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# GOSH Governance Transition Procedure

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## Introduction

This document was created in July 2021 by the GOSH Community Coordinator, who serves as August 2025..

The purpose of this document is to help those administering the GOSH election process in the future by sharing and documenting knowledge, tips, and useful templates. This is a living document that can be updated as the election process continues to change.

This document is specifically concerned with the logistical aspects of running a GOSH election and is not a resource documenting the governance process itself. For more information on GOSH governance, you can visit the GOSH community governance category on the GOSH forum<sup>1</sup> or view the GOSH Governance Plan for Seating a First GOSH Community Council<sup>2</sup> created by the GOSH Governance Working group in 2021.

For specific questions about governance processes and/or the election secretary role, please contact the GOSH Council at [goshcouncil@openhardware.science](mailto:goshcouncil@openhardware.science).

**Templates and protocols referenced throughout this document are housed in the following Google Folder:**

<https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1jLclFkbn9vJN2YKVY3ENA3FNMzvjA-qM?usp=sharing>

This document is explicitly meant for the Community Council Election procedure. For more information on referendums & ratifying documents, such as the GOSH Constitution, please click [here](#).

## Roles

### Election Secretary

The Election Secretary oversees voter registration, candidate nominations, administration of election processes and platforms, technical support of voters and candidates, and tabulation and reporting of election results. For past Community Council elections, the GOSH Community Coordinator served as the Election Secretary.<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> <https://forum.openhardware.science/c/community-governance/41>

<sup>2</sup> [https://docs.google.com/document/d/1yym3H9qLhlj0FlnMXDuGS-\\_8n8LG7p0l6xtpRqrQ6Yw/edit#](https://docs.google.com/document/d/1yym3H9qLhlj0FlnMXDuGS-_8n8LG7p0l6xtpRqrQ6Yw/edit#)

<sup>3</sup> In the 2021 election, the GOSH Community Coordinator served as Election Secretary as it was agreed upon during the 2021 February community call. This does not have to remain in place in future elections.

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## Independent Observer

The Independent Observer reviews all aspects of the election, affirming and ensuring that defined processes are being followed and providing assurance that a fair and inclusive election takes place. In particular, the responsibilities of the independent observer will be to:

- Review and understand the GOSH election processes
- Work with the Election Secretary to confirm that processes are being followed
- Review and confirm tabulated election results in collaboration with the Election Secretary
- Confirm winning candidates in collaboration with the Election Secretary
- Confirm that reported election results match tabulated election results

## Independent Observer Nominations

Prior to the start of the election cycle, the election secretary will ask the community for independent observer nominations on the GOSH forum. You can see an example of this from the 2021 election.<sup>4</sup>

### Template for Independent Observer Nominations Forum Post:

<https://docs.google.com/document/u/2/d/1US9BsAq0-IC5aKHIHPqrtgJCeDH7uknfVWUNYZNFJpl/edit>

Once the nominations are in, the independent observer will be selected by the seated community council<sup>5</sup> and sent an email asking if they are interested in being an independent observer for this election. Be sure to note back up choices for the independent observer in the case that your first choice is not interested.

### Template for Independent Observer Interest Email:

<https://docs.google.com/document/d/1CXon2W5K5YmXFK5sEdLM8ogLBULwVox7X64ChViEqwE/edit>

## Election Timeline

The community-facing election cycle generally lasts about three months, starting from the development of the nomination form and ending with the selection of new Community Council members. The following timeline is proposed for the 2026 cycle:

Date	Task
6/1	Open Forum Category; Share Plan with Community

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<sup>4</sup><https://forum.openhardware.science/t/independent-observer-nominations-for-upcoming-community-council-election/2789>

<sup>5</sup> Note that in the 2021 election, the Governance Working Group selected the independent observer from the nomination pool.

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Week of June 1	Comment period
6/22	Open nomination
7/6	Close nomination
6/22 - 7/20	Communicate with nominees, confirm interest
7/6 - 7/17	Interview interested nominees
7/20 - 7/24	Council deliberates and ranks candidates
7/28	Council confirms selections and communicates to candidates
7/31	Selections communicated to community
7/31 - 8/14	Community comment period
8/18	Selection finalized

The full transition timeline, including preparatory work done prior to the community-facing launch, can be found [here](#).

## Election Landing Page

A page containing full information about the election should be created and posted to document the election process and support both candidates and voters. Elements anticipated to be on that page include:

- Overview of Community Council
- Summary of vacancies and terms
- Current Election Schedule
- How do I register to vote?
- How do I vote?
- How do I learn more about candidates?
- List of nominations and candidates
- Administration: information about election administration and roles

In future elections, this page could also include information on non-candidacy items to be voted on, such as resolutions and referendums.

This info page should be posted on the GOSH website.<sup>6</sup> You can find the 2021 Election landing page on the GOSH website as well.<sup>7</sup>

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<sup>6</sup> <https://openhardware.science/>

<sup>7</sup> <https://openhardware.science/2021-gosh-community-council-elections/>

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### **Template for Election Landing Page:**

<https://docs.google.com/document/d/1kZdKq6RjzLHUz7ILi5MrIMkJW70UZWzoryseOVuNP4Q/e/dit#>

## Community Governance Category on GOSH Forum

For the first GOSH election, the GOSH Governance Working Group created a Community Governance category on the forum<sup>8</sup> for communicating with the broader GOSH community specifically on ideas and decisions regarding governance. This category on the forum is the place for sharing election related updates and candidate statements.<sup>9</sup>

## Independent Observer Thread on Forum

A thread should be created on the GOSH forum so that communication between the Election Secretary and Independent Observer can be made public to the GOSH community. This also creates a place for the independent observer to do any reporting if need be. You can see an example thread below:

### **Independent Observer Thread from 2021 GOSH Election:**

<https://forum.openhardware.science/t/independent-observer-thread-for-2021-gosh-community-council-election/2858>

Ideally, the Election Secretary should update the thread during various stages of the election process, including:

- 1) The end of the candidate and the voter eligibility period
- 2) The start of the voting period
- 3) The voting tabulation process
- 4) The announcement of the election results

## Voter registration

In order to vote in a GOSH Community Council election, individuals must first register to vote in order to prove their eligibility as an active participant in the GOSH community.<sup>10</sup> This will be discussed further in the "[Checking voter eligibility](#)" section below. Voter registration is done via Limesurvey<sup>11</sup> or EUSurvey.

### Setting up survey

For information on how to set up the voter registration survey, visit the "Voter Registration Survey Flow" section in the following document:

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<sup>8</sup> <https://forum.openhardware.science/c/community-governance/41>

<sup>9</sup> This was established under the GOSH Governance Working Group and the methods for communicating election updates to the GOSH community can be changed in the future if needed.

<sup>10</sup> This is based on the [GOSH Governance Plan for Seating a First GOSH Community Council](#)

<sup>11</sup> Be sure to take into account that Limesurvey needs to be self-hosted.

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### **GOSH Election Voter Registration Protocol and Survey Flow:**

[https://docs.google.com/document/d/1lkqslOkDmFofe7GEpw3hgz7qiAe\\_NncO9Maz9yZ975Q/edit#](https://docs.google.com/document/d/1lkqslOkDmFofe7GEpw3hgz7qiAe_NncO9Maz9yZ975Q/edit#)

Announcing registration on the forum

When the voter registration period begins, be sure to share the voter registration survey on the forum. You can use the following template for sharing voter registration on the forum:

### **TEMPLATE: Announcing GOSH Election Voter Registration on Forum:**

<https://docs.google.com/document/d/1kO6zrzCzUy6YdtHT5tePzkHciHDtL3FpNSPpa02nH7E/edit>

Don't forget to send out reminders to register to vote throughout the registration period as well.

Checking voter eligibility

Checking voter eligibility can be tedious work, and it is recommended that you download the survey data as a .csv file and keep track of responses in a spreadsheet. You can use the following plan to check voter eligibility:

### **GOSH Voter Eligibility Validation Plan:**

<https://docs.google.com/document/d/10hr5ErDIMTnLVPTzJ-GiRc4ZLdyCad8F49Ww25Rd7Ys/edit>

The Independent Observer should be able to have access to and review the eligibility process. Ideally, the Election Secretary and Independent Observer should outline how to do this prior to the start of the eligibility process.

## Candidate nominations

Individuals can nominate others or self-nominate for inclusion in the candidate pool. Individuals nominated by others will need to explicitly accept their nomination in order to be included in the election slate. Nominations will be done via LimeSurvey or EUSurvey.

Nominated candidates can indicate whether they self-identify as being part of one of the following groups<sup>12</sup>:

- Individuals who are Women, Trans or Gender non-conforming
- People of Color and/or Indigenous
- From a low income country or/and community in Africa, South America or Asia

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<sup>12</sup> This is based on the [GOSH Governance Plan for Seating a First GOSH Community Council](#). This may be subject to change depending on the seated council at the time.

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- Those from Unaffiliated, community-based organizations/NGOs<sup>13</sup>
- People/persons with disabilities.

### Setting up surveys

For the candidate nomination process, you will need to set up a survey for GOSH community members to nominate themselves or other community members. Be sure to regularly check the results of this survey, as you will need to personally reach out to anyone who was nominated by another community member to ask them to accept their nomination. To accept their nomination, invite them to complete the survey, but as someone who is “self-nominating.”

For information on how to set up the candidate nomination surveys, visit the “Candidate Survey Flow” section in the following document:

#### **GOSH Election Candidate Nomination Protocol and Survey Flow:**

[https://docs.google.com/document/d/11dWDXaWI4U\\_PPMhUtdgMTMBYj028Rw3vo-NHCThxyn4/edit#](https://docs.google.com/document/d/11dWDXaWI4U_PPMhUtdgMTMBYj028Rw3vo-NHCThxyn4/edit#)

### Announcing nominations period

When the candidate nomination period begins, be sure to share the candidate nomination survey on the forum. You can use the following template for sharing this on the forum:

#### **Template for Announcing GOSH Election Candidate Nomination:**

[https://docs.google.com/document/d/1iTzGKI9f9BRv\\_3XurzQ-LeHAOej2bPv-5iqeeCqDq8g/edit](https://docs.google.com/document/d/1iTzGKI9f9BRv_3XurzQ-LeHAOej2bPv-5iqeeCqDq8g/edit)

Don't forget to send out reminders to register to vote throughout the registration period as well.

### Notifying candidates nominated by others

You must notify candidates nominated by others in a timely manner. Below, you can also see an example email asking someone to accept their nomination.

#### **Example: email to accept nomination for GOSH Community Council Election**

[https://docs.google.com/document/d/1MatJdyff3uGPKER\\_VPOL7v1LsTcVuGdDHs7zUjLjnsU/edit#heading=h.o82koyap9235](https://docs.google.com/document/d/1MatJdyff3uGPKER_VPOL7v1LsTcVuGdDHs7zUjLjnsU/edit#heading=h.o82koyap9235)

### Checking candidate eligibility

The candidate eligibility process is the same as the voter eligibility process. It is recommended that you download the survey data as a .csv file and keep track of responses in a spreadsheet. You can use the following plan to check candidate eligibility:

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<sup>13</sup> The first four groups were based off of the recruitment of participants for the GOSH 2018 Gathering in Shenzhen. This information can be found in the GOSH 2018 Final Report.

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**GOSH Voter Eligibility Validation Plan:**

<https://docs.google.com/document/d/10hr5ErDIMTnLVPTzJ-GiRc4ZLdyCad8F49Ww25Rd7Ys/e/dit>

The Independent Observer should be able to have access to and review the eligibility process. Ideally, the Election Secretary and Independent Observer should outline how to do this prior to the start of the eligibility process.

Notifying and announcing confirmed candidates

Once the candidate nomination period has closed and candidates have been checked for eligibility, it is important to notify the eligible candidates and announce the list of candidates on the GOSH forum.

***Candidates who were nominated by someone else will have up to two days after the candidate nomination period closes to accept their nomination.***

**Template for notifying candidates via email:**

<https://docs.google.com/document/d/1XRuyluHw8C90-9ar1F78ROD3l5UcRHxO9w728i07tX0/e/dit>

**Example forum announcement of candidates:**

<https://forum.openhardware.science/t/announcement-of-candidates-2021-gosh-community-council-election/2860>

Candidate statements and community meetings

Candidates will be free to communicate with and engage the GOSH community in any way they feel is appropriate, however all candidates will be expected to participate in specific common activities<sup>14</sup>, including:

- 1) Posting of candidate position statements: Candidates will be asked to draft a short position statement, indicating why they are running for Community Council, their priorities for the community, and what they hope to achieve, along with a short bio.
  - a) Share the following basic template with candidates in order to encourage comparability of position statements.
  - b) Position statements will be posted to a designated category on the GOSH forum, with community questions and comments enabled so that community members can offer feedback and pose questions. These statements do not have to be in English.
- 2) Community meeting(s) with candidates: Community meetings (or town halls) will be scheduled and announced to allow live discussion between community members and candidates.

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<sup>14</sup> These activities were decided upon by the Governance Working Group for the 2021 election. These activities can be changed in the future if needed.

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- a) Be sure to share the meeting information on the forum and in an email to the candidates
- b) Be sure to take notes and record the meetings, to be shared later with the community. You can see an example of this below.

**Candidate Statement Template for GOSH Community Council Election:**

[https://docs.google.com/document/u/2/d/1QdAeuruc217\\_26dzLO1OgFHfGVTDP\\_KurO6tBNKMVfk/edit](https://docs.google.com/document/u/2/d/1QdAeuruc217_26dzLO1OgFHfGVTDP_KurO6tBNKMVfk/edit)

**Previous Candidate Statement Category on Forum (to use as an example):**

<https://forum.openhardware.science/c/community-governance/candidate-statements/48>

**Example of Notes and Recording from past GOSH Election:**

<https://forum.openhardware.science/t/recording-and-notes-from-community-meeting-1-2021-gosh-community-council-election/2903>

**Template for Community Meetings Forum Post:**

<https://docs.google.com/document/d/1hQtKpjNt6bfeRvAKRUHYcL9gCehTzE7WX1B0ISxMAb4/edit>

## Election Platform

For the 2021 GOSH Community Council Election, the STAR voting platform<sup>15</sup> was used.<sup>16</sup> This platform uses a combination of score voting, to pick two highest scoring candidates, and a “runoff” in which the finalist who is preferred on more ballots wins.

The STAR voting platform is open source and doesn't use proprietary identification systems. Some of the open discussions about this topic can be found on the forum<sup>17</sup>.

*Please note that in 2024, a different process was used to host the GOSH election. The platform still had STAR voting, but the version of STAR.vote was updated, and the process for administering the election was changed.*

## Election Platform Process 2024-onwards

### Setting up the election platform

To set up the election on the STAR voting platform, please refer to the first section (titled “Setting up the Election”) in the following document:

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<sup>15</sup> <https://www.starvoting.us/>

<sup>16</sup> The voting platform can be changed in future elections if that is preferred. However, if a new platform is chosen, this section will need to be updated to reflect the new voting platform.

<sup>17</sup> The address for these discussions are the following:

<https://forum.openhardware.science/t/gosh-community-call-thursday-february-25th-1430-utc/2697/5> and <https://forum.openhardware.science/t/towards-more-inclusive-polling-voting/2474/7>.

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### **GOSH Election Platform Administration Protocol (2024):**

Make sure that the Independent Observer has reviewed the election platform protocol as well.

Administering elections and notifying voters

To administer the election and notify voters of the election, follow the second and third sections (“Distributing the Election” and “How to Vote”) in the following document:

### **GOSH Election Platform Administration Protocol (2024):**

[https://docs.google.com/document/d/1qrmcUwzXx9kPui0Y\\_0zoBBttvIO8G\\_x-CjRQfMWFVsE/edit](https://docs.google.com/document/d/1qrmcUwzXx9kPui0Y_0zoBBttvIO8G_x-CjRQfMWFVsE/edit)

Remember to send a reminder email about the election to voters as well.

### **Election Platform Process 2021-2023**

Setting up the election platform

To set up the election on the STAR voting platform, please refer to the first section (titled “Setting up the Election”) in the following document\*:

### **GOSH Election Platform Administration Protocol (2021):**

<https://docs.google.com/document/d/1v1GYMiblsFh42Ir-PgUxFsfZzllx8JliJDwzzASQPgA/edit#>

Make sure that the Independent Observer has reviewed the election platform protocol as well.

*\*Please note that in 2024, the STAR voting platform was down and instead was replaced by dev.star.vote. The administration protocol was updated to include information on how to use this platform*

### **GOSH Election Platform Administration Protocol (2024):**

[https://docs.google.com/document/d/1qrmcUwzXx9kPui0Y\\_0zoBBttvIO8G\\_x-CjRQfMWFVsE/edit](https://docs.google.com/document/d/1qrmcUwzXx9kPui0Y_0zoBBttvIO8G_x-CjRQfMWFVsE/edit)

Administering elections and notifying voters

To administer the election and notify voters of the election, follow the second and third sections (“Distributing the Election” and “How to Vote”) in the following document:

### **GOSH Election Platform Administration Protocol (2021):**

<https://docs.google.com/document/d/1v1GYMiblsFh42Ir-PgUxFsfZzllx8JliJDwzzASQPgA/edit#>

Remember to send a reminder email about the election to voters as well.

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## Tabulating votes

Once the voting period ends, the Election Secretary and Independent Observer are responsible for tabulating the votes. The election secretary and independent observer should develop a plan for tabulating votes prior to tabulating the votes, and this plan should be shared with the community on the Independent Observer thread on the forum. You can see an example of this on the Independent Observer thread from the 2021 election<sup>18</sup>

It is suggested that the Independent Observer and Election Secretary tabulate the votes soon after the voting period ends so that there is more time to notify the elected candidates before announcing the results.

What to do when there is a tie

When creating a plan for tabulating votes, be sure to note what to do if a tie arises.

For the STAR voting platform, if there were a tie between two candidates in the automatic runoff, whichever candidate scored the highest in the scoring round becomes the winner. If, however, two candidates tied in the automatic runoff and had the same score in the scoring round, we decided that we will flip a coin to determine who the winner is. The tied candidates will be notified before the coin toss as well.

## Reporting Results

After votes have been tabulated, you can announce the results on the forum. Here is an example below:

**2021 Community Council Announcement:**

<https://forum.openhardware.science/t/announcement-of-2021-gosh-community-council/2949>

**2022 Community Council Announcement:**

<https://forum.openhardware.science/t/announcement-of-2022-gosh-community-council-election-results/3971/6>

## Independent Observer Report

Be sure to also update the Independent Observer Thread on the forum so that there is a space for any outstanding comments or reports the Independent Observer may have on the election process and/or voting tabulation procedure. If the Independent Observer doesn't have any outstanding comments, they should publicly declare this so that the election process is officially closed.

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<sup>18</sup> Independent Observer Thread from 2021 GOSH Election:

<https://forum.openhardware.science/t/independent-observer-thread-for-2021-gosh-community-council-election/2858>