

Swarm Manifesto

Independence means acting on your own terms.

Cryptography made privacy enforceable, Bitcoin made value transferable without a central intermediary, and Ethereum extended this principle to computation, coordination, and consensus.

Swarm is the continuation of that lineage, addressing the question left unanswered: *who holds the data, and on what terms?*

Those who carry our data must not gain the power to censor our communication, monitor our activity, or turn our private lives into commercial assets. We must hold the keys to our data, without requiring any gatekeeper's consent.

In a global digital society, what we publish, who we reach, and what information we access must not depend on the permission of platforms, the entities owning them, or their changing rules. These freedoms are not to be restricted to serve commercial or political interests.

Self-sovereignty over data must extend into the web. Individual freedom to communicate and trade must be built into its infrastructure. Public information must flow freely and remain uncensorable, while access to private data stays in the hands of its creators. Contributing to our collective knowledge must not require surrendering our privacy. Building an application, publishing our work, or exchanging information must not place us under the authority of whoever carries the data. Our responsibility is to build a system in which that is not only possible, but enforced on the protocol level.

We are building Swarm as such infrastructure. Its design rests on four convictions, each of which is *embedded on the protocol level*.

Inclusivity — The network is open to anyone who wants to participate, publish, or build, with every participant on equal footing.

Integrity — Data integrity and signed authorship can be independently verified, without requiring participants to disclose their real-world identities.

Incentivization — The network's incentive system must make honest behavior the most rewarding choice for the node operators who run it. By compensating participants for reliably storing and serving data, the network supports the people who sustain its infrastructure. The greater the adoption, the more robust and self-sustaining the network becomes.

Impartiality — The network must be neutral to content, neutral to identity, and structurally resistant to becoming an instrument of any political or commercial agenda.

Swarm was conceived alongside Ethereum as the data layer of the world computer — its hard drive. What made that storage component accessible and resilient at scale turned out to be something more: the foundation of an entirely new web. One that is fully decentralized — where publishing requires no central gatekeeper, where applications can outlive their original hosts, where continuity depends on aligned participation rather than an institution's continued goodwill, and where encryption allows people to share private data without entrusting its confidentiality to those who store it.

The swarm has no center. Every node that joins, and every piece of data that is stored on the network makes this vision incrementally harder to undo.