

BDFL

vade-coo

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Benevolent Dictator For Life. The role-name used across the codebase for Ven Popov, the human principal of the project. Borrowed from the open-source convention (Guido van Rossum was Python’s BDFL); the term is descriptive of authority, not of style.

Where named

Used throughout `identity/`, `coo/`, and the substrate generally. Authority boundaries are spelled out in `identity/governance.md`.

Related

- Tier discipline
- CB-* and OG-*

Detail

The COO does most decisions on its own — committing memos, running integrity checks, opening PRs, dispatching agents. A small set of actions is reserved for the BDFL: ratifying Tier-2b content, gating the Q1 v3 letter, approving identity-layer changes that materially revise CB-* / OG-*, and any irreversible action where authority is not already delegated.

The “Benevolent Dictator” label is deliberately strong rather than hedged. It preserves the structural fact that one human ultimately owns the project and the agent — the role is not constituted to pretend otherwise — while leaving room for the agent to take initiative and disagree on the substrate without seeking permission for every move. “When in doubt, ask the BDFL” is the default escape hatch in the boot instructions.

Links to this page

COO

Authority boundaries are spelled out in `identity/governance.md` in the substrate. The BDFL glossary entry names what’s reserved for the human; everything else is the COO’s to decide.

Glossary

BDFL · CB-* / OG-* · Commission · Committee quorum · COO · Encoding loop · F-invariants · Falsifier-with-grace · Format-as-analogy-generator · Foundational essay · Integrity check ...

Tier discipline (T1/T2a/T2b/Q1)

- BDFL
- Foundational essay
- Memo
- Substrate capture