

FACEBOOK, INC.**September 17, 2019****08:30 AM PT**

Operator Hello and welcome to today's Facebook press call. There will be prepared remarks and Q&A to follow. To ask a question, after the prepared remarks conclude, please press star one. Now, I'd like to turn the call over to Carolyn Glanville, who will kick this off.

Carolyn Glanville Hi, everyone. Thank you so much for joining us today. As he said, I'm Carolyn Glanville on Facebook's Communications Team. Today, we're going to be talking about the Oversight Board. You should have received documentation in advance, if not please reach out. On this call, you'll be hearing from Brent Harris and Heather Moore from our Governance Team. They have been working hard to set up this body. This call is on the record, but it's under embargo, until the release of the charter at one o'clock Pacific, today.

With that, I'll turn it over to Brent.

Brent Harris Hi. Thank you for taking the time to join us today I'm Brent Harris, and I'm the Director of Governance here at Facebook. I've been leading the Oversight Board Project for the past year. First, I want to give some context for what we're publishing today, along with some information on the team, and the process that got us to where we are now. I'll then hand it over to Heather, who will walk you through some of the details of what's in the charter, in particular will zoom in on a few areas of focus that may be of interest to you.

First to rewind, last November, Mark Zuckerberg published a blueprint for content, governance, and enforcement, on Facebook. As part of that, we committed to building an external body, the Oversight Board, which will review some of the most difficult and significant decisions we make about content at Facebook and Instagram.

Since that time, we've released a draft charter, which became the

basis of a public consultation on the idea of the Oversight Board. As a part of that consultation, we hosted six in depth workshops, and twenty-two round tables, with more than six hundred and fifty people, from eighty-eight different countries. We had personal discussions with more than two hundred and fifty people, and receive twelve hundred written submissions in response to the public consultation.

We were lucky to have heard from a wide variety of people with very different expertise and backgrounds, from privacy advocates, to human rights lawyers, to people who use Facebook, to journalists, and constitutional scholars. We captured the feedback we've heard in extensive report we published in June. We've been incredibly grateful for everyone's contributions.

It's also worth saying, we have pulled together a cross-functional team of over one hundred people within Facebook. We've been involved in the development of the board and the charter and the workshops and simulations we run internally, to test how the board will work in practice. As you can imagine, this board poses a number of complex and difficult governance questions, which we've been working through with external partners.

We put a lot of thought into the governing structure and subsequent governing document. The charter we are publishing today will clearly articulate the Oversight Board's purpose and mandates, as well as, its relationship to Facebook. It will form a foundation for the Oversight Board's functions, operations, government, and independent. With that in mind, it is intended to remain fairly constant over time.

The charter will form the basis for the board's operations and set out (the) process for selecting members, the procedures the board should follow, the methods for coming to decisions, and the structures that allow the board to carry out its duties and responsibilities. The charter is also designed to provide for the possibility that the board may grow over time. It is our hope that, eventually, this will lead to industry-wide efforts towards better content governance, which could support a variety of social media platforms.

A set of forthcoming bylaws and other governing documents will articulate the day to day procedural details that are necessary to facilitate the board's operation. It will contain specific operational details on topics such as roles and responsibilities of the board co-chairs, procedures for term renewals, future selection, and if necessary, removal of board members, procedures for forming smaller panels to deliberate and decide upon cases, and rules and criteria for selecting the cases the board will review. The board will have the ability to amend its bylaws, so they can remain flexible and responsive to emerging issues in changes in the digital landscape.

As Mark says in his letter accompanying the charter, Facebook's commitment to giving people a voice remains preeminent, and we look to the principles of safety, dignity, privacy, and authenticity in writing and enforcing our policies. We recently shared an update on these values in our Newsroom; they will guide our decision making when we develop and enforce our community standards. These principles will set a foundation for the work of the board.

We've been humbled by how many people in our community, as well as, outside advisers and experts (have) been willing to offer their thoughts, time, and expertise, to help guide us to a good starting place. We've listened to the feedback that experts across the world have given us. Today, we're taking that thinking and using it to develop a functioning organization, one with a sound flexible governance structure.

So while we will be publishing the charter for the Oversight Board, there's still a long way to go in making the board fully operational. This is an important step, and we wanted to give you the opportunity to understand and to ask questions about what we've included in the charter, how we got to this point, and what to expect next.

I'd now like to turn it over to Heather Moore, who was led our work to develop the board's governance and structure, including developing this charter.

Heather Moore

Thanks, Brent. Hello to everyone, and thanks again for joining us. As Brent said, as part of our consultation process, the team and I have personally met with hundreds of experts from all over the world to hear their views on how we should do this. We've talked with Safety and Privacy Experts in India, Internet scholars in France, Constitutional Lawyers in Brazil, Digital Rights Advocates in Nigeria, and so many others who have taken an interest in the Oversight Board.

As a starting point for us, one thing was clear, people want the Oversight Board to be a global body that exercises independent judgment and advances free expression. We've written this charter with these objectives in mind.

So now, I'd like to turn to four issues that have spurred, particular, interest and debate: the structure of the board, its membership, its authority to make decisions and set precedent, and the mechanics for implementing the board's decision. Before we move on to answering your questions, I'd like to quickly give you some context on each of these four areas.

First, the governance structure. As you can imagine, we heard many views on how the board should be structured and supported. For example, early on in our planning process, we kept hearing resounding feedback that Facebook should not pay board members directly. People expressed concern, and rightly so, that direct compensation by Facebook could pose a conflict and call the independence of the board members into question.

I remember one call that was particularly helpful to me as I struggled to find the right answer. I talked with an internet governance expert from Europe who has spent many years working on multi-stakeholder processes. We talked to all the options of how we could address the issue, the implications of creating an entity that could cover compensation and operational costs. Following this conversation and many others, we undertook a review of all the possible ways we could establish a structure that could serve this purpose.

Ultimately we decided to build a Trust. The Board, the Trust, and

Facebook will have separate roles and responsibilities, all of which will work to ensure that the board is set up for success. We also heard strong feedback on the importance of the board having its own staff to support the members and their responsibilities, which will also be funded through the Trust.

A second area of debate focused on the board's membership: how big should it be, who should be on it, and how should members be selected through a fair and transparent process. Many people we spoke to expressed concern that a board that is too small, would struggle to manage its workload, given the sheer number of potential cases that could be referred to it for review. Others, conversely, worried that an overly large board would be unrealistic and unmanageable.

We are working towards a diverse and qualified group of forty board members, but with individual cases being heard in panels of five members, based on research and test runs conducted over the past few months. The charter also stipulates a minimum number of board members required for the board to operate, eleven. This is to ensure at least two panels can be working on decisions, at any given time.

In order to ensure Facebook is not selecting the entire board alone, we will be selecting a small group of initial members, who will then partner with us to select the majority of the board. In the future the board itself will take the lead in selecting members. As we've explained, in a separate Newsroom post, also shared with you, we are hoping to be in a position to announce an initial group of members by the end of twenty nineteen, for the board to start its work.

A third more technical question, that was particularly interesting to me as a lawyer, centered on the concept of precedent. In essence, will board decisions apply only to the individual case, or would they bind future decision making. Two thirds of respondents to our public consultation said that it was important the board considered its own past decisions. In other words, decisions should have precedential weight. At the same time, virtually, all agreed the board would also need to be able to revise and overturn past decisions, in order to keep pace with shifting social, and cultural norms, and

standards.

Interestingly in conversations about this, we were reminded by experts from all over the world that what was really important here was ensuring a degree of consistency and continuity in the decisions made by the board. The charter confirms that board panels will generally be expected to defer to past decision. The board will be able to recommend that a decision be applied to other instances or reproductions of the same content, but the implementation of that recommendation will be at Facebook's discretion.

Finally, we heard many people focus on the implementation of board's decisions and the scope of possible board recommendations. Feedback has been clear that not only should Facebook promptly implement any and all of the boards content decisions, but that Facebook should also be held accountable for explaining publicly how it acted on the board's guidance.

Decisions that the board makes will be binding, except where Facebook concludes that implementing such a decision could violate the law. We will also analyze whether it is technically and operationally feasible to apply the board decisions at scale. Facebook will respond to the case decision with details on the implementation actions taken. We also welcome the board to make policy recommendations.

These recommendations will be brought to our product policy forum, our policy development process, for consideration. We will once again transparently communicate any actions taken as a result. Also, under the charter Facebook can also actively request guidance on policies from the board.

These four areas have been the subject of intense debate, both, internally and with external stakeholders. But, you'll realize that those four areas are by no means the only discussions we had throughout this process. Every detail of the board is ripe for discussion.

For example, earlier this year, we had a heated debate between stakeholders from Argentina, the Us, the UK, France, Turkey, and

Australia. The question was: how do we ensure the board has enough time to review cases carefully and issue high quality decision, while also recognizing that some issues need to be decided upon urgently? In other words, how do we optimize, both, speed and quality of decision making?

To provide greater detail on some of these discussions we've also shared a document today, which lays out how the feedback we received on the draft charter is now reflected in the revised charter, and the process by which we got there. We are far from finished. We are working hard on a draft of the bylaws, and other governing documents, and testing our operational assumptions.

Brent Harris

Thank you, Heather. In the months ahead, we'll be doing everything we can to get the board fully up and running and hearing cases early in twenty, twenty. We would now like to open the line for any of your questions.

Operator

We will now open the line for questions. To ask a question, press star followed by the number one. And, we will pause for a moment to compile questions.

Your first question comes from Scott Rosenberg from Axios, please go ahead.

Scott Rosenberg

Hey, thank you for this intro. I guess, my question is about what happens in the situation where, you know, Facebook has committed to implementing decisions by the board, but presumably given the complex nature of all these issues, there will be, possibly, situations where Facebook does not agree with the board. And, I'm just wondering how you envision that kind of conflict playing out that scenario. If say, the board makes a recommendation, Facebook leadership, either the current leadership or some future leadership, decides that it disagrees with the board's judgment, what happens?

Heather Moore

Thanks for the question. I think you can really find guidance in article four - implementation - of the charter. We really laid out there that the board resolution of each case will be binding, and Facebook will implement it promptly, unless implementation of the

resolution could violate the law. And so, in other words, even if Facebook leadership or executive disagrees with the board's decision, they will be implemented irrespective of our opinion as a company on them. Unless they violate the law - we have to comply with our legal obligations globally - but that is the only exception.

Brent Harris

I'll respond. We fully anticipate that this board, and indeed, it's part of the purpose, will overturn us. And, we expect that will happen once the board is up and running, and that will establish that it is independent, and it will insure that the company is accountable, in the course of its decisions, and then, the policies for living up to the values, that we've articulated.

Operator

Your next question comes from the line Frank Bajak from Associated Press, please go ahead.

Frank Baja

All right. Thanks for this. So, let me be clear on the board members. How much will they be compensated? Will this be a full time job, and what kind of time requirements? It was interesting that you mentioned all of these countries concerned about whether you'll have enough time to, you know, optimize speed and quality of decision. Because, I imagine that, you know, sometimes the issues can come fast and furious, and I'm just wondering whether they'll be able to handle it. They were already complaints about whether Facebook is set up to handle so many issues in so many jurisdictions.

Brent Harris

Perfect. Thank you for the question. So, what we're envisioning is that the board members will be part-time. We are looking for that in part, because we believe that they'll be in roles, where it enhances their independence, that they'll have affiliations beyond this board and beyond this company. We envision that they will come together in panels and hear these matters. And, we believe that the panel will help to ensure that they can be composed quickly and be responsive.

On compensation, we're still working out those details, and that's something that over the next few weeks, we anticipate that we will

resolve.

Operator Your next question comes from the line Kurt Wagner from Bloomberg, please go ahead.

Kurt Wagner Thanks. I actually have two questions. One is you mentioned that the board might be able to overturn certain decisions, and I'm wondering if that essentially means that the board will be writing Facebook policies, by just simply whatever their decision is to enforce. It kind of seems like that set up for that for what it should be. So, I'm just curious to what you think about that?

And, the second question is what level of data access is the board going to have for these user cases? Are they going to be able to see, you know, user or private information in order to make necessary judgment or how is the data sharing going work?
Thanks.

Brent Harris Perfect. So, decisions will have several different parts (to) them, and it's important, I think, to kind of reflect what those parts will be and the charter's spelled this out. One part will be to make a determination on the content that is brought before this board, and to do so, both, by interpreting the policies that Facebook has articulated, and then, looking to how that interpretation and how those policies live up to the values that we've set. The board will out of discretion also be able to provide guidance to Facebook on our policies, and so, we anticipate that, and indeed we've built this, where the board will weigh in and provide guidance, and an offer opinions. And we, as a company, will then be bound to respond to that guidance and tell the board here's actually how we are interpreting it; here's how this fits into our policy making, and into our policies going forward.

On data access, there's a couple things that I hear out of that question, and I think that it's important to call them both out. So, the first is, the board will have access to information that's pertinent, but no more, to resolution of the case, and that's crucial, so that they're in a position to make out the right determination, with regard to that content and that particular matter. The second is, we're in the process of building out some of the infrastructure. It

will be secure and privacy protecting, in order to ensure, and this is provided also in the charter, to guarantee the privacy of users.

Operator Your next question comes from the line of Alexandre Piquard from Le Monde, please go ahead.

Alexandre Piquard Hi. It's about the board's (staff), and (inaudible) will they be chosen? Will (they) be sitting at Facebook headquarters or somewhere else? And, where will the board be meeting physically, where will it be? And, how will the staff be separated from Facebook?

Heather Moore We envision that the board will need a full-time staff in order to help it call through the cases that are submitted for its review and to do the research that's required to build out their ultimate decisions, and to make a determination. We really think it's important that the staff to be selected in concert with board members, and so we're really reserving on that until we have board members, who can weigh in on where the staff should come from, what expertise they should have, and how the organizational structure should be set up.

We are exploring whether or not in order to accommodate case request that the board may get before the staff is fully up and running and functional whether or not Facebook should lend a set of employees that it could potentially second to this independent entity, that will sit under the Trust, to at least staff the board in the interim, and to provide it with support and help, until it's able to hire a staff of the own.

Operator Your next question comes from the line of Richard Waters from Financial Times, please go ahead.

Richard Waters Yes. Hello, good morning. I haven't read through your documents, but can you tell us a bit more about transparency? So, will we be able to tell who has sat on the panels for any particular decisions? Will we be able to see the decisions, and how they arrived at them, and things like that?

Brent Harris Perfect. So, thanks for the question and a few responses to the elements of it. First, all of the board members will be public, so everyone will know, and their names will be published, and that's guaranteed in the charter. Second, the decisions and opinions of the board will also be published, and so, the world to be able to read and see the reasoning that they had, and look at the explanations that they provide, and the guidance that they share with Facebook.

The third part of whether the panel members will be public or not, we haven't fully answered that question yet, and it's in part because there's been different feedback across stakeholders around the world. And so, our bias has been to build transparency in every element of this institution.

At the same time, some of the feedback has been for at least certain decisions, in certain parts of the world that it may be best to, actually, protect some of the board members and not to name them and some of those cases. And so, we have left that up as a decision for the board members to make, when this gets up and running.

Operator Your next question comes from the line of Queenie Wong from CNET.

Queenie Wong Hi. Thank you so much for taking the time to take my question. You mentioned that the initial group of board members will be chosen by the end of this year, which is three, about three months away. So, have you started recruiting members for the board? What has been the response? And, what exactly are you looking for? Is it people with a lot of legal background, or is it going to be members with that mix of occupations? And, have any of them then hesitant to move forward, because it is a part time job, and this is all sort of experiment?

Brent Harris Perfect. So let me tackle, kind of, a few parts of that question, and thanks for asking. And, we're keenly attuned to the timeline, so there's a lot of work going on, so, to get this going.

On backgrounds, we are really looking for people from a really wide array of different backgrounds, and that's been important to

us. And, we want folks, who can be a moderator of a Facebook group, who is really distinguished at what they do, and cares a lot about this community, and is deeply versed in our standards. We also want folks, who are former judges, or former lawyers. We believe that former publishers, or editors, and journalists could be experience, as well, and that's just to name a few of the different occupations.

And so, the goal has really been to set this out where a wide array of people from across the world and from huge array of different backgrounds are in a position where they could serve

On the qualifications, there's really kind of three things that we're looking for. And so, one is we're looking for people who have experience making decisions under a set of standards or policies, and that could be editorial guidelines, that could be standards like the Facebook community standards, or it could be standards like law. And, a really important part of this is interpreting a set of standards on behalf of the two billion people who use these products. And so, that's the first element that we've been looking for; it's familiarity with interpreting and applying a set of standards and values.

The second thing we've been looking for is the ability to make a - really to come together as a group and as a board, and then, have experience making decisions and serving together with a group of people, in part because it's not going to be just one panel member that makes any decision or one board member. It's going to be at least five people on a panel. It is going to be a full board, and it will be a crucial for this to work that you have experienced hearing different points of view, collaborating with colleagues, and reaching a decision.

The third thing we're looking for is really a set of familiarity with some of these issues, and so, experience with topics like expressions, and news, and information, and some of the technical issues at play here. And so, those are some of the major qualifications that we're looking for.

And on the process, people have suggested names to us throughout

the consultation process, and so, we've heard hundreds of different names that have been suggested over the last few months. We're about to open a process whereby anyone can submit names and share their recommendations for who should serve, and the goal is really to run something that is really principled in the selection of these members.

Operator Your next question comes from the line of Jo Ling Kent from NBC News.

Jo Ling Kent Hey guys, thank you so much for doing this call with us. I have two quick questions for you. What happens in the case of when Facebook received a subpoena or summons by a government agency - will the oversight board be weighing in on that decision, on how to respond to that?

And my second question is how do you make sure that the board isn't stacked with pro-Facebook people, so to speak, people who are interested in making sure that Facebook is making money, at all costs, meeting shareholder expectations?

Brent Harris Perfect. I'll take the lead on this one, and then, I think Heather will add some details. On the first question around kind of subpoenas and the government side, the goal here is to build a board that is not a replacement for and really isn't about the sets of laws around the world. It's about Facebook, and it's about community on Facebook, and it's about the standards we set, the decisions we make. And so, we provided throughout the charter a few different places that really kind of carve out some of these kind of legal issues, so that the board's focuses entirely on how Facebook is governing content, and adjudicating content, and enforcing decisions. And, we think it's really important to have that separation.

And then on the people, one thing that we're looking towards is we are helping select the co-chairs, but those co-chairs will then be highly empowered to go, and to pick the next set of numbers together with Facebook, and to ensure that the set of people who serve or not trust people who are favorable for this company, and indeed I think you'll see that even in the folks who serve as co-

chairs themselves, and that this will be a highly credible group of people, including folks who hold real criticism of some of the ways that we've operated.

Heather Moore

Right, Brent. The other thing I'd like to just call out a bit is the process which you have to undertake, in order to reach the board. So, there will be two ways: users will be able to submit cases, as well as, there will be Facebook initiated cases. For users to reach the board, they will first have to go through our internal appeals process, if they still disagree with our decision, then they can submit a request for review to the board. The board itself will have discretion, which cases it chooses. There will also be a mechanism by which Facebook can submit cases to the board for review. Again, the board will have the discretion on which cases it chooses.

And then turning to the second part of your question, I think one of the qualifications that we are really looking for are individuals, who can exercise independent judgment, which is really important in adjudicating these cases.

And then, I think, lastly, we will have a trust that is set up to assure that they are able to exercise this independent judgment. So, they won't be compensated directly by Facebook. The trust will be funded upfront and will be irrevocable, so that board members will feel free that they can exercise independent judgment about what they think is really the right answer in the case.

Operator

Your next question comes from the line Josh Constine from TechCrunch, please go ahead.

Josh Constine

Thank you for taking the questions. Regarding the ability for Facebook to decide what's operationally feasible and scalable about implementing recommendations from the board, how or what is the bar there? Does this mean that Facebook will determine if something is possible at all to be implemented or whether it's financially expedient? If the board recommends something that would cost billions of dollars per quarter, or might significantly inhibit sharing, or otherwise be detrimental to the momentum or progress of the company financially, you know, is

that or something Facebook would decide that this is not, that something is not operationally feasible, along those lines? And to that end- ahhh, yeah actually, I'll just keep it there.

Heather Moore

Thank you for that question. So, really the board's powers are drawn from Article IV Implementation, so in that particular case, Facebook will absolutely implement the decision, specifically on that piece of content. The next step after that is that an analysis will be done by Facebook about whether or not they can apply that same treatment to identical content on the platform, with parallel contexts. And so, that is really the analysis that it will be undertaking.

As I'm sure you're aware, there are a lot, there's a lot of progress that we've made with our automated detection technology, but it's not perfect, and it doesn't catch everything. Sometimes there are subtle nuances in videos or how text is altered, that really can inhibit how are technology is able to catch parallel context, which is why we've included that clause in there.

And so, what we're really seeking is to apply the board decisions, as much as we can, but we do want to have a carve-out when there are technical limitations that we just can't overcome.

Brent Harris

I just want to build on that to call out a couple different pieces. So one is very (explicitly) made (it) where the board's decisions on content that's brought to them will be binding and that's just 100 percent where this is going to go. Second is from the board's recommendations around sort of a wider set of content or policies, our responses on that will be public and so really this will help to craft a negotiation or a dialogue that is really transparent about some of these issues of what is similarly situated content and what is technically feasible today, and where do we go on this. And the last part is then through that if the board feels like we haven't gotten it right, they'll take more cases, and they will overturn us again and everyone will get to see that, and they will hold us accountable for getting into the right spot.

Operator

Your next question comes from the line of Dave Lee from BBC News. Please go ahead.

Dave Lee Hi there. Thanks for taking my question. Just a couple of things on the kind of mechanics of the board. If the user is involved in one of these decisions, will they get to make their case to the panel? Will they be able to interact with the panel to make their case over a piece of content? And then separately, does Facebook anticipate in the future perhaps that other companies, other networks might decide to be involved with this panel in some way, I don't know, contribute some money to the trust and have them make decisions about their networks as well. I think if we could hear about those plans if there are anything?

Heather Moore Thank you for both parts of that question. So, in the charter, we envision that users will be able to submit a written statement on their behalf in order to make their case. We do want to leave out the other nuances of the procedure to the board members themselves to decide upon once they get here, which will really be charted out in the bylaws in concert with, in partnership with the board members, but one could envision that board members will absolutely want to hear from users and want to see them face to face and potentially ask them questions. Those sort of operational details are being worked out, but at minimum, users will be able to submit written material on their behalf.

The second question relates to whether or not other companies are interested or could potentially join this in the future. That's something that we've heard a lot of feedback on. We did a really extensive public consultation throughout 2019, traveling globally, and it's something that we heard from stakeholders over and over again. Right now we are really working to build this, but we've set it up so that the trust can accommodate other social media platforms if they do want to join in the future, and we've written the governing documents of the trust and other associated documents to account for that.

Operator Your next question comes from the line of Sarah Frier from Bloomberg. Please go ahead.

Sarah Frier Hi. I am wondering whether the board will be able to look at issues more holistically, not just individual cases and rules, but general

trends like you know, say there's a new form of abuse that's going on or a new form of problems that may crop up. Would they be able to make more broad recommendations?

Heather Moore

Thank you Sarah for that question. I think what we've tried to do in the charter is really craft the document that is really high level but envisioned the scope of the board expanding over time. Right now we really want to give the board time to figure this all out and figure out what it means to come together and make decisions, but absolutely in the future, we do envision that the board will want to take a holistic look at maybe similarly situated pieces of content or how the policies are affecting certain users on the platform, but for right now we really envision the board making decisions on individual cases. There is nothing precluding them in the charter from as part of that case weighing in broadly on what they see as maybe a broader recommendation that they'd like to make on the policy.

Operator

Your next question comes from the line of Jeff Horwitz from the Wall Street Journal. Please go ahead.

Jeff Horwitz

Thanks. A question as to whether or not how this fits in with I suppose the independent fact checking partnerships Facebook has and whether these panels are going to have the ability to determine sort of truthfulness as part of what they're looking at and whether that overlaps or whether it's just simply going to be community standards in some broader sense.

Brent Harris

Perfect. So, the purpose of the board is to look at community standards, to look at the enforcement of the community standards and the set of content policies. And so what we think will happen is users will appeal individual cases up under those community standards, the board, and the board will hear them and hear different perspectives about what the right decision is and then make that decision, and set out guidance at times on whether or not the standards are set in the right places. On the specific case of the fact checkers and the work that gets done on fact checking and truthfulness, I don't believe at this time that the board will be making a determination on that.

Operator Your next question comes from the line of Laurence Dodds from The Daily Telegraph. Please go ahead.

Laurence Dodds Hi there. Thanks so much for this call. It's super interesting to see this mission moving forward. I have two questions. One is I want to follow up on the **(inaudible)** location. If the board members are part time, that suggests to me it will be sort of a virtual board and that they'll be situated around the world, but I'm wondering if you can lock down for us you know where people will be, where they'll be meeting with the rest of the committee, and crucially where that staff would be located, and whether they'll be located at Facebook HQ? Is that something you're still working out and finally if we could get some detail on that?

And one other question similarly relates to the part-time nature of the board members. What is the process for them to recuse themselves when they hear a case that has something to do with their other employer or with another interest that they have?

Brent Harris Well, I'll take the first part of that question and then hand it over to Heather to add detail and also weigh in on the recusal process. On location, it was really important to ask as we built this. We wanted the board was as global as the set of people who use our products, and so when we think about the board, when we think about the staff for the board, it's been important to us that you can come from anywhere and be able to serve, and the consequence of that is that at least for how these panels come together, they're likely to be virtual in many cases.

At the same time, we do envision that the board will come together and choose to come together and build those relationships so that they have in-person relationships and possibly at times also hear cases in person. On where the staff is, it's actually really too soon to say. So we're hoping to really kind of have this first cohort of board members by the end of the year, and we think it's on them since it's their staff to pick who will be supporting them, and I'm sure they're going to have views on where they want that staff to be and where they're located.

Heather I'll quickly jump in on the recusal question. So, we do notate in the charter that the board members will have code of conduct. That will be more specifically laid out in the bylaws as will the operational procedures for recusal or determining conflicts of interest or other ethical considerations. We think that's an absolutely important part to ensuring the integrity of the board and the integrity of their decisions but it's something as I'm sure you can imagine just takes more thought and more detail to get it right in this particular context.

Operator Your next question comes from the line of Sabine Dolan from Reporters Without Borders. Please go ahead.

Sabine Dolan Thank you and thanks for taking my question. I had two quick questions. One on the membership -- you've stated that the board will consist of no less than eleven members. As I understand Facebook will pick the handful of the initial members. I was wondering whether you had set a ceiling as to how many members you will pick out of the initial eleven members. My second question was regarding your section six public communication. I think it says each decision will be made publicly available and archived in the database subject to data and privacy restrictions. I was wondering if you were going to publish the decisions no matter what and for privacy restrictions and concerns, you know perhaps change the names and not disclose location or will some decisions just not be published. Thank you.

Brent Harris Perfect. So I'll take the first part and then hand it over to Heather on the second one. On membership, the board and if you note this is provided in the charter, (inaudible) have to have at least eleven members, and so that's what we're aiming for by the end of the year. Where we are focused right now is on a selection of co-chairs so that we're in a position where together with those co-chairs, Facebook is hoping to pick the beginning of this board, and that's really our goal right now. We have in part also set it up this way because we think it's important to stage the board so that not all the board members roll off at any one time, and so we envisioned that this is really the first set of members and that new sets of members in staggered terms will join over the next two or three years in order to have a full board.

Heather With regard to section six, public communications, you know we've done a lot of global consultation on the board, and one of the strongest pieces of feedback that we've received is that public reason giving is important as well as archiving the reason giving and some public fashion that can be accessed at a later date, and so we absolutely envisioned that board decisions will be public and the information can be accessed at a later date. However, we do have to comply with data and privacy restrictions and so you know you rightly called out some of the things that we are considering -- what are ways that we can continue to be privacy protective of the people that use our services while also allowing the board to publicly release its decisions and so that's something that we're continuing to work on.

Operator Your next question comes from the line of Kate Klonick from Saint John's Law School.

Please go ahead.

Kate Klonick Hey, guys. So, I have two questions. One I was curious if there was an actual number about what the funding is going to be for the trust going forward, it is like an initial matter, and then the second question was I've kind of -- really a lot of people have been talking about since this is rolled out that Facebook needs to bind itself to a set of values, a kind of substantive ideals, and you guys published a few days ago -- Facebook published its values. How does Facebook values -- how are those going to interact with something like what you're releasing now, which is the charter for the board which seems to govern the board and the procedure for the board, and kind of structure for the board, but it's separate from the substantive values.

Brent Harris Okay. Thanks for your question here, and thanks for your thought leadership around these issues too. So, a couple responses to this. On the funding side, we're working through those numbers, but what I want to make a commitment to is that we're going to provide an initial set of funding that extends beyond the terms of any of the first board members, so that there is no possibility of reprisal for their decisions and their content decisions, and so that

is something that we're working through, but we anticipate, you now a multimillion dollar several year commitment at the very least at the first tranche that goes into that board and give the board members a position where they can exercise truly independent judgment from the company.

On the values, this is a great question, and I think it's really important to call out that what we've articulated here is really the structural powers and the structural arrangement for this institution and how it will relate to Facebook. And ideally hopefully also, how it will grow and really provide due process and transparency across the industry. What it provides for is that this board that exercised independent judgment will then interpret the values that we say that we're accountable for, that we live up to and they can guide our policies and guide our decisions. And so the charter sets out the structure of this institution. That institution when it comes into being will look at those values that have been published and then really hold Facebook accountable for and provide oversight on how we are doing with regards to content and our community.

Operator

Your next question comes from the line of Rowland Manthorpe from Sky News. Please go ahead.

Rowland Manthorpe

Hi there. Thanks for arranging this. Have you made any estimate how many appeals you're going to get a year and how many cases the board will look at a year or you know for any time period and if so, how many?

Brent Harris

This is one where we really went out and we wanted to consult with people across the world, and we've heard feedback as we've gone out and we've heard from people, and there are really two different kind of competing points of view that came forward and one was to build a board that was in a position to hear many thousands of cases and appeals, and there were a lot of people who felt like that's an important thing to do and we don't disagree. And there was also a set of feedback and this was the bulk of the feedback that at least to start the most important thing was to build a board that took on a handful of really the most important decisions.

The ones that are of the greatest public benefit or of the greatest value in setting a course for where policy line should be drawn. And what this institution does is that it really provides for a body that will focus on that handful of the most important cases and we anticipate that that's likely to be maybe in the dozens at least as we get the board up and running.

Operator Your next question comes from the line of John Samples from Cato Institute. Please go ahead.

John Samples Hi. Great job. I wanted to ask you about Mark Zuckerberg's statement in the letter that accompanies -- that's where he says he's talked to governments to provide better guidance on hate speech. I would like to ask in general what is it (is) about the structure of this board that would interact with governments on issues and like that and also how much have you thought about in creating the structure of the board, making it such that it would be resistant to governments, not so much governments making laws which you would follow presumably, but rather governments trying to jaw bone or governments trying to bully this board into making decisions that are left to politicians or unelected politicians wanted from it.

Brent Harris So Mark's letter really sets out a couple different things, and thank you for your question. It makes a statement that Facebook is about free expression and about expression and upholding that as well as looking to a set of values and thinking about the standards that we articulate. And the letter then also commits that we as a company will partner with and work with this institution and be bound by its decisions. On the relationship to government, it's been important to us to distinguish this board from what governments are looking for and their laws and we as a company are bound by the laws where we operate and so the purpose of the board is to look at that set of values to look at the commitments that we've made and to ensure that we're living up to that both in our policies and then our decisions.

Operator Your next question comes from the line of Thomas Kadri from Yale. Please go ahead.

Thomas Kadri

Hi, thanks very much. So, my question builds on some of the earlier questions and in the documents you shared and in the comments you've made, it seems like you envisioned board decisions that split neatly into two types of statements. There are contract decisions which are binding and there are policy recommendations which are -- that seems extremely important to define what constitutes a contract decision and what constitutes a policy recommendation, and I guess a content decision is defined as narrowly as whether a particular piece of content stays up or comes down, and everything else is a policy recommendation.

That's quite a narrow form of binding oversight, you know in core decisions and things that come easily, you have like direct orders but then you have a bunch of stuff that's not that as the reasoning and rationales and that is still considered to be binding precedent even if it's not a direct order like desegregate the schools now. And so I guess I'm just wondering will Facebook be bound by anything that isn't a specific content decision, whether say a particular photo stays there or comes down or are you thinking of everything else as a non-binding policy recommendation, such that you know policy recommendation doesn't actually mean a recommendation to change your community standards, but it's just anything that isn't a content decision. Just to make sure I'm clear on that point.

Heather Moore

Thank you for the question, Thomas. You know we did a lot of global consultation on this and we talked to a lot of people who had strong opinions on both sides of this. There were many who expressed the opinion that the board should have broader powers to be able to set policies and make policies in the body of their decisions while they were deciding a particular case. There were others who felt strongly as well that the board's power should be limited to adjudicating that one particular piece of content, allowing it to remain up or to come down, and then to recommend changes to the policy, but that truly -- the legislative function or the policy drafting function should remain with Facebook.

We've given this a lot of deep thought as we think about the overall governance structure of this entire scheme in many ways and we really tried hard to chart out specific roles and responsibilities

without resting too much authority into one institution. And so we did consider deeply this question of whether or not the board's power should be more expansive on the policy recommendations front. I do think, you know, you frankly honed in on that as we have it currently envisioned in the charter, the board's decisions will be split into two parts, so it will be able to make a determination solely on whether or not the content should remain up or come down and then the rest of the decision opining on the policy will be a recommendation.

The one thing I want to stress there is that Facebook will indeed take that commitment really seriously and will be bound to take it through our policy development process and then to report out publicly what its determination would be and so it's not so loose as Facebook saying "oh okay we see that you've made a policy recommendation and we don't really have any other further obligation," but it really will get the full treatment through our process and then a public reporting out.

Brent Harris

And I'd like to build on that and just say part of what we've reflected here is that if Facebook's responsibility what's on about how we operate our products and how we operate this company, it's our responsibility to set policies, it's our responsibility to make enforcement decisions. And what we are building here is an independent body that's in a position of reviewing how we are doing at that, but we are not punting our responsibility on that. What we are doing is providing for strong oversight of how we are exercising that responsibility.

Operator

Your next question comes from the line of Gopal Sankaranarayanan from the Supreme Court of India. Your line is open. Please go ahead.

Gopal Sankaranarayanan Hi, thanks for having me on this call. I had three questions and I'll keep them very brief. The first one is regarding the relationship between the panel and the board. I understand that the panel is about five members from the board who will review particular cases. However, in article three, in many parts, you have used the phrases board and panel interchangeably, including for example the use of experts and things like that, and that creates a little bit of

confusion because the board I assume is the entire set of possibly forty members while the panel would be only the subset that's hearing that particular case. So is there any plans to reconcile that or is that deliberately done?

The second is about the board or panel members, when they take decisions, would they sometimes be exposed to any type of liability in case the aggrieved person decides to take them to the municipal or domestic courts within that country? Would Facebook be taking upon itself the responsibility to indemnify or protect the board or panel members when they take decisions, and the third, is about article five where you've said that you will create that structure where you have Facebook, (the) trust and the board and the trustees, would be appointed by Facebook and you've said they'd be truly independent, what exactly are the parameters because these are the trustees who have the power to administer the code of conduct on the board members and if necessary at some point to remove it. Thank you.

Brent Harris

Thank you for the top (up) questions and I'm gonna take them in order. So first is we have, as you've noted provided for both panels that hear the cases and then a board that is composed of the full suite of board members, and our intention in this would be that the panels will have access to the resources that are available to the board, I mean. So the panels are composed of members who are part of the board and in the course of doing their work, they will be able to draw on the staff, the expertise, and the variety of different capabilities that are provided for in the charter in order to make the best possible decisions.

On the question, at least as I understood it about indemnity, our intention is absolutely that the board members will be indemnified so that they are in a position so deliberate thoughtfully, be free of influence, and come to the best recommendation under the policies and under our values, and then on the Facebook, the trust and the board, this is really an important arrangement and is one that came out of consultation, and what we were providing for in the trust is we've heard feedback across the world about what happens if the board goes off in a direction that doesn't fit the charter, it doesn't fit its mission and purpose, and so the goal of the trustees is to have a

set of people who hold the funding relationships or hold the funds for independents that have some of the appointment power for the board and ensure and have a fiduciary duty to ensure that this board really lives up to its commitments and lives up to the purpose that's been set for it.

Operator And we have time for three more questions. Your next question comes from the line of Frank Bajak from Associated Press. Please go ahead.

Frank Bajak Hi. Yes, I had a follow up question and I guess it regards policy, so it may have been partially answered, but Facebook's ad policies and decisions which can be enormously influential especially now in the area of disinformation are currently ad hoc and unaccountable. So what would this board be able to do? Would it be able to issue recommendations on those or take up individual disputes involving ads?

Heather Moore Thanks for the question. So under section four, collective powers, you see that the board will be able to interpret Facebook community standards and other relevant policies, and we did that specifically to address instances where the board may get a case regarding an ad, and so as you rightly pointed out, ads policies are not captured under our community standards, but we have included this provision within the charter, should a case like that come before the board. Something we've tried to do intentionally throughout this document is really give it room to grow over time and so by including clauses like that we really have tried to carve out a space to do exactly what you just mentioned, but if the board were to take an ad case it would be binding.

Operator Your next question comes from the line of Richard Waters from Financial Times. Please go ahead.

Richard Waters Yes. Thanks. On follow up, what can you do to ensure that the membership of the board is politically balanced and also seen to be politically balanced? Are there any specific rules?

Brent Harris Thanks for that question. As we source potential board members and then a selection is made around board members, political perspectives are an important part of the consideration. So what we provided for is that we will build a board that is truly diverse and that comes from across the world and that really brings to bear a broad set of perspectives in the course of making our independent judgment.

Operator Your last question comes from the line of Josh Constine from TechCrunch. Please go ahead.

Josh Constine Hi. Given that the board is meant to be international and cross cultural, certain points of view that are mainstream in certain cultures may be perceived as discriminatory or insensitive in others. Past comments by individuals surfaced after they've been selected for the board, the conflicts of the values of the board or the public could also lead to calls for their removal and we've seen this happen commonly in popular culture with celebrities being deposed from positions due to their past public statements.

How will the board handle potential removals from the board for this reason, and for instance, if somebody had said abortion is never medically necessary, a statement that some including myself would find insensitive, yet US senators pushed Facebook to remove a fact check rating that statement as false. How would a past statement like that influence the eligibility of someone to the board and what happens if senators demand or US government representatives demand board members of a certain political party on the board?

Brent Harris Great. Thank you. Thank you for that question. It's certainly something that we have contemplated and sought to address in the charter and there are a couple points here. So, first is on removal, members will not be permitted to be removed for any of their decisions. And so it was important to us that you can serve and you can exercise judgments and deliberate with colleagues and issue opinions, and that is not something -- no matter what your views are and how you share them, that you will be removed from this board for. Second is there is a code of conduct and so the code of conduct will be specified and released publicly and provide

guidance on what constitutes grounds for removal, and so that's the second part to it.

The last thing that I want to underscore and I think I hear it out of your question is, with over two billion people who use these products, there's going to be a set of people who serve on this board to make different people within that group uncomfortable, and some of the folks who make us comfortable will make other people uncomfortable, and we believe that in building this board and constituting this board and truly representing diversity and the composition of this institution, that that's actually going to be a feature, that folks will hold a wide array of views and views that really challenge both how Facebook operates and sometimes challenge the perspectives of various of our users and that will lead to -- and the evidence is strong on this -- that will lead to better decisions that are well reasoned and bring empathy to bear on a wide array of points of view on whether or not we're upholding our values in the right way.

Carolyn Glanville

Thank you guys so much for joining the call today and for all the thoughtful questions. We look forward to keeping you updated as this work continues. If you have any follow up questions, please feel free to reach out. And as a reminder, the charter will be released and the embargo will lift at 1 PM Pacific today. Thanks so much and have a good day.

Operator

This concludes the Facebook Press Call. Thank you for joining. You may now disconnect your line.