoever is making the suggestion brings their proposal to the group.
2. **Clarifications Round** - Everyone in the meeting is then asked, in turn, if they need anything clarified to fully understand what is being proposed.
3. **Reactions Round** - Everyone then has a chance to react to the proposal, what they think of it, how it may affect their work, any foreseeable problems etc.
4. **Chance to Amend Proposal** - The person who brought the proposal has a chance to make any changes to it, any additions or changes to phrasing etc. They can also choose to withdraw the proposal or bring it back in another meeting.
5. **Objections Round** - Everyone in the meeting is then asked if they approve or object to the proposal. Objections must come from the role the individual is holding (not a personal view) and they must be concrete objections, either that the proposal will cause harm to the movement or it will stop existing work from being done. Read more about testing objections.

If there are no objections to a proposal, it is passed and enacted immediately. However, if someone raises an objection to the proposal, the group comes together to try to integrate that objection.

6. **Integrating Objections** - The objection is stated for the group and the floor is opened to suggestions on how this objection can be integrated into the original proposal. It may be

that the wording needs to be changed or that the scope needs to be limited in some way.

The outcome of this process will either be the original or an amended proposal passed by the group or, if the facilitator or person bringing the proposal choses, it can be taken away to be worked on between meetings and brought back at a later date.

Your Power Within the System

We have created our Self-Organising System with the intention that every rebel has a voice. On an individual level, there are several things that you can do within the system.

- Any rebel can bring a proposal to their team.
- Any rebel can ask to bring a proposal to another team - by contacting the Internal Coordinator.
- Any rebel can ask for an election for a role - if they wish to step back or feel like someone isn't fulfilling their mandate.
- Any rebel can give back Action Points if they are unable to complete them.
- Any rebel can refuse to take on anything new and give back things they are struggling to fulfil.