

Debian Social Contract - (v1.1)

Debian Project

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1 **Debian Social Contract**

[Prefix]

Version 1.1 ratified on April 26, 2004. Supersedes [Version 1.0](#) 2
ratified on July 5, 1997.

Debian, the producers of the Debian GNU/Linux system, have cre- 3
ated the **Debian Social Contract** . The [Debian Free Software
Guidelines \(DFSG\)](#) part of the contract, initially designed as a
set of commitments that we agree to abide by, has been adopted
by the free software community as the basis of the [Open Source
Definition](#).

4 **Social Contract with the Free Software Community**

5 **1. Debian will remain 100% free**

6 We provide the guidelines that we use to determine if a work is
“free” in the document entitled “The Debian Free Software Guide-
lines”. We promise that the Debian system and all its components
will be free according to these guidelines. We will support people
who create or use both free and non-free works on Debian. We
will never make the system require the use of a non-free compo-
nent.

7 **2. We will give back to the free software community**

8 When we write new components of the Debian system, we will
license them in a manner consistent with the Debian Free Software
Guidelines. We will make the best system we can, so that free
works will be widely distributed and used. We will communicate
things such as bug fixes, improvements and user requests to the
“upstream” authors of works included in our system.

9 **3. We will not hide problems**

10 We will keep our entire bug report database open for public view
at all times. Reports that people file online will promptly become
visible to others.

11 **4. Our priorities are our users and free software**

12 We will be guided by the needs of our users and the free software
community. We will place their interests first in our priorities. We
will support the needs of our users for operation in many different
kinds of computing environments. We will not object to non-free

works that are intended to be used on Debian systems, or attempt
to charge a fee to people who create or use such works. We will
allow others to create distributions containing both the Debian sys-
tem and other works, without any fee from us. In furtherance of
these goals, we will provide an integrated system of high-quality
materials with no legal restrictions that would prevent such uses of
the system.

5. Works that do not meet our free software standards

13

We acknowledge that some of our users require the use of works
that do not conform to the Debian Free Software Guidelines. We
have created “contrib” and “non-free” areas in our archive for these
works. The packages in these areas are not part of the Debian sys-
tem, although they have been configured for use with Debian. We
encourage CD manufacturers to read the licenses of the packages
in these areas and determine if they can distribute the packages on
their CDs. Thus, although non-free works are not a part of De-
bian, we support their use and provide infrastructure for non-free
packages (such as our bug tracking system and mailing lists).

14

15 The Debian Free Software Guidelines (DFSG)**16 1. Free Redistribution**

17 The license of a Debian component may not restrict any party from
selling or giving away the software as a component of an aggregate
software distribution containing programs from several different
sources. The license may not require a royalty or other fee for
such sale.

18 2. Source Code

19 The program must include source code, and must allow distribution
in source code as well as compiled form.

20 3. Derived Works

21 The license must allow modifications and derived works, and must
allow them to be distributed under the same terms as the license
of the original software.

22 4. Integrity of The Author's Source Code

23 The license may restrict source-code from being distributed in modified
form only if the license allows the distribution of "patch files"
with the source code for the purpose of modifying the program
at build time. The license must explicitly permit distribution of
software built from modified source code. The license may require
derived works to carry a different name or version number from
the original software. (This is a compromise. The Debian group
encourages all authors not to restrict any files, source or binary,
from being modified.)

5. No Discrimination Against Persons or Groups 24

The license must not discriminate against any person or group of
persons. 25

6. No Discrimination Against Fields of Endeavor 26

The license must not restrict anyone from making use of the pro-
gram in a specific field of endeavor. For example, it may not restrict
the program from being used in a business, or from being used for
genetic research. 27

7. Distribution of License 28

The rights attached to the program must apply to all to whom
the program is redistributed without the need for execution of an
additional license by those parties. 29

8. License Must Not Be Specific to Debian 30

The rights attached to the program must not depend on the pro-
gram's being part of a Debian system. If the program is extracted
from Debian and used or distributed without Debian but otherwise
within the terms of the program's license, all parties to whom the
program is redistributed should have the same rights as those that
are granted in conjunction with the Debian system. 31

9. License Must Not Contaminate Other Software 32

The license must not place restrictions on other software that is
distributed along with the licensed software. For example, the li-
cense must not insist that all other programs distributed on the
same medium must be free software. 33

34 **10. Example Licenses**

35 The <“GPL”>, <“BSD”>, and <“Artistic”> licenses are examples of licenses that we consider “free”.

36 *The concept of stating our “social contract with the free software community” was suggested by Ean Schuessler. This document was drafted by Bruce Perens, refined by the other Debian developers during a month-long e-mail conference in June 1997, and then <accepted> as the publicly stated policy of the Debian Project.*

37 *Bruce Perens later removed the Debian-specific references from the Debian Free Software Guidelines to create <“The Open Source Definition”>.*

38 *Other organizations may derive from and build on this document. Please give credit to the Debian project if you do.*

Metadata

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Authoritative Source Document

http://www.debian.org/social_contract

Debian Constitution @ SiSU

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