

# Noisy Discord Specification

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## Foreword

This specification has been produced by the Silent Concord Foundation.

The contents of the present document may change following formal approval by the Silent Concord Foundation (SCF) Change Control Board (CCB). Should the SCF CCB modify the contents of this specification, it will be re-released with an increase in version number.

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## Acknowledgements

This format of this specification is an adaptation of a specification format developed by the European Telecommunications Standards Institute (Sophia Antipolis, France).

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# 1 Introduction

This specification defines the requirements by which a meeting qualifies as a Noisy Discord. This specification is intended to:

- Promote uniformity among Noisy Discords. Participants should know what to expect when attending a meeting advertised as a Noisy Discord.
- Maximize the freedom of Noisy Discord participants and coordinators by minimizing the number of rules.
- Provide a mechanism for the orderly evolution of Noisy Discord.

Minimizing variability and maximizing freedom are contradictory goals. There is unlikely to be a single solution which satisfies all participants and coordinators. This specification will evolve in concert with the understanding of the best compromise between these contradictory goals.

Section 2 provides references. Section 3 provides definitions and abbreviations. Section 4 provides an overview of Noisy Discord. Sections 5, 6, and 7 provide general, coordinator, and participant requirements. Appendix A provides a specification change history.

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## 2 References

- [1] SCF 100      Silent Concord Specification, Silent Concord Foundation

## 3 Definitions and Abbreviations

### 3.1 Definitions

See [1].

### 3.2 Abbreviations

See [1].

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## 4 Overview

Noisy Discord is a meeting following Silent Concord [1] where participants can share ideas and experiences. Noisy Discord participants should not allow disagreements that may arise during discussions to affect their willingness to engage in Silent Concord. Silent Concord is the primary vehicle for community building; Noisy Discord is a secondary vehicle. The unifying silence of Silent Concord always supersedes the sometimes divisive ‘noise’ of Noisy Discord.

There are two roles within Noisy Discord: coordinator and participant. The person with the coordinator role is responsible for administering the Noisy Discord. A person with the participant role participates in the Noisy Discord. The coordinator is usually also a participant.

The coordinator determines what activity or activities will occur during Noisy Discord. The coordinator will often solicit participants for their activity preferences before defining a Noisy Discord. Some example activities for Noisy Discord:

- Discussing Silent Concord practices
- Informal conversation with coffee and pastries
- Sharing cares and concerns
- Sharing insights obtained during Silent Concord
- Seminars on topics of interest to participants
- Presentation by an invited speaker
- Music

The coordinator has no exceptional censorial power in Noisy Discord discussions. All participants are equally responsible for shaping and policing a free discussion.

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## 5 General Requirements

10. A Noisy Concord **shall** have a single person designated as the coordinator.
20. A Noisy Concord **shall** have two or more persons designated as participants.

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## 6 Coordinator Requirements

### 6.1 General

1000. The coordinator **should** also be a participant.

1010. The coordinator **may** delegate a task to a participant but **shall** retain ultimate responsibility for the completion of the delegated task.

### 6.2 Structuring a Noisy Discord

1100. The coordinator **may** arrange participant seating to imply that some participant is different than other participants. For example, a participant giving a presentation **may** be seated facing all other participants.

1110. The coordinator **should** solicit participants for activity preferences.

### 6.3 Policing a Noisy Discord

1200. The coordinator **shall not** claim or exercise an exceptional right to control a free Noisy Discord discussion.

1210. The coordinator **shall** remove a participant who persistently violates a Noisy Discord rule despite repeated warnings.

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## 7 Participant Requirements

### 7.1 Engaging in Noisy Discord

2000. A participant **shall** respect statements made by other participants.

2010. A participant **should** ask questions.

2020. A participant **shall** express personal opinions in the first person, as opposed to the second or third person. An example first person statement is “I believe in X.” An example second person statement is “You are Y.” An example third person statement is “Z exists.”

2030. A participant **should not** dominate a free discussion.

2040. A participant **should not** allow disagreements with other participants regarding topics discussed during Noisy Discord to affect the participant’s willingness to engage in Silent Concord.

2050. A participant **shall not** offer unsolicited advice to another participant.

### 7.2 Policing a Noisy Discord

2500. A participant **should** tactfully notify another participant when they violate a Noisy Discord rule.

2510. A participant **should** bring persistent violations of a Noisy Discord rule by another participant to the attention of the coordinator.

2520. A participant **should** bring persistent violations of a Noisy Discord rule by the coordinator to the attention of the Silent Concord Foundation.

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## Annex A: Change history

2007-09-27 Version 1.0 Initial Release