



# Democracy Champion handbook ————— 2018



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**Democracy Champion: A person willing to defend democracy and stand together with others to advance better community decision-making for all.**

**There are many ways to be a democracy champion: through an interest and desire to learn; small conversations with close friends; social media advocacy; or spreading the word on stage in front of thousands of people.**

**We welcome you and invite you to find your own way of connecting with the movement. Democracy champions come in all forms and bring their own styles.**

**We're very glad you're here.**

When we begin the conversation about community decision-making, we invite people to consider three questions:

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- 1. Is there any group, party, or organisation with which you agree on every issue, all the time?**
- 2. Does your system of government give everyone the same opportunity and access to provide equal self-determination?**
- 3. In representative government, do your elected representatives enact the will of the people every time on every policy decision?**

If you answered no to any of these, you must seriously consider the quality of your democracy. If you answered no to more than one, then, unfortunately, you must accept that you do not live in a democracy at all.

We live in a world where we can have one-to-one, one-to-many and many-to-one conversations, and instantly access more information than at any other time in human history. There is no longer any reason to persist with a representative government designed in a time and for a world that no longer exists.

The legacy system of community decision-making that we've dragged into the 21st century has stopped being fit for purpose; it has been gradually eroded to a point where it no longer serves the single purpose for which it was intended.

In a world of steam trains and telegrams, decentralised democratic options were not feasible – it made sense for the community to defer its decision-making power to an elected representative to enact its will.

For the most part, communities are no longer constrained by geographic distance, limited access to information or reduced ability to be heard. There is no need to hand over our self-determination to another in the hope that they will act in our best interests until, years down the track, we have another opportunity to vote to keep or replace them.

Political scientists argued that the classic Westminster model allowed the cream of society to rise to a ruling position. That is no longer the case and actually works against democracy because of the privilege (and therefore vested interests) enjoyed by wealthy and people who already have power within the system.

MiVote is a community decision-making platform that provides equal, instant access to everyone so that, if they choose, they can make an informed choice, on every issue, every time, and build the future the community wants, together.

The next generation of democracy is here.

### Why does MiVote exist?

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## Democracy is not what it used to be - nor what it needs to be.. MiVote is here to lead the charge to a new kind of democratic decision-making. [Are you in?](#)

MiVote exists to ensure we all have an equal and informed influence on the decisions that affect our lives. We are a global not-for-profit democratic movement made up of people from communities around the world who want a say on the future they envisage for their community, issue by issue.

We are one of many groups around the world working to advance democracy. The ecosystem of democratic innovators brings together multiple perspectives and approaches, from tech-based direct democracy voting apps, to citizen juries and sortition approaches, and machine intelligence-driven policy and legislative development. MiVote collaborates and cooperates with everyone who is working towards the same goal we are. Our mission is to empower community members around the world with self-determination to design their own future, together.

MiVote is not a party. It is a model for community decision-making that connects people and ensures their views are heard, represented and the consensus will of the community is enacted.

**No career politicians. Ever.**

**No special-interest influence or corporate money. Ever.**

MiVote-powered independent candidates are held accountable to the community they are elected to represent – on every issue, every time.

MiVote supports democratic integrity, and our chosen technology reflects this.

In a complex world, citizens no longer fit into partisan boxes (left / right, blue / red) on every policy issue. There is not even another person who will agree with you on everything, so, why pretend that political parties can represent all that you stand for?

Partisan politics is designed to divide the community. It is exploited by entrenched power and money. Party ideology presupposes that those in power know the answer to every question before it has been asked, and that they abide only a single possible way to solve a challenge.

By contrast, MiVote has no partisan ideological position on an issue. Instead, MiVote is guided by the facts, subject matter experts and community

representatives to outline ways to approach each issue. These possible destinations – future outcomes towards which the community could work – are served to voters in the MiVote app alongside digestible explainers, detailed discussion papers and even the source material, so they can explore the options as deeply as they choose.

Where traditional party politics forces you to pick a side, the MiVote model of community decision-making looks for community consensus. We don't ask you to identify your preferred destination, or even to rank them.

**Instead, MiVote asks, for each individual destination:**

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# “Can you live with this?”

**This is a new approach to decision-making, one that recognises individuals can make decisions for themselves based on quality information.**

## MiVote Values

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**MiVote is underpinned by seven values. These are at the heart of everything we do as we build the next generation of community decision-making.**

### 1. Equality

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When we all start in the same place, in the same environment, we each have an equal part to play in the decisions that affect us.

Equality in MiVote means that no voice is louder or softer than another. It also means that I am free to make my choices in my way, and you are free to make your choices in your way, with neither of us imposing our world view on the other.

Equality is achieved when the systems and constructs that favour one person over another – such as wealth, networks, tribal ideologies – are removed.

MiVote does this through structures that actively seek to eliminate the undue influence of any single person or group while elevating the opportunities of groups and voices that might be overlooked, until all the voices reach equilibrium.

You can make your decision, in your way, for you – just like everyone else.

### 2. An informed community

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We understand more about the world now than ever before. Not only that, but we are also able to consider these facts in context and apply knowledge from the past to better consider the potential futures our choices may deliver.

We also have greater access to platforms for sharing knowledge. Technology allows us to have one-to-one, one-to-many and many-to-one conversations instantly.

Great things happen when you strip away partisan ideology, half-truths, spin, political and commercial agendas, and seek to eliminate confirmation bias, selection bias, and tribal dogma. You find facts, and in context.

We believe treating people with respect and acknowledging their capacity for critical reasoning and thoughtful reflection, and arming them with information creates a powerful tool for making good decisions, together.

The MiVote approach is simple: give people the unbiased information they need to make their own informed decision, then let them enact it.

### 3. Accountability

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Politicians are becoming increasingly accountable to everyone EXCEPT the community they are elected to serve.

In a representative system of government, democracy cannot exist unless those elected representatives are held to account on three things:

- Ensuring their community has the best information available and is able to access and understand it.
- Asking the people what they want – based on the facts, in context.
- Delivering what the people decide they want. All-in, together.

Being accountable means it is a condition of serving that you uphold these three priorities, always, or incur the consequences of failing your responsibility.

### 4. No special-interest or corporate money or influence

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The influence of money in politics is poison to democracy.

“Policy for sale” is a direct attack on the notion of democracy and on the community itself.

In a functioning democracy, where every person has an equal and informed say on the decisions that matter to them, policy decisions must not be made based on who can afford to buy the loudest voice.

MiVote does not accept money from business, special interests, or lobby groups. This means that we do not and will not allow special-interest,

lobby group or corporate money to influence our voting model, the votes, or the crafting of legislation in support of vote results.

We recognise that implementing democracy in representative political systems requires playing the political game, and that requires money. That is why, as a not-for-profit organisation, we welcome contributions from the community. However, these contributions are made in the environment of specific systematic protections that protect the purity of the model.

**Individual contributions only:** Your name and the amount you generously contribute will be published for anyone to see.

**Contributions support the movement – not a vote, or a person, or an outcome.** All the money that MiVote receives goes into the same bucket, where it is then directed to where it is needed to advance democracy. That might be engaging more researchers, setting up more chapters around the world, supporting democracy warriors, running fundraising campaigns, running votes, etc.

Candidates who choose to run on the MiVote platform are able to crowdfund their own political campaigns from their community, but that money is subject to the same transparency requirements. Contributions to a MiVote independent’s campaign are in no way connected to specific votes.

## MiVote Values

### 5. Secularism

Religious faith may inform the way each individual constituent votes on policy issues, but religion itself can not dictate the creation of policy and laws in a genuine democracy. Whether you refer to a faith when making a decision is up to you and you alone, and applies only to you.

While you may refer to a specific doctrine or philosophy in your own life, you may not impose that on anyone else. Given that democracy requires equality for all citizens, policy and legislations must be free from adopting one particular religious view over any other.

### 6. Transparency

Transparency underpins accountability, facts in context, and eliminating third party influence.

- By ensuring that the community can understand the entire vote process and see each step as it happens, we know everyone is able to understand how decisions are made and why.
- When everyone knows what everyone else wants, it becomes impossible for an elected representative to say otherwise.
- Showing where the money comes from and goes to means that money can not influence the process.
- Providing access to all the information and source material used to develop vote content means that anyone can see for themselves where the information has come from and, if they choose, determine for themselves that it's being presented in its most accurate form.

### 7. The people's voice

Every person, on every issue, every time.

People's voices are amplified and empowered by the support of non-partisan, non-ideological systems based on facts and transparency.

Democracy means enacting the informed will of the people. You can't do what people want if you don't know what that is and you can't know what it is unless you ask them.

## MiVote Values

### The birth of a movement

The idea that was to become MiVote blossomed in 2010, when co-founder Adam Jacoby realised that he no longer recognised the world his children would inherit. This was a world where, day by day, the voice of the people was being eroded by partisan ideologies and third-party influence from special interests, lobbyists and corporate donors.

Adam shared his vision with friend Hamish Hughes, and so began seven years (and counting) of evolving the model, speaking with people from all walks of life around the world, tearing it down, building it back up, breaking it and fixing it, to ensure that MiVote is the most democratic model of community decision-making in the world.

In 2014, Adam was introduced to Richard Hames, CEO of Centre for the Future. In addition to applying his considerable wisdom and experience to evolving the model, Richard also took MiVote on to be incubated by Centre for the Future. MiVote as it exists today was born.

### Call to Action

The very heart of our communities is under threat. We no longer live in a society where each person can confidently determine their own path. The idea of self-determination – that we have agency in the decisions that matter to, and affect us – is being eroded by partisan politics, career politicians, corporate money and special-interest influence.

The result is that we no longer enjoy the benefits of democracy. We no longer have a system of community decision-making that holds sacred each person's equal participation and the responsibility of elected representatives to enact the informed will of the people.

We are at the dawn of a new generation of democracy: one that informs, empowers and represents all of us.

Join MiVote's global democratic movement to empower everyone to reclaim their power to decide their own community's future.



**This is how we ‘MiVote’ – by building a culture within our teams and across our chapters that is driven by optimism, enthusiasm, wisdom and tenacity.**

At MiVote, we are guided by our seven Cultural Signifiers:

### 1. Purposeful

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MiVote is focussed on a clear mission objective: advance democracy to enable self-determination for every community member. In everything we do, we act with purpose and intent towards this goal. Be decisive, be bold, be brave, be ambitious.

### 2. Voltron

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Voltron is a cartoon robot from the 80s who defends the universe. Voltron is five robot lions, each piloted by a human, and each with its own capabilities, specialties and weaknesses. These five lion robots could act alone, or combine to form one powerful robot Voltron. In the same way, MiVote is a collection of capable people, groups and communities, each empowered to get their own things done, and, when we need to, we can unify to create a Voltron to take on bigger tasks. The whole is greater than the sum of its parts.

### 3. Imagineering

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Imagineering is a term that we’ve borrowed from Disney that we feel describes how MiVote approaches things. It’s more than solutions focussed, or being driven by excellence. At MiVote we are creative in the way we take on tasks, using the tools available and engineering new ones as needed. MiVote is focussed on getting the job done, harnessing innovation to take us there.

### 4. Courage

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MiVote’s mission is ambitious and difficult, but worthy and achievable. For democracy to thrive, we must forge on against the current power systems and have the courage to stand together to defend self-determination for all. Change takes courage, speaking truth to power takes courage, and building a movement to empower us all takes courage. We draw our courage from our fellow democracy champions, and the communities we hold dear.

### 5. Be Like Water

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Water adapts to and can change its environment. Depending on the circumstance, it can be calm and still, or ferocious and powerful. Water has a natural flow; it finds a path, and when it needs to, forges the path itself. Water carries its own potential and momentum, and responds to its environment without being dictated by it. A single drop of water is harmless, but, over time, it can bore through stone.

### 6. Safe, Supported and Set Up for Success

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MiVote is a community that works to the benefit of all. We create an environment that encourages you to be yourself, to bring what you have to the community and to unleash your best self to thrive on our mission towards better decision-making. MiVote cares about communities and seeks to empower them with the environment, culture, support and tools needed to thrive.

### 7. Candy

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We’re serious about democracy, but that doesn’t mean we have to take ourselves seriously. MiVote is about enjoying the adventure, being a bit cheeky and irreverent, and bringing joy to what we do.

**MiVote comprises four key integrated components that enable one another and propel MiVote forward.**

#### MiVote the Movement

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The MiVote movement is the people and the mission. Together, we become a global movement, each advancing democracy in our communities in our own way.

#### MiVote the Platform

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The MiVote platform is the set of technical services that sits behind the app. The platform connects the movement, model and app. The functions of the platform include the voting technology, content production and delivery, fundraising tools, candidate gymnasium (education and support resources), the MiVote shop (campaign and marketing materials), and MiVoter recognition (so your voice is included in the right conversations). All the technical things that power the movement are included in the MiVote platform.

#### MiVote the App

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The MiVote app is the community's key touchpoint with the movement and the model. It is the technical tool that allows us to communicate content that presents the best possible version of the position, and it ensures secure voting and provides the doorway to the underlying MiVote platform.

#### MiVote the Model

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The MiVote model is the operational rules, frameworks, guidelines and processes that govern the way MiVote behaves. The model is made up of all the interventions that we've discovered through countless conversations and revisions that are fundamental to a thriving democracy.



**“Many forms of Government have been tried, and will be tried in this world of sin and woe. No one pretends that democracy is perfect or all-wise. Indeed it has been said that democracy is the worst form of Government except for all those other forms that have been tried from time to time...”**

Winston Churchill, House of Commons  
11 November 1947

People often use the word “democracy” when they mean representative government. MiVote considers there to be a difference. **We define democracy as enacting the informed will of the people as determined by the majority consensus of the community.**

#### 1. Self-determination – for all of us, all the time.

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Equality means that we all must have an equal voice, equal access and equal influence on the decisions that affect us.

#### 2. Asking, not telling

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You can't enact the will of the people if you don't ask them what that will is. The community's will is an expression of a desired future, not a choice between pre-determined solutions.

Democracy is the natural state of an averaged process of decision-making – one that decentralises power and influence and applies it evenly to all of us in the community. There is

no 'us' and 'them', only a collective of individuals coming together, each with the same opportunity for self-determination. Naysayers might argue that democracy is not the best way to govern society. To them we say: we can't determine that without trying real democracy first!

#### 3. Facts, in context

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In order to make good decisions, we must be armed with good information that is complete and based on facts and evidence. We must also then be armed with an understanding of the potential impacts of those decisions.

#### 4. Accountability

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It's not enough for the community to make the decision; legislators must be influenced by and held accountable to the community they serve, and only the community they serve.



### The erosion of democracy

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**In addition to the fact that the representative model we've had imposed upon us is no longer fit for purpose, it doesn't function even as it was designed. Today's model is obsolete. The world has never seen true democracy, and with each iteration of representative government we move further away from it, pushed by corporate dollars, corrupt politicians, and influence from ideological dogma.**

The community decision-making system that we've inherited has been manipulated and gamed to the point where it no longer provides an equal opportunity of self-determination for us all. Instead, we are subject to a system weakened by undue influence of:

- **Special-interest money**, which gives the loudest voice and the largest influence to those with the most money.
- **Party politics**, which celebrates loyalty and service to a political party and its ideology at the expense of the community.
- **Career politicians**, whose sense of entitlement and self-interest increasingly influences the decisions that they make, often at the expense of the people that elected them as a representative. Politicians are incentivised by the system to protect their power base, even at the expense of the best interests of the community and in spite of their representative responsibility.
- **Partisan ideology**, which presumes to have an answer for every challenge before the question has even been asked - at the expense of solutions orientation, making good decisions a result of luck rather than informed deliberation.

- **Special interests**, who seek to direct policy in their own favour regardless of the interests of the community.
- **Disenfranchisement with government** as the people are further distanced from the decision-making process.
- **Adversarial politics**, fueled by the manipulation of community discussion by exploitation of media channels, ideological partisanship and tribalism.

This creates an environment where community members feel disempowered, excluded, ignored and actively suppressed – because they are. Any proposed solution to our existing methods of community decision-making must identify, address and resolve this.

MiVote exists to advance an approach to community decision-making that empowers, informs and includes everyone in the decisions that craft the future we want, together.

### A new generation of democracy

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**We know more than we ever have, can communicate faster and more easily than ever, and recognise that we are responsible individuals capable of making informed decisions on issues. So we must ask ourselves: why are we persisting with an obsolete model?**

For the first time ever, technological hurdles that prevented a rapid evolution to improved systems have been removed. Distributed ledger technology has opened the doorway to a scalable, secure, accessible model. Every MiVote user can participate with the confidence that their say is recorded anonymously and their vote is counted – and that no one else can see what they supported.

Having identified special-interest money, partisan ideologies and career politicians as the most damaging threats to true democracy, we can design new models that eliminate undue influences that undermine the very communities they claim to serve.

It's time for a social solution to a social challenge. One that we can enhance by applying 21st-century tools that strengthen the methods by which communities make decisions together.

**The next generation of community decision making is here.**

MiVote does not seek to replace the representative system of government, nor the mechanics of government operation. Instead, we want to strip back the corrosion that has attached itself to politics over time. We want to build stronger foundations that centre the community, install it at the heart of the system, and demand that it be heard. A MiVote-empowered community cannot be ignored, cannot be manipulated, and cannot favour one person or group or ideology over another.

## Why is MiVote important?

### Humans of democracy

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Since the birth of the MiVote movement, we've had thousands of conversations – with founders, friends, strangers, and even detractors. We've chatted with bus drivers, school teachers, politicians, civil society advocates, digital security consultants business owners, and everyone in between. Hearing every voice is, after all, the core function of MiVote.

**We often ask a simple question to nudge people to reflect on their current political model:**

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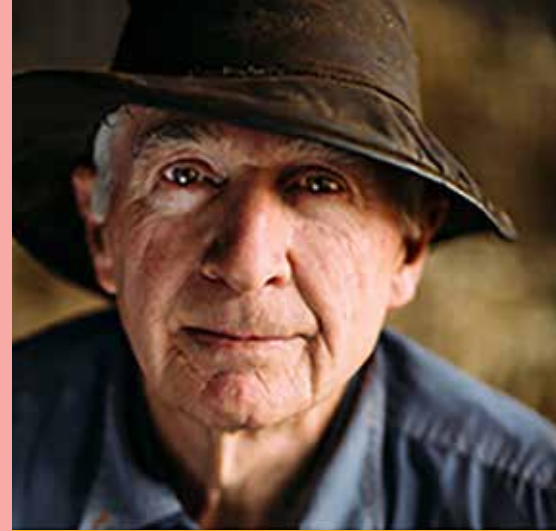
# What bothers you about politics?

Over the course of these thousands of conversations we have learned some very consistent and clear themes. We invite you to consider what concerns you about politics, and read on to see if your ideas are reflected below.

**"The people in power are only interested in staying in power"**

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**"Elected representatives don't represent the community that they're supposed to serve"**



**"The media controls the election"**



**"The system isn't fair"**

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**As we've been learning, thinking, discussing, building, tearing down, rebuilding, and evolving the MiVote model over the past decade, some important themes have emerged.**

We've used these themes to build and test MiVote, to ensure it serves the mission of better community decision making.

**What we've learned is that effective decision-making within that community depends on:**

- Focus on uniting around the areas in which we all agree, rather than dividing over our differences.
- Eliminating the influence of partisan ideologies over the self-determination of the individual.
- Elevating and cherishing the role of accurate information and facts in context at every level of the process.
- Dismantling systems that can suppress voices and replacing them with those that fiercely defend the opportunity of every voice and evidence-based perspective to participate equally at every level.

### Changing the conversation

**The largest group in the 2016 US Presidential election was 'people who did not vote.' How can a government or elected official claim to represent the informed will of the people when the largest group did not even participate in the process?**

MiVote recognises this and understands that people must not only be able to easily participate in their community decision-making, through high utility and accessibility, but must also see value in giving up their time and effort to get involved.

**How do we do that?**

- **We look for the points on which we agree, taking a consensus approach.** By focusing on what unites the community, MiVote invites everyone to consider what they are willing to live with, instead of a combative approach of dismissing anything that doesn't fit into a preconceived ideological box.
- **We look to the future, the long term – not to the next election, but to the next generation.** When you lift your perspective and give the community the opportunity to consider the future we wish to build together, it changes the motivation driving decisions. Instead of politicians campaigning based on a three- or four-year election cycle (or more often the weekly or even daily news cycle), the community is empowered to take a destinational approach and design the future they want in the long term.

- **We look for the truth and the best possible presentation of the information.** Fake news, political propaganda and filter bubbles are all designed to warp a person's understanding of their world. When you eliminate spin, agendas, and commercial motivations and return to facts in context, communities have a chance to really understand the options before them, and the true impacts of a particular choice.
- **We look at each issue individually and on its merits.** The idea that there is one group that reflects our views on every single thing all the time is laughable. Markets around the world are fragmenting. As we become more savvy and informed consumers unlimited by geography, the concept of a single box that fits at least half of a community becomes ever-detached from reality. MiVote intentionally separates issues from ideology to allow each topic to be considered in its own context and on its own merits. Furthermore, the discussion is couched in facts, community consultation and subject-matter expertise, not ideological spin and propaganda designed to push a specific agenda.
- **We eliminate special-interest influence.** When you remove the ability of money and power to direct what information is presented when and to whom, you create an environment where people have access to truth and are able to draw their own conclusions in their own way, driven by facts in context.

## MiVote is not a party

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When we set MiVote up as a registered not-for-profit in Australia in 2016, we presumed that we would eventually register as a political party. In Australia, that's the established way to get people elected.

As we continued to meet and discuss with more people around Australia and around the world, including former and current politicians, farmers, students, lawyers and parents, we realised a key theme of frustration: parties are a huge part of the problem.

Parties are the gatekeepers to elections. Before you can get on a ballot, you must be pre-selected by a party. While in the past independents have struggled to gain traction, recent trends show an increased interest in micro parties and candidates who distance themselves from the party line.

### The typical pathway for a politician in Australia is:

- Study law at university
- Join the Young Liberal or Young Labor group
- Get a job as a staffer in a party politician's office
- Do your time
- Play the game
- Do your time some more
- When you have patiently waited long enough, get nominated for pre-selection by your friends in the party
- Get preselected by your party
- Run as a candidate for your party, using the party platform and talking points
- IF you have a chance of winning your seat, the party will determine whether it's worth putting money and support behind your campaign
- The community only has a choice of the person that the party has already ordained
- If you are elected, you then owe all the people that got you there – in favours and recognition, implicit or implied

- You play the party game so you continue to be supported into the next election
- Because you've invested so much to get to your position, you build a sense of entitlement and fight to hold it
- You are now beholden to your party, its ideologies, party elders and donors, at the expense of the people you are elected to represent

Many politicians unknowingly fall into a mindset of 'I've earned this; this is now my right.' Although they may have chosen a career of selfless public service and started out with the best intentions, the machine is not designed to support this endeavour.

## Busting Fake News and Filter Bubbles

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### The top Google search term the day AFTER Brexit was: 'what is Brexit?'

In both the 2016 US Presidential election and the Brexit vote in the UK, bad actors exploited the platforms we use everyday to distribute carefully-targeted propaganda. Many voters were living in entirely contradictory worlds created by the information to which they were deliberately exposed, and neither were accurate nor grounded in reality.

#### These behaviours are a symptom of two key realities:

# 1.

**We live in our bubbles, carefully cultivated to continually validate our world view.** People emphasise things that confirm their beliefs and diminish the importance of information that counters them. Visit [mivote.org.au/newyorker](http://mivote.org.au/newyorker) for a New Yorker article 'Why facts don't change our minds' that gives a helpful explanation.

# 2.

**The anxiety that is being exploited is real and important.** Many of the people supporting Trump in 2016 reported feeling unheard and concerned for their future, and saw Trump as a solution to a failed political system. Similarly, pro-Brexit voters were over-represented in communities with less opportunity and prosperity.

#### MiVote addresses these two extremely important challenges through a carefully designed model that:

- is driven by facts, in context
- presents clear information in a manner that is easy to consume and filtered against bias
- provides the same content to everyone, in the same way, with no partisan agendas
- ensures every voice is heard and everyone can participate equally in the decisions that matter to them
- ensures every community perspective is considered in the discussion BEFORE the vote.

**When our fears, biases and ignorance are triggered, we can be easily misled by misinformation.**



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# 1.

## Policy team and crowd-sourced topic selection

Anyone can nominate a topic area for consideration on MiVote.

# 2.

## Global research

Peer-reviewed, evidence-based data from around the world.

# 3.

## Community consultation

Subject-matter experts and voices from communities

Any group, organisation or representative body can contribute to content development through a verified submission process.

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# 7.

## Content published in MiVote app

Accessible to all community members.

# 8.

## MiVoters (16 years +) vote

Voting is free and results are cast to blockchain via Horizon State secure ballot box.

Members can vote for one, some, all or none of the four frames presented.

This unique voting mechanism builds consensus and has led to 60%+ outcomes for every vote run since launching in February 2017.

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# 4.

## Framing and content development

MiVote's Policy team consolidates input and distills into four unique destinations outlining potential futures for the community.

# 5.

## Ethics committee review

Internationally distributed ethics team tests content for bias, accuracy and fairness.

# 6.

## Governance committee review

Legal experts per country/region assess frames for compliance with local laws and MiVote values.

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# 9.

## Results are assessed by electorate/region

The frame with the majority support above 60% becomes MiVote's position

# 10.

## Legislators craft laws based on the informed will of the people

Elected MiVote-powered representatives are bound by the majority position of their community to deliver legislation that takes that community towards its desired destination.

**The MiVote Policy Framework is the culmination of seven years of conversations – and counting. It’s a roadmap for true democracy that includes everyone equally, fosters informed decision-making and looks to the future. It guides the way the information is collated, consulted, and consolidated to present the community with the best form of the argument for each perspective, issue by issue.**

This Policy Framework is the secret sauce underpinning MiVote’s world-leading community decision-making model. It has been torn down and rebuilt repeatedly, adapting to new insights, wisdom and criticism, and has grown stronger each time.

The model has evolved with the input of each and every person who has offered feedback, criticism, advice and improvements, under the careful steering of Adam Jacoby and Hamish Hughes. This truly is a model of the people, by the people, for the people.

The Policy Framework has been recognised for its potential and integrity by all kinds of people: world leaders past and present, academic heavyweights, community leaders, lawyers, politicians from all sides, public servants, senior executives from global corporations, friends and strangers in pubs, cafes and lounge rooms across the world.

Of course, we recognise that the model is never perfect, so we commit to share, listen and learn as we continue MiVote’s evolution and build on the most democratic community decision-making model in the world.

## 1.

### Issue nomination, identification and selection

Potential policy vote topics are pooled from across the community.

- **Crowd sourced** - Any community member can nominate a topic for consideration.
- **Current public interest** - Each chapter policy team will consider those topics relevant to the chapter’s community at a given time.
- **General government portfolios** - In order to represent their community in the day to day activities of law-making, elected reps must have an understanding of their community’s position on the broad portfolio areas in government.
- **Candidate and representative requests** - A MiVote-powered independent may request a vote on a specific issue to assist them to better understand and serve the community.
- **Legislative calendar** - The community’s government will have its own calendar of legislative decisions and MiVote-powered independents must be armed with the will of the people relating to that topic as the legislation is crafted.

## 2.

### MiVote Policy Vote Calendar

The MiVote chapter policy team identifies the calendar for votes.

- The order in which votes sit within the calendar is based on the priorities of the community, public interest, and legislative timelines.
- The vote calendar is not published, so as to protect the votes from public campaign and lobbying pressure that could prejudice the vote before it is made public.
- The chapter policy team may adapt the calendar from time to time in response to such things as community demand, legislative needs, or new information.

- The decentralised process of information collation removes barriers and provides an equal and simple pathway for any perspective or information to be included for consideration.
- Contributors must be ‘verified’ by peers and are responsible for ensuring that any information they offer is evidence-based, peer-reviewed and factually accurate.
- Parties found to be submitting inaccurate or misleading information are given one warning and the opportunity to correct their submission.
- If the same party submits inaccurate or misleading information again, they are permanently blocked from submitting anything into the platform.
- Over time, a pool of verified contributors will build a library of information. This library will sit there, ready for the policy team to draw on when the relevant policy vote comes up for consideration.

#### What does the research say?

The chapter policy team collate published information such as research, white papers, and reports to capture the best available understanding of the topic from a macro perspective.

- Research will be drawn from academic sources, industry bodies, government departments and other formal authorities.
- in future, the MiVote platform will engage artificial intelligence to perform this function. The AI will be able to scrape the internet for all content published on a given topic, in any language, test it for accuracy and legitimacy and then serve it up to the chapter policy team for review.

## 3.

### Information Gathering

The chapter policy team canvas all the relevant and available information and perspectives on the policy issue.

#### What do the people say?

- The MiVote platform serves as a submission portal for any group, person, or organisation to contribute their knowledge and perspectives on a given topic, providing a perspective of what’s happening on the ground.
- This provides a platform for specific communities to share lived experiences and have their voice elevated to be equal with every other perspective.

# 4.

## Information Analysis

The chapter policy team develop the vote manuscript.

The chapter policy team collaborate to:

- Consider all of the information and perspectives.
- Identify the four frames driven by the data.
- Identify the best version of the argument for each frame.
- Write the policy manuscript that will form the basis of the information provided to the community in the vote.

The head of policy is not included in this stage; their role is to ensure the integrity of the process, not develop the vote content.

# 5.

## Policy Manuscript Review

The manuscript is reviewed by chapter ethics and governance committees.

The **chapter ethics committee** reviews the manuscript to:

- filter for bias
- ensure the information is accurate and verifiable
- ensure that all the source material is transparent

The ethics check continues in a loop, should the committee need to send the manuscript back to the chapter policy team for review.

The **chapter governance committee** reviews the manuscript to:

- ensure that the potential destinations offered in the four frames can be implemented in that community
- ensure that everything proposed in the frames is within the local laws and constitution.
- guarantee that the information in the manuscript upholds MiVote's values.

The governance check continues in a loop, should the committee need to send the manuscript back to the chapter policy team for review.

The **head of policy** runs a process integrity check to ensure that the manuscript has been approved by both the ethics and governance committees.

# 6.

## Vote Content Production

The manuscript is developed into a suite of assets to make the policy vote content easier to understand and consume.

The Content team are responsible for producing a range of assets that make the information easy to consume and understand. Assets may include:

- Infographics
- Videos
- Charts/diagrams
- Memes
- Podcasts
- White papers

The Policy Director checks the content against the MiVote ethical content guide to ensure that the content limits things like bias, leading language, emotive images wherever possible.

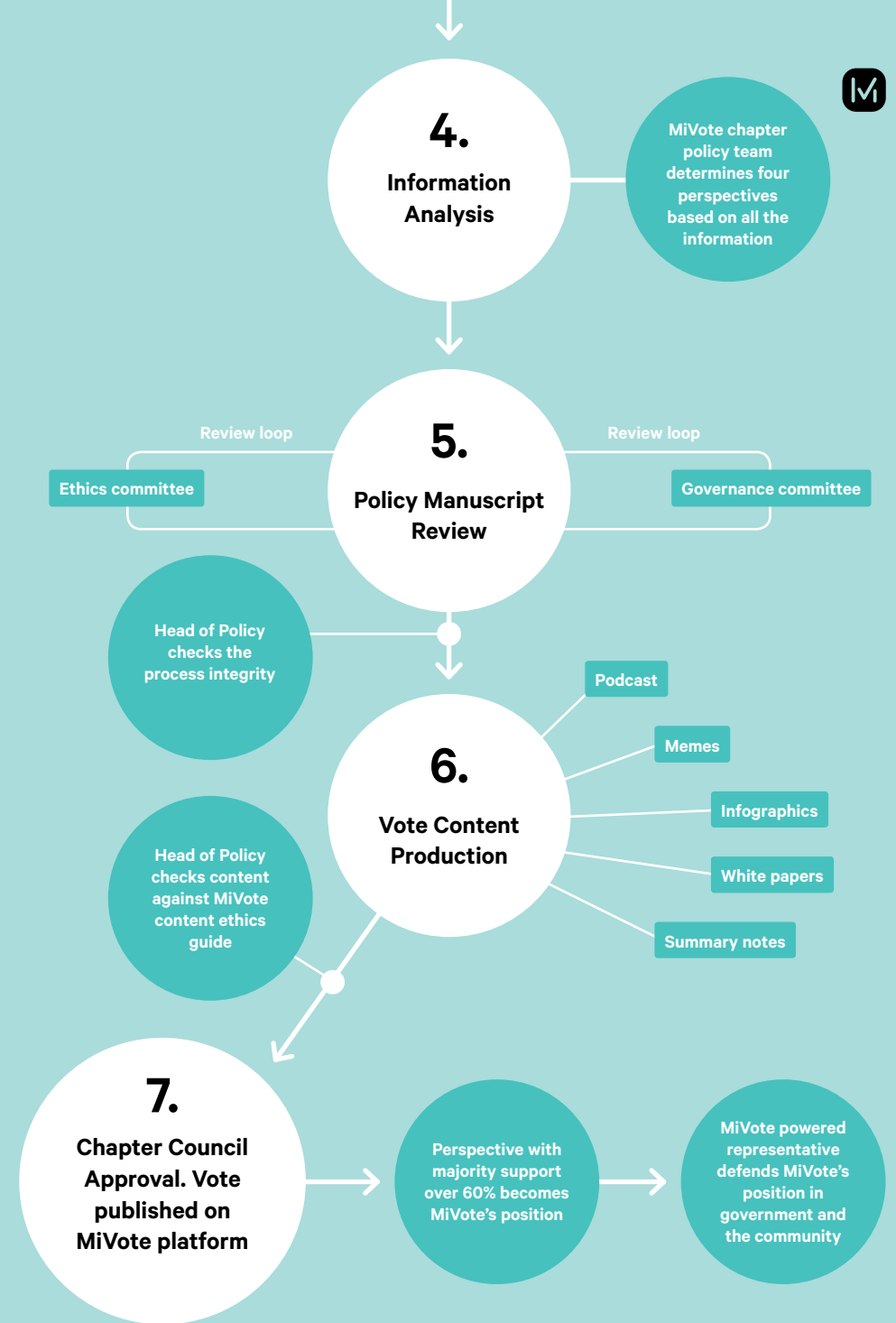
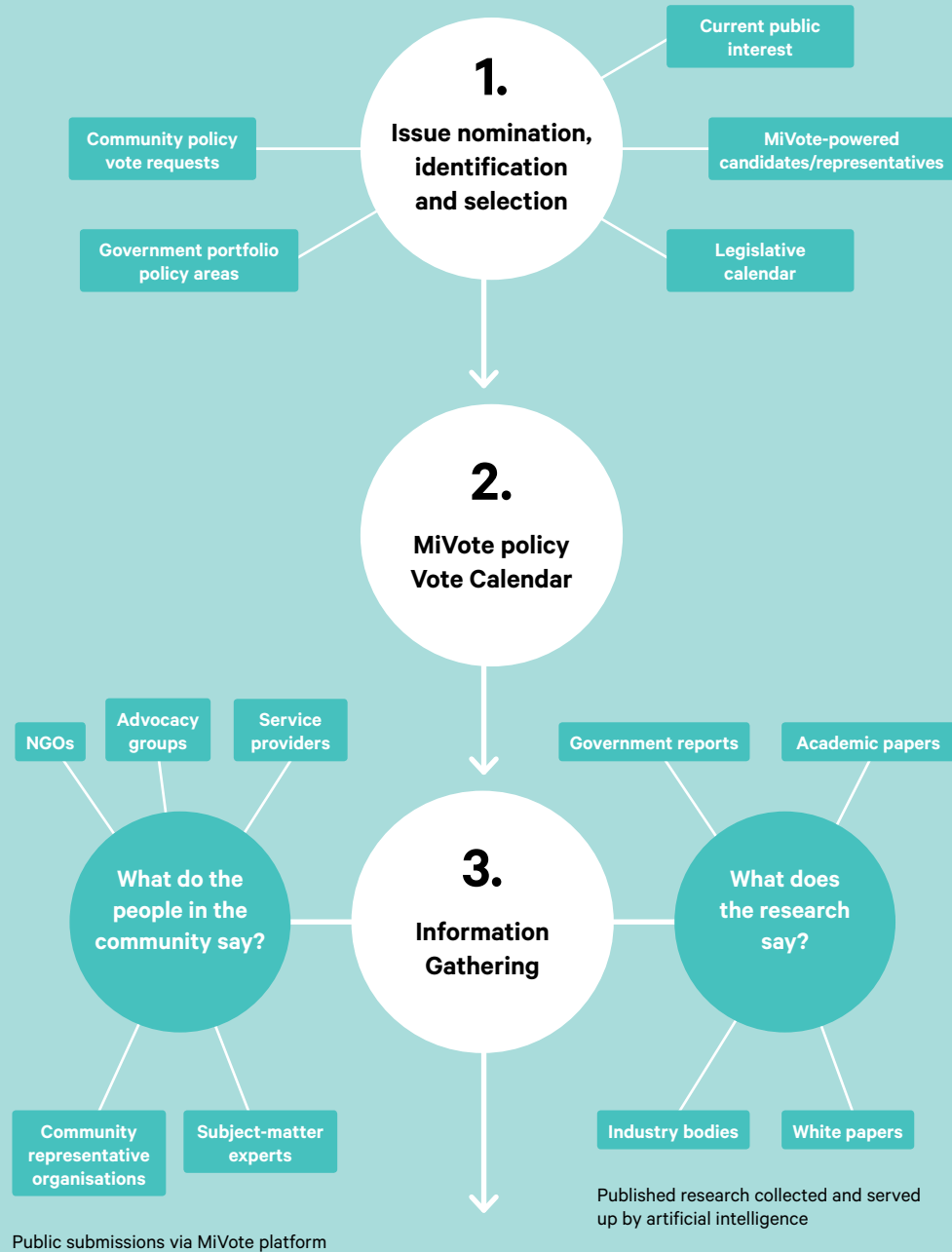
# 7.

## Chapter Council Approval and Vote Publication

Before a vote is published, the Chapter Council is responsible for running a process integrity check to ensure that every stage of the framework has been satisfactorily completed.

- Once approved by the Chapter Council, the vote is published.
- At the conclusion of the vote, the perspective with majority support above 60% becomes MiVote's position on that issue.
  - If no perspective reaches the 60% threshold, or if there is a tie, there is a runoff vote between the two top perspectives.
  - In the event that there is still no majority position above 60%, the issue is decided by a citizen jury.
- The result is published.
- MiVote-powered independent representatives then defend the community's position in government.

# Policy Framework





## The MiVote Governance Framework guides the international deployment and operation of the MiVote model, chapter by chapter.

This framework goes hand-in-hand with the Policy Framework to allow the model to scale and be available for communities around the world.

The foundation of MiVote is enshrined in this framework with a very intentional and specific decentralisation of core functions.

Each country is responsible for deploying the MiVote model locally, with regional chapters established by community members, for community members.

The Global MiVote Council is responsible for the integrity of the model as it is deployed, and it is those local chapters that are responsible for ensuring it best serves the delivery of true democracy for their community.

A representative group of chapter council members sit on the Global council.

Each chapter is responsible for its own governance and ethics committees and vote content is produced chapter by chapter, using the MiVote Policy Framework.

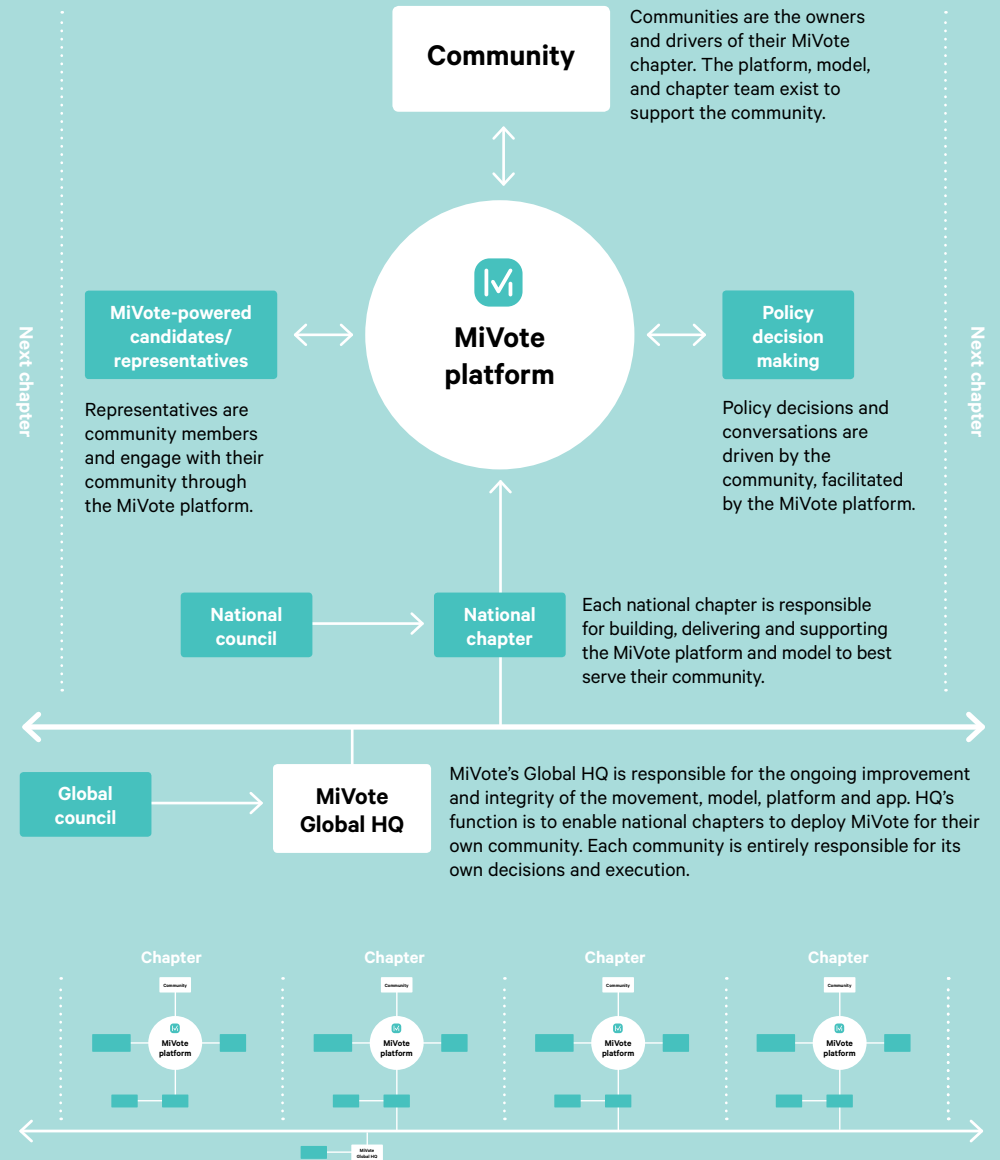
Just as MiVote-powered representatives are held to term limits, so too are MiVote Councils.

When Adam and Hamish wrote the original MiVote Constitution, they specifically embedded their own term limits. The constitution was then reviewed and ratified by the MiVote council. Adam is constitutionally bound to step down from the Chief Steward role in 2022 and hand over to a new generation of MiVote leaders, all of whom will be bound by the same constitution. That's because the movement is about serving communities, not about serving individuals.

Similarly, the distributed nature of the framework is carefully designed to ensure that voices from across communities and chapters have agency in the conversations at the very top of the movement.



## Structure





## 1. Transparency

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**How can you expect someone to make an informed choice about where they want to go if they do not first understand where they are? MiVote holds our value of transparency sacred. As MiVote is the community, so information is the community's information.**

**The two most important applications of transparency to a well-functioning democracy relate to funding and facts in context.**

### Funding

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Every dollar that's donated to MiVote directly, to a MiVote-powered candidate, or to a MiVote-powered campaign is transparent. That means the amount of the contribution and the name of the person contributing it are published for all to see. It doesn't mean that we won't accept large contributions, but if someone does choose to make a large contribution, the amount and their name will be published. If everyone knows where your money is coming from, there can be no secret agendas.

MiVote only accepts contributions from individuals and non-partisan foundations. This eliminates the influence of corporations and special interests on the movement through financial power.

As a final safeguard, all contributions are pooled in the same pot. These funds are used to improve the platform, the model, the research and the movement. The only exception to this relates to campaigns, where a MiVote-powered candidate can fundraise for their campaign directly, but this fundraising is subject to the same rules – no corporate or special-interest funding. Once the election campaign is complete, funding is channelled to the movement, not to the individual.

Any funds raised using the MiVote fundraising platform attract a 5% service fee, in a structure similar to crowdfunding platforms such as Indiegogo and Kickstarter. As always, being a not-for-profit organisation, MiVote reinvests all these funds in improving the platform and the model, and to support our chapters and candidates around the world.

### Facts in Context

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Access to facts in context is a crucial part of informed decision-making, and MiVote supports this with transparent vote content and research. In addition to publishing the frameworks that underpin MiVote, all of the information used to develop the vote content is available for anyone to review. This means that the community has the ability to unpack every piece of information they see on the platform, right back to the source material. Transparency in the voting content is just that: anyone can dive as deeply as they like. In addition, the MiVote Ethics Committee is in place to check the vote content for accuracy, transparency and to ensure that bias has been removed as much as humanly possible.

## 2. No Corporate Money

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**In a true democracy, every person in the community has equal self-determination. This doesn't necessarily mean we all get the outcome we want every time, but that each of us has the same influence on the collective decision.**

When we asked the community if they felt this was currently true, we heard a resounding "no". The most common reason why was money. And when we ran a survey to ask where the community in Australia most wanted to have its say, the overwhelming response was campaign finance.

A true democracy must give careful consideration to the role money plays in the decisions the community makes. It must take decisive steps to ensure money cannot be used to undermine the voice of the people. MiVote recognises a true democracy cannot exist unless corporations, lobby groups, special interests and any entity with financial power are prevented from using their financial power to disproportionately influence community decisions.

**MiVote's intervention is two-fold:**

### MiVote has banned corporate and special-interest contributions.

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We only accept contributions from individuals and some non-partisan not-for-profit organisations that satisfy the MiVote values. That restriction applies both to candidates running on the MiVote platform and donations to the movement.

### All contributions are published for everyone to see

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Whether you contribute \$1 or \$1 million, MiVote will humbly and gratefully accept your support and contribution, and publish that transaction for anybody to audit.

Eliminating the opportunities for money to influence the model or the votes is one way in which MiVote is protecting community decision-making from the influence of external agents.

### 3. No Career Politicians

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**If you are a politician in a representative government, you have one job: Being an elected official is about providing public service, not building a career.**

That's why MiVote-powered representatives are limited to two consecutive terms in an elected office. Not only that, but MiVote-powered candidates fortunate enough to be elected for two terms also agree to serve an additional emeritus term as a mentor to the next generation of representatives. This ensures that there is a continuation of experience, knowledge and ability, so the community can be confident that their representative is well supported to serve.

Holding representatives to this commitment ensures those putting their hand up to represent their community are motivated by a loyalty to and desire to serve their community.

The MiVote model is intentionally designed to ensure that each community has the same self-determination and representation no matter who is serving as their elected representative. The representative is armed with the voice of the people, meaning they can approach legislation with a clear understanding of the outcomes the community desires.

Holding representatives to term limits strengthens democracy by systematically elevating the community above the individual. When every community member has an informed and equal voice, on every issue, every time, the role of an elected representative becomes much less complex and the power naturally flows to the people.

### 4. Ask, Don't Tell

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**Our current political system of partisan ideology is actively undemocratic. In order to enact the informed will of the people, first you must determine what it is.**

This means the community must be empowered with access to the information required to make the decision, and then given the opportunity to express their views.

Party politics is executed in exactly the opposite way. Parties form their own policies, guided by donors, special interests, party elders, and ideologies, before ever talking to the public.

In party parliamentary systems around the world, the public is told to choose between a small range of key ideological policies that the parties have decided. The community can then only chose to either accept or reject the parties' entire ideological platform – whether they agree with every one of the policies or not. Once elected – based on those key five or six election platforms – the party that forms government makes thousands of decisions on behalf of the community with very little consultation.

The community's next opportunity to have their say is three or four years away, at the next election.

Instead of telling you, MiVote asks what future you want for your community. And we keep asking – on every issue, every time – and we do not form any policy position until the community has answered and has told us the future they want.

### 5. Destinal Perspective

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## Democracies around the world promote near-sighted decision-making.

One of the unintended consequences of regular elections is that it promotes a behaviour that is counter to the long-term success of a community. Instead of making decisions with a generational lens, politicians are motivated primarily by being re-elected – or worse, by weekly opinion polls.

The decisions that you would make on a three-year time scale are likely very different to those you might make on a generational time scale. And yet, governments can only make short-term decisions as long as their primary focus is on winning the next poll.

This is why MiVote takes a long-term, destinal approach to decision making. We ask the community:

### “What future do you want to build together?”

Taking a destinal perspective empowers legislators to do good work. When armed with a clear purpose and goal, experts, public servants, and representatives can work together with a clear objective.

### 6. Non-Binary, Consensus-Driven Policy Considerations

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## The legacy of binary politics does not serve our complex and interconnected world.

Global markets are fragmenting as we connect with more people, access more information, share more experiences and have the capacity to design our life to suit our needs. Think of your smartphone: although they're all basically the same fundamental product, side-by-side they light up with different apps, unique wallpapers, various cases. We customise the basic product to suit our individual needs.

Democratic systems have not kept pace with this evolution.

The way issues are presented to the community allows only for a yes/no response. Red/Blue, Pro/Anti, Right/Wrong. These artificial binaries do a disservice to the issue and to the community. “Yes or no” choices do not allow the details to be considered or alternate perspectives to surface.

Pitching issues in a binary leads to adversarial decision making with a win/lose mindset. The underlying assumption is that in order for there to be a winner, there must necessarily be a loser. This approach does not do justice to the complexities of our communities.

MiVote uses a consensus approach, designed specifically to elevate those points on which the community agrees. We approach the conversation by identifying four potential directions a community could take and then, on each direction, ask:

### ‘Can you live with this?’

Taking the adversarial binary out of the conversation gives the community a much better opportunity to uncover both what's important with respect to that decision, and how important it is.

When you provide an opportunity for the community to consider an issue from a more inclusive perspective, you gain a better understanding of its sentiment and can therefore craft legislation that is more closely matched to the desired future state the community has chosen.

### 7. Holding Representatives to Account

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## The condition under which the community elects a representative should be the same condition under which that representative serves.

MiVote-powered independents who operate within a representative government system have a responsibility to their community, and only their community. Candidates who put their hand up to run on the MiVote platform do so with a very clear understanding of the responsibility they are taking on and the expectations to which they will be held accountable.

Before registering as a MiVote-powered candidate, potential candidates participate in a multi-day induction workshop that empowers them with the resources they need to thrive using the MiVote model, and purposefully steps them through the expectations and commitments they are expected to maintain.

Should a candidate or representative fail to uphold these commitments, MiVote has a process of feedback, counselling and penalties to ensure they clearly understand any breach, the severity of such a breach, and, most importantly, how they can rectify and prevent the breach from happening again.

The underlying intention of the relationship is to support candidates to thrive, recognise that they may make unintentional mistakes, and to ensure they are supported to continually improve.

In the event of major breaches, such as breaking the trust of the community, voting against the will of the people in parliament, etc., MiVote will impose the most severe consequences available including financial damages. These damages are outlined as part of the candidate agreement.

MiVote recognises the importance of trust between the movement, the community and the representatives who have been honoured with the opportunity to represent their community, and we defend it with the utmost passion and conviction.

**There are 17 operational commitments included in the Candidate Agreement to which they, and every candidate, must agree before they can run.**

### Honouring the Community's Decisions

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1. A candidate must not commit to any position until the MiVote community has decided a position through the platform.
2. A candidate must not express a personal opinion on a live vote, so as not to influence that vote. After the vote is closed, they may express their own view but must uphold the consensus position, even if it differs.

### Financial Responsibility

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3. No corporate, lobby group, or special-interest money.
4. Transparent financial records and reporting.

### Term Limits

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5. Two-term limit in any elected office.
6. If a candidate is successfully elected to two terms in an office, they must then act as a mentor for the following term to the next MiVote independent representative.

### Behaviour and Integrity

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7. Candidate must uphold the MiVote values always: Transparency, Accountability, Equality, Meritocracy and Secularism.
8. Candidates must preference and promote other MiVote-powered candidates, above all others, always.

9. Candidates must not denigrate another MiVote independent in public; they should raise any concerns directly with the MiVote chapter for their attention.
10. Candidate agrees that they will be personally liable for significant damages, particularly financial (subject to each relevant jurisdiction) for violating the agreement.
11. Candidate is responsible for immediately advising MiVote of any breach or potential breach of the agreement.

### Presenting MiVote

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12. Marketing and other public-facing material must recognise and identify the MiVote relationship, including the application of MiVote branding as per brand guidelines.
13. Use of MiVote branding, etc. must be approved by MiVote before being published.

### Using the Model and the Platform

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14. IP of the brand, tech, model etc remains solely the rights of MiVote.
15. Candidate agrees to use the technology platform as intended and agrees that the functionality may change.
16. Candidate is solely responsible for meeting any eligibility criteria for any elected office for which they run and for satisfying all legal requirements for that jurisdiction.
17. Candidate is subject to confidentiality clauses/agreements.

## What tools does MiVote use?

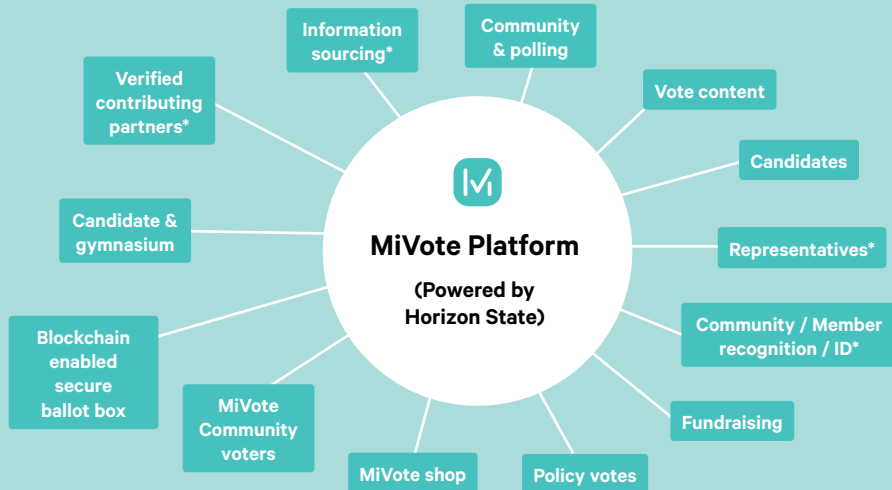


### The MiVote Platform

## MiVote is a social solution to a social challenge, enhanced by technology.

The carefully-honed interventions the model employs to strengthen democracy have nothing to do with technology, but, technology is used as another tool that allows it to operate at speed and scale. In theory, the MiVote model

could be deployed manually, but it would be prohibitively inefficient. The platform is the technological hub that connects all the variables across the MiVote model.



\*Feature will be available in future versions.

### The Relationship Between MiVote and Horizon State

## Horizon State is a technology company MiVote has engaged to deliver the technical tools necessary to implement the model around the world.

In 2017, MiVote recognised the clear role technology could play in supporting the delivery of the model. We also saw the growing interest in the technology we were exploring, and multiple applications for it that were well beyond MiVote's interest, capacity or purpose.

We were also clear that MiVote was NOT a technology company and had no interest in becoming one. As a result, we separated the technology from the movement by spinning out a whole new company. It's sole focus is the digital solution, and it is capable of capitalising on commercial opportunities that MiVote, as a not-for-profit with strict rules around corporate money, could not and would not.

The company is entirely separate from MiVote, with some very specific rules in place to ensure that the for-profit technology company is entirely disconnected from MiVote in its legal structure, people, purpose and ownership. That technology company, founded in late-2017, is called Horizon State. MiVote does not own ANY stake in Horizon State.

Horizon State is responsible for building, delivering, supporting and maintaining the technological tools that MiVote requires to drive self-determination for people around the world. The relationship between social movement MiVote and technology company Horizon State is a formal agreement between client and vendor.

The key rules that govern the split of Horizon State out of MiVote are:

- MiVote is a not-for-profit organisation; Horizon State is an entirely separate for-profit entity.
- No one can simultaneously serve in a decision-making role in both Horizon State and MiVote.
- Horizon State can sell its technology to whomever it likes, but the MiVote model and operating principles remain exclusively MiVote's.
- Financial transactions from MiVote to Horizon State are conducted as in any other client-vendor relationship.
- From time to time, Horizon State may provide charitable contributions to MiVote via its not-for-profit foundation, which MiVote will reinvest to further the movement.

**Questions about the technology platform and Horizon State should go to Horizon State directly. [HorizonState.com](https://horizonstate.com)**



## What tools does MiVote use?

### Blockchain

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## Blockchain is a distributed ledger technology that stores value across a decentralised network of nodes.

Although MiVote is not a technology company, it is helpful to have a basic understanding of the technology we use and why it is important.

**One of the best introductions to blockchain was written by Horizon State's Chief Product Manager, Jamie Skella. You can read the explainer at [MiVote.com/blockchainexplained](https://mi.vote.com/blockchainexplained)**

A fundamental factor in democracies' ongoing use of paper and pencil at voting booths is that, until now, no technological solution has offered a satisfactory alternative that maintains the fundamental needs of free and fair voting. Those needs are:

- **Anonymity** - The security that only you can know what your vote is.
- **Auditability** - The ability for anyone to audit all votes and agree or dispute what the vote is.
- **Accountability** - The ability for you to go back and check your specific vote.

Blockchain provides a solution to this challenge by addressing and satisfying these three needs:

- **Anonymity** - Your vote is cast to blockchain with your unique private key. Only someone with that key can see who made that specific vote.

- **Auditability** - The blockchain is a distributed ledger and can be public. This means that anyone can see all the transactions that have been recorded on the blockchain, but not who made them.
- **Accountability** - You can access your own votes at any time with your individual private key, so you can go back and see your previous votes.

The challenge of recognising who it is that's voting and protecting against those who may try to exploit the system is real and not unsubstantial. This ongoing work requires balancing the ability to recognise and verify a voter with our primary obligation to the community that everyone have an equal and informed voice.

Current tools can solve community recognition challenges for an overwhelming majority of people, but until everyone can participate, democracy cannot thrive. We work passionately towards this goal every day, and are pleased with and confident about the progress we are already beginning to see. MiVote is always adapting, staying ahead of the curve, and looking for ways to use advancing technology to support our mission. We are excited by potential new approaches that are becoming available that allow equal access and vote security.

## Your toolkit



### Handy ways to talk about MiVote

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The MiVote founders, long-term friends and people who joined the team in the early days talk about MiVote all day, everyday, with anyone who'll listen. And sometimes with people who won't!

We've prepared a tool kit that summarises some of the things we've picked up along the way: phrases that resonate, some soundbites you might like to make your own, some examples and proof, and a collection of frequently asked questions - with answers! Use this tool kit to support you as you begin your own conversations within your community. You'll find you develop your own delivery style, but the key information is always the same.

### Elevator Pitch

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**MiVote is a global democratic movement that lets you vote directly on the issues that matter to you. We're not a political party. We're about asking (not telling) the community what future they want. We have a world-leading community decision-making model that gives you an informed and equal say issue by issue, supported by a blockchain-enabled app. MiVote is leading the charge towards the next generation of democracy, free from partisan ideology, party politics, corporate and special-interest influence, and career politicians.**

### Not perfect, but better

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MiVote is very aware of the responsibility we take on when we try to evolve the way communities make decisions. The upsides of getting it right are massive; the risks if we get it wrong are far worse. We forge on humbly, conscious of what we have learned, what we have yet to learn and that there is much we do not yet know. **Our fear is not that we fail, but that we succeed, and that the model is wrong.** When we speak about

MiVote, we do not suggest for a moment that we have a perfect solution. We say very clearly that we're not perfect, but that we're taking steps in the right direction and that we believe that what we're building is better than where we are now. The journey of improvement, honing and development will not end.

### MiVote is one of many

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There are democratic movements all over the world. Some are similar to MiVote and some take quite different approaches. The common thread of that global democratic ecosystem is a desire to improve the way we make decisions. Any one of these movements could be the one that gains traction, and if it advances democracy, MiVote is entirely supportive of that. If someone else can solve the challenge, then we at MiVote can happily step aside and let others lead the charge. Our ultimate goal is true democracy, not MiVote in and of itself.

Jon Barnes is a former MiVote Council Member who literally wrote the book on democratic movements around the world in 2016. You can learn more about it at [democracysquared.io/](https://democracysquared.io/)

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## Direct democracy is inevitable

In a world where we can now have one-to-one, one-to-many and many-to-one conversations in an instant, and can access the world's information from a device in our pocket, there is no reason to persist with a system that was designed in and for a society that no longer exists.

Just as we have greater control and choice in every aspect of our lives, the natural evolution is for community-based decision making to follow that same model. It's a question of when, not if.

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## A destinal perspective

Our current system can only deliver short-term thinking motivated by short-term goals. That's the way it's designed. MiVote overcomes this by taking a step back and asking: 'What kind of future do you want to build for your community, together?' Long-term solutions require a long-term perspective. That's why MiVote does not ask binary questions based on predetermined solutions. In order to work towards a desired future, you must first know what that future is ... and you can't know that until you ask.

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## A consensus approach

Adversarial politics does not serve the community, and yet the system is designed to perpetuate it. MiVote specifically seeks to understand the points on which the community agrees. It does this by offering up four frames (or destinations). We then ask, for each of those perspectives: **'Can you live with this?'** That's a very different question from 'Do you want this?' because it leads to an understanding of what the

community considers acceptable. Finding the baseline that suits the majority of the community then provides a clear context to inform any potential solutions to design the future on which people can agree.

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## Open to people aged 16 and up

Those who have the longest time to be in the world we're designing – and to effect future change – are currently not even included in the conversation. MiVote allows any community member aged 16 and above to participate and have their voice heard, because one day they will rule the world. In fact, the intergenerational shift has already begun.

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## Facts, in context

In a world of fake news, filter bubbles, spin and agendas, a great deal of mental stamina is required to decipher the media. That's why MiVote is interested only in discovering the truth and then revealing it to everyone in a way they can trust, consume and understand. Context matters, as does an understanding of potential outcomes from a particular decision. MiVote's decentralised policy framework is designed specifically to ensure that the information presented to the community is as reliable and accurate as possible, has been filtered to remove as much bias as possible, and is as transparent and accessible as it can be so that it can be scrutinised in detail.

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## Clever people tell us we're onto something

Over the seven years MiVote has been percolating, we have discussed the model with all sorts of people; people much smarter and more experienced than us. MiVote has been interrogated by Australian former Prime Ministers, as well as countless current and former politicians from across the political spectrum at both the state and federal levels in the US, Australia, Europe and Asia. On each occasion, once they've had a chance to interrogate and probe the model, they tell us the same thing: it's the best framework for democracy I've seen, and it just might work.

It's not just people from politics. The model has been scrutinised by lawyers, students, technologists, ethics professors, political scientists, and members of underrepresented and underprivileged communities. Each time we learn something and have an opportunity to evolve the model, but frequently we're told we are building something powerful and should continue.

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## A social solution to a social challenge

MiVote is a global democratic movement, a not-for-profit organisation whose purpose is to advance self-determination for us all. Community is at the heart of what we do and why we do it, and the MiVote model is designed to engage, inform and empower everyone, equally.

A great model is at the heart of MiVote. Applying technology to a broken system just delivers broken results faster. That's why MiVote made the specific decision to separate the technology from the movement.

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## Improving every day

We recognise that there is still much to do. The more conversations we have and the more we test the model, the further it will improve and the stronger it will become. We welcome feedback and discussion. The model has been torn apart and rebuilt many times, each time benefiting from new knowledge and new perspectives. We appreciate that the harder people look at MiVote, the more they care about it.

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## Self-determination for all

One person, one vote, one voice. MiVote was designed to enshrine everyone's opportunity to participate equally and actively in the decisions that matter to them and affect them.

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## Ask, Don't Tell

Partisan politics presumes to have an answer to every issue, even before the issue is defined or understood. MiVote starts with the community and asks: what future do you want to create, together?

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## Having the right conversation

Partisan politics and a media environment driven by attention – not truth – hijacks what issues we pay attention to, and the way we talk about those issues. MiVote takes a step back to consider the community as a whole, and look towards long-term decisions that guide the direction of the community together.



**No one represents you better than you**

In a time of steam trains and telegraphs, technological and geographical limitations made it practical to hand over your decision-making power to a representative you trusted. But in an era of party politics, partisan ideology and special-interest influence, deferring your self-determination to a party is unlikely to deliver the future you would design for yourself. We are now in a time where it's possible to have an informed say on each issue and regain your self-determination. No one can represent you better than you.

**Inform, Empower, Represent**

Everything MiVote is and does is designed solely to provide everyone with the same opportunity for self-determination. This is achieved by offering you the knowledge you need to make an informed decision, by empowering your voice so that it sits among every other voice equally, then transforming decisions into actions that shape the world through transparent and accountable representation.

**Design your world**

When you are empowered with self-determination, you can participate in the creation of the world in which you and your community live. By providing a platform for everyone to make decisions equally and together, MiVote equips you with the power to design your world.

**A growing interest worldwide**



**Australasia • North America • Europe • Africa**



**The basics**

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**What is MiVote?**

MiVote is an online platform that empowers voters to have their say on issues that matter. Evidence-based, digestible information helps voters to make the best decisions for them—they can vote on any or all tabled issues and their community's independent candidate takes the majority opinion to the top. This powers direct democratic change—the way your community votes is the way your representative votes in government.

**How does MiVote work?**

We start with the facts. Zany, right? Our research team uncovers everything to know about a political issue and brings that information to members. For example, we might ask “how would you prefer political donations be managed in your country?”

A MiVoter (that's you) will get unbiased, fully-referenced content in a way that's easy to understand. We offer the best possible form of the argument so you can take in as much as you want. Every eligible community member has one opportunity to vote and each vote carries exactly the same weight.

Every community within MiVote can be represented by an independent political candidate of its choosing. This MiVote-powered independent will take your community's majority decision to government and advocate for the changes you want. No party line. No backroom deals. No one in the pocket of big business or special interests.

Our dedication to fairness runs deep. We use blockchain technology, so our system is incorruptible. We require independent candidates to agree to uphold our values in government. We're not for profit. We're party agnostic. We don't accept corporate donations. We're here to make sure government hears the voice of the people.

**What is MiVote's goal?**

Within five years we want to be the biggest political organisation in the world. We want to have MiVote-powered independents in ten governments and give voices to emancipate a billion more people. To do this we need to give every individual an informed and equal say on the decisions that affect them and their communities.

Success for MiVote looks like this: better community-driven decision-making and a world where everyone feels empowered by their own self-determination.

**Is MiVote a political party?**

No. MiVote is a social movement, a community decision-making platform, a democratic model, and an app. The MiVote platform simply connects communities with those people the community has chosen to represent them and facilitates equal informed decision-making so the community can design their own future, together.

**Where does MiVote get its money?**

From the people.

We don't accept corporate donations or contributions from lobbyists. You keep telling us that's what's wrong with politics and we emphatically agree. All the money we use for operations comes from you and others like you—people who see value in our movement and want to support it.

Our app will also include a crowdfunding feature, so you can contribute to the campaigns of your MiVote-Powered independents. Your funds will directly support your community's majority position.

We also partner with NGOs to work on specific programs like education and representation of marginalised communities. Resultant funds are clearly and transparently quarantined, so they have no impact on votes or vote content.

**Who started MiVote and why?**

Who doesn't want a better, fairer world, operating on a foundation of real democracy? That's what founders Adam Jacoby, Hamish Hughes and Dr Richard Hames had in mind when they started MiVote.

**How we differ**

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**What is MiVote's political position?**

MiVote is a platform that facilitates independent political candidates. We don't have a political position and we're not a political ideology.

The political position of MiVote-powered independents will always be that of the community they represent. As soon as they're elected, you have a direct line to them. That independent candidate (or multiple candidates) will be bound by the voice of the MiVote community. They'll represent the majority vote on every issue, as decided on the MiVote platform.

When sitting in government they'll be speaking with your voice.

**How does MiVote differ to other direct democracy parties?**

We're not a party. We don't accept corporate donations and have no partisan ideology of our own. We don't allow career politicians and can't be influenced by special interest groups.

As a direct democracy model we are keen to use technology to advance the cause. Other movements apply technological solutions to a failing system. MiVote has created a new model for a new generation of democracy, and then applied technology to speed up and scale its development.

**Are you a charity with Tax Deductible Status?**

Not yet, but we are working towards it.

**MiVote community members**

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**I'm already a member of a political party. Can I join MiVote?**

Yes. We're party agnostic, and that's kind of the point. Anyone can join the MiVote movement, and any eligible community member aged 16 and over can be a MiVoter.

**How much does MiVote cost?**

Being a MiVoter is free. Running as a MiVote-powered independent has no upfront costs—a small percentage of funds raised is used by MiVote for continued improvements to the platform.

**Where do my financial contributions go?**

We're grateful for all contributions you make. MiVote is not-for-profit, so all funds are put back into the organisation to keep growing the platform, to continue to offer the highest-quality research and to advance global democracy into the future.

## Voting

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### Can anyone vote?

If you're an eligible voter, the answer is 'yes'.

MiVote is for people who are tired of corruption in politics or think that their vote has lost its value. It's for anyone who sees the way governments run and thinks "there has to be a better way". It's for the people who want to be involved in community decision making but think "what's the point?" or "it's too hard".

### What about the tyranny of the mob?

One of the first arguments against direct democracy is that it may lead to bad – but popular – decisions. MiVote's model protects against this in a number of important ways:

- **Destinational focus:** The community isn't voting for a specific law, but on a desired future. It's up to legislators to craft laws that take the community towards their chosen future.
- **MiVote values:** No option or perspective can be presented to the community if it's not approved by chapter ethics and governance committees. These committees are responsible for ensuring any proposed frame is legal and consistent with MiVote's values.
- **Consensus approach:** Because MiVote seeks to understand the points on which the community agrees, the weight of extreme opinions is diminished. By asking questions beyond a binary framework, you open up the conversation to a more nuanced response, allowing for a spectrum of opinion instead of yes/no.

### Do I have to vote on every piece of legislation?

No. MiVote is a platform that allows you to participate equally in the decisions about the future of your community. You can choose to participate in every MiVote, or just those votes that matter to you.

Because MiVote asks destinational questions, you don't have to vote on specific laws. The community decides the desired direction, and it's up to legislators to craft laws that take the community closer to that future.

### How is MiVote for everyone if voting relies on technology?

We appreciate internet access isn't universal. It's why we partner with nonprofits to support disadvantaged communities and amplify voices that might not otherwise be heard.

Technology is a way to mobilise voters, not to exclude them. Barack Obama used crowdfunding to support his 2008 political campaign and Donald Trump engaged his audience through social media. Some of these campaigns may have lacked clarity, but their digital concepts were sound. We're keen to build on this kind of inclusion.

### What if I change my mind?

Just like a paper ballot, a vote can't be changed after you've cast it. However, we can revisit issues. We know opinions and external factors change, too. Vote topics are revisited at least once a year, so the results always reflect what the MiVote community is really thinking.

Further, if the number of people using MiVote increases beyond a milestone (e.g. 50%), we may no longer be able to say our position reflects the will of the community—enough of them may tip the scales the other way. When that happens, we go back to the people to check in again on the consensus of the community.

### Who decides what topics are voted on?

You do.

Any eligible member of the community can nominate a topic to be voted on. MiVote also pays attention to the legislative calendar of the government and any topics that may be in the public interest, and those with high levels of interest are prioritised by our policy team. Votes need to be cast on every topic, so this method only affects the order in which you'll have your say, not the topics themselves.

### Who decides what the frames are?

The data decides the frames. No one person or group decides what the frames are.

The aggregated information collected during the vote development process includes as many perspectives and as much information as possible. Once all the information is pooled, the chapter policy team reviews the information and lets the data determine how the possible destinations should be framed.

The proposed frames are then subject to ethics and governance reviews, and a number of other checks and balances per our policy framework. This distributed process of content development means that there is no single person or group that can unduly influence the way the vote is presented.

### Who writes the vote content?

Our policy team is made up of people whose job it is to collate relevant, evidence-based information, understand the different perspectives of community groups and subject matter experts, and present it in a straightforward manner. The vote content is then vetted by chapter ethics and governance committees, the Policy Director and the Chapter council to make sure the appropriate process has been followed, and that the resulting content is not leading and is as free from bias as humanly possible.

### What does MiVote do to reduce bias in the vote content?

MiVote is subject to a number of independent governance processes designed to weed out leading or biased material that may influence decision making. We acknowledge that nothing that involves people can ever be completely unbiased, but are resolute in identifying and eliminating bias at every possible opportunity.

### How does voting affect policy?

A majority result for an issue means more than 60% of the community voted in its favour. When that happens, your MiVote-powered representative will defend the community's position in government. Your voice becomes their influence and the way they vote will always reflect the will of the MiVote community.

### How does my vote have an impact?

Each vote is important. By coming together as a group, we can make the most noise. The majority vote (above 60%) for a given topic will be taken on the community's behalf to government, where it becomes an actual, quantifiable representation of the will of the people.

### Is there a knowledge barrier to participation?

Informed decision-making is fundamental to a successful democracy, and our team is dedicated to presenting you with the facts, in context. For each issue, we break down research into digestible content, and always give you the option to dive into the finer details.

Our goal is inclusion. We want to provide clear information for users of all interest and knowledge levels, do it in multiple languages and make it accessible to people with disabilities.

### I don't know about politics. How do I know what to vote for?

That's okay. Politics is complex and the people calling the shots want to keep it that way. Changing that is a big part of why MiVote exists.

We won't tell you how to vote, but we will make it easier for you to be better informed. We'll give you the information you need to make a decision based on what's important to you and how it might affect your community.

Because you're voting on destinations – the future direction you'd like to see – you're identifying the basis of the laws you want. It's still up to expert law-makers to create those laws, but now they're accountable to their community and its desired outcome when they do it.

## Voting

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### Does MiVote have citizen juries?

Yes.

MiVote's primary function is to offer a voice to every eligible voter. Citizen juries invite people to represent their community and deliberate on decisions, but they're vulnerable to the same inequalities and weaknesses that exist in current systems. They're also expensive, time consuming and susceptible to special interests, and marginalised groups are less likely to be supported to join them.

When a decision is reached, there's no guarantee it will be binding. However, citizen juries do have merit and have been used by other groups to reach consensus on behalf of a community. MiVote will use citizen juries in the uncommon event of having no clear outcome and where a secondary run-off vote between tied options does not yield a 60% majority. A citizen jury may also be called upon to support MiVote-powered candidates to determine if a piece of legislation supports the community's chosen position on a particular issue.

### How do you limit the influence of any one group on a vote?

Each person gets one vote. MiVote decentralises political power, which means no pockets of influential people mobilising followers.

- Our objectives are broader than “yes” or “no”. We ask users to vote on complex issues with multiple outcomes. It's up to legislators to deliver laws that take the community in the desired direction.
- No one person or group of people can dictate what's presented.
- Every step is accountable to multiple other steps, from the initial topic nomination through to the checks and balances dictated by our policy and governance frameworks. There is no single point of failure.
- We constantly monitor for unusual voting activity on the platform. If a special interest group (e.g. a church or union) tries to flood a vote, we'll be made aware of it.

Because everyone's single vote has the same value, growing the voter base in an inclusive way is the best chance we have for a truly democratic decision.

### Why does MiVote provide four options?

We're glad you asked. Often, when asked to vote, you're given “yes” and “no” options. We take a holistic view on each issue because we think it's vital to understanding a community's wants. We start with the high-level question then drill down with repeated votes until we get to the heart of the community opinion.

We based our four-option model on a study in the American Political Science Review that posits “approval voting”, where voters can approve of any number of options. This method is most likely to represent actual majority ideas whilst reducing the likelihood of further runoff elections.

We're not interested in finding out how many people voted “yes” on an issue that might not even be a dichotomy. This isn't about winners and losers. We want to understand community consensus so MiVote-powered independents can take it to government. You can review the paper at [MiVote.com/approvalvoting](https://www.mivote.com/approvalvoting)

### Why can't I add my own responses to votes?

Once the vote is cast it can't be changed – that would invalidate votes already cast. But you can get on board while we're creating the content. We're building a information contribution portal as part of the platform, where any group or person will be able to submit their research. If it's relevant, evidence-based, and stands up to peer review, it will be incorporated into the content-creation process.

## Running on the MiVote Platform

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### How do I become a MiVote-powered independent?

If you want to represent your community through MiVote, please email us on [candidate@mivote.org.au](mailto:candidate@mivote.org.au)

### Who do MiVote-powered independents present to?

Like other politicians, MiVote-powered independents will present in government. Unlike other politicians, they will always represent the informed will of their community and answer only to the people they represent.

### When will MiVote-powered independents run at elections?

Candidates are preparing to run on the MiVote platform at the 2019 national election in India and the 2020 election in the USA. We're being invited to help establish chapters globally and more candidates will run as those chapters come on line.

### Who are the MiVote-powered independents?

Anyone eligible to run for office can put themselves forward as a MiVote-powered independent. Just like now, these independents will run during the elections at local, state and federal level. MiVote-powered independents can be your friends and colleagues, your doctor, your local change-makers, that guy from the telly, or even you — as long as you agree to uphold MiVote's values, you can run. Once nominated, the community decides whether they want the candidate representing them, reflecting the true will of the people.

### How does MiVote ensure representatives vote the way people want them to?

They're contractually bound to. Before they run, MiVote-powered independents must sign a commercial agreement to always uphold the MiVote values and only speak for the majority of their community during their term in office. That means they're legally obliged to take their community's majority view to government, and nothing else. If a MiVote-powered independent breaks that agreement, they will be liable for damages.

If this sounds tough, it is. We're serious about changing politics and democratic process. Jeopardising that core value by taking advantage of the people who voted in good faith will have serious consequences.

### Doesn't parliamentary privilege protect politicians from MiVote?

Parliamentary privilege protects politicians, allowing them to speak and act freely during their time in office without fear of legal action. MiVote-powered independents can go back on their word once they're in power and vote as they wish in government, but that doesn't mean they're not bound by the MiVote constitution, or the agreement they signed with us. Any deviation from the values they've agreed to uphold has serious consequences – including, but not limited to, ejection from the MiVote platform and legal action.

### Technical

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#### **How do you ensure votes are accountable, auditable and anonymous?**

Votes can be counted by any member of public and directly matched with the number of eligible voters. These votes are logged into a public blockchain, making them transparent and incorruptible. While votes themselves are public, who voted and what they voted for is not.

#### **How is MiVote using blockchain?**

MiVote uses blockchain to record votes. That means they're permanently lodged, can't be changed and are never removed. They can be counted and checked by anyone who wants to. We think it's the perfect match for our goal of a transparent, people-powered democratic utopia. The data can be checked, but the only person who can link a vote with its caster is the person who cast it.

#### **How do you know the person voting is who they say they are?**

Voter recognition is a vital part of a successful democracy. We're working with our technical partner Horizon State and the MiVote chapters in each country to ensure that we can recognise voters, and ensure the anonymity and security of their votes, without creating artificial barriers to participation. We recognise the size and importance of this challenge.

#### **How does MiVote keep my data safe?**

Our own ethics and values are a good start, but the law also protects your personal information. We only use your data to register and verify your identity and (with your consent) to help us understand demographics in different communities. We have no way of knowing who's cast which vote, and this also means no one else can find out. The only person who knows how you voted is you.

For more information about what we collect and how we use it, you can read our detailed privacy policy at [mivote.org.au/privacy](https://mivote.org.au/privacy)

#### **Who has access to my voting history?**

You. No one else.

#### **How does MiVote ensure voting anonymity?**

Every vote cast via MiVote is encrypted using blockchain technology. This maintains integrity and means no identifying information is sent or stored alongside it.



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## **MiVote has come a long way in seven years, and now it's time to approach the starting line. In that time, hundreds of people around the world have given their time, expertise, passion, support.**

We've reached this point thanks to all those people we have been fortunate to meet along the way, and we are sincerely grateful to each one. We're motivated by the challenge ahead and encouraged by the knowledge that there are many more people out there equally as important and passionate that we are yet to meet.

We owe a sincere thanks to volunteers, friends and patrons for their support to grow MiVote to a stage where we are now speaking to people from more than over 25 countries who want to introduce MiVote to their own communities. We look forward to continuing the journey together.

It speaks to the character of the founders that MiVote has forged forward at such pace in the face of not insignificant challenges. It is that character that sits within the soul of MiVote, and the genuine desire to spread democracy around the world is reinforced every day through actions and sacrifices to advance the movement.

We hope this spirit resonates and we are privileged to travel alongside a growing army of democracy warriors, working with tenacity and compassion toward the mission objective of self-determination for all.

You can join the journey by supporting MiVote in your own way: by volunteering, donating money, spreading the word, sharing expertise and opportunities, running as a MiVote-powered independent candidate, or any other pathway that you chose to follow.

**You are invited and you are welcome in the MiVote movement.**

## Timeline

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<b>2010</b>	Adam Jacoby starts to consolidate ideas that have been percolating for his entire life
<b>2012</b>	The first iteration of what was to become MiVote comes to life as OB4 - Of the people By the people For the people
<b>April 2014</b>	Adam Jacoby meets Hamish Hughes
<b>2014-2015</b>	Adam and Hamish refine the OB4 concept
<b>January 2016</b>	Adam and Hamish meet Richard Hames, Futurist and CEO of Centre for the Future. Richard asks Adam to draft the MiVote manifesto so he can show it to some colleagues. Steve Graham, upon reading the manifesto, offers to provide seed funding to create an organisation to put the words into action.
<b>March 2016</b>	OB4 evolves into MiVote, with a new brand identity, new resources and new opportunities. Democracy by MiVote Limited is a registered not-for-profit organisation in Australia
<b>July 2016</b>	MiVote now has a small team of volunteers, including Jamie Skella
<b>September 2016</b>	Unbeknownst to Adam and the team, Hames enters MiVote in Singularity University's Grand Global Challenge for ideas that can positively affect 1 billion people. MiVote is selected as one of four finalists in their category out of entrants from across the world. MiVote flies to San Francisco to take the stage.
<b>December 2016</b>	Steve Graham offers to fund the development of the first Minimum Viable Product version of the app and a supporting launch campaign
<b>February 2017</b>	MiVote launches the app with a test vote, cast to blockchain
<b>June 2017</b>	MiVote council decides on the decentralised model - MiVote will not be a political party
<b>July 2017</b>	MiVote council decides to spin off the tech company that would become Horizon State
<b>January 2018</b>	MiVote is invited to present at the World Economic Forum in Davos, Switzerland. Partners with the United Nations' Millennium Development Goal program.
<b>June 2018</b>	MiVote travels to the US and formally establishes the US MiVote chapter. Attends an event with Orange Generation and announces a partnership to run a national vote on gun policy.
<b>August 2018</b>	MiVote travels to India to launch the MiVote India Chapter, sign a partnership with the Democratic Party of India who will run on the MiVote platform, and run MiVote's first ever Candidate Induction Workshop.
<b>November 2018</b>	MiVote formally signs an agreement to create the MiVote Germany Chapter.

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**A democracy champion is an endearing term given to anyone who supports the idea of advancing democracy and/or MiVote. Democracy champions can be compassionate, vocal, subtle, subversive, bold, but always respectful. They are driven by passion to advance the charge towards self-determination for all.**

**If you answer the call to join the march of democracy champions, you are encouraged to do it in your own way. That may be through social media, conversations with friends, learning more about decision making and MiVote, running for elected office on the MiVote platform, or lending a shoulder to the movement in any other way you can. Every democracy champion chooses their own path and their own way, united by the vision of advancing true democracy for us all.**

**MiVote has already established a band of passionate democracy champions around the world, and we invite you to join us.**

**MiVote is not just a clever model, or an app, or the team that wrote this manual. MiVote is all of us – communities connecting with each other to design the future we want, together.**

**[mivote.org.au](https://mivote.org.au)**