

Making a Multilingual Internet More Accessible: A Community Initiative

Quotes from Generation Panel Leaders



“Armenia is a country with an ancient culture and language. For many Armenians who do not know other languages, the Internet is the only way to get important information, education, health care, and entertainment. ICANN’s slogan is “One World, One Internet.” To make that a reality, we need Internationalized Domain Names (IDNs) in local languages.”

- Igor Mkrtumyan, Chair, Armenian Script Generation Panel



“Internationalized Domain Names (IDNs) are effective at increasing Internet penetration and bridging the digital divide. They also work to eliminate Internet fragmentation by enabling access for users who read and write in native languages and scripts, especially for those who do not use ASCII characters.”

- Wei Wang, Co-Chair, Chinese Script Generation Panel



“The second most popular language for Internet users is Chinese, which has two writing systems: Simplified Chinese (SC) and Traditional Chinese (TC). The Chinese writing scripts in SC and TC have the same meaning and are typical variants. Most Chinese users understand texts written in SC and TC, so the variant mapping relationship for Chinese is very important.”

- Kenny Huang, Co-Chair, Chinese Script Generation Panel



“There is no better time to highlight the importance of the work done by the Cyrillic Generation Panel. Developing the label rules for the root zone creates order for potential new Cyrillic TLD applications. Having clear rules and recommendations from our work lays a foundation for every ccTLD or new gTLD that wants to work on their own rules at the second level.”

- Dušan Stojičević, Chair, Cyrillic Script Generation Panel



“Addressing the digital divide in Ethiopia is of paramount priority. Factors beyond access to the Internet such as linguistic barriers stand in the way of a sizeable part of the population realizing the full benefits of the Internet technology that others who are able to write and read in Latin-based scripts already enjoy.”

- Dessalegn Mequanint Yehuala, Chair, Ethiopic Script Generation Panel



“The Hebrew GP was formed to recommend the usage of Hebrew character sets in TLDs. Hebrew is an ancient Semite language that is written from right to left, and its character set is mainly used in Hebrew, but also in Yiddish and other rare dialects. The work of the GP helped enable the usage of a full Hebrew IDN for Hebrew and Yiddish speakers, and was its main importance.”

- Yoram Hacohen, Co-Chair, Hebrew Script Generation Panel



“Diverse languages have diverse requirements, and such requirements ended up influencing each other’s work. Such impacts were not known to each Generation Panel in the early stages and required us to successfully coordinate with people around the world with diverse expertise and cultures.”

- Hiro Hatta, Chair, Japanese Script Generation Panel



“IDNs are important to the Internet community and ecosystem. They give underserved and unconnected people opportunities to connect to the Internet. This will help bridge the digital divide especially in areas of education, finance, trade, and more.”

- Rapid Sun, Chair, Khmer Script Generation Panel



“By allowing characters of local scripts and languages (Hangul and Hanja in case of Korea) in top-level domains (TLDs), Internet users can now recognize and use them more easily. Internationalized Domain Names (IDNs) also allow users and companies to better express their organization or company’s name, interests, and more.”

- *KIM Kyongsok, Chair, Korean Script Generation Panel*



“Internationalized Domain Names (IDNs) not only encourage people to use websites in local languages, but also show the readiness to move towards a digital economy that empowers local communities to access online services through any digital media gateway.”

- *Keovisouk Solaphom, Co-Chair, Lao Script Generation Panel*



“It’s important that all users have the same rights to access all Internet resources. The majority of the world population speaks and reads in their own native languages, and it’s crucial to give these people the chance to use TLDs in their own languages and scripts.”

- *Mirjana Tasic, Chair, Latin Script Generation Panel*



“Working with the GP was a great opportunity to meet diverse people and learn the cultures of different language users who share the Myanmar script. Despite challenges at times with unstable Internet connectivity and electricity, members from all over the world came together to work on this proposal. This project connected people and gave us a chance to benefit our native language community.”

- *Yin May Oo, Co-Chair, Myanmar Script Generation Panel*



“The Neo-Brahmi GP was a successful example of the multistakeholder process, where people came together to achieve a common goal with consensus. Our GP included people from academia, civil society, government, technical and language communities, and industry who worked together to achieve rules for 9 scripts that cover all 22 official languages of India, along with languages of Bangladesh, Nepal, and Sri Lanka.”

- *Ajay Data, Co-Chair, Neo-Brahmi Script Generation Panel*



“Multilingualism is crucial to bringing the next billion Internet users online. These new users will likely come from non-English speaking countries, and providing access for them requires more than just support for multilingual content. IDNs and internationalized email give businesses, governments, and social services greater reach to their constituents, and allow users the ability to communicate and engage in such services in their native languages.”

- *Mahesh Kulkarni, Co-Chair, Neo-Brahmi Script Generation Panel*



“It was a great experience for us linguists and computational experts to work with organizations that deal with domain names, ccTLDs, and Internet security, as well as general Internet users, to come up with a set of solutions that would enable our own languages and scripts to be more functional on the Internet.”

- *Udaya Narayana Singh, Co-Chair, Neo-Brahmi Script Generation Panel*



“I have always believed that IDNs would become very important. IDNs have grown throughout East Asia while Internet content has grown even faster in Chinese, Japanese, and Korean scripts. I believe IDN usage will continue to increase as rendering and input technology becomes more accessible to ordinary people in South Asia.”

- *Harsha Wijayawardhana, Chair, Sinhala Script Generation Panel*



“Language is always an important aspect that divides people, especially between those who understand English and those who don’t. As more government essential services become available via the Internet, domain names in local languages will assist the majority of Internet newcomers.”

- *Wanawit Ahkuputra, Chair, Thai Script Generation Panel*