welcome to
DWEB FOR CREATORS
GRAY AREA
F F D W
grayarea.org/dweb

DWEB FOR CREATORS

SESSION 4:

VALUES & PHILOSOPHICAL UNDERPINNINGS OF DWEB

Educator:
MAI ISHIKAWA SUTTON

GROUNDING QUESTION

Enter these in the chat:

- your name
- where you're joining from today
- one way that you want network infrastructure improved for your community

AGENDA

10:30-10:50 :: welcome + grounding question

10:50-11:20 :: presentation: principles and values, an overview

11:20-11:40 :: individual reflection + share out

11:40-11:50 :: break

11:50-12:05 :: presentation: dweb principles, a case study

12:05-12:40 :: role play: network project + manifest principles

12:40-12:55 :: share highlights

12:55-13:00 :: close

March 6 - April 28, 2024

DWEB FOR CREATORS

CODE OF CONDUCT

Gray Area is dedicated to providing a respectful, harassment-free community for everyone. We strive to create a safe space for learning and community to share new ideas. We do not tolerate harassment or bullying of any community member in any form. This does not only extend to staff members of Gray Area, but to anyone who chooses to become involved in the larger Gray Area community of artists, developers, and students through events or interactions.

We encourage everyone to share their preferred pronouns with us in their Zoom name or during introductions.

GRAY AREA

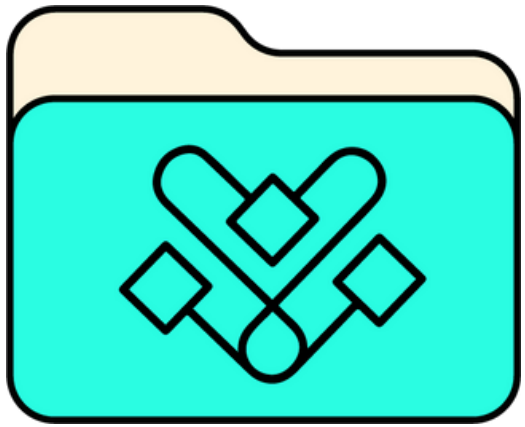
F F D W

grayarea.org/dweb

RULES OF ENGAGEMENT

- Ask clarifying questions at any time: save open questions for the discussions
- Write your opinion freely on silent individual activities
- Say your opinion freely in group activities - try to speak 1/nth of the time
- Mute yourself during silent individual actions, and in general if you have background noise
- Write in the chat when you take a break (no need to announce it)
- We follow the Gray Area's Code of Conduct

PRINCIPLES & VALUES: AN OVERVIEW



ALL TECH IS BIASED

- Technologies reflect the values of those who build, maintain, and participate in using them
- As we've learned so far, all network systems are designed and built by people and organizations
- All embed their belief systems and values into them (personally or are directed to do so)

THE CENTRALIZED WEB

Network infrastructure reflects economic realities and priorities.

Dominant operating logic of most economies are capitalistic.

Most network infrastructure are built and controlled by corporations, whose primary concern is "shareholder value" (SV).

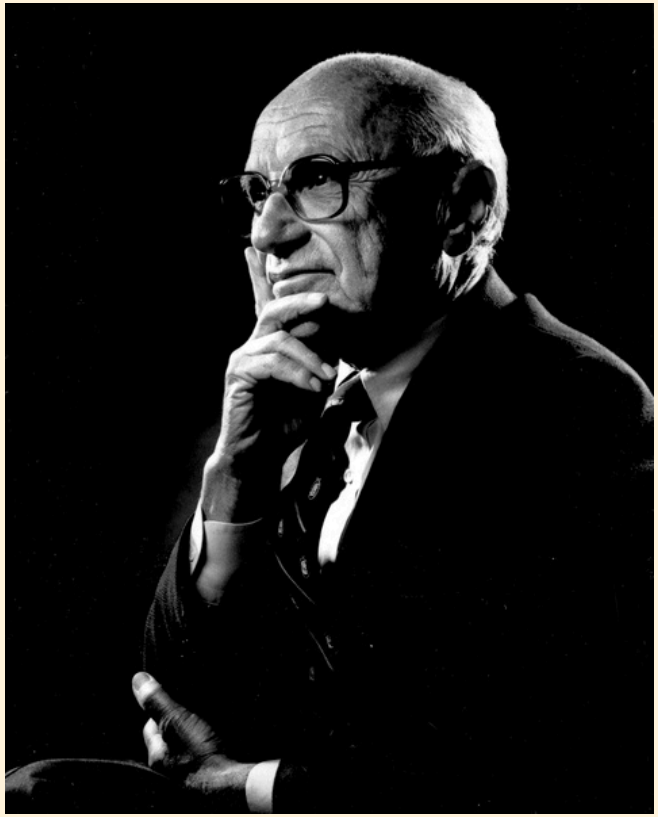
There was a major shift in thinking in business in the 1970's, which has continued to influence enterprises globally today.

THE FRIEDMAN DOCTRINE

AKA THE REIGN OF SHAREHOLDER VALUE

Milton Friedman's 1970 essay for The New York Times titled "A Friedman Doctrine: The Social Responsibility of Business is to Increase Its Profits",

It argued that company has no social responsibility to the public or society: only responsibility is to its shareholders.



Milton Friedman (1912–2006)

THE FRIEDMAN DOCTRINE

"In a free-enterprise, private-property system, a corporate executive is an employee of the owners of the business. He has direct responsibility to his employers.

That responsibility is to conduct the business in accordance with their desires ... the key point is that, in his capacity as a corporate executive, the manager is the agent of the individuals who own the corporation ... and his primary responsibility is to them."

~ Milton Friedman

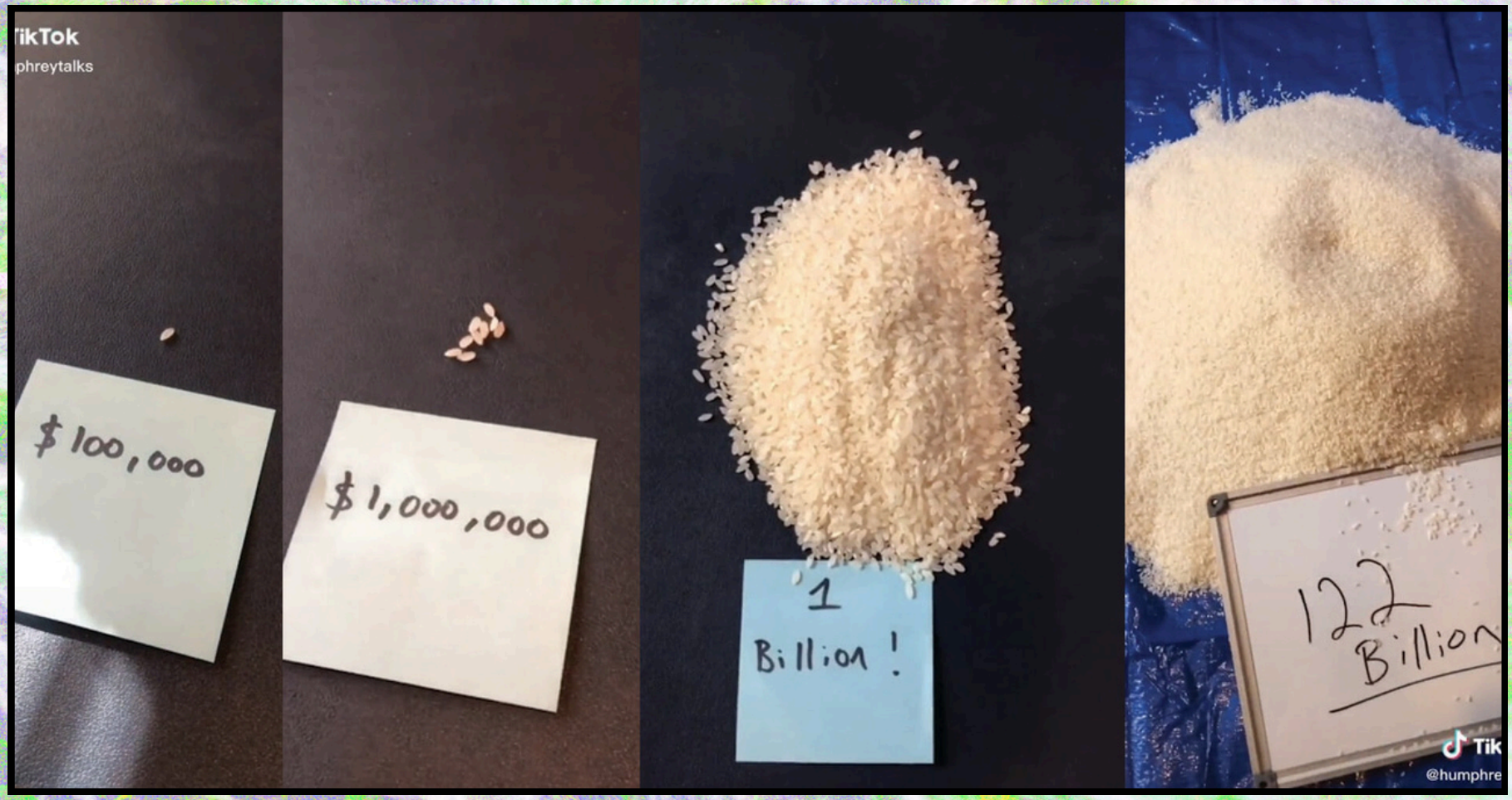
THE FRIEDMAN DOCTRINE

The doctrine was amplified with the 1976 business paper by finance professors William Meckling and Michael C. Jensen, "Theory of the Firm: Managerial Behavior, Agency Costs and Ownership Structure".

The Friedman Doctrine is credited with changing the course of business, where shareholders' interests are prioritized above all else.

Whereas before, employees, customers, partners, secondary communities were also stakeholders.

WEALTH OF TECH CEOS



Jeff Bezos' wealth - $122 billion// Feb 2020 ^^^
Elon Musk's wealth - $363.6 billion // April 2025

TECH INDUSTRY INFLUENCE

Tech industry heartily applies the Friedman Doctrine to concentrate wealth and power >>> extreme state influence.

Dark Enlightenment - neo-fascist movement that advocates for absolute monarchism and authoritarian capitalist city-states which compete for citizens. Also espouses scientific racism.

President Trump's inauguration 2025

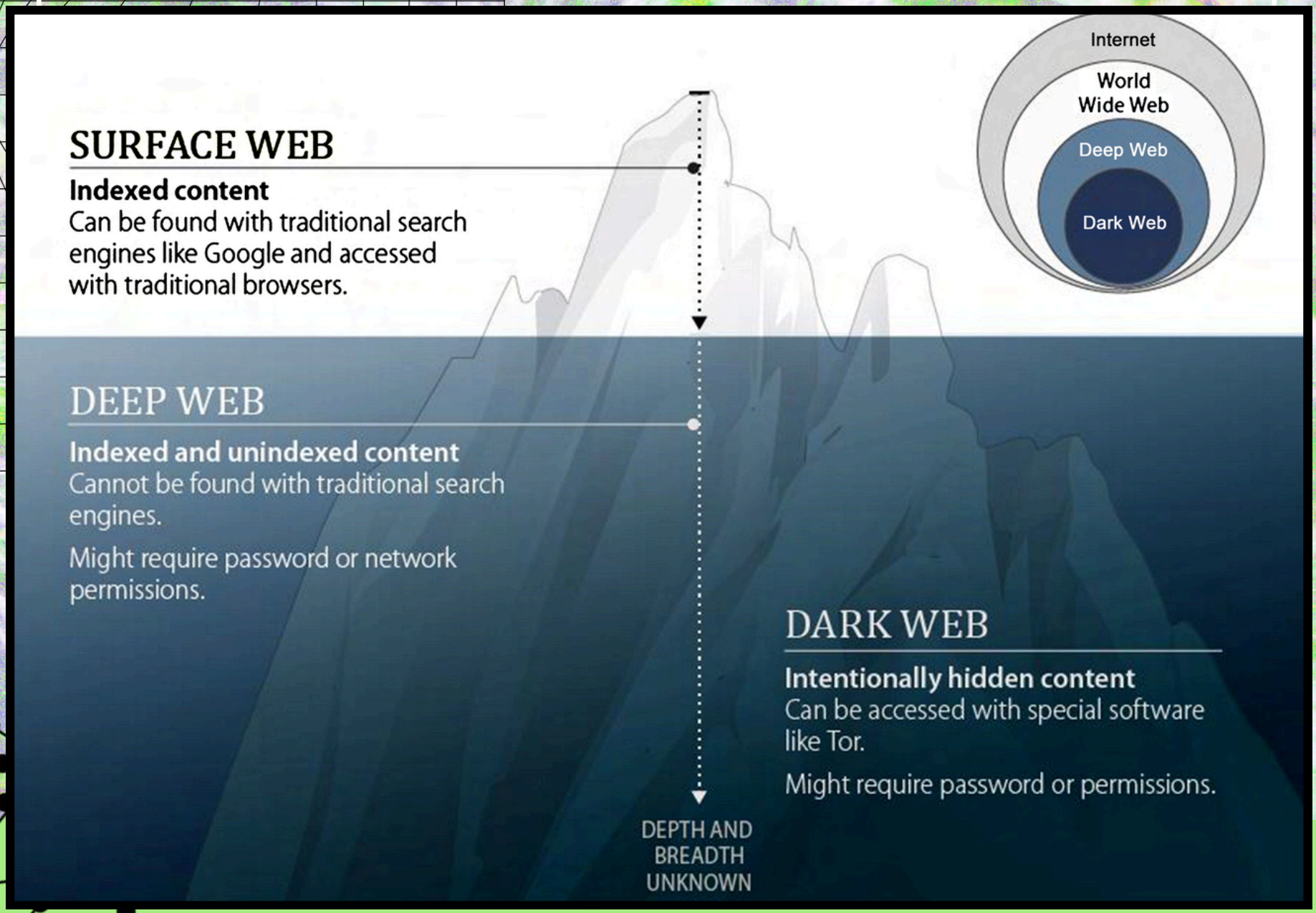
How have tech CEOs/investors and their values re-shaped our societies and governments?

ELINOR OSTROM

- Nobel Prize winner, 2009
- Economic governance of "common pool resources" (CPR) and the social norms/behaviors of their stewards
- Eight Principles for Managing Commons
- Alternative approach to building network infrastructure

Elinor Ostrom (1933-2012)

SURFACE / DEEP / DARK WEBS



SURFACE WEB

AKA the Visible Web, Indexed Web, Indexable Web or Lightnet

The portion of the World Wide Web that is readily available to the general public through standard web browsers and indexed/ searchable through web search engines.

Examples :

WIKIPEDIA
The Free Encyclopedia

INTERNET ARCHIVE

news sites

commerce sites

blogs

DEEP WEB

AKA the invisible web, or hidden web.

Parts of the World Wide Web whose contents are not indexed by standard web search engines and does not require specialized software.

Examples :

- Private or pay walled websites accessible by password, such as medical platforms, email inboxes, academic databases.
- Unlinked content: Pages not linked to by other pages, which prevents web crawling programs from accessing it

DARK WEB / DARKNET

- Web content that exists on darknets: overlay networks that use the Internet but require specific software.
- Considered part of the Deep Web.

DWeb technologies and darknets:

- The Onion Router (TOR)
- Invisible Internet Project (I2P)
- Virtual Private Networks (VPNs)
- Bitcoin and other cryptocurrencies to make untraceable transactions

DARK WEB

SOME DATA

- "Illicit" crypto addresses received more than $40 billion in 2024 – likely an underestimate
- In 2023 much as 80% of darkweb traffic is related to accessing CSAM

DARKNET MARKETPLACES

Online platforms that facilitate trade among millions of users, such as drugs, firearms, credit cards dumps, fake IDs, CSAM, and other "illicit" materials.

Examples: Silk Road (2011-2013), AlphaBay (2014-2023)

DARK WEB

WHAT IS ALSO "ILLICIT"

- Life saving drugs inaccessible in some regions
- Hormone replacement therapy medications
- Censored material that is banned by local laws
- Whistleblower sites

CREATIVE USES

- Dark Web Bake Sale (2015)
- Aphex Twin's Syro album, info was only available through using TOR

DICHOTOMIES OF THE WEB

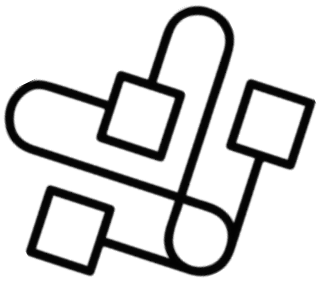
Private vs. Public
(Surface, deep, dark)

Competitive vs.
Collaborative

Centralized vs.
Decentralized

All different lenses to examine
power and motivations

DEFINITIONS



- Principles
- Values
- Codes of Conducts

PRINCIPLES

- Rules or laws that are permanent, unchanging, and timeless in nature.
- Concern human behavior and govern interactions between people.
- A compass and a timeless sense of purpose, to shape the mission
- Drives your values and goals
- Example: The Organization for Ethical Source Principles

VALUES

- Internal and subjective beliefs and opinions that may change over time.
- Internal, subjective, and malleable.
- If a given belief or opinion is something that might be altered if the conditions are right, then it's a value.
- Examples: Open Source Licenses, such as the Hippocratic License

CODES OF CONDUCTS

- A set of rules outlining the norms, rules, and responsibilities or proper practices of an individual party or an organization.
- Manifests principles and values of a community, appropriate or inappropriate behavior + sets the culture of space
- Examples: Contributor Covenant + Geek Feminism

PURPOSE OF STATING VALUES

In general, it helps to:

- Explicitly state what you are about, what you stand for and strive for
- Attract people you want to communicate and build with
- Repel those that do not resonate or align

PRINCIPLES + VALUES IN TECH

As stated in the beginning, all tech is biased

- Make explicit how tech is designed, controlled, and who benefits
- Always embedded in tech, but can be obfuscated
- Organizational model heavily shape principles and values

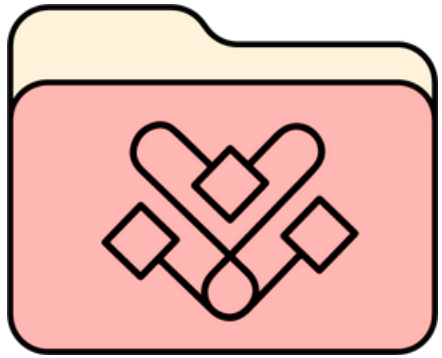
ORGANIZATIONAL MODELS

- For-profit corporation
- B-Corp
- Cooperative
  - Worker owned, user-owned, business/retail
- Non-profit
- Government entity
  - Local, state, federal
- Unincorporated collective

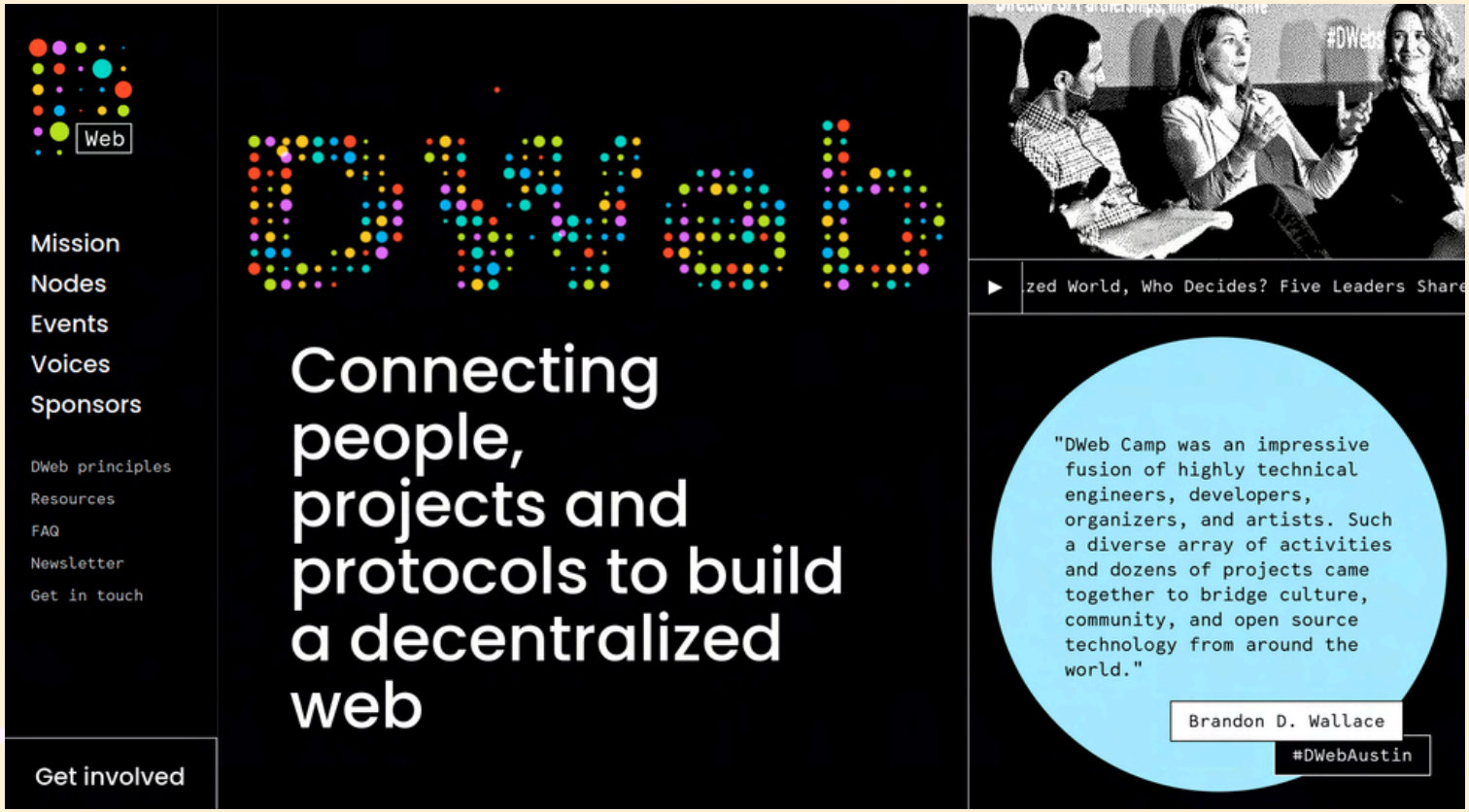
INDIVIDUAL REFLECTION TIME

let's move to Miro!

DWEB PRINCIPLES: A CASE STUDY



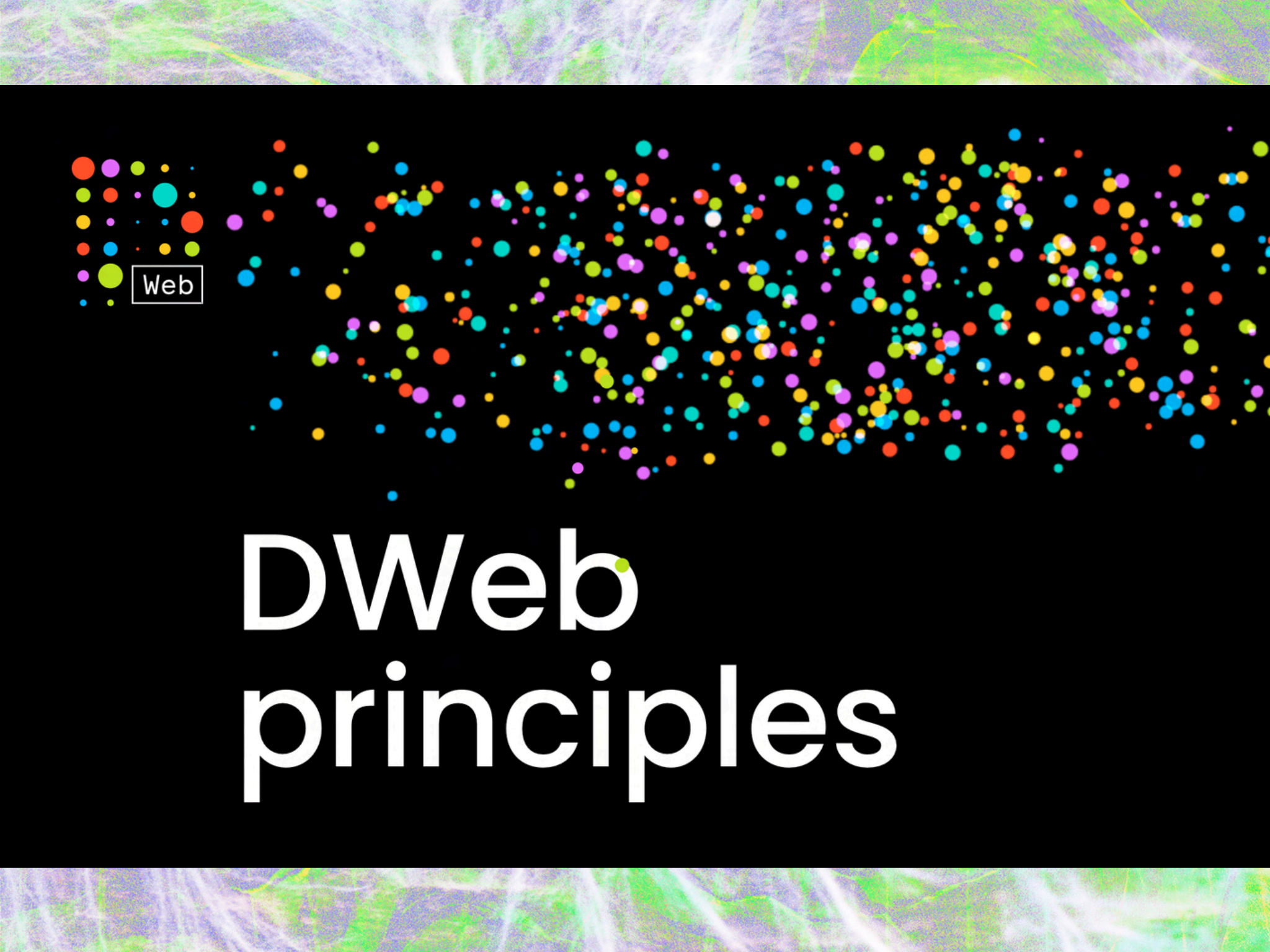
WHAT IS "DWEB"?



getdweb.net

ITALY
PARIS
BERLIN
PRAGUE

Website Built by Many
As a contributor I WANT...
Who are you?
As a Visitor I WANT...
As a Company I WANT TO...



DWeb principles

Web

DWeb principles

01. Technology for human agency

01. Technology for Human Agency

1. We stand for technology that enables the primacy of people as beneficiaries of the technology, by upholding their security, privacy and self-determination.
2. We urge coexistence and interoperability, and discourage walled gardens.
3. We value open source code as a fundamental building block of an open and inclusive Web.
4. We aim for peer-to-peer relationships, rather than hierarchical control and power imbalance.
5. Our technologies must minimize surveillance and manipulation of people’s behavior, and optimize for social benefits and empower individuals to determine how and why their data is used.
6. We believe that multiple technical means will be more effective than a single technical solution to achieve ethical and people-centric outcomes.

Web

DWeb principles

02. Distributed benefits

02. Distributed Benefits

1. We believe that decentralized technologies will be most beneficial to society when the rewards and recognition of their success, monetary or otherwise, are distributed among those who contributed to that success.

2. If that is infeasible, proportionate benefit should flow to the community at large.

3. High concentration of organizational control is antithetical to the decentralized web.

Web

DWeb principles

03. Mutual respect

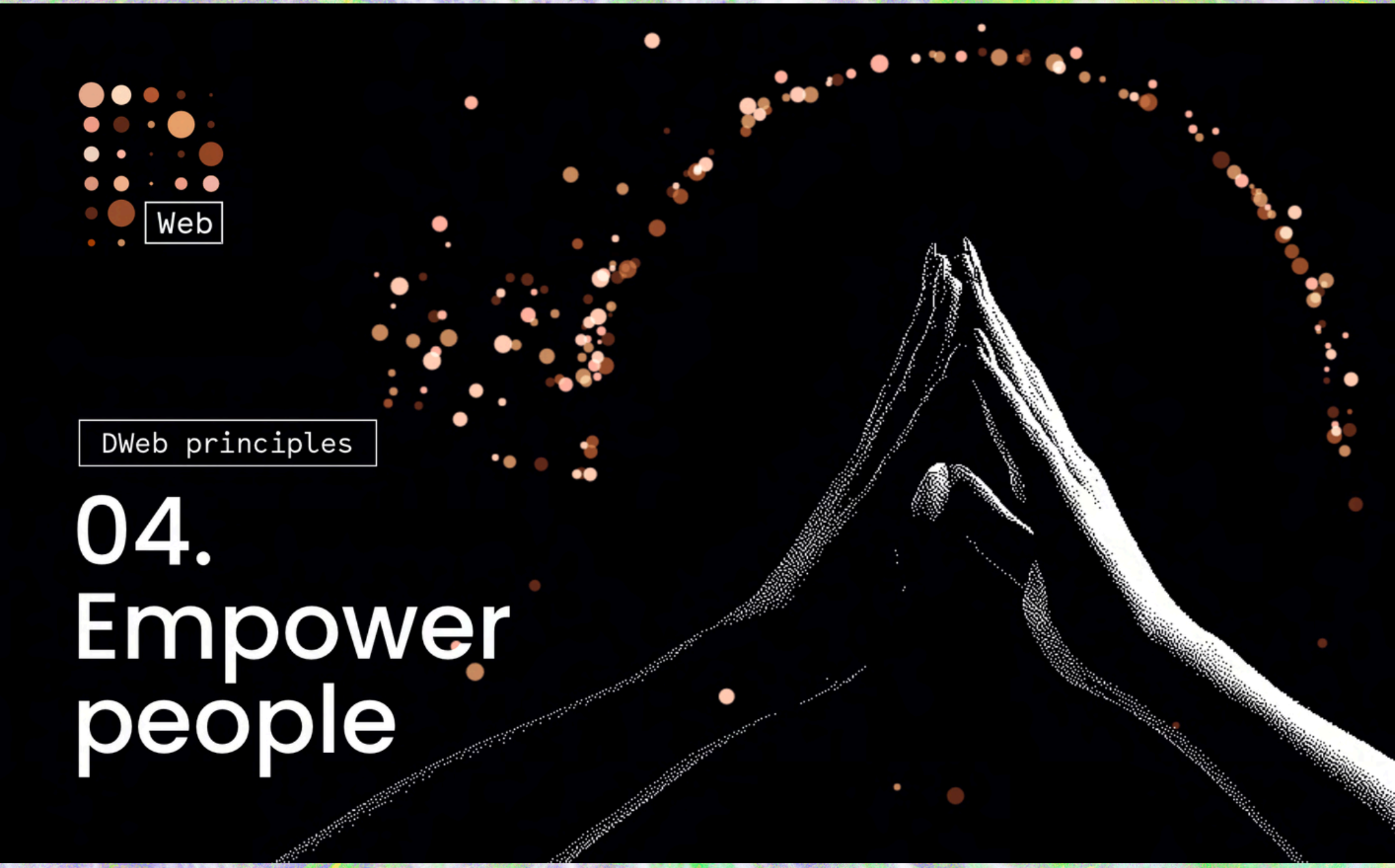
03. Mutual Respect

1. We support and encourage clear codes of conduct to ensure respectful behavior and accountability.
2. We expect participants to remain mindful of, and take responsibility for, their speech and behavior, by acting out of respect for others and respecting physical and emotional boundaries.
3. We stand for open and transparent organizational practices, motivations, and governance, in a manner that actively pursues equity, mutual trust, and respect.

Web

DWeb principles

04. Empower people



AKA Humanity

04. Humanity

1. The objective of building a decentralized web is to protect human rights and empower people, especially those who experience systemic inequity and prejudice.

2. We stand for people having agency over their own data and relationships, rights to free expression, privacy, and knowledge, as these are essential to human empowerment and dignity.

3. We condemn the use of distributed tools for activities antithetical to human rights, such as human trafficking; sexual, mental, or physical abuse; and arms trading.

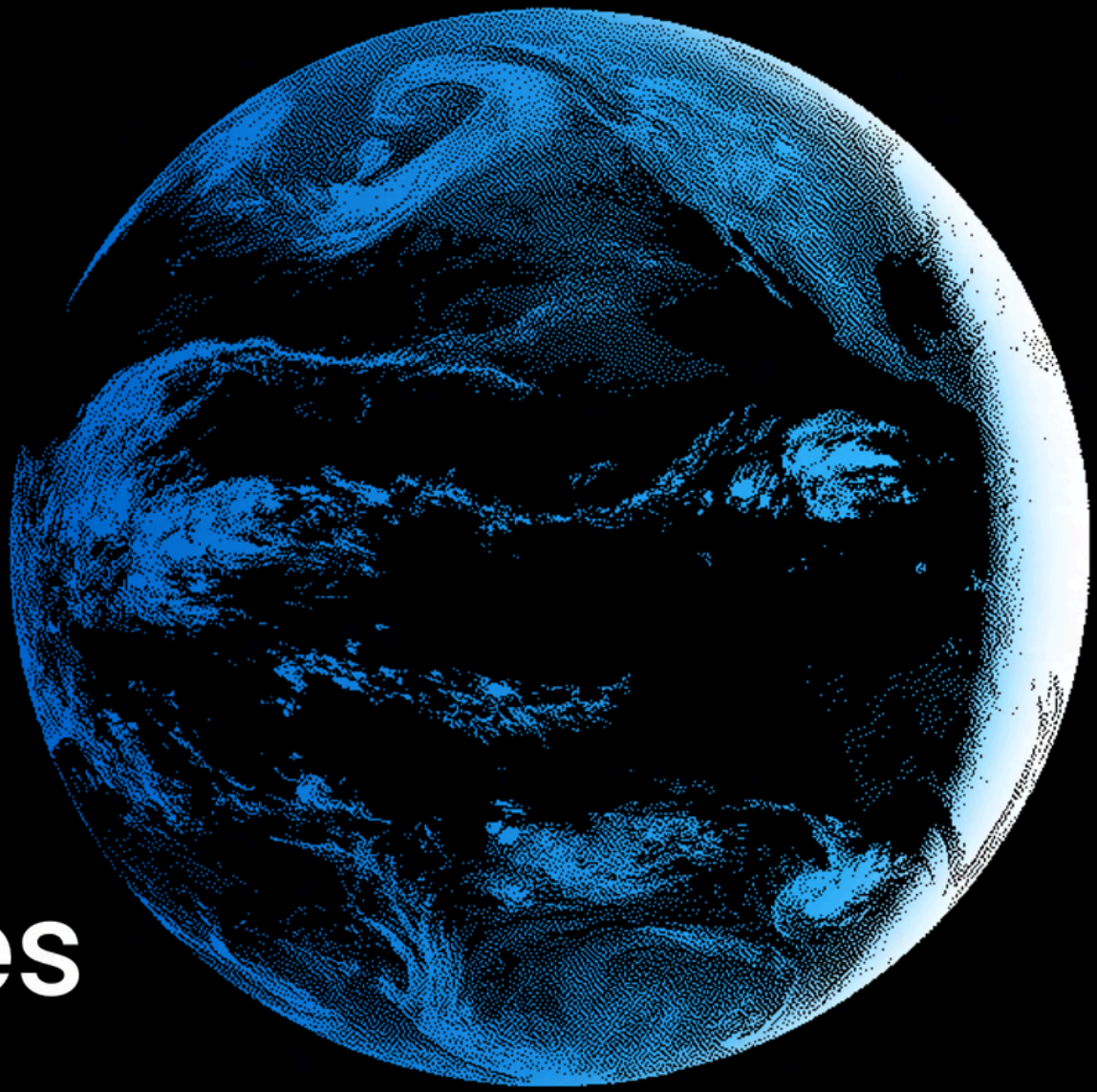
4. We encourage building with harm-reduction in mind, and support the adoption of mechanisms that mitigate the potential for abuse, and consideration of those ‘not at the table’ — not connected, not users, and the disadvantaged.

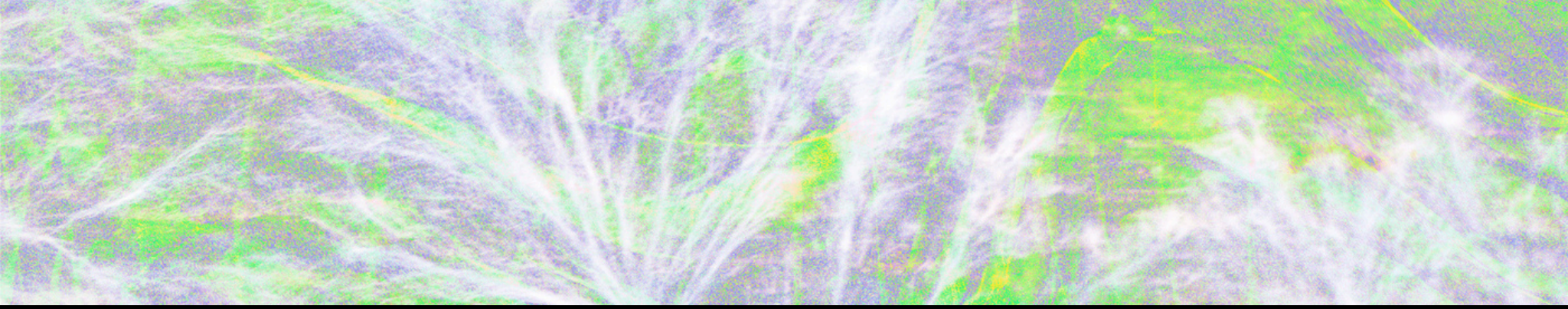
5. We encourage the development of tools and applications in many languages and forms, with a high degree of accessibility.

Web

DWeb principles

05. Ecological imperatives

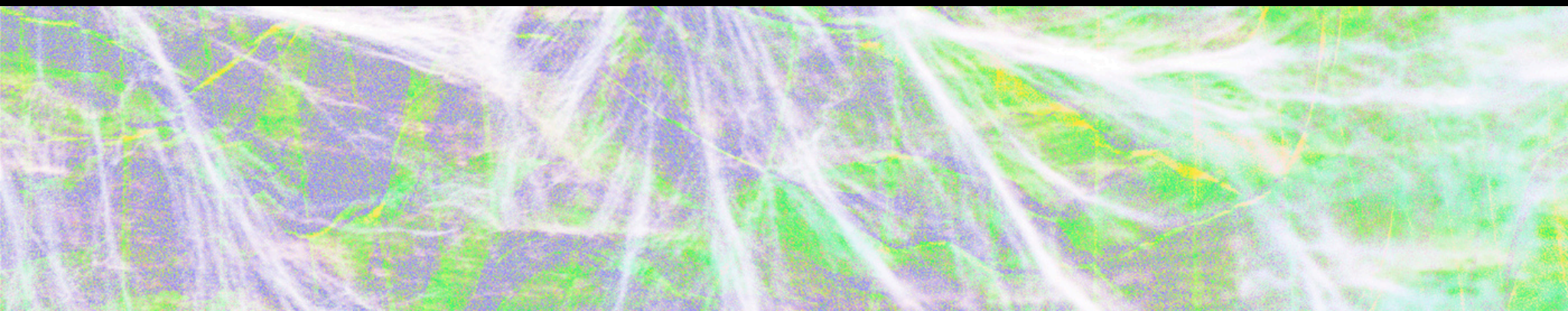




05. Ecological Awareness

1. We believe projects should aim to minimize ecological harm and avoid technologies that worsen environmental health.

2. We value systems that work towards reducing energy consumption and device resource requirements, while increasing device lifespan by allowing repair, recycling, and recovery.



Related Principles

CARE Principles for Indigenous Data Governance

Center for Humane Technology's Policy Principles

Contract for the Web

Decentralization Off The Shelf

Design Justice Principles

Detroit Digital Justice Coalition Principles

Elinor Ostrom's Principles for Governing the Commons

The Ethical Source Principles

Feminist Data Manifest-No

Feminist Principles of the Internet

Internet Research Task Force Research into Human Rights Protocol Considerations

PLAN Systems Technology Design Principles

A Shared Digital Europe

A SPECIFIC "DWEB"

- A particular group of people, largely from the Global North
- A particular moment in time

Questions we're grappling with:

- How is it enforceable? Should it be?
- How can we help network projects manifest these principles?

NETWORK PROJECT ROLE PLAY

Let's go back to Miro!