ELECTRONICS LIFECYCLE CARE INSTITUTE

ENGINEERING THE FULL LIFECYCLE OF ELECTRONICS

FOUNDING PHILOSOPHY & ENDURING VISION

To care for the things that care for us

The founding charter of the Electronics Lifecycle Care Institute — written to outlast lifetimes.

E-value | Care | Dignity | Proof | Continuity

Electronics Lifecycle Care Institute
Founded in Nairobi, Kenya

PREAMBLE

A Charter Written to Outlast Lifetimes

> **Everything we make carries value.**
> **Everything that carries value deserves care.**
> **Everyone who gives that care deserves honour.**

Somewhere tonight, a piece of electronic equipment is keeping someone alive, a community connected, an industry running, and a nation secure and fed.

A monitor counts the breaths of a child in a hospital ward while her mother sleeps in a chair beside her. A radio mast on a dark hill carries a son's voice home to his father. A pump lifts water to a village before dawn. A drone jammer guards a sleeping nation. A PLC drive turns, hour after hour, a process that feeds a people. A turbine rotor spins and a SCADA system keeps silent watch, holding the power grid steady through the night. These are not just machines — they are enablers of life, livelihood and national resilience.

And somewhere, under a single bulb, a pair of skilled hands is bringing one of them back to life.

This charter is for that electronic equipment, and for those hands. It records what the Electronics Lifecycle Care Institute (ELCI) believes, and it is written to be read long after its founders are gone — by students not yet born, in workshops not yet built, caring for electronic equipment not yet imagined.

The circuits on our benches will one day seem as distant as the valve and the vacuum tube. Technologies will rise and evolve. But the questions beneath this institute are as old as the human story, and they will not age:

What do we owe to the things we make? What do we owe to the people who keep them alive? And what do we owe to the earth, and to the generations from whom we borrow both?

This is our answer. Let every programme, standard and decision of ELCI be measured against it — and by the value it preserves, the life it extends, the resources it saves, the people it empowers, and the generations it serves.

I · THE FOUNDING TRUTHS

Five Truths on Which ELCI Stands

Every civilisation reveals itself in how it treats what is broken. These five truths are ours.

1 Electronics are a population — every device deserves a passport

Electronics are not inventory. They are a **demographic**: a population that is born, works, travels, ages and retires among us — and that now outnumbers humanity itself. They sit at our bedsides, in our pockets, in our clinics and our classrooms. Yet most of them pass through the world unnamed, uncounted and unremembered.

What is not known cannot be cared for. So every device deserves what every citizen is owed — **an identity: a Passport ID.** A lifelong record of where it was born, what it is made of, whom it has served, what illnesses it has suffered, who has healed it, what secrets it keeps, and where it must go when its work is done. To give a thing a name is the first act of care. A device with an identity can be trusted, followed and kept. A device without one is lost the moment it fails — and with it, everything it was worth.

2 A faulty device is a patient, not a corpse

A fault is not a death. When electronic equipment falls silent, somebody is waiting — a patient for a scan, a family for a call, a village for water. It does not need a burial. It needs a diagnosis. ELCI receives every faulty device as a **patient**: with attention, with patience and with skill — triaged, examined, treated, rehabilitated and certified fit to serve again.

No device is declared beyond saving until a qualified carer has proven it so. And even then its story does not end: like an organ donor, it gives its healthy parts so that others may live, and its substance returns to the earth's productive cycle. We do not walk away from the sick. We do not walk away from the broken. **We diagnose before we condemn.**

3 E-value, not e-waste

Nothing that has been made is worthless. Every device holds value: minerals drawn patiently from the earth, energy spent in its making, the intelligence of those who designed it, and the years of service still waiting within it. The copper in a discarded board once carried a grandmother's voice across a continent. To call it *waste* is not to describe it. It is to forget it.

4 The carer without care

Every society rests on electronic equipment that heals, connects, lights, feeds and protects it — from the monitor at the bedside to the drive on the factory floor and the shield that guards its skies. This equipment is a carer. Yet they have been left without care — bought without a plan for their keeping, abandoned at the first fault, and tended by people whose mastery goes unnamed: the technician called at midnight, the repairer at a roadside bench, the engineer who never appears in the photograph of the ribbon-cutting.

ELCI exists to end that neglect. Its whole purpose can be spoken in a sentence: **to care for the things that care for us, and to honour the people who give that care.**

5 From making to keeping

All things made are subject to decay; this is the oldest law of the physical world. Care is humanity's answer to it — the patient, deliberate act of holding things in order against the drift of time. The industrial age perfected the art of making. The age now beginning must master the older and wiser art of keeping. ELCI gives that art a name — **Lifecycle Care Engineering** — and a home.

> *"What others call e-waste, we call e-value — value to be kept in service, restored by skilled hands, harvested with care, and returned to the cycle from which it came.*

THE LIFE OF A DEVICE, AS ELCI SEES IT

1	2	3	4	5	6
Born	**Serves**	**Falls ill**	**Is healed**	**Gives on**	**Returns**
Issued a Passport ID at birth: origin, materials, design.	Registered, maintained and kept in its highest use.	Admitted as a patient, never written off as a corpse.	Diagnosed, treated, certified and returned to service.	When truly beyond repair, donates its healthy parts.	Its substance re-enters the cycle as e-value.

Every stage is written into the device's passport — one record, from first spark to return.

II · THE ROOTS WE STAND ON

Engineering Rooted in African Wisdom

ELCI is an institute of engineering, but its roots go deeper than engineering. It draws on the relational understanding of being in Bantu ontology and the humanism of Ubuntu — and binds that ancient wisdom to the discipline of science.

1

Being is relationship

Nothing exists alone. A thing is what it is through its bonds — to the land that yielded its metals, the hands that shaped it, the people who depend on it and the carer who knows its every fault. To discard it carelessly is to cut those threads and pretend they were never woven. To care for it is to honour every life woven into it.

2

Ubuntu: I am because we are

A person becomes fully human through others; so too, the worth of electronic equipment is the lives it sustains, and the worth of a carer is the community kept whole by their work. Care is never a private trade. It is a gift to the common life — and what is given in common must be taught in common, never hoarded.

3

The unbroken line

We stand between those who came before and those yet to come. What we take from the earth is not ours; it is held in trust, passed through our hands on its way to our children. To burn it or bury it is to spend an inheritance that was never ours alone. To keep it is to honour our ancestors' land and our grandchildren's future in a single act.

4

Care made rigorous

Care without competence is only goodwill; competence without care is only technique. Love must learn method, and method must remember love. Our care is expressed in standards, evidence and the patient discipline of doing things right — because a promise of care that cannot be shown is not yet care.

Repair is an act of memory

To repair a thing is to remember what it was for, who made it and who needs it — and to refuse to forget. A people who repair are a people who remember. **ELCI exists so that we never forget.**

III · TEN ENDURING PRINCIPLES

The Constitution of Our Conduct

Programmes, technologies and leaders will change. These will not.

1

Care comes before replacement

The first question is always whether a thing can be kept, safely and worthwhile. Replacement must earn its place.

2

Everything made holds value

E-value, not e-waste. We measure ourselves by what is kept, not by what is discarded.

3

The nearest loop is the richest

Keep, restore, renew, harvest, then recover — always in that order.

4

Buy care, not only objects

No electronic equipment should arrive without the knowledge, parts and people to sustain it for its whole life.

5

Proof honours promise

No claim of quality or circularity stands without evidence another can verify.

6

First, do no harm

People, knowledge and land are protected at every step; hazard is never hidden for gain.

7

Skill is sovereignty

A people who cannot care for their own systems do not fully own them.

8

Every carer has dignity

The street repairer and the chief engineer belong to one profession, on one ladder, worthy of one respect.

9

The door stays open

No one with the will to learn is shut out by origin, gender, age or circumstance.

10

Knowledge is held in common

What we learn, we teach; what we discover, we share.

IV · THE CARER'S CREED

An Oath for a Lifetime of Care

Humanity has always honoured those who heal the body and those who keep aircraft in the sky, because lives depend on their work. Lives now depend just as surely on those who care for our electronic equipment. ELCI calls them lifecycle carers, and asks each to carry this creed for the whole of their working life.

I	*I diagnose before I condemn; I seek the cause, not the casualty.*
II	*I work to the standard, every time; my signature is my word.*
III	*I guard what the equipment holds; the knowledge in it belongs to others.*
IV	*I record what I do, so that my work may be trusted and learned from.*
V	*I respect the hazard; I will not trade safety for speed or gain.*
VI	*I return what I cannot keep, so that its substance may live again.*
VII	*I pass it on; every skill I hold was a gift, and I owe it to the next carer.*

ONE PROFESSION, MANY DOORS

The profession of lifecycle care is entered by many doors — the market workshop, the technical college, the hospital bench, the university laboratory, the boardroom. All who enter climb one ladder, from the first careful inspection to the stewardship of whole systems. And every carer, at every rung, carries the same quiet knowledge: **someone, somewhere, is alive, connected or in the light tonight because of my work.**



V · THE ENDURING VISION

A Horizon, Not a Target

> *A world in which nothing made is wasted, no electronic equipment that serves life stands idle for want of care, and no carer works without honour — beginning in Africa, and offered from Africa to all.*

This vision is not a target to be reached and filed away. It is a horizon: always ahead, always calling us forward. We do not set it small enough to finish in our lifetime. We set it large enough to be inherited.

FIRST HORIZON

A profession named

The work of care is recognised for what it is — a profession with its own knowledge, standards, ladder and dignity. A child can say, without hesitation, *"I want to be a lifecycle carer,"* and her parents are proud. The skilled hands that kept electronic equipment alive for generations without recognition are welcomed in, at last.

SECOND HORIZON

A system of care

Every community is within reach of skilled and trusted care. All electronic equipment that serves life has a passport, a history and a carer. Care is planned before purchase, funded through use and proven by evidence. Nations recognise one another's carers, and equipment crosses borders to be healed, never to be dumped.

THIRD HORIZON

The value kept

The vast store of value in the electronics already among us — knowledge, critical minerals and carbon, the **Third Mine** — is governed as a common inheritance. Africa keeps its value at home and returns its recovered materials to the world. The repair-first wisdom of African workshops is recognised everywhere as a way to live within the limits of one earth.

VI · THE COVENANT

Our Promises, in Every Generation

In founding this institute, and in every generation that carries it forward, we make this covenant:

To the things we make	We will keep them in service while they can serve, and return their substance to the cycle when they can serve no more.
To those who care for them	We will give their work a name, a standard, a path and the honour it has long been denied.
To the communities we serve	We will keep the instruments of their health, connection, light and livelihood alive, and their knowledge safe.
To the land	We will never let hazard be buried, burned or hidden for convenience or gain.
To those who come after us	We will leave more skill, more value and fewer debts than we received.

WHAT WE WILL NEVER DO

- ✕ We will never certify what has not been earned.
- ✕ We will never claim what we cannot prove.
- ✕ We will never trade safety, trust or the earth for speed or profit.
- ✕ We will never treat the self-taught carer as a stranger to the profession.
- ✕ We will never keep to ourselves the knowledge others need to care for their own.

VII · THE MEASURE THAT ENDURES

The Question That Will Judge Us

One day every programme built on this charter will have been revised, all electronic equipment on our benches replaced by another, and every founder succeeded. Then, as now, ELCI will be judged by a single question:

THE MEASURE THAT ENDURES

Are the things that care for our people being cared for — and are the people who care for them honoured?

Somewhere in a time we will not see, a child will be born under a light that a carer kept burning. A message of love will cross a sea through a circuit that someone refused to throw away. A grandmother's hands will hold a device made, in part, from the metal of electronic equipment that served us. They will not know our names. They do not need to. It will be enough that the circle held.

While the answer is anything less than yes, the work continues.
When the answer is yes, the work continues still —
for care, like life, is never finished. It is only handed on.

Ogola Ndolo
Founder · Electronics Engineer and Circularity Director
Founded in Nairobi, Kenya, with EMROC — The Electronics Care Company, and CME — Centre for Multivendor Electronics

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