



BSI Standards Publication

Information technology — Governance of IT for the organization

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National foreword

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A list of organizations represented on this committee can be obtained on request to its committee manager.

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ISO/IEC 38500**Information technology —
Governance of IT for the
organization**

*Technologies de l'information — Gouvernance des technologies
de l'information pour l'entreprise*

**Third edition
2024-02**

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This document was prepared by Joint Technical Committee ISO/IEC JTC 1, *Information technology*, Subcommittee SC 40, *IT service management and IT governance*.

This third edition cancels and replaces the second edition (ISO/IEC 38500:2015), which has been technically revised.

The main changes are as follows:

- the principles for governance of IT and alignment to the principles of governance in ISO 37000 have been elaborated;
- the model has been updated to include "engage stakeholders";
- a framework for the governance of IT has been updated from ISO/IEC TR 38502.

A list of all parts in the ISO/IEC 38500 series can be found on the ISO and IEC websites.

Any feedback or questions on this document should be directed to the user's national standards body. A complete listing of these bodies can be found at www.iso.org/members.html and www.iec.ch/national-committees.

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The use of information technology (IT) is critical to the success of most organizations, not only as a supporting function, but also as part of the organization's capability to transform the organization. IT enables new business models and can substantially improve the organization's outcomes to meet the organization's stakeholder needs and expectations. The growing threat of cybersecurity and risks emanating from emerging technologies increases this focus.

The increasing potential of current and future IT requires the appropriate application of governance of IT to ensure that it fulfils the purpose of the organization in an effective, responsible and ethical manner, and that it aligns with the organization's strategic direction.

The objective of this document is to provide guidance to governing bodies on the responsible, innovative, sustainable and strategic use of IT, data and digital capabilities, so their organizations can fulfil their purpose in a manner expected by their stakeholders. This document provides principle-based guidelines and therefore does not include specific implementation detail.

It utilizes three tools for the governing body and associated governance and management practices to achieve good governance of IT:

- 1) Principles for the governance of IT — applying these principles to the responsible and strategic use of IT can lead to an organization that is more agile and adaptive.
- 2) Model for the governance of IT — the model shows the main governance tasks and interactions throughout the organization, leading to a clarity of decision-making and responsibilities for all aspects of the use of IT.
- 3) Framework for the governance of IT — the framework describes the elements through which the organization's governance of IT arrangements operate, which helps to ensure the critical actions of governance are considered and applied to the use of IT by the organization.

As the governance of IT is a domain of the governance of organizations, this document aligns to ISO 37000 and its principles of governance. This document can also be used in conjunction with other governance codes and principles for effective governance. This document can be used independently or to upgrade current governance based on the previous edition of ISO/IEC 38500.

This document is addressed primarily to the governing body but recognizes that governance occurs throughout the organization. It therefore provides guidance on the practice of governance of IT across the organization including the interaction and collaboration of all personnel, regardless of their job description.

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Information technology — Governance of IT for the organization

1 Scope

This document provides guiding principles for members of governing bodies of organizations and those that support them on the effective, efficient and acceptable use of information technology (IT) within their organizations.

This document is applicable to:

- the governance of the organization's current, and future, use of IT;
- the governance of IT as a domain of governance of organizations.

In terms of audience, this document is applicable to:

- all organizations, including public and private companies, government entities, and not-for-profit organizations;
- organizations of all sizes, from the smallest to the largest, regardless of the extent of their use of IT.

2 Normative references

The following documents are referred to in the text in such a way that some or all of their content constitutes requirements of this document. For dated references, only the edition cited applies. For undated references, the latest edition of the referenced document (including any amendments) applies.

ISO 37000, *Governance of organizations — Guidance*

3 Terms and definitions

For the purposes of this document, the terms and definitions given in ISO 37000 and the following apply.

ISO and IEC maintain terminology databases for use in standardization at the following addresses:

- ISO Online browsing platform: available at <https://www.iso.org/obp>
- IEC Electropedia: available at <https://www.electropedia.org/>

3.1 direct

communicate desired purposes and outcomes

Note 1 to entry: Within the context of the governance of IT, directing involves setting objectives, strategies and policies to be adopted by the members of the organization, to ensure that the use of IT meets business objectives.

Note 2 to entry: Objectives, strategies and policies can be set by management if they have the relevant authority delegated to them by the governing body.