



The Good Country: Common Questions

General

Why a country?

Because it's the best structure for achieving our goals. In order to 'change the culture of governance worldwide from one that is fundamentally competitive to one that is fundamentally collaborative,' we need a powerful new actor that can make and implement its own policies. In doing so, the Good Country will provide working proof to other countries of the benefits of collaborative behavior.

Is the Good Country a legal entity?

We are currently registered as a non-profit organization in the state of Delaware in the United States, charitable 501(c)3 status pending. This has been a useful vehicle for us during the set-up phase of the project but now that we're turning into something more like a real country, with actual citizens, we might move to a different status at some point in the future. But rest assured, it won't be at the expense of our transparency and accountability.

How are you different from campaigning organisations and activist groups?

Campaigning organisations are often quite effective at raising the profile of certain issues, and 'making a noise' about the injustices they identify around the world. But the Good Country goes further: it aims to make and implement *its own* collaborative and innovative foreign policies, acting like a true sovereign nation, and actively bringing about the changes its citizens wish to see.

Who's behind the Good Country?

At present, the Good Country Inc. has only two officers: its co-founders, Simon Anholt and Madeline Hung. There are no foundations, corporations, or other entities behind the Good Country. We received a handful of small donations from individual philanthropists which helped us to set up the organization and get us to launch: our



intention is to repay these donors during 2019 and 2020, and after that point to ensure that the Good Country's operations are funded solely by tax revenues.

Will Good Country citizens ever have a passport?

Our current plan is to make passports available to citizens after the Good Country's official launch (after our nine-month trial period) in September 2019.

Where can I see a copy of your manifesto/charter/constitution?

Nowhere yet. We have some pretty clear values which are expressed in all of our materials – including respect for the provisions of the UN Charter – but we will start work codifying them next year with input from the Good Country's first citizens.

Taxes and Money

What will be done with my tax money?

The \$5 annual tax each citizen pays allows the Good Country to exist and to conduct our international interventions. We have no other sources of income, so citizens can always be sure that they alone are funding the country.

There is a general explanation of how tax dollars are spent in our [Explainer](#) document.

Why do we call them taxes?

We call our annual citizen payments "taxes" to emphasize that taxes are a once a year contribution (not a "donation" to an NGO that constantly asks you for money or a company "share" driven by a corporate agenda). We do realize that the word "tax" has negative associations for some people, but we ultimately hope to reclaim the word by giving citizens real agency in deciding how tax dollars are spent.



Who decides how the tax dollars are spent?

All major policy decisions are discussed and debated by all the Good Country citizens who choose to participate in our Remesh conversations. This AI-based decision-making platform enables all points of view to be represented.

You can always check how we've spent our tax revenues in a given year by looking up our corporate tax filing. Under US law, 501(c)3 charitable corporations are required to report publicly on all their financial transactions. This is one of the main reasons why we decided to register as a US-based non-profit: the reporting standards are about as stringent as you can get.

I was fine with the Good Country until you started asking for money. Why have you “gone commercial?”

Our promise to our citizens is ‘to help change the culture of governance worldwide, from one that’s fundamentally competitive to one that’s fundamentally collaborative,’ and this is a big change requiring major influence. We want to make a difference, not just make a noise. Without a substantial economy, it’ll be much less likely the Good Country will be listened to by other members of the international community. So we need to collect taxes in order to fund the country’s operations and interventions.

Bonds?

Traditionally, a bond is an investment which can be returned with interest. We use the term “bond” metaphorically: the “interest” you accrue is the increased impact and effectiveness the Good Country gains by acquiring more citizens and therefore more power.

In the future, when the Good Country develops its own currency and economy, Good Country bonds may also offer financial returns on investment.



Why don't you have your own currency?

In the age of cryptocurrencies, it may seem surprising for a new country to use the currency of an existing country, but USD is a convenient and widely-accepted currency. At some stage, we may issue our own currency, but this is a difficult and expensive process which we can't justify undertaking in advance of the more important issues we will be facing in our first year.

Are you offering the right to live and work in the USA for \$5 per year?

No. \$5 per year entitles you to become a citizen of the Good Country. As the Good Country has no territory, it does not provide domicile rights of any kind.

Who's funding it?

The Good Country is entirely funded by the \$5 taxes collected from its citizens each year (voluntary additional contributions in the form of Good Country bonds are currently used to fund tax waivers for citizens unable to afford the \$5 annual payment: see "Bonds?").

Safety and Security

How safe is my data?

Our website uses SSL – in other words, all data is transferred via an HTTPS encrypted connection to the users and nothing is held on the server in terms of personal user data. The Good Country neither handles nor holds any customer data via the website.

All customer data is handled and held by HubSpot. Their security details are [here](#).

All payments are securely made via HubSpot and Stripe, which use SSL encryption and are fully PCI compliant. All transactional data is stored with Stripe, so neither Good Country nor HubSpot ever see any card information and this information is never sent to any of our servers. All card numbers are encrypted on disk with AES-



256. Stripe has been audited by a PCI-certified auditor and is certified to PCI Service Provider Level 1. This is the most stringent level of certification available in the payments industry.

“I assume responsibility for all consequences pursuant to my citizenship of the Good Country.” What does this mean?

We included this note because while we honestly don’t think it’s likely that anything really bad could happen as a result of becoming a citizen of the Good Country (and of course, you can opt out at any time), a project like this has never been tried before and so of course some of the consequences of citizenship are unknown. For example, some countries don’t permit dual nationality, and it’s possible that citizens could get into trouble for this reason. This is fairly unlikely because the Good Country isn’t yet recognized as a sovereign state, so membership of the Good Country really can’t be considered dual nationality in the formal sense of the term. But we think it’s prudent to make people aware that nothing can be 100% risk-free, and it’s a good idea to think through the possible consequences. If you’re concerned about any of these issues, please write to us at civilservice@good.country.

Does the Good Country have rules about how its citizens should behave on our online platform?

Yes. Next year we will develop a set of guidelines and a terms of use document, with citizen input.

What do you do with trolls?

We reckon that the \$5 tax requirement is enough to put off most casual trolls, who are unlikely to want to pay for the privilege of being disruptive. But we enjoy hearing constructive criticism, and we expect our citizens to let us know if we’re saying or doing anything they feel is out of line with what they want from their country.



Citizenship

Does it matter where I live?

Definitely not. The Good Country accepts citizens from anywhere in the world.

Can we join as a family? / What's the youngest age for a citizen? / Can I sign up my children as citizens?

We don't put a lower age limit on citizenship for the Good Country. Our view is that as long as a child is capable of a) understanding the meaning and purpose of Good Country citizenship; b) completing the application form; and c) participating in our policy-making cycles, then they are eligible to apply for citizenship. It's not a problem for their parents, or anyone else, to pay their taxes for them. However, citizenship of the Good Country is *not* a hereditary right: one cannot be born into the Good Country, and every citizen must apply and join of their own accord.

What are my responsibilities as a citizen, other than the \$5 annual tax? Is contributing to periodic Remesh conversations mandatory?

Participation in Remesh conversations and other voting processes is certainly not mandatory, and we appreciate that many of our citizens are happy simply to be a part of the group that's making the world work better, without being actively engaged in that process. Having said this, we do work hard to make all the issues we deal with as clear and simple to understand as possible – you certainly don't need a degree in international relations to be an active citizen of the Good Country (although you might well be in a position to study for such a degree after a year or two of citizenship). Several of our voting processes also allow citizens to temporarily transfer their voting rights to people who they feel understand the issues better.

Will you actively seek gender, racial, and socioeconomic equality within the Good Country's citizenship?

No: this is a self-selecting and self-organizing community and we don't intend to try and influence who applies or who can join in any way. The gender, age, racial, and



socioeconomic profile of the country will simply reflect the people who want to join. Equal *access* is certainly a fundamental principle, however, and we will always do whatever is in our power to ensure that everybody everywhere is aware of the Good Country and the benefits of citizenship, and that financial barriers to joining are minimized (payment of the \$5 annual tax is frequently waived for those who cannot pay, see “Bonds?”).

What type of person would not be the right fit for the Good Country?

We prefer to let people decide for themselves, and in the end, if somebody doesn't share the values of the Good Country they probably won't enjoy the experience of being a Good Country citizen (although we do earnestly welcome honest and constructive debate). No political affiliation is likely to make somebody inherently unsuitable for Good Country citizenship, as the issues we are concerned with are generally well above the level of domestic political ideology.

Are you active in my city? / Do you have a branch/office in my country/city?

We're trying to become active everywhere in the world. We don't have any branches yet but we do have outreach programs in around 7 countries and 5 regions. Please write to ambassadors@good.country for further information, and especially if you'd like to help us spread the word and connect with other citizens in your country or region.

Can I volunteer? / Can I work for you? / How do I spread the word?

Yes please! Send an email to ambassadors@good.country with some information about your background, skills, available time, and experience, and we'll get back to you straight away.



Technical Questions

How can I check if I'm enrolled as a citizen?

You should have received a tax receipt and a number of welcome emails. If you have not done so but believe you have enrolled and paid your taxes, please write to us at taxes@good.country and we'll check for you.

I've changed my e-mail address since becoming a citizen. / I accidentally used the wrong e-mail address when I signed up. / Can I change my e-mail address? / I think I used two different e-mail addresses.

Please write to us at civilservice@good.country saying which email address you prefer to use and we will update your contact details.

Where do I log in?

At the moment, you don't, as we have no citizen-only areas of the website. These will be introduced during 2019.

One World Government?

Is the Good Country striving to further the concept of a One World Government?

No. We're not in the least bit interested in One World Government or anything of that sort. In our experience, government is effective in direct proportion to its closeness to the people being governed: many domestic problems in many countries today are caused by nations and populations being simply too big to govern, and central governments making policy from a position that's simply too remote from the daily needs, concerns, and cultural specificities of citizens.

Our day-jobs have shown us very clearly that "global government" is a pipe-dream, and that government only works when it's intimately acquainted with citizens and their needs and desires. Cultural difference is a reality, and a good thing too: it's one



of the best things about humanity. It's something we need to work around, and work with, not erase or ignore.

But just because we're against the idea of World Government doesn't mean that we're against the idea of the United Nations, or the other international agencies either. On the contrary, we think that most of them do an essential job admirably well under extraordinarily difficult circumstances. We certainly need administrative and organisational structures like these if we're to avoid a continual 'tragedy of the commons,' and they need to have a certain amount of power or they can't operate.