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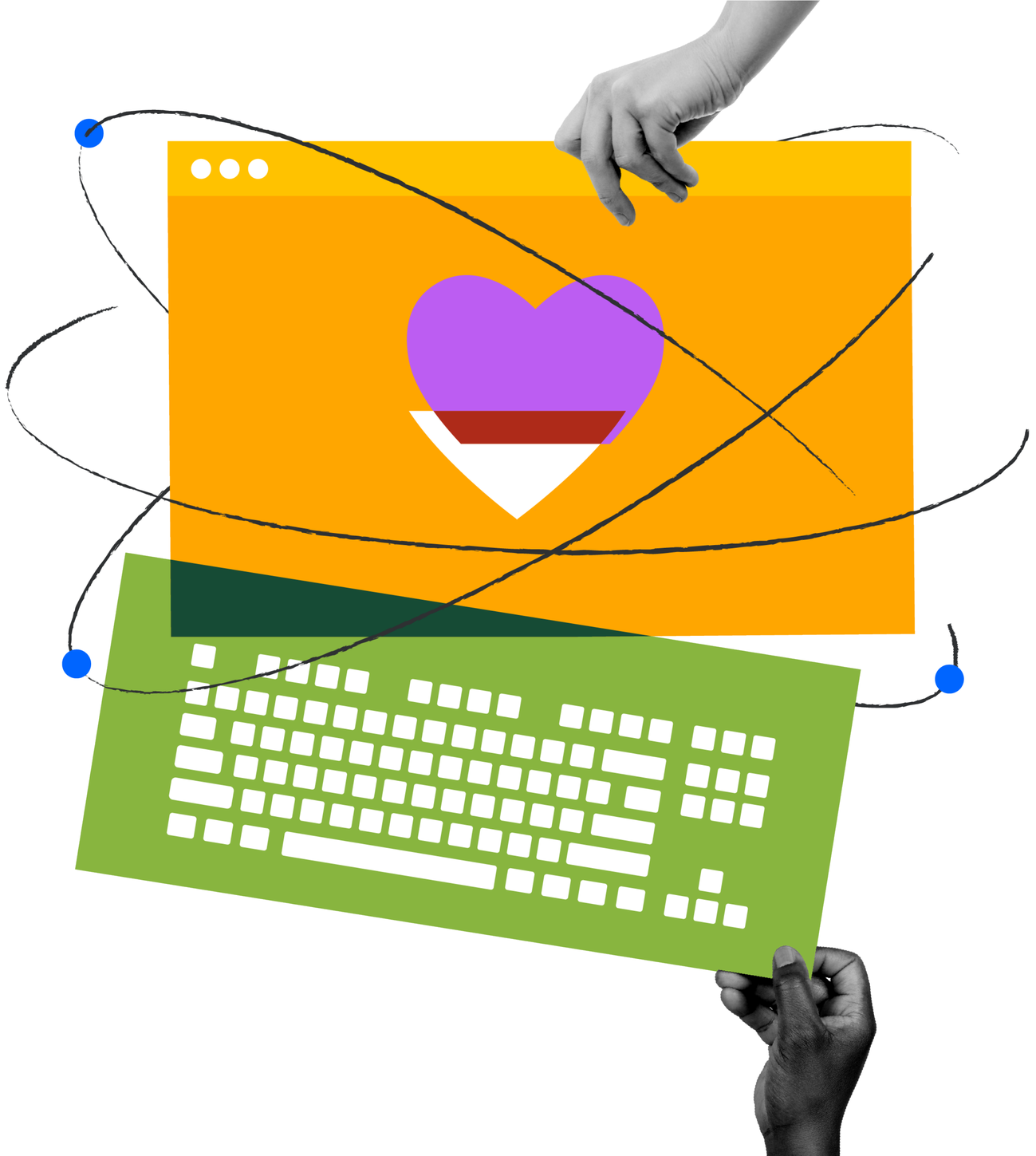
Responsible Technology Review Template



Introduction

This template is based on **Atlassian's Responsible Technology Principles** and helps teams build a shared understanding of how their project affects employees, customers, and community stakeholders. By being thoughtful in the use and development of technology, we can move fast and *not* break things.

"How do I use this thing?"

1. Step through this template as a project team and don't expect to work through the whole thing in one go. You may need to split off to gather information or talk to stakeholders, then come back together.

2. Make sure the project's lead is involved throughout. This person might be called the owner, approver, directly responsible individual (DRI), or some other clever name your company has invented.

3. Tip! You don't *have* to complete a responsible technology review before beginning development work. But you'll be more objective in your thinking (and end up with less re-work) if you do.

4. Treat this as a living document. Come back and reassess if the project pivots direction, the user persona changes, you go from beta to GA, etc.

5. Tip! Use this template to assess the technology you're building or buying for internal use, too.

A note about alignment checks

Each section focuses on a different guiding principle. Along with specific questions to consider, you'll also check how well the project aligns with that principle. We've found a simple red/yellow/green system works well. Here's what each rating means.

FEELS GOOD

You're confident this use of technology aligns with the relevant principle.

NEEDS WORK

You've uncovered risks or potential issues. That's OK! Reassess your plans and adapt as needed.

NOT ALIGNED

You've identified ethical issues and/or problems that might emerge later.

Project summary

Project or product	
Driver	
Team members	
Description	
Resources	
Dates and versions	
Overall confidence	☐ FEELS GOOD ☐ NEEDS WORK ☐ NOT ALIGNED

Principle 1: Empower all humans

Technologies should be open, inclusive, fair, and just to reflect the fundamental rights we all share.

How will customers, employees, or other users experience this technology?

We don't know what we don't know. To maximize fairness and inclusivity, we need to think about how all users will be affected.

THEME	DISCUSSION PROMPTS	ALIGNMENT RATING	ACTIONS AND IMPROVEMENTS
1. Benefits, harms, and fairness for users and stakeholders	Describe each user persona or type, as well as personas or types of people who might be affected by the project even if they don't use it directly (e.g., because it is used on or about them, like job candidates or end users). For each group, identify the main benefits and possible harms they could experience. **Answer:** Are there any groups or sub-groups that might be treated differently or miss out on benefits (e.g. due to cultural or language barriers)? **Answer:**	FEELS GOOD ☐ NEEDS WORK ☐ NOT ALIGNED ☐	What have we already done to make sure everyone is treated fairly and gets similar benefits? What will we do next to keep checking and improving fairness for all groups?

Principle 1 (cont.)

How will customers, employees, or other users experience this technology?

We don't know what we don't know. To maximize fairness and inclusivity, we need to think about how all users will be affected.

THEME	DISCUSSION PROMPTS	ALIGNMENT RATING	ACTIONS AND IMPROVEMENTS
2. Including different voices, experiences, and perspectives	How have we included the voices of people with different backgrounds and needs in the project? *Think about the composition of the project team as well as how additional perspectives could be included via research, data collection, design, and user testing. For example, think about how to account for possible differences in languages or cultures, or other missing perspectives.* **Answer:**	FEELS GOOD ☐ NEEDS WORK ☐ NOT ALIGNED ☐	How will we bring in any missing voices or experiences? If we can't, how will we make sure their needs are still considered?

Principle 2: Unleash potential, not inequity

If we use technologies responsibly and intentionally, we can contribute to better outcomes across our communities.

What are the known and potential uses?

It's our responsibility to control for bad outcomes to the best of our ability and drive toward good outcomes. That starts with thinking through how technology should be used.

THEME	DISCUSSION PROMPTS	ALIGNMENT RATING	ACTIONS AND IMPROVEMENTS
3. Understanding intended uses, potential misuse and its consequences	How does the technology help make teamwork and collaboration easier for users and stakeholders? What is the best possible outcome when it's used? **Answer:** What could go wrong, whether by accident, due to failure or if someone tries to misuse it? What are the worst things that could happen? *Think about how a supervillain might abuse technology – as well as other ways that use could result in **unintended consequences**, like bias, toxicity or harm to individuals.* **Answer:**	FEELS GOOD ☐ NEEDS WORK ☐ NOT ALIGNED ☐	What have we already done to help things go well and prevent problems or misuse? What else will we do to make good outcomes more likely and reduce the chance of things going wrong?

Principle 3: Build for trust

Trust isn't just about ensuring the security and privacy of technology products, but is also earned and kept by demonstrating a commitment to reliability and performance.

How does the technology align with our commitments around trust?

New technologies (including AI) come with unknowns about their quality, accuracy, and reliability. Acting in line with user expectations helps to maintain trust.

THEME	DISCUSSION PROMPTS	ALIGNMENT RATING	ACTIONS AND IMPROVEMENTS
4. Customer and user expectations	From the user's perspective, does the use of this technology align with what they expect from us and the trust they place in us to safeguard their data? *For example, think about whether a user might consider any aspect of the technology to be unusually different or surprising, or might expect to have more choice in whether and how to use it.* **Answer:**	FEELS GOOD ☐ NEEDS WORK ☐ NOT ALIGNED ☐	What have we already done to help users maintain their trust in us? What will we do next to build trust and address any worries users may have?

Principle 3 (cont.)

How does the technology align with our commitments around trust?

New technologies (including AI) come with unknowns about their quality, accuracy, and reliability. Acting in line with user expectations helps to maintain trust.

THEME	DISCUSSION PROMPTS	ALIGNMENT RATING	ACTIONS AND IMPROVEMENTS
5. Testing, quality, and performance	How are we ensuring that this technology works well and is accurate for its intended use? *Think about whether there has been robust and comprehensive testing and whether testing is repeated as things change – especially if the tasks that it is being asked to complete or the environment in which it is deployed are more complex, open-ended or likely to change over time.* **Answer:**	FEELS GOOD ☐ NEEDS WORK ☐ NOT ALIGNED ☐	How will we keep checking that our testing is robust enough, and improve it as things change?

Principle 4: Open communication, no bullshit

With new technologies like AI, just telling users that a feature is AI-powered doesn't mean much unless the user also understands what it means when the feature is in use, how to best interact with it, and how to respond to (and if needed, question) its outputs.

What will we communicate about this tech and the data that powers it?

Some disclosures will be mandatory, others aren't. But many of the issues identified in this review can be solved by being open with users – particularly for AI systems that mimic human interactions (like chatbots) and generative AI that produces human-like output.

THEME	DISCUSSION PROMPTS	ALIGNMENT RATING	ACTIONS AND IMPROVEMENTS
6. Understanding what to communicate	What risks or limitations do we think users should understand before they use the technology? *Include any scenarios where we know that the technology does not perform as well, where we have not tested and validated its performance, or specific end user behaviour (e.g. types of misuse) that we want to limit or restrict.* **Answer:**	FEELS GOOD ☐ NEEDS WORK ☐ NOT ALIGNED ☐	How will we keep learning about any risks or limits, so we can give users the best information?

Principle 4 (cont.)

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THEME	DISCUSSION PROMPTS	ALIGNMENT RATING	ACTIONS AND IMPROVEMENTS
7. Communication plan	If we are using AI for this project, how might we best inform users that an AI system is in use? **Answer:** How else can we educate users about the technology, and help them understand both the risks and benefits? *Think about what level of disclosure is most appropriate based on the context, including whether there are any behavioral nudges or notifications you can build into the product itself.* **Answer:**	FEELS GOOD ☐ NEEDS WORK ☐ NOT ALIGNED ☐	What information will we need to share with users in the future?

Principle 5: Accountability is a team sport

Any technology is part of a larger ecosystem. It's important to take user feedback seriously and to encourage other technology makers to adopt these practices, too.

How will we hold ourselves and our partners accountable for the impacts of this technology?

We need to understand the boundaries of what we're responsible for, and make sure that human involvement and oversight is meaningful.

THEME	DISCUSSION PROMPTS	ALIGNMENT RATING	ACTIONS AND IMPROVEMENTS
8. Human oversight and control when the technology is in use	How much human control do users have when using or interacting with this technology and its outputs? *Think about whether and how administrators, users and others can choose whether to use and rely on it, and how those choices will be presented to them (e.g. opt-in/out).* **Answer:**	FEELS GOOD ☐ NEEDS WORK ☐ NOT ALIGNED ☐	What have we already done to make sure that users meaningfully engage with these choices and options? How will we give people more involvement in or control over how they use this technology?

Principle 5 (cont.)

How will we hold ourselves and our partners accountable for the impacts of this technology?

We need to understand the boundaries of what we're responsible for, and make sure that human involvement and oversight is meaningful.

THEME	DISCUSSION PROMPTS	ALIGNMENT RATING	ACTIONS AND IMPROVEMENTS
9. Understanding our place in the technology ecosystem	What aspects of oversight and management of the technology are we responsible for, relative to other third parties? *Think about, and aim to differentiate between, what oversight activities are controlled by the project team, other teams within the organization, or outside partners – including the providers of any AI models not developed by us.* **Answer:** Are there any areas where responsibilities might overlap or be unclear? **Answer:**	FEELS GOOD ☐ NEEDS WORK ☐ NOT ALIGNED ☐	What have we already done to make sure that everyone understands their responsibilities? If there's confusion over responsibilities in future, do we have a plan to sort it out?

Principle 5 (cont.)

How will we hold ourselves and our partners accountable for the impacts of this technology?

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THEME	DISCUSSION PROMPTS	ALIGNMENT RATING	ACTIONS AND IMPROVEMENTS
10. Feedback and continuous improvement	How will we collect and use feedback from users and others to keep improving the technology over time? *Think about reactive measures like user reporting, as well as more proactive, regular cadences for seeking feedback, and whether these are ongoing or only for limited periods.* **Answer:**	FEELS GOOD ☐ NEEDS WORK ☐ NOT ALIGNED ☐	How will we make it easier for people to give feedback, and how will we use that feedback to keep getting better?

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