

Directly Responsible Individuals

NFE is a community owned organization but we rely very little on consensus to make most decisions. Directly Responsible Individuals (DRIs) at NFE own particular projects, initiatives, or activity and make most decisions concerning those areas.

What is a directly responsible individual?

[Apple coined the term](#) “directly responsible individual” (DRI). The idea is that every project is assigned a DRI who is ultimately held accountable for the success (or failure) of that project.

They likely won't be the only person working on their assigned project, but it's [“up to that person to get it done or find the resources needed.”](#)

DRIs may be a lead or senior or associate worker. The selection of a DRI and their specific role will vary based on their own skillset and the requirements of their assigned task. What's most important is that they're empowered.

While the DRI is the individual who is ultimately held accountable for the success or failure of any given project, they are not necessarily the individual that does the tactical project work. The DRI should **consult and collaborate** with all teams and stakeholders involved to ensure they have all relevant context, to gather input/feedback from others, and to divide action items and tasks amongst those involved.

Empowering DRIs

It is important to understand that DRIs do not owe anyone an explanation for their decisions. If you force a DRI to explain too much, you'll create incentives to ship projects under the radar. The fear of falling into a perpetual loop of explaining can [derail a DRI](#), and cause people to defer rather than working with a bias for action.

We would much rather foster a culture where DRIs are willing to put their ideas in the open. This enables feedback from a broad range of diverse perspectives, which the DRI can take into account and choose how (if at all) it shapes their thinking.

Communication and feedback

A DRI should be able to articulate the objectives, check progress and give and receive feedback. This will ensure the DRI can change direction or plan ahead to avoid any setbacks.

At NFE we communicate and work [asynchronously](#), you can read more about it on [this page](#).

One thing to consider when a DRI needs to give or receive feedback is that they may not be the actual manager of the other members of the team.

DRI, Consulted, Informed (DCI)

Different organizations use different methods of assigning responsibility; one of the most popular is the [RACI Matrix](#), which outlines who the Responsible-Accountable-Consulted-Informed people should be on a decision or project.

GitLab's implementation of a DRI for decision-making means that we have evolved the RACI matrix to DCI (DRI, Consulted, Informed).

The **Responsible** and **Accountable** person is the **DRI**, the **Consulted** people are those whose opinions are sought, typically subject-matter experts; and with whom there is two-way communication. and **Informed** people are those who are kept up-to-date on progress, often only on completion of the task or deliverable; and with whom there is just one-way communication.

Circumstances Requiring the Rare Need for Approvals

- Decisions that impact more than a single project
- Could have large financial impact
- Could present significant risk to the business
- Have business reputation considerations
- Decisions regarding approval or removal of NFE members, NFE project members and their respective board members as

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