

IEEE Standards Association Public Policy Statement
Policies Accepting Global, Market-driven Standards Should be Embraced in
International Trade Discussions and Regulatory Environments

IEEE STANDARDS ASSOCIATION BOARD OF
GOVERNORS
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The IEEE Standards Association (IEEE-SA) recommends that international trade agreements and regulatory environments should:

1. Embrace the globally inclusive, market-driven standards¹ approach as an equally legitimate approach to standardization as a country-driven model.
2. Specify preferences for global/international standards over national or other standards, so that the benefits of technical excellence and global interoperability are available to all.
3. Protect innovation by setting out principles for technical regulations that encourage use of global/international standards and minimize the use of prescriptive technical regulations.

The IEEE-SA believes that an open, global, market-driven standards paradigm is a critical component in promoting global economic benefits.

Standardization can reduce cost and administrative burdens on governments. Standards can provide an alternative to technical regulations and reduce the need for government to develop regulations. Further, standardization facilitates the ability to stay current with technology as it advances. When a regulation is needed, by referring to the most recent standard(s), a regulation can be as current as the state-of-the-art standard in that field.

Standardization supports technical excellence and encourages innovation. Because technology is an enabler for global interconnection and interdependence, mechanisms for unifying technology are foundational to increased economic growth and trade. By enabling global interoperability, standardization also provides building blocks for innovation, helps facilitate economies of scale, and lowers the risk of vendor lock-in.

¹ See Karen Bartleson. *Market-Driven Standards and the IEEE-SA*. *IEEE Internet Computing* (Volume: 18, Issue: 2, Mar.-Apr. 2014). <https://ieeexplore.ieee.org/document/6777470> for an in-depth discussion on market-driven standards. Bartleson defines the market-driven model as “a model by which global standards are created, adopted, and recognized worldwide. In it, the very developers and users of technological innovations—as opposed to a centralized body—drive the development and adoption of the standards.”

Unlike country-driven standards, the market-driven standards development paradigm favors no nation and fosters a global environment where technology standards compete for implementation on their own merits. This paradigm of market-driven standardization has been proven to ensure strong integration, interoperability, and increased synergies along the technological innovation chain, while allowing for the representation of the broadest possible cross-section of stakeholders.

Technology is constantly evolving and expanding into our daily lives. As technologists, engineers, and manufacturers strive to keep pace with the increasing intersection of technology with economic, political, and policy drivers, it is important that our standardization paradigms retain the flexibility to respond to the pace of innovation and the breadth of applications. The globally inclusive, market-driven standards approach has demonstrated the necessary agility to meet modern society's needs.

This statement was developed by the IEEE Standards Association and represents the considered judgement of a group of IEEE standards participants with expertise in the subject field. The position taken by the IEEE Standards Association does not necessarily reflect the views of IEEE or its other Organizational Units.

ABOUT IEEE

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IEEE has 420,000 members in more than 160 countries. IEEE publishes a third of the world's technical literature in electrical engineering, computer science, and electronics, and is a leading developer of international standards that underpin many of today's telecommunications, information technology, and power-generation products and services.

ABOUT THE IEEE STANDARDS ASSOCIATION

The IEEE Standards Association, a globally recognized standards-setting body within IEEE, develops consensus standards through an open process that engages industry and brings together a broad stakeholder community. IEEE standards set specifications and best practices based on current scientific and technological knowledge. The IEEE-SA has a portfolio of over 1,250 active standards and over 650 standards under development. For more information visit <http://standards.ieee.org>.