



**World Forum on Theology and Liberation**  
**Foro mundial de teología y liberación**  
**Fórum mundial de teologia e libertação**  
**Forum mondial de théologie et libération**

**Principles and procedures**  
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**Principes et procédures**  
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## 1. Principles and Procedures, English version

**Principles and procedures**  
**Adopted by the International committee, April 17, 2021**  
**English version**

### **PART I**

#### **Historical introduction**

In 1975 representatives of Black Theology, Feminist Theology and Liberation Theology met ecumenically in Detroit, Michigan (USA), recognizing these trajectories as “liberation theologies”. In 1976 theologians from Africa, Asia and Latin America met in Dar Es Salaam (Tanzania), starting the Ecumenical Association of Third World Theologians (EATWOT / ASETT). In 2003, inside the World Social Forum (WSF), in Porto Alegre (Brazil), a process began that resulted in the first World Forum on Theology and Liberation (WFTL) in 2005, also in Porto Alegre. Since then, always in tandem with the WSF meetings, the WFTL has been held in Nairobi (2007); Belém (2009); Dakar (2011); Tunis (2013 and 2015); Montreal (2016), and Salvador da Bahia (2018). During the pandemic that ravaged the planet, the WFTL also contributed through a digital platform to the 2021 Virtual World Social Forum. From the beginning, the process was supported by some institutions (four in southern Brazil; two of national character in Brazil, one in Latin American and one global) through representatives of these institutions. It also relied from the beginning on economic support from institutions in Europe and North America. Although each WFTL event has been contextually unique, there continues to be a process of critique and maturing within the WFTL.

#### **Objective**

The World Forum on Theology and Liberation (WFTL), since its origin, has as its objective and mission to be a space or platform for convergence, encounter and exchange, with theologies and theologians who, around the world, commit themselves to the *principle of liberation* in their personal, regional and international contexts. Its identity is manifested in its production: exchanges, debates, publications, spiritual and artistic spaces, aligned with its thematic axes and its principles.

## **Principles**

1. The *World Forum on Theology and Liberation* connects “theologies” and “liberation” because it intends to bring together different theologies that inherit their references in dialogues of knowledge and spiritualities from Liberation Theology, in its contextual and public expressions. The WFTL is therefore opposed to any totalitarian, exclusive and reductionist views of the human being, of gender, race, culture, and of the religious phenomenon. The WFTL, on the contrary, is open to challenges by different religious traditions, ecological spirituality and plural representations of the transcendent.
2. The WFTL promotes different contemporary theological approaches identified and committed to practices of liberation, resistance, creativity and transformation in the face of all types of structures that oppress and deny the full expression of life, justice and dignity of all people, without any discrimination.
3. The WFTL requires participants that, directly or indirectly, are interested to explore the intersection between theology/religion/spirituality and actions for justice, dignity, respect for plurality and peace through networks such as the World Social Forum and others of global, regional and local character. As a methodological and interdisciplinary principle, the WFTL promotes deliberate openness to critical positions and different proposals from different paths of faith and expressions of wisdom. It allows free articulation by its participants, assuring them, within the possibilities available, opportunities for active participation in its events and in its organization.
4. As an event located in time and space, the WFTL welcomes and contributes to the worldwide network of theologies in various contexts committed to liberation, the option for the poor, the empowerment of vulnerable populations and victims of oppressive hegemonies in different locations around the world.
5. The WFTL is a process and event in connection with the World Social Forum (WSF). It has, since its origin, a convergent relationship with the WSF. The WFTL's horizon is the slogan of the WSF: “another world is possible”, with different theological and interdisciplinary approaches. The WFTL participates in the WSF International Council to plan and develop methodologies in line with the WSF processes and events, and normally holds meetings with the WSF editions where it integrates into the WSF program through different forms of participation.
6. The WFTL can also connect with other social and intellectual spaces and initiatives of an alternative and “alter-worldist” character.
7. The WFTL may adopt other forms of organization, with the possibility of temporary, periodic or permanent linkage with other initiatives in addition to the WSF.

## **PART II - PROCEDURES**

### **1. Participants**

To participate in one or more WFTL meetings, it is necessary to adopt the principles above in this document. Being an open platform, people from the region where the event is being held are especially invited. No membership is required to participate.

The forms of participation of each edition (delegations, individual participation) and the ways of participating in self-managed activities (round tables, panels, rituals, conferences, workshops, presentations) are defined, created and organized by the committees created *ad hoc*, that is, the event's Organizing Committee, with possible Working Groups (WG) for 1. Methodology (cf. 4, a); 2 Infrastructure; 3. Participants, under the coordination of the Executive Committee.

## **2. International Committee (IC)**

It consists of participants from different continents that have a relatively stable and continuous participation in the WFTL, providing a stable and internationalized platform for processes and events.

IC members participate in face-to-face or online assemblies, where they present suggestions and decisions for new members, give guidance to the Executive Committee (EC), vote or acclaim the Executive Coordinator (former "General Secretary"), and form the Executive Committee.

IC members seek personal and institutional support in their regions, promote in the various societies or associations of theology and religious sciences the participation of representatives in WFTL activities, and promote contacts with the WFTL in their regions.

## **3. Executive Committee (EC)**

Composed of five (5) members, including:

a) An **Executive Coordinator**, who is responsible for coordination in and between the various committees and the executive secretariat. The executive coordinator is also responsible for coordination of meetings, legal signatures, collaboration with support institutions, elaboration and sending of projects, and representing the WFTL as needed. He\she is elected or acclaimed by the International Committee assembly. His term of office lasts for six years (thus being able to coordinate the average of three events and their processes).

b) An **Executive Secretary**, which is responsible for minutes, correspondence, schedules, working with Committees, collaborating with the Executive Coordinator. He or she can be hired and paid by the EC for an indefinite period.

c) The Executive Committee is in charge of organizing the infrastructure, creating and communicating with an *ad hoc* Local Organizing Committee when appropriate. It has a duration of six years and must be recomposed, together with the election or acclamation of the Executive Coordinator from the International Committee assembly.

## **4. Methodological Committee (MC)**

Composed of six members, along with the Executive Coordinator, is constituted by a call from the Executive Committee. This committee is entrusted with thematic, methodological outlines and publications.

a) with the appointment of three members to deal specifically with the Forum's themes and methodologies. On the occasion of the event, they form the Methodology Working Group, being able to bring together suitable people from the location where the event takes place.

b) and three other members to take care of publications, website and digital networks.

## **5. Finance Committee (FC)**

This committee, composed of three members, constituted by the EC and in collaboration with the Executive Coordinator, establishes contacts with institutions of financial support, presents projects prepared by the EC in collaboration with the IC, takes care of the reception, management and accountability of funds, together with the Executive Secretary and the Executive Coordinator.

Note: Mandates or offices can be renewable only once.

### **Annex - THEMATIC AXES**

Must be updated every two years, before the WSF and WFTL events:

- Liberation as a hermeneutical and practical principle
- Liberation, Democracy and the Common Good
- Liberation and decoloniality.
- Violence, Human rights, Rights of the Poor.
- Environmental justice and food security
- Migration, climatic migrants and territorialities
- New languages and liberating reconstruction of symbolic and mythical languages.
- Pact of religious traditions with policies of Justice, Peace and Ecology.
- Gender, Feminism and Diversities
- Youth and intergenerational relations