

ICANN NextGen Program Improvements | Community Input Status Report

Working Draft | As of 11 February 2020

Ref. #	Broad Category	Sub-Category	Full Issue/Suggestion/Recommendation	Status	Proposed Approach	Organization/ Group
1	(A) Outreach and Promotion	Outreach - stakeholder group (business)	Despite attempts to promote more engagement, the fundamentally academic nature of the selectees makes it difficult to recruit more members with a business inclination, and we do feel more could be done to outreach to post-grads studying international business and related fields.	Active	ICANN Org will focus on outreach for post-graduates in a broad range of studies, including international business.	BC
2	(A) Outreach and Promotion	Outreach - students in relevant fields who could become active in policy development	The sole objective of NextGen should be to attract students in relevant fields to becoming active participants in ICANN policy development. The NextGen program should not be a centrally-funded engagement opportunity for one or two SG/C/SO/ACs (in particular GNSO NCSG and ALAC), but should provide much broader exposure to all of the stakeholder groups and interests in the ICANN community.	Active	ICANN Org will focus on wider outreach for students with the potential to become active in ICANN's policy work, with broader exposure and raised awareness across all stakeholder groups.	IPC
3	(B) Application	Application format	Re-expanding the application option to allow for short video presentations. This way the selection committee will have a more diverse pool of applicants who are not just "good at writing applications" but can also speak and present well. There could also be possibilities for more technically-minded students to showcase a project.	Active	ICANN Org will look into ways to adapt the application to allow applicants to express themselves in different ways, reducing cultural barriers in the application system while respecting issues of biases and following best practices around data minimization.	RySG
4	(B) Application	Application format	As a result of baseless GDPR fear, the application process for the program has been made more unjust. The application used to allow for candidates to attach a video showing something they are proud of or speaking directly to the selection panel. This was a great chance for those with better speaking than written skills to be selected. More importantly, this provided a different outlet for those who have an interesting project to show it in action rather than having to describe it. This option needs to not only be reinstated but expanded, to allow for a greater diversity of selectees other than those who are naturally good writers. This way, anything the candidate is proud of could be evaluated, including source code or blueprints for hardware. A phenomenon very common to the NextGen Selection Committee is to see applications from candidates from the technical field who seem to have interesting things to present, but end up writing very short applications that do not say much, because it is not their natural inclination to write detailed prose. These candidates are never selected, but if provided the chance to present their best work, they would be able to do it.	Active	ICANN Org will look into ways to adapt the application to allow applicants to express themselves in different ways, reducing cultural barriers in the application system while respecting issues of biases and following best practices around data minimization.	BC
5	(C) Selection Process	Selection criteria - year of studies	Candidates who are further advanced in their studies should be prioritized in the selection process. We expect that the program is more useful to them than to first-years, and that they have more opportunities to further spread the gained knowledge and insight.	Resolved	The program will remain open to students in general rather than to a specific year; Selection Committee members from the community will select applicants and can choose to change priorities as needed.	RySG
6	(C) Selection Process	Selection criteria - age	It might be worth considering to tighten the eligibility criteria and reserve the program to graduate or doctoral students while removing the age-limit of 30 years old. We recommend ICANN Org to be cautious when setting eligibility criteria as for example the use of hard age limits might not be lawful in some jurisdictions on the basis of age discrimination.	Resolved	ICANN Org has a range of programs that are available for other age groups. ICANN conducted an age diversity and participation survey to explore perceptions of ageism, which highlighted the need for capacity-development opportunities for young participants (under 35) to improve age diversity and inclusive participation at ICANN.	RySG
7	(C) Selection Process	Selection criteria - age	ICANN is right to be actively supporting the inclusion and development of young people within the community. However, although universities are certainly an appropriate place to find young people who will contribute to ICANN related fields, the program could also be open to graduates under 30 who are already in the workplace and at the start of their careers.	Resolved	The program's focus is on students and the academic community; recent graduates or older students can pursue the ICANN Fellowship Program.	RrSG
8	(C) Selection Process	Selection criteria - stakeholder group	Arguably the best way to engage with ICANN is via active participation in one of the SO/ACs, so encouraging and enabling this should be a focus of the program. We recognise that this is of course more difficult for groups like the RrSG that require paid membership and association with a specific type of organisation, but if NextGen participants were selected with their potential for engagement in different SO/ACs in mind, this could be improved. If this was the case, the RrSG would welcome greater involvement in the NextGen program and with its participants	Active	ICANN Org proposes to add to the selection criteria a category for "potential for engagement" so that Selection Committee members evaluate applicants with future engagement in mind.	RrSG

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9	(C) Selection Process	Selection criteria - nominations - and Selection committee	An amendment to the current selection process, particularly if it was not a requirement to select only university students, could be to provide groups with the opportunity to directly nominate candidates for the NextGen program. The existing staff-led selection committee could then make the final selection for each meeting, with the majority of places allocated to group nominated candidates and ensuring a cross section of participants. There is a longstanding issue with volunteer limited time within ICANN, so this would eliminate the need to find individuals from across the community to participate in the selection committee.	Active	ICANN Org will change the application to include a section where applicants can upload a letter of endorsement/recommendation from a community group. The existing Selection Committee is not staff-led but a poll has been conducted to see which community groups would be interested in nominating volunteers for involvement in the committee, and this poll informs the approach put out for public comment for a community-nominated Selection Committee.	
10	(C) Selection Process	Selection committee	Yes, the Selection Committee members should be selected in a manner similar to the Fellowship Program Selection Committee. For maximum efficiency, ICANN could consider combining these two programs for maximum efficiency, with perhaps a bifurcated Selection Committee. This would help to identify "serial" applicants, overlapping applications, etc. The rationale for this is that if engagement and onboarding is the goal, we want to ensure that SO/AC/SG/Cs are aware and active in the selection process so that they can evaluate candidates based on their current needs and priorities.	Active	ICANN Org will move forward with having a community-nominated Selection Committee (for a two-year period, in the same manner as the Fellowship Program). We will look into ways to only allow applicants to apply for one program per application cycle.	IPC
11	(C) Selection Process	Selection committee	Yes, however, having a single representative for the GNSO is not viable, and at the very least 3 people should be brought into the Committee to represent it, with both parts of the Non-Contracted Party House and one for the Contracted Party House having a voice. This is an absolute must, seeing as we have previously pointed out in our self-funded "Building Sustained Business Constituency Participation in Latin America" ¹ report that the Fellowship Program brings in significantly less participants from business-related areas in relation to other stakeholders, and one way to alleviate this is having more leverage in selection processes to ensure that no bias affects business candidates.	Active	ICANN Org proposes to have a Selection Committee that is community-nominated and that will be open to GNSO constituencies/groups (unlike Fellowship Selection Committee, which only has one GNSO slot).	BC
12	(C) Selection Process	Selection committee	Knowing this opinion will vary among ICANN community members, it would be worth considering taking a poll to ascertain who would be interested in participating at this level. If a broader cross section of Selection Committee members participates, this may facilitate a broader cross section of those approved to be a part of the NextGen. If the appointment of the Selection Committee members is supported, this opportunity should revolve to various SO/AC groups who are interested in participating.	Resolved	ICANN Org has polled SOs/ACs/Cs/Gs to gauge their level of interest; the poll was open to GNSO constituencies/groups (unlike the Fellowship Selection Committee). The findings of the poll defined the approach that has been put out for public comment.	RySG
13	(C) Selection Process	Nominating a Selection Committee Member	A final decision on identifying a member within the RySG would first need general discussion and then a call for interest. Interest may vary from the RySG membership based on what region is involved.	Resolved	ICANN Org has polled SOs/ACs/Cs/Gs to gauge their level of interest; a subsequent call for nominations will go out once the new program approach has been finalized, following the public comment period.	RySG
14	(C) Selection Process	Nominating a Selection Committee Member	Yes, but to ensure representation of the broad range of (at times, conflicting) interests in the GNSO, a representative from each SG and C is needed. The IPC cannot speak on behalf of the entire GNSO as to its willingness to nominate a single representative for the SO, but does not believe that this is appropriate.	Resolved	If each GNSO SG and C wants to nominate a member, they are welcome to do so. A poll was conducted by ICANN Org to this effect.	IPC
15	(C) Selection Process	Nominating a Selection Committee Member	Yes, the BC would nominate a member.	Resolved	If each GNSO SG and C wants to nominate a member, they are welcome to do so. A poll was conducted by ICANN Org to this effect.	BC
16	(D) Pre-Meeting Preparation	Pre-Meeting Materials	One objective would be to better introduce those eligible to participate in the NextGen@ICANN program with the high-level background of each ICANN community member organization. For example, provide those accepted applicants with information for their review (i.e., such as a link to the RySG website [and other community members websites/newsletters, etc.]) to assist in their being able to make a more informed decision and choices about various activities that take place at ICANN Public Meetings. A successful implementation/outcome of this objective might be a broader, yet more targeted, exposure from the academics considering various fields of opportunity within this industry.	Active	ICANN Org will ensure that the NextGen onboarding welcome email contains links to each SO/AC/C/G.	RySG

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17	(D) Pre-Meeting Preparation	Pre-Meeting Database	It strikes us as important that ICANN org. proactively attempts to integrate these newcomers into the community. As it stands, neither the selectees nor community members have the tools to attempt to build more lasting relationships that can lead to active contributions to the policymaking process. An opt-out database of talents from the program should be created and made available ahead of meetings, so that those who want to be discoverable by the community can be reached and included.	Active	ICANN Org holds a mailing list of NextGen alumni who have opted in to receive information. Pre-meeting Statements of Interest (SOIs) will be made available (as is done for the Fellowship Program) so that the community is aware of participants' interest. ICANN Org can serve as a liaison for interested community members and NextGen participants who have opted in to receive information.	BC
18	(D) Pre-Meeting Preparation	Schedule planning	In addition to introducing more deliberate community engagement, general sessions, such as outreach sessions for SO/AC/SG/Cs should not be made mandatory sessions for participants. Further, as part of the preparation for the ICANN meeting, participants could engage with a Mentor/Ambassador to determine which sessions will be of most interest to attend, outside of community engagement activities. This would be instead of a fixed schedule for all participants and enable participants to engage in work that is relevant to their field of study.	Active	The NextGen community-outreach sessions are not mandatory but strongly encouraged; only the NextGen-specific sessions are mandatory. Community-appointed mentors will work with NextGeners to plan individualized schedules.	IPC
19	(E) Mentoring	Community involvement	Perhaps less about "keeping as is" or "replacing," but consideration be given to "enhancing" the Ambassador program with a mentor from interested SO/AC groups in the community. There is room to enhance the training ("training the trainer") and commitment aspects of the NextGen Ambassadors program, currently those returning as Ambassadors do not have an obligation other than to provide some form of mentoring, which for a seasoned community member would be fine, but for a young academic still finding a footing in the community this is vague and undefined.	Active	ICANN Org will create a toolkit for NextGen mentors, leveraging the Fellowship mentoring handbook; this will be updated regularly with feedback from community-appointed mentors.	RySG
20	(E) Mentoring	Community involvement	From the RrSG's perspective, if NextGen participants will continue to be individuals who are unlikely to have involvement with our group (and others) there is no real benefit to nominating our own members as mentors.	Resolved	Each SO/AC/SG/C is welcome to nominate a mentor, but none are required to do so.	RrSG
21	(E) Mentoring	Community involvement / training	The selection process itself is not problematic, what needs to be changed is the training and commitment aspects of those who return as NextGen Ambassadors. Currently, that role does not carry practical obligations other than to perform some degree of mentoring for the incoming NextGen. The Ambassadors need to be made aware that their objective should be to go above and beyond in an attempt to make relevant the participation of these entrant members. For this, more extensive training should be required to be undertaken in the Learn platform, so that they have a sufficient degree of knowledge about both their role and the community's workings. The coaching process that was ultimately assigned to the Fellowship program in its reform is far from ideal. It was a top-down decision, as can be corroborated by the Report of Public Comments from the "Draft Proposal of the New Fellowship Program Approach", in which this decision appears as a statement, and not as a product of community input. Doing something similar for the NextGen would be even less effective. Using the Fellowship as an example, most of the selectees need to be assigned to the GNSO and ALAC mentors to have proper guidance due to their backgrounds, leaving the other mentors either mismatched or with an inferior workload. In the NextGen's case, this sort of problem would only escalate, seeing as their backgrounds are much more homogenous.	Active	ICANN Org will work on a toolkit/handbook that explains why mentoring takes place; the handbook will leverage Fellowship materials to explain the purpose of mentorship. There will be required courses for mentors on ICANN Learn (including an upcoming course on Mentoring Best Practices, informed by primary research).	BC
22	(E) Mentoring	Ambassador role / community involvement	The Ambassador selection process should be altered so that the community identifies and nominates mentors with preference for previous NextGen participants who have become active participants in PDP, IRT, review team, etc work. In addition to Ambassadors, it would be worthwhile to consider seeking 'shadowing' opportunities of PDP, IRT, review team, etc leaders to provide participants with alternative perspectives and additional mentoring. The aim would be to bridge the gap between newcomer and (genuinely!) active participant. Ambassadors are often relative newcomers and finding their feet, so it is not always realistic for them to provide the mentoring active community members could provide.	Active	ICANN Org has polled SOs/ACs/Cs/Gs to gauge their level of interest, and the findings of the poll defined the approach that has been put out for public comment. Groups will be encouraged to consider active participants in ICANN's work as well as former NextGen participants. These community mentors will be empowered to connect their mentees with other community members for shadowing opportunities.	IPC

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23	(E) Mentoring	Nominating a mentor	As above, and given the RySG is a fully voluntary membership, a final decision on identifying a member within the RySG would first need general discussion and then a call for interest. Interest may vary from the RySG membership based on what region is involved.	Resolved	ICANN Org has polled SOs/ACs/Cs/Gs to gauge their level of interest; a subsequent call for nominations will go out once the new program approach has been finalized, following the public comment period.	RySG
24	(E) Mentoring	Nominating a mentor	Yes, but to ensure representation of the broad range of (at times, conflicting) interests in the GNSO, a representative from each SG and C is needed. The IPC cannot speak on behalf of the entire GNSO as to its willingness to nominate a single representative for the SO, but does not believe that this is appropriate.	Resolved	ICANN Org has polled SOs/ACs/Cs/Gs to gauge their level of interest, allowing each SG and C to indicate interest; this poll has helped to define the approach that has gone out for public comment.	IPC
25	(E) Mentoring	Nominating a mentor	(Would your group nominate a mentor?) Yes, but we do not find this solution ideal.	Resolved	ICANN Org has polled SOs/ACs/Cs/Gs to gauge their level of interest, allowing each SG and C to indicate interest; this poll has helped to define the approach that has gone out for public comment.	BC
26	(F) On-Site Expectations	Focus of program	Given the specific target group of university students, we believe that the NextGen@ICANN program should focus on education and capacity building. We expect program participants to leave the ICANN meeting with a good understanding of ICANN's role and insight in the working of the ICANN multistakeholder model, and use this knowledge for their studies and later academic or professional work, or volunteer engagement in internet governance. This will contribute to the global awareness and understanding of ICANN's role and governance model.	Active	The sessions that are recommended and the outreach opportunities and networking experiences introduce NextGeners to a variety of stakeholder groups; mentors will be required to help their mentees select sessions for an appropriately rounded schedule.	RySG
27	(F) On-Site Expectations	Networking	Recruiting new active participants to broaden the ICANN community is not the objective of the NextGen@ICANN program. However, the program's detailed introduction to all aspects of the ICANN ecosystem and the working of the ICANN MSM can trigger the participants' interest to get further involved in a specific topic, group or discussion. The NextGen program should support these individuals in reaching out to the topic leads, group leadership or relevant staff.	Active	Community-appointed mentors will be responsible for helping NextGen mentees to reach out to relevant community members; ICANN Org will host mandatory NextGen sessions to introduce NextGen participants to the ICANN community, Board, and organization.	RySG
28	(F) On-Site Expectations	Introducing to community leaders	The sole objective of NextGen should be to attract students in relevant fields to becoming active participants in ICANN policy development. Successful implementation of this objective requires broadening the NextGen program content to introduce recipients to active policy development processes, community leaders (including PDP chairs and co-chairs), and substantive SG/C/SO/AC work. The NextGen program should not be a centrally-funded engagement opportunity for one or two SG/C/SO/ACs (in particular GNSO NCSG and ALAC), but should provide much broader exposure to all of the stakeholder groups and interests in the ICANN community. The NextGen Program should effectively onboard new members to actively and meaningfully contribute to ICANN policy development.	Active	Community-appointed mentors will be responsible for helping NextGen mentees to reach out to relevant community members; ICANN Org will host mandatory NextGen sessions to introduce NextGen participants to the ICANN community, Board, and organization.	IPC
29	(F) On-Site Expectations	Specific suggestions	The IPC would like to see more deliberate community engagement with participants in the NextGen Program. Some examples are as follows: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A social event with just community leaders and NextGen participants; • Have SG/C/SO/ACs more involved in the NextGen program (idea: invite SG/C/SO/ACs to relevant NextGen presentations, provide meet & greet opportunities to target particular SG/C/SO/ACs of interest to the student); • Have current ICANN Community members engage as mentors to NextGen participants; • Introduce a "shadowing" component to the Program (eg each participant is paired with a Community member for a day to observe what they do at an ICANN meeting); • Introduce NextGen participants to PDP, IRT, CCWG, review team leaders; • Provide PDP updates for beginners at NextGen sessions to introduce substantive ICANN work. In addition to introducing more deliberate community engagement, general sessions, such as outreach sessions for SO/AC/SG/Cs should not be made mandatory sessions for participants.	Active	ICANN org can host a Fellowship/NextGen joint social event with community leaders. Program staff will invite SO/AC/SG/C members to participate in the NextGen sessions, and will continue to invite them to NextGen presentations. Community-appointed mentors will be empowered to introduce their NextGen mentees to relevant community leaders and arrange shadowing opportunities.	IPC

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30	(F) On-Site Expectations	Wider introductions	Typically, NextGen organizers channel participants into either ALAC or NCSG, this is reflected in the NextGen Five-Year Survey where the majority of respondents reporting Community affiliation, leaving participants on their own if they wish to get involved outside of these SG/C/SO/ACs.	Active	In addition to addressing this concern in the program outreach, ICANN Org will also invite community groups to participate and network with NextGen participants and will empower community-appointed mentors to introduce NextGenners to a wide range of community groups.	IPC
31	(G) Post-Meeting Expectations	Follow-up and guidance	NextGenners interested in becoming actively involved in the ICANN community should be guided to other opportunities (e.g. the Fellowship Program) that can support them to attend more than one ICANN Public Meeting. For a young academic, the first ICANN Public Meeting can be extremely overwhelming and the level of assimilation and benefit of information and opportunities going forward may be constrained (this, of course, would vary depending on their background and basic knowledge coming in).	Active	ICANN Org will ensure that the Fellowship Program is actively promoted for NextGen participants.	RySG
32	(G) Post-Meeting Expectations	Future opportunities	The NextGen@ICANN program should not provide support to alumni to allow them to attend additional meetings with the aim to get further involved in community discussion as there are other mechanisms in place, such as the Fellowship program or Community travel support.	Active	Mentors will now be appointed by the community (by interested SOs/ACs/SGs/Cs); communities may choose to appoint program alumni and are encouraged to appoint active community members who have an interest in mentoring students.	RySG
33	(H) Metrics	KPIs	The success of the NextGen Program should be measured using metrics. Clarity and transparency as to what metrics and KPIs are being tracked is very important, as there is significant investment of Community funds in these programs. Engagement with the whole ICANN Community, and not only certain groups should be a key goal for the future of the program.	Active	ICANN Org will continue to carry out a five-year survey for self-reported engagement data. The new program approach currently out for public comment proposes KPIs, including stakeholder diversity, and metrics, but further feedback on metrics is welcomed.	RrSG
34	(H) Metrics	Mapping	Alumni of the program act across the ICANN environment, with several having moved into the Fellowship program and built a basis for further engagement under that banner. There is, however, a distinct lack of mapping of these individuals, so it becomes difficult to both quantify the program's effectivity and engage with alumni that can potentially contribute to certain types of policy work, which would increase the benefits brought by the program.	Active	ICANN Org is looking into ways to track and measure engagement of NextGen program alumni.	BC
35	(H) Metrics	Need for metrics	Metrics should be used to evaluate the return on investment of this and any other outreach initiative. Implementation of this objective is easily tested by metrics tracking former NextGen members' subsequent involvement in a SG/C/SO/AC and membership in a PDP, IRT, specific review, etc.	Active	ICANN Org will continue to carry out a five-year survey for self-reported engagement data. The new program approach currently out for public comment proposes KPIs, including stakeholder diversity, and metrics, but further feedback on metrics is welcomed.	IPC
36	(I) Messaging	Unclear target	The NextGen@ICANN program has a clear focus. However, it is our feeling that most community members, if asked, would not link the NextGen@ICANN program to its target group, university students (18-30) from the region where the ICANN meeting is taking place.	Active	ICANN Org will clarify messaging around the program's target group.	RySG
37	(I) Messaging	Unclear webpage	The goal and purpose of the program needs to be defined more accurately and consistently. We note that the "About" section on the NextGen@ICANN webpage describes the program's purpose as 'The ICANN organization is looking for the next generation of individuals who are interested in becoming actively engaged in their regional communities and in shaping the future of global Internet policy.' The introduction to the survey reads: 'This questionnaire only refers to the NextGen@ICANN Program, the goal of which is to broaden participation in ICANN by providing opportunities for university students from the region where the ICANN meeting is taking place to better understand ICANN and the Internet ecosystem.'	Active	ICANN Org will clarify messaging on the ICANN website regarding the goal and purpose of the program.	RySG
38	(I) Messaging	Unclear goals	The goal of the NextGen@ICANN Program, as stated above, is clear enough, although how well that is both known and understood within the community is not. More information should be provided about the program and its goals for this to be improved. The RrSG believes that the goal itself is valuable, but perhaps due to its broad nature, NextGen engagement that does not extend to all SO/ACs, which has resulted in a lack of understanding.	Active	ICANN Org will clarify messaging about the program goals and will work on implementing broader outreach at the pre-application stage and wider introductions to SOs/ACs at the pre-meeting and on-site stages.	RrSG

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39	(I) Messaging	Unclear goals	While the general goal seems clear enough, the BC has at times expressed uncertainty as to what the end goal of the program is. It is not clear if the selectees are intended to be observers of the ICANN process to further their research or if the community is expected to attempt to bring them into the policymaking process in a manner similar to the Fellows group. This ambiguity makes it difficult to ascertain how to best work together with the program.	Active	ICANN Org will clarify messaging about program goals. Further feedback on the initial messaging (currently out for public comment) is welcomed.	BC
40	(I) Messaging	Unclear goals	Currently the program goal is neither clear nor well understood. NextGen is known broadly as a general onboarding program; few GNSO Stakeholder Groups or Constituencies understand or see the potential benefits of the NextGen Program or link this initiative to the broader objectives of their SG/C. The objective of NextGen needs to be defined more clearly defined, with direct relevance to and support of the ICANN Strategic Plan. Program goals must then clearly and logically flow from this objective.	Active	ICANN Org will clarify messaging about program goals. The short-term goal is to understand the context and nature of the program, to expose them to ICANN, and for them to observe and follow ICANN's work; following completion of the program, the goal is for them to raise awareness with research and share information. The long-term goal (post-studies) is participation in ICANN. Further feedback on draft messaging (currently out for public comment) is welcomed.	IPC
41	(J) Differences from Fellowship Program	Program promotion	From an internal perspective – or looking at these two programs as an established member of the ICANN community – the basic difference between the two programs is clear. However, there may be some level of confusion or unfamiliarity among community members. In particular, if a group has not had the occasion to work with either program. A suggestion to assist in reducing confusion might be to clearly announce various opportunities for both the NextGen@ICANN and Fellowship Program when announcing/promoting ICANN Public Meetings. When doing so, ICANN staff should describe the goal of both programs in a clear and unambiguous wording (see answer to question 1). The reference to the Fellowship Program in the eligibility criteria on the NextGen@ICANN webpage ("Between the ages of 18 and 30. If you are over the age of 30, learn about the ICANN Fellowship program") creates the illusion that both programs are similar but focus on a different age group. The NextGen@ICANN and Fellowship Program serve a distinct purpose. However as per comments above there is a lot of overlap and confusion. Clarifying the program's focus and purpose would help volunteers and organisations involved in administering and supporting them. This would increase efficiencies and allow for better coordination between programs.	Active	ICANN Org will prioritize clarifying the program's focus and purpose, particularly on the ICANN website (including updates to NextGen website which direct applicants who do not meet NextGen eligibility criteria to explore the Fellowship Program). ICANN Org will consider announcing both programs together in the future.	RySG
42	(J) Differences from Fellowship Program	Name of program	It might be worth considering a name change and opt for a name that clearly links the program to its academic target group. In fact, 'next generation @ ICANN' fits too well as a description for what the Fellowship Program intends to achieve and might be one of the reasons why both programs get confused.	Active	ICANN Org will take this into consideration, while emphasizing that changing the branding within the community is difficult. Messaging about the differences between the programs will hope to clarify this distinction. Feedback on the chart of differences linked to on the public comment page is welcomed.	RySG
43	(J) Differences from Fellowship Program	Combining programs	For those who actually know about them in the first place, undoubtedly there is some confusion between the NextGen and Fellowship programs, notably on how they actually offer differing benefits or if they are effectively duplicate programs and therefore an inefficient use of ICANN budget. Both programs start by working with newcomers and aim to provide enough support and interaction to result in an individual's continued participation in ICANN. This is a desirable aim, but why two programs are required to reach it is not clear. Instead of looking to differentiate the two programs, ICANN should instead be looking at combining them and developing an improved single program that covers both students and people from "underserved" regions.	Active	ICANN Org is currently exploring synergies between the programs and has created a draft chart to explain the differences between the programs. Feedback on the chart (which is linked to on the public comment page) is welcomed, as ICANN Org will consider creating an infographic/visual to explain the differences/goals/activities/etc.	RrSG
44	(J) Differences from Fellowship Program	Combining programs	Much more work is needed to differentiate NextGen and Fellowship. Consider rolling these two programs together under shared leadership and ICANN Org portfolios to economise, develop synergies, share data and metrics, etc.	Active	ICANN Org is currently exploring synergies between the programs and has created a draft chart to explain the differences between the programs. Feedback on the chart (which is linked to on the public comment page) is welcomed, as ICANN Org will consider creating an infographic/visual to explain the differences/goals/activities/etc.	IPC

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45	(J) Differences from Fellowship Program	Program logo	Yes, although this problem has lessened with time. It is not uncommon to see references to "NextGen Fellows" around the ICANN environment, both by community members and selectees themselves. A better separation of the programs could be promoted by each having a different logo instead of just different names. Initially, the NextGen did have its own logo, which was eventually dropped due to undisclosed reasons. Adding a visual element to further this distinction would be helpful.	Active	ICANN Org will prioritize improving the messaging around the two programs. Note that ICANN doesn't use logos for its programs.	BC
46	(J) Differences from Fellowship Program	Lack of clarity	There is unquestionably some confusion between the two programs. This could come from the NextGen Program not having a clear objective and then being associated with other onboarding programs. Applicants clearly misunderstand any distinction between the two programs, because overlaps in applications are not uncommon (ie, some applicants apply for both NextGen and Fellowship simultaneously). There are also a number of individuals who move from the NextGen Program into the Fellowship Program, which likely contributes to this conflation. Overall, both NextGen and Fellowship may appear as 'free tickets' to ICANN meetings with minimal or no active participation in ICANN policy development or other work expected in return.	Active	ICANN Org will clarify the goals and purpose of each program, both for community members and for program participants.	IPC
47	(K) Program Objective	Program focus	The NextGen@ICANN program should maintain its focus on university and doctoral students. The program should provide information on ICANN's role and insight in the working of the ICANN ecosystem, knowledge that the alumni can further spread within their local academic and internet governance communities. As such the NextGen program contributes to increasing global awareness and support for the ICANN MSM and serves a clearly different purpose than the Fellowship program, which is focused on broadening participation in ICANN.	Active	ICANN Org will clarify program language accordingly.	RySG
48	(K) Program Objective	Program focus	As we have noted above, the RrSG would prefer to see a single program to increase, broaden, and diversify ICANN participation. However, if NextGen is going to continue as a stand alone program then the objective of the NextGen@ICANN Program should be to broaden the medium- and long-term participation of young people in ICANN and seek to identify and develop future potential leaders within the community.	Active	ICANN Org will clarify program language accordingly.	RrSG
49	(K) Program Objective	Program focus	The program needs to have a focus not only in bringing people in, but also in connecting them with the community. One meeting's time is not enough for the SO/ACs to pick up on talented people, unlike what happens with successful Fellows that get 3 shots at showing their skills to the community. Promoting a bridge between these youth and potential opportunities for them to make good use of their skillset in the ICANN environment should be an integral part of the program's objectives.	Active	ICANN Org will continue to make efforts to connect NextGeners with the community (particularly through community-appointed mentors) and to strengthen the links between the two programs.	BC
50	(K) Program Objective	Program focus	The sole objective of NextGen should be to attract students in relevant fields to becoming active participants in ICANN policy development. Successful implementation of this objective requires broadening the NextGen program content to introduce recipients to active policy development processes, community leaders (including PDP chairs and co-chairs), and substantive SG/C/SO/AC work. The NextGen program should not be a centrally-funded engagement opportunity for one or two SG/C/SO/ACs (in particular GNSO NCSG and ALAC), but should provide much broader exposure to all of the stakeholder groups and interests in the ICANN community. The NextGen Program should effectively onboard new members to actively and meaningfully contribute to ICANN policy development. Implementation of this objective is easily tested by metrics tracking former NextGen members' subsequent involvement in a SG/C/SO/AC and membership in a PDP, IRT, specific review, etc.	Active	The program will continue to expose the NextGen to all communities as well as specific reviews during Newcomer day. (Note: this comment appears multiple times throughout this tracker, as it is relevant to multiple categories.)	IPC
51	(L) Overall Assessment of Program		As the purpose of the NextGen@ICANN program is "providing opportunities to better understand ICANN and the internet ecosystem," we expect that the community indirectly benefits when NextGeners use this knowledge for their academic work and related activities and as such contribute to a global awareness and growing correct understanding of ICANN's role and the Internet ecosystem. We have witnessed how different initiatives at global and regional levels cross-pollinate (NextGen@ICANN, Fellowship Program, programs within the IG ecosystem of the RIRs and IGF, etc.), and we find that this strengthens the contributions from the students across the board as well as helps retain the young talent. Several have gone onto roles with more responsibility within industry organisations as well as started their own think tank initiatives. There is little known about the contributions from NextGeners to the Registries Stakeholder Group as a whole. Perhaps this may differ at the organization level of the membership.	Active	ICANN Org acknowledges the need for raising global awareness and understanding of ICANN's role in Internet ecosystem. Program staff will improve future surveys to better gauge the level of participation and involvement not only in ICANN, but in the broader Internet ecosystem as well.	RySG

ICANN NextGen Program Improvements | Community Input Status Report

Working Draft | As of 11 February 2020

Ref. #	Broad Category	Sub-Category	Full Issue/Suggestion/Recommendation	Status	Proposed Approach	Organization/ Group
52	(L) Overall Assessment of Program		Within the RrSG, members are not particularly familiar with the NextGen program (nor the Fellowship program) or its benefits, since the program has historically had virtually no interaction with, or impact on, the RrSG. As is indicated in the NextGen 5 year Survey Report , no NextGen participants in this period have been affiliated with 1 the RrSG, nor the entire Contracted Party House. In fact, excluding ALAC, NCUC and to some extent NCSG, it appears a number of other ICANN groups also apparently have very little or no NextGen engagement, so the contributions of NextGen participants would appear to benefit only some parts of the community. Due to the above mentioned lack of interaction, the RrSG is not aware of any notable contributions from NextGen participants to our group.	Active	NextGenners can help raise awareness of the work of RrSG, even if not being able to directly participate in its work. If the RrSG were to nominate either a selection committee member or a mentor, this would further promote understanding and awareness of the work of RrSG beyond ICANN. Additionally, the group would be encouraged to interact with NextGenners by attending the NextGen sessions and networking events.	RrSG
53	(L) Overall Assessment of Program		The NextGen program appears to have significant promise if it were used more effectively and aligned more clearly with the ICANN Strategic Plan. At present, contributions are isolated and few in number. The IPC has benefited from a handful of excellent former NextGenners who took it upon themselves to reach out to the IPC.	Active	ICANN Org will clarify messaging and clearly link the goals and objectives of the program with the new Strategic Plan and its outcomes.	IPC
54	(M) Synergies with Academic Community	Broad understanding of synergies	This question about synergies between NextGenners and “the ICANN academic community” gives the impression that the latter is a well-defined separate group or structure within the ICANN ecosystem. To our knowledge there is not such an academic group active at the moment. We assume that the question intends to ask how NextGenners could be triggered to become involved in the ICANN community and participate in community discussions and policy work. Recruiting new active participants to broaden the ICANN community is not the objective of the NextGen@ICANN program. However, the program’s detailed introduction to all aspects of the ICANN ecosystem and the working of the ICANN MSM can trigger the participants’ interest to get further involved in a specific topic, group or discussion. The NextGen program should support these individuals in reaching out to the topic leads, group leadership or relevant staff.	Active	ICANN Org will clarify the messaging about the program objectives and will ensure pre-meeting preparation introduces participants to all aspects of the ICANN ecosystem; community-appointed mentors will be empowered to support NextGenners in reaching out to relevant community and org members.	RySG
55	(M) Synergies with Academic Community	Broad understanding of synergies	The RrSG is unaware of any structured ICANN academic community, so are not able to comment on improving synergies.	Resolved	Program staff acknowledges that there is no “ICANN Academic Community” and will consider ways to identify and engage with the academics within ICANN.	RrSG
56	(M) Synergies with Academic Community	Broad understanding of synergies	More work needed to identify academics in the ICANN community as a starting point (ie, there isn't as yet a readily identifiable ‘ICANN academic community’). Once this group is identified, more deliberate engagement with community members can occur through mailing list, social events, participation in the NextGen orientation and substantive program. It is essential that academics from a range of backgrounds and interest areas participate to ensure representativeness across SO/ACs and the full range of ICANN’s mission.	Active	Program staff acknowledges that there is no “ICANN Academic Community” and will consider ways to identify and engage with the academics within ICANN. Program outreach will be revised to ensure program participants come from a wide range of backgrounds and mentors will be encouraged to engage mentees with a broad range of SOs/ACs.	IPC
57	(M) Synergies with Academic Community	Showcase NextGen research	Currently there is no showcasing of the students’ research in a significant way other than the public presentations held within the meetings, and with the tight overlapping scheduling, very few can actually spare time to attend. It would be beneficial to make this accessible to the broader community. A periodic e-publication could be created that highlights the NextGen contributions and makes clearer to the community what sort of research is being produced.	Active	ICANN Org will create a template for a post-meeting report, authored by the NextGenners, that gives an overview of the NextGenners’ research. ICANN Org will consider creating a page to publish alumni research, blogs, etc. Program staff will highlight NextGen alumni outputs on ICANN newsletters and will consider ways to raise awareness about NextGen presentations at the ICANN meeting.	RySG
58	(M) Synergies with Academic Community	Showcase NextGen research	Despite being casually tied to the academic environment, there are no strong academic connections being pushed by the program. ICANN does not promote the students’ research in a significant way other than the public presentations held parallel to the meetings. Considering how hectic these meetings are, few people can spare the time to attend even if they want to. In this sense, there could be different strategies to make use of this research, promoting it in some way or at least making it accessible to the broader community. For example, a yearly publication could be assembled with the best papers or short essays of NextGen alumni, both highlighting their contributions and making it clearer to the community what sort of research they are outputting.	Active	ICANN Org will create a template for a post-meeting report, authored by the NextGenners, that gives an overview of the NextGenners’ research. ICANN Org will consider creating a page to publish alumni research, blogs, etc. Program staff will highlight NextGen alumni outputs on ICANN newsletters and will consider ways to raise awareness about NextGen presentations at the ICANN meeting.	BC

