



Decision Making through One to Five Voting

One to Five¹ Voting presents an opportunity to add a layer of nuance to voting and decision making on prospective grants at the Woodcock Foundation (and may also be used to inform decisions beyond grantmaking). While a 1 or 5 indicate a strong No or Yes vote, the numbers in between allow us to understand the level of enthusiasm for a given decision. It can improve the quality of decision-making and the confidence and satisfaction in the decisions that Trustees make.

When voting using One to Five, level of agreement can be understood to mean the following:

- 👉 1 means, "I'm not in favor of moving forward."
- 👉 2 means "I don't much like this, but I'll go along."
- 👉 3 means, "I'm in the middle somewhere; I'm fine with a decision to move forward."
- 👉 4 means, "I'm supportive of a decision to move forward."
- 👉 5 means, "I like this a lot, I think it's the best possible decision."

One to Five Process

1. When a proposal has been brought before Trustees, and it has been well discussed and refined as needed, a vote for passage is taken.
2. When in person, Trustees can raise their hands with the number of fingers that indicate their level of agreement with the proposal. When virtual (such as on Zoom), Trustees can decide between holding up fingers or entering a number into the chat box.
3. The vote can stand as taken, if the count is above the threshold for a Yes vote. Or those with a 1 or 2 vote can be asked to speak to their objections and offer possible solutions to overcome their objections. If this is attempted, then a second and final vote is taken.
4. We may choose to do a check early in the proposal dialogue to determine the level of consensus and either move to a vote quickly to save time or proceed with dialogue based on the initial vote. For example, an early check might find all 4 and 5 votes, or if not, those with objections can raise them early on so they can be addressed during the dialogue.

Interpreting the Vote:

- 👉 A high-quality vote of all 4s and 5s indicates a clear Yes. A mix of 3s, 4s, and 5s also indicates a Yes.
- 👉 Trustees have agreed that with seven Trustees voting, a total count of 25 would be a "yes" vote, and a count lower than that would be a "no" vote.
- 👉 If fewer than seven Trustees are available to vote, the threshold for a "yes" vote should be determined before the vote takes place.

¹ Adapted from the "Fist to Five Voting and Consensus" guide published by National Center for Family Philanthropy