

ICANN Fellowship Coaching Guidelines

Version 1

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1 Introduction

1.1 Background

Since its creation in 2007, the Fellowship Program has created a network of individuals who are apt to actively participate in the ICANN community and other parts of the Internet ecosystem. In 2014, the program expanded considerably, allowing more eligible newcomers and Fellowship alumni to participate in the program. At this time, it also became evident a need to maintain consistency of the Fellowship Program and to strengthen the relationship between Fellows and the ICANN community.

The ICANN Fellowship Coaching process was created to help Fellows (new and alumni) to prepare themselves for the ICANN Fellowship experience and make them feel more comfortable to participate in an ICANN Meeting. A pilot process started during ICANN49 and was properly launched for ICANN52 in Singapore.

Fellowship coaches are ICANN Fellowship alumni already engaged in the community and with a good understanding of the ICANN multistakeholder process. They are well positioned to relate with Fellowship participants, share their own experience in the program and demonstrate opportunities for participation in ICANN.

The Fellowship Coaching process has evolved over the years, and the mechanisms used for coaching were developed from the experiences of the coaches and stakeholders' feedback. Recently, a need was identified to create guidelines for the coaching process to ensure consistent and effective communications between coaches and Fellows.

1.2 Scope

This document intends to provide guidelines to coaches of the ICANN Fellowship Program to ensure a harmonized coaching process for all ICANN Fellows. The document serves as a guideline only. It is expected that coaches will use this document to provide guidance to their mentees while adapting to situations as needed.

The document is prepared by keeping in mind the past coaching experiences, as well as the feedback received from coaches and Fellows alike.

2 ICANN Fellowship Coaching

ICANN Fellowship Coaching program aims to help fellows (new or alumni) to better prepare themselves for the ICANN Fellowship and ICANN Meeting experience. For the returning fellows who already have the Fellowship experience, the coaching process is expected help them finding their place in the ICANN world.

The following can describe a member (a mentee) of any team that a coach needs to be prepared to assist:

- ⦿ Newcomer to the ICANN world;
- ⦿ Newcomer to ICANN, but familiar with the ICANN organizations;
- ⦿ Aware of ICANN, familiar with its functioning to some extent but never attended an ICANN Meeting;
- ⦿ Participated in an ICANN Meeting, but not as a Fellow / not immersed in the culture;
- ⦿ Returning Fellows who have yet to fully grasp the ICANN multistakeholder process, need more exposure and networking or have not yet committed to a particular community.

2.1 Eligibility

A Fellow is qualified to serve in the role of a coach if he fulfills the following criteria:

1. Already has attended at least two ICANN Meetings, of which one of the meetings must have attended as an ICANN Fellow. Depending on the situation at hand, the capability of the Fellow and his/her conformance of points 2 to 8 below, this requirement can be set to one meeting only;
2. Receives strong support from an ICANN community member and/or regional ICANN staff and/or global Internet leader;
3. Possesses sound understanding of ICANN, its mission, model and processes;
4. Demonstrates active engagement in at least one of the ICANN communities;
5. Applied via the Fellowship Program online application system and clearly explained why he/she wants to be a coach and what achievements demonstrate his/her leadership skills;
6. Able to dedicate time for coaching and possess a good bandwidth to perform the duties;
7. Has the understanding that the coaching process requires continuous engagement with a group of mentees that begins two months prior to the ICANN meeting, continues during the duration of the meeting and ends after guiding the mentees into drafting and submitting the post-meeting report four weeks after the ICANN Meeting;
8. Possesses good communication and interpersonal skills.

2.2 Team Forming

Teams of Fellowship participants are formed to maximize the time and quality of the coaching experience. Each team has an assigned coach and up to three ICANN Fellows. The ICANN Fellowship Office sets up the teams at least two weeks before the Fellowship Coaching process for a Fellowship round. While creating a team, the ICANN Fellowship Office considers a number of factors related to the team members, which include, but are not limited to the following:

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- ⦿ Area of Interest;
 - ⦿ Language in common;
 - ⦿ Geographic proximity / regional profile;
 - ⦿ Experience of the coach;
 - ⦿ Prior exposure to ICANN and/or Fellowship.

The ICANN Fellowship Office will seek a balance between the coach's experience and the mentees' to avoid a big gap between them (which can sometimes be that the mentee has more experience than the coach but not in matters pertaining to the ICANN community nor the Fellowship).

Once the teams are formed, the ICANN Fellowship Office will share the teams and the details of team members with the selected coaches and solicit the coaches' feedback to confirm if the mentees assigned are a suitable fit. Coaches will have one week to provide feedback.

2.3 Expectations

One of the expectations from the coaches is to be approachable to the mentees, make them feel open for them, and to make them realize that the coach is there for help whenever required. The purpose is to make the mentees comfortable and confident about their upcoming meeting experience and to explain the importance of the opportunity they have at hand. The coach is expected to maintain both a one-to-one and broadcast mode of communication and work with the mentees based on their prior knowledge, experience, background and ability to learn. Another expectation is to coordinate with other coaches in a timely manner to resolve any issues a mentee or a team might be facing.

To summarize, a coach is expected to:

- ⦿ Be accessible/approachable to mentees in his/her team through previously agreed upon social media channels and/or email for communication, at reasonable time frames throughout the experience (pre, during and post meeting);
- ⦿ Be able to create a welcoming atmosphere of openness and understanding, and to show a desire to be helpful;
- ⦿ Be a good listener and communicator;
- ⦿ Be a good team player, not only within his/her own team but also able to work with other coaches to coordinate a consistent experience; and be ready to support other coaches in area of expertise when needed;
- ⦿ Remain unbiased during the coaching process while keeping in mind that this is their journey, not the coach's;
- ⦿ Provide help and immediate feedback to mentees with their agenda, once they set it up
- ⦿ Update Fellowship Office whenever needed;
- ⦿ Copy ICANN Fellowship Office in email communication only for urgent matters, or when the communication with mentee(s) is lacking;
- ⦿ Understand that some mentees/members of a team may have different abilities or special needs. This requires the coach to be ready to use special techniques to communicate and guide.

2.4 Roles and Responsibilities

The main role of a Fellowship coach is to support ICANN fellows and help them learn about the ICANN Fellowship and ICANN in general, keeping in mind their interest, backgrounds, prior knowledge and experience. The goal is to prepare each fellow to engage in an ICANN Meeting, even if at most basic level, and to create a team bond and support system.

Coaching activities include, but not limited to, the following:

- ⦿ Guiding individuals through the ICANN Learn online courses and other available resources before the meeting, and be a guide at the ICANN Meeting
- ⦿ Disseminating relevant information to the Fellows in a simple manner that makes it easier to understand and retain
- ⦿ Encouraging Fellows to ask pre-meeting and in-meeting questions and responding to their queries satisfactorily
- ⦿ Coordinating with other Fellowship coaches who have sector experience or background different from yours, to ensure questions from every area can be answered accurately. This can help resolve a number of issues raised and coaches can draw from the knowledge and experience of other coaches supporting the Fellowship Program.
- ⦿ Working to develop Fellow's confidence through learning
- ⦿ Preparing the mentees for good networking experiences through regular engagement, interaction, Q&A
- ⦿ Facilitating the introductions at the meeting with ICANN staff, community members and others to help them initiate networking, and breaking the ice
- ⦿ Sharing your experiences and Fellowship success stories
- ⦿ Holding at least two online meetings with the team members sharing information and addressing any concerns

2.5 Ensuring Communication within Teams

Throughout the coaching process, proper communication and coordination between the team members must be ensured. If a team member is not responding to the communication from the coach and not participating in the coaching process consistently, the coach should escalate the matter to the ICANN Fellowship Office. The Office will make sure that the mentees responds to the communication by clarifying that the coaching process is a mandatory part of the Fellowship Program.

On the other hand, if a mentee realizes that the coach is not responding to the queries and concerns or is not helping him/her properly, he/she can bring this to the attention of the ICANN Fellowship Office, who can help resolve the matter amicably. A mentee who is not comfortable with an assigned coach may request the ICANN Fellowship Office for he/she to be placed on another team if required.

2.6 Working Methods

Communicating with Team Members

The first communication of a coach with the team members is an email following the announcement of the coaching teams. The coach will introduce himself/herself, explain his/her role and experience within ICANN, and provide a list of interests and some other general information. The coach will also ask the team members to introduce themselves and share their interests and background as well. Response from each of the team members should come in within a few days of sending the initial introductory email. A sample introductory email is attached in Appendix-A. Throughout the coaching process, the coach will also share useful links and basic information about ICANN with the mentees.

It is assumed that email is the primary communication channel between a coach and the team members. However, as deemed necessary, the coach can take advantage of other communication forums/tools such as Skype, AdobeConnect, WhatsApp,¹ etc. to communicate effectively.

Setting Deliverables

As the coaching process moves on, it is critical that the coach provides useful information to his/her team members in a progressive way and asks for their feedback on the information provided. Setting weekly progress deliverables is the key to successful coaching process; this can be achieved by giving questions to the mentees on the information provided and asking for their responses and related queries.

It is important to note that all members of a team may not be at the same level of understanding about ICANN. Thus, deliverables from a coach and expectations may differ from person to person (accelerate for any individual who demonstrates more understanding).

The key to successful coaching is a clear, consistent approach to the learning process regardless of the content or timing. Coaches are expected to use similar steps of learning content so that each member of a team receives approximately the same preparation before the in-situ meeting.

Below is a list of items that coaches should follow during the coaching process:

- ⦿ ICANN Learn Courses: everyone needs to register on the ICANN Learn site, and begin with the basics of 'What is ICANN?'
- ⦿ ICANN's Mission: What ICANN Does and Doesn't Do
- ⦿ Policy Process
- ⦿ Operation of Domain Name System
- ⦿ Security, Stability and Resilience
- ⦿ Multistakeholder Model: Understanding of who does the work at ICANN and how the work is accomplished
- ⦿ Overview of ICANN Communities

¹ These social media and communication tools are mentioned only as examples. It is up to the team members to decide upon which communication medium they are comfortable to use. ICANN Fellowship program does not endorse or enforce use of any specific social media or communication platform for fellows.

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- ⦿ Other coaches might be involved to broaden this
 - ⦿ Current Topics of Interest in ICANN
 - ⦿ A coach is not expected to be an expert who knows everything. Rather, the idea is just to share resources of where to find this information; to share webinars and policy reports that have either been archived or will occur pre-meeting
 - ⦿ Expectations of the Fellowship Program at the ICANN Meeting
 - ⦿ How to Network successfully at the ICANN Meeting
 - ⦿ Preparing the list of Who's Who
 - ⦿ How to Create an Agenda (once schedule is posted)

Collaborating with Fellow Coaches

It is understood that the coach may not have sufficient knowledge/experience of all communities/organizations of ICANN. Hence, when deemed required, the coach can ask the help of other fellow coaches or community members/fellowship alumni to respond to a query from his/her team members.

Building Confidence

A number of Fellowship alumni have succeeded in taking leadership positions within ICANN and in the Internet governance world in general. Sharing these success stories with the newcomers can help in boosting their confidence while making them realize that they can also step into leadership roles. Moreover, a coach should also share his/her own learning experience in ICANN with the team members, telling them what difficulties they encountered and how they overcame them. A coach's own engagement process and experiences can also be used as a piece of information to increase the confidence level of the fellows.

Coaches must take the coaching process in a way such that the newcomers feel that they can achieve something out of this experience, and this is not something out of their capacity or capability. One of the ways to achieve this is by building the learning process in a progressive way, and not to provide all the information at the same time.

Furthermore, it is important not to have the mentee rely on the coach every step of the way but give them autonomy and independence to act on their own. Coaches should refrain from any implied suggestions to go in one direction or the other or meet any particular individual unless it falls within the mentee's area of interest. Most importantly, coaches should ensure that mentees develop their own ICANN personality and profile that may be disconnected from their coach.

Helping to Develop Personal Meeting Agenda

As the ICANN Meeting approaches, the coach must work with the team members individually to help them build their personal agenda/schedule for the meeting. Before arriving to the meeting, each fellow should have a clear picture of what is to be achieved from the experience. The personal agenda for the ICANN Meeting should be flexible to allow networking and other face-to-face meetings while accommodating all mandatory Fellowship sessions. During the ICANN Meeting, the coach should continue working with mentees to see whether the planned agenda is working and recommend changes if necessary.

Introducing Fellows to Community Leaders/Members

One of the aspects to take advantage during an ICANN Fellowship is to meet community leaders/members face-to-face and to participate in networking activities. The ICANN Fellowship Program puts the mentees in prestigious shoes, which they can benefit from, by introducing themselves to community leaders and other attendees. Since coaches have more connections, coaches can help mentees accomplish this task effectively; for example, coaches may help mentees meet the right persons in the corridors, after meeting sessions and during social events.

Guiding to Prepare the Post-Meeting Report

Once the meeting experience is over, the coach is expected to guide his/her team members in preparing the post-meeting reports. It is important to note that all team members need to submit their reports through the Fellowship online system individually before the deadline given by the ICANN Fellowship Office. A team member may share his/her report with the coach for feedback prior to submitting the report online.

The report should mainly comprise the following sections:

- ⦿ *Expectations coming into the meeting:* This section describes the background of the fellow before coming to the ICANN Meeting, and motivation to get involved in ICANN's multistakeholder processes.
- ⦿ *The meeting experience and expectations met:* This section targets how the ICANN Meeting goes for the fellow, sessions attended, meeting people and positives and negatives from the experience.
- ⦿ *Lessons learned and the future plans:* This section narrates the lessons learned based on the Fellowship experience during the coaching process and at the ICANN Meeting, and plans to stay engaged in local, regional and global community.
- ⦿ *Comments on the coaching process and feedback of the coach:* This section should contain any comments or suggestions on the coaching process to reflect on how it helped the fellowship mentee to experience the meeting. The mentee may also provide feedback on the coach as well.

Coaches are also encouraged to provide feedback to the Fellowship Program on their experience with mentees as it helps to improve the coaching experience.

3 Team Coordination and Timeline

3.1 Startup and Team Formation (2 Weeks)

Following the announcement of selected fellows, the first two weeks are assigned to the initial set up and confirmation from fellows about their willingness to participate in the program. At this time, ICANN Constituency Travel starts coordinating with the fellows regarding their travel, and ICANN's Fellowship Office works on the formation of the teams.

3.2 Feedback from Coaches and Teams Finalization (1 Week)

Once the teams are formed, the Fellowship Office sends teams' information to selected coaches. Coaches have one week to confirm whether they are comfortable with their proposed team. After the feedback is received, ICANN's Fellowship Office adjusts teams if necessary, and then share the teams with all selected fellows.

3.3 Pre-meeting (6 Weeks)

Pre-meeting support to the ICANN fellows is expected to start around four weeks after the fellowship award announcement and at least six weeks before the respective ICANN Meeting. In the event mentee/s are not responsive to their coach, even after one or two reminders, the coach immediately notifies the Fellowship Office. The Office will take the responsibility of contacting those mentees and explaining the importance of established cooperation and mandatory participation in coaching process as a part of the Fellowship Program.

This period of six weeks is divided into three phases.

Phase 1: The first two weeks are expected to be spent on the introductions and basic information exchange. Communications are mainly done as a team since all information provided is useful to all team members. This phase also about understanding mentees' individual interests in the ICANN world. ICANN fellows must complete some basic and relevant intermediate level online ICANN Learn courses during Phase 1. If applicable, the coaches may get feedback on the travel arrangements of their mentees and help coordinate with the relevant person.

Phase 2: The middle two weeks comprise the Phase 2 of pre-meeting support. During this period, the coach works with the team members (both at individual level and collectively) and provides them useful information based on interests and prior knowledge. The coach can work with other Fellowship coaches to respond to the queries and to provide more relevant information to his/her team members if necessary.

Phase 3: The coach uses the final two weeks to disseminate useful information about the expected meeting experience, and setting expectations about the fellowship compliance requirement during the ICANN Meeting, such as attending mandatory fellowship sessions,

approaching community leaders, etc. Moreover, the coach works with individual fellows to help them create their meeting agenda. This helps fellows to come prepared for the ICANN Meeting with a clear picture of what they are going to do during the event.

A coach is expected to have at least two online meetings with the team members during the pre-meeting period.

3.4 In-meeting (1 Week)

During the ICANN Meeting, it is critical that the coach stays connected with team members through any pre-agreed communication means, keeping in mind privacy concerns that may matter to any of the team members. The coach should be available to respond to any queries and help resolve issues that a team member may face. Besides, it is mandatory for a coach to hold a download session every day for at least 15 minutes with team members. The agenda of this short meeting is to retrospectively look at the meeting experience thus far and to plan for the upcoming meeting sessions. Additionally, the coach can help making introductions of the fellows to some community leaders/members and should encourage the fellows to spend some time on networking with the community.

Coaches are expected to be proactive and keep their mentees informed about any relevant sessions and any changes in the schedule, since coaches are better informed via mailing lists, messaging groups that already exist etc.

3.5 Post-meeting (2-3 Weeks)

Once the ICANN Meeting is over, the coach is expected to support team members in preparing their post-meeting reports, if needed. The Fellowship Office may request the coach to review submitted reports from team members. Both mentees and coaches should submit individual reports via the Fellowship application system within the deadline set by the Fellowship Office.

4 Useful Links and References

- ⦿ ICANN website. <http://www.icann.org>
- ⦿ ICANN Learn. <http://learn.icann.org>
- ⦿ ICANN Newcomer useful information. <https://www.icann.org/resources/pages/newcomers-2012-06-18-en>
- ⦿ ICANN's 5 Year Strategic Plan (2016-2020) <https://www.icann.org/en/system/files/files/strategic-plan-2016-2020-10oct14-en.pdf>
- ⦿ History of Internet Governance <http://www.intgov.net/papers/35>
- ⦿ ICANN History Project <https://www.icann.org/history>
- ⦿ ICANN Policy Support. <https://www.icann.org/policy>
- ⦿ Security, Stability and Resilience, Overview. <https://www.icann.org/en/about/staff/security>

ICANN Advisory Committees

- ⦿ Government Advisory Committee (GAC) <https://gacweb.icann.org/display/gacweb/Governmental+Advisory+Committee>
- ⦿ Security and Stability Advisory Committee (SSAC) <https://www.icann.org/resources/pages/ssac-2012-02-25-en>
- ⦿ Root Server System Advisory Committee (RSSAC) <https://www.icann.org/resources/pages/rssac-4c-2012-02-25-en>
- ⦿ At Large Advisory Committee (ALAC) <http://atlarge.icann.org/>

ICANN Supporting Organizations

- ⦿ Address Supporting Organization (ASO) <https://aso.icann.org>
- ⦿ Country Code Naming Support Organization (ccNSO) <http://ccnso.icann.org/>
- ⦿ Generic Names Supporting Organization (gNSO). <http://gnso.icann.org/en/>

Stakeholder Groups and Constituencies

- ⦿ Registrars / Registrars Stakeholder Group (RrSG)
<http://www.icannregistrars.org/>
<http://gns0.icann.org/en/about/stakeholders-constituencies/rrsg>
- ⦿ Registries / Registries Stakeholder Group (RySG)
<http://gns0.icann.org/en/gtld-registries/>
<http://gtldregistries.org/>
- ⦿ Non-Commercial Stakeholder Group (NCSG)
<http://gns0.icann.org/en/about/stakeholders-constituencies/ncsg>
- ⦿ Not For Profit Constituency (NPOC)
<http://gns0.icann.org/en/about/stakeholders-constituencies/ncsg/npoc>
<http://www.npoc.org/>
- ⦿ Non Commercial Stakeholder Constituency (NCUC)
<http://gns0.icann.org/en/about/stakeholders-constituencies/ncsg/ncuc>
<http://www.ncuc.org/>
- ⦿ Commercial Stakeholder Group (CSG)
<http://gns0.icann.org/en/about/stakeholders-constituencies/csg>
- ⦿ Commercial Business User Constituency (CBUC)
<http://gns0.icann.org/en/about/stakeholders-constituencies/csg/cbuc>
<http://www.bizconst.org/>
- ⦿ Intellectual Property Constituency (IPC)
<http://gns0.icann.org/en/about/stakeholders-constituencies/csg/ipc>
<http://www.ipconstituency.org/>
- ⦿ Internet Service Provider Constituency (ISPC)
<http://gns0.icann.org/en/about/stakeholders-constituencies/csg/isp>
<http://www.ispcp.info/>

5 Appendix A: Sample Introductory Email

Dear all,

My name is _____ and I will be your Fellowship Alumni Coach for the ICANN XX Meeting. What this means is that I was a fellow previously, so know all about what you will go through in the next few months and am here to make this experience more focused and productive.

What we find works best is regularly scheduled communications from now until the ICANN Meeting starts. Other than email communication, we can use a number of different communication platforms. The first thing to decide is which communication platform and/or social media we are all comfortable with for our communication. Please let me know about your preferences by replying to this email.

I shall be setting up a Skype Group for us so that we can get together every other week for about 30 minutes to have a quick download and opportunity to ask questions. Our first session may be a little longer as we go through introductions and get an outline for how we will work together moving forward. I have set up a doodle poll with some suggested times to find the most reasonable time period for us to meet.

If you already have a Skype account, please forward your account ID to me. If you do not yet have a Skype account, you may go to <http://www.skype.com/en/download-skype/skype-for-computer/> to set it up and then send me your contact details.

Once we get started, I will be facilitating your “entry” into ICANN using the ICANN Learn website. This ICANN Learn experience is a requirement actually for all new fellows. Though I know some of you will be more aware than others about this information, we all will move through various courses designed to help you understand better who and what ICANN is and how the work of ICANN is completed with a fresh set of eyes.

I do encourage everyone to visit the ICANN website to keep updated on hot topics to be discussed at the meeting, as well as referring to the ICANN meeting website (insert website link here) which will provide you the complete information about the XX meeting. The schedule of sessions for the full week will also be posted at this site closer to the meeting. In the schedule, you will see that there will be different track sessions; you have to follow the Fellowship Track in particular and others at your own choice.

If you are part of fellowship group, please keep looking at group discussions, which are helpful for everyone.

You can reach me anytime through email, FB, LinkedIn or Skype (Skype ID: xxxxxx).

I would like to kick things off by asking for an introductory email from each of you so that we as a team get to know each other better.

In relation to myself, I work for XXX, doing xxx and am one of the alumni of ICANN Fellowship program and have attended XX ICANN Meeting(s).

I look forward to working with and meeting you all!

