

IP Charter

Steering Group Meeting, 18 March 2005

1. The Steering Group met on 18 March 2005 at the RSA in London. It was attended by James Boyle, Lynne Brindley, Carlos Correa, Darius Cuplinkas, Carolyn Deere, John Howkins, Michael Jubb, James Love, Hector MacQueen, John Naughton, Vandana Shiva, Jaime Stapleton and Sir John Sulston.
2. The meeting started with a report on the research programme, including the appointment of several key researchers and the formation of a research group. We have started to hold a series of small informal meetings. John Howkins will also be visiting organisations in Brazil and Australia in April. The full research report will be available on the website.
3. The draft Charter text (see draft #1 and marked-up versions by James Boyle and Cory Doctorow which have also been distributed).
 - It was agreed we should define the problem at the beginning very clearly
 - It was agreed we should establish our general (non-IP) principles before introducing the issues of copyright, patents, etc. Our aim is to establish a new agenda, a new set of principles.
 - The core of the Charter should be the principles. We should include other material only insofar as it explains or strengthens the principles.
 - Our starting points are creativity, the public domain, public interest, access, etc.

- We should refer to existing principles, phrases, etc as much as possible
 - On the recommendations to governments, some people felt they were too detailed and would get out-of-date, and should therefore be excluded, while others welcomed their specificity. Whether we include recommendations (as distinct from principles) will be resolved in the next drafting stage. There was a proposal to separate the principles from the recommendations needed to implement them
4. These few points are a tiny fraction of the comments made during an extraordinarily vigorous and interesting discussion. A detailed transcript will be sent out to all members.
 5. It was agreed to form a small drafting committee to prepare a new draft within 4-6 weeks for circulation to members by the beginning of May.
 6. Presentation and Signatories. We discussed how to maximise the Charter's impact. It could be signed
 - i. by the small number of people involved in drafting it
 - ii. by a selected group of say 60-100 luminaries (including those in (i))
 - iii. by all who support it (open signing)
 - iv. by no-one
 - v. by the RSA
 7. It was agreed that option (ii) and (v) were most attractive. For this, we need a list of people who are representative of the relevant fields/interests/countries etc and who we can contact. When we are closer to having a final draft, we will distribute a list of categories and ask for suggestions.
 8. Our timetable envisages a final draft by July. The date and manner of the launch depends on the form of the final Charter, and on who signs it, but is not likely to take place before September. It was suggested we should hold several

events, linking with local organisations in different countries. When we launch the Charter we will also publish a research dossier and FAQs to support the Charter.

9. Next meeting. The next meeting of the Steering Group will take place in London on 15 July. We are planning another RSA debate on the evening of 14 July which is likely to focus on the Charter's themes.