# Guidance for Discussion Papers

The ISWG aims to bring diverse minds and opinions together to discuss issues related to the Inputs (Identity management), Semantic (Data management), and Governance (Access management) domains through a series of discussion papers that bring cohesion to data entry, data capture, and data governance processes and standards throughout the Trust over IP stack.

> *"Simple can be harder than complex: You have to work hard to get your thinking clean to make it simple. But it's worth it in the end because once you get there, you can move mountains." - Steve Jobs*


- How to Write a Discussion Paper
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## How to Write a Discussion Paper

A discussion paper aims to put forward some ideas or opinions that form the basis of a discussion of a particular topic. It describes a position on an issue and the rationale for that position. Base a discussion paper on facts that provide a solid foundation for an argument. The discussion paper should:

- Use evidence to support the position, such as statistical evidence or dates and events.
- Validate the position with authoritative references or primary source quotations.
- Examine the strengths and weaknesses of the position.
- Evaluate possible solutions and suggest courses of action.

Choose an issue with a clear division of opinion and which is arguable with facts and inductive reasoning. You may choose an issue on which you have already formed an opinion. However, in writing about this issue, you must examine your opinion of the issue critically. Before writing your discussion paper, define and limit your issue carefully. Social issues are complex, with multiple solutions. Narrow the topic of your discussion paper to something manageable. Research your issue thoroughly, consulting experts and obtaining primary documents. Consider feasibility, cost-effectiveness and political /social climate when evaluating possible solutions and courses of action.

## Current List of Submitted Discussion Paper Proposals

The current list of submitted ***ISWG Discussion Paper Proposals*** can be viewed here.

## How to Start the Submission Process

The submission process is lightweight by design. To start the process, please fill in the ***ISWG Discussion Paper Submission Form*** here.

## How to Structure the Discussion Paper

> *"Everything should be made as simple as possible, but no simpler." - Albert Einstein*

To facilitate reading and distribution, the typical length of a discussion paper is usually between 500 and 800 words.

The *introduction* should clearly identify the issue and state the author's position. It should be written in a way that catches the reader's attention.

The *body* of the discussion paper may contain several paragraphs. Each paragraph should present an idea or main concept that clarifies a portion of the position statement and is supported by evidence or facts. Evidence can be primary source quotations, statistical data, interviews with experts, and indisputable dates or events. Evidence should lead, through inductive reasoning, to the main concept or idea presented in the paragraph. The body may begin with some background information and should incorporate a discussion of both sides of the issue.

The *conclusion* should summarize the main concepts and ideas and reinforce, without repeating, the introduction or body of the paper. It could include suggested courses of action and possible solutions.

In order to keep a uniform structure for all ISWG Discussion Papers, please make an editable copy of the ***ISWG Discussion Paper Template*** here and start drafting.

To fully understand the content and structure of the template, please read the ***ISWG Discussion Paper Guide*** here.