
Global Agenda Council on the Intellectual Property System

Digital Copyright Principles

Technology is dramatically shifting the ways in which content is created, stored, moved, and consumed. Information can be moved nearly instantaneously to anywhere in the world. Cloud computing has upended traditional assumptions about the tie between physical location and access to content. And, massive amounts of information can now be stored in devices that easily fit in the palm of a hand.

What has not changed, however, is the underlying importance and value of the intellectual property (IP) embodied in creative content. The principles below are intended to serve as a framework for policymakers, copyright owners, and content consumers to ensure that the value of that IP continues to be appropriately recognized, while also enabling current and emerging technologies to be harnessed in ways that benefit everyone in the IP ecosystem.

1. Creators and producers of creative works should receive meaningful protection, recognition and compensation for their contributions to economic and cultural development.
2. Copyright law should reflect an appropriate balance between the rights of creators and copyright owners and the interests of consumers and other users of works.
3. Copyright law should be regularly reviewed and updated as appropriate to respond to new technologies and uses.
4. Copyright systems should enable rights to be meaningfully, practically, cost-effectively, and proportionally enforced.
5. A wide range of means should be available for creative works to reach the public, as enabled by Internet and other technologies—maximizing choice for both rights holders and users. It is desirable to have as much quality content as possible available in as many formats as possible.
6. Licensing should be streamlined in a content-appropriate manner and simplified to be as easy and efficient as possible, including for different types of content and across national boundaries.
7. The public should be educated about the purpose, scope and nature of copyright protections, including exceptions, and the reasons for proposed changes or government action.