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TOP STORY



Register Now for the ICANN70 Virtual Community Forum

ICANN70 will be held **virtually** due to the continuing impact of the COVID-19 pandemic. In consultation with community leaders, the dates have been modified slightly to 22-25 March 2021. Those interested in attending ICANN70 must **register** to participate.

To learn more about the meeting time zone and language interpretation options, visit <https://70.schedule.icann.org>.

Update on ICANN Public Meeting Innovation

Read **this blog** about several actions and improvements that will be implemented for ICANN70 as a result of the community engagement process to innovate ICANN org's support for Public Meetings.



ICANN70 Internet Access Reimbursement Program

ICANN will be continuing financial assistance for ICANN70 for community members who have limited Internet capacity. The goal is to facilitate participation in ICANN Virtual Public Meetings during the pandemic. The application deadline is Friday, 5 March 2021.

Details on the application process are available **here**.



SPOTLIGHT

Apply Now for ICANN Leadership Positions

The ICANN Nominating Committee (NomCom) is **inviting applicants** for key leadership positions within ICANN, including:

- Three members of the ICANN Board

- of Directors
- Three regional representatives to the At-Large Advisory Committee (ALAC) – one each representing the Africa region, Asia, Australia, and Pacific Islands region, and Latin America and Caribbean region
- Two members of the Generic Names Supporting Organization (GNSO) Council – one representing the Contracted Parties House and one representing the Non-Contracted Parties House
- One member of the Country Code Names Supporting Organization (ccNSO) Council



The deadline to submit applications is **18 March 2021** at 23:59 Universal Coordinated Time (UTC).

Find more information on the positions and application process at the [NomCom webpage](#).



APAC ACTIVITIES & HIGHLIGHTS

Pacific Network Operators Group (PacNOG27) Virtual Conference

At the virtual PacNOG27 Conference Plenary on 1 December 2020, ICANN org staff presented on Domain Name System (DNS) threats and abuses, as well as best practices for securing the DNS.

ICANN org representatives also introduced and called for participation in various initiatives, such as the Domain Abuse Activity Reporting System (DAAR) and the Identifier Technologies Health Indicators (ITHI).



The PacNOG27 Conference Plenary focusing on DNS security topics welcomed over 50 participants.

Promoting the Use of Internationalized Domain Names (IDNs) among ASEAN Community



ICANN org called for collaboration with individual Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) members and ASEAN as a block to further develop the regional IDN ecosystem.

The topic was addressed during the “Strategic Workshop and Guidelines to Promote the Use of IDNs and IDN ccTLDs among the ASEAN Community”

session organized by the Lao National Internet Center (LANIC). Discussions included the status of current IDNs and IDN ccTLDs as well as recommendations to promote IDN usage and achieving Universal Acceptance (UA) readiness within ASEAN.

The virtual workshop took place on 9 December 2020 and representatives from nine ASEAN member states took part.

ICANN Participates in Youth Engagement Activities

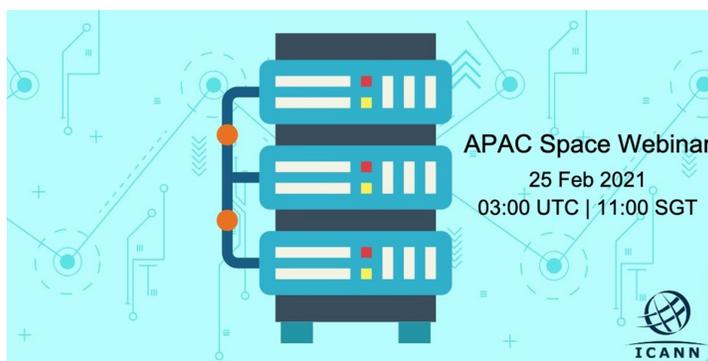
ICANN org participated in the following youth engagement activities during the December 2020 to January 2021 period.

At the Thailand Networking Group (THNG) Camp #10, ICANN org representatives shared on three key topics: Internet governance, Internationalized Domain Names (IDNs), and Universal Acceptance (UA). Organized by the Thai Network Information Center Foundation (THNIC Foundation), the camp focused on Internet governance and the importance of multistakeholder participation. It was attended by 45 people aged below 30.

ICANN org also participated in the NetMission Academy 2021. Through an interactive learning approach, participants presented their research on key Internet organizations and initiatives, and were then appraised by the respective organizations' representatives. The online Internet governance capacity-building program featured 50 full-time tertiary students from the Asia Pacific region.

Save the Date: APAC Space Webinar

Join us for the first 2021 APAC Space webinar - an information sharing session on the Root Server System (RSS). This will be a good opportunity for both technical and non-technical community members to learn more about the RSS, such as its functions, governance, and critical importance.



Root Server System (RSS) Information Sharing
Date: Thursday, 25 February 2021
Time: 03:00-04:00 UTC | 11:00-12:00 SGT

Details are available [here](#).



ICANN NEWS

Listen to the ICANN Board's Open Session

The ICANN Board of Directors held its first workshop of 2021. During the Open Session, the Board shared details of its progress on its 2021 Priorities.

If you missed the Open Session, listen to the recording [here](#).

Read Board Chair Maarten Botterman's blog on the workshop [here](#).



Changes Coming to Registry Reports on the ICANN Open Data Platform



ICANN's [Open Data platform](#) will become the permanent home of Registry Reports beginning on 15 March 2021. With this change, these reports will no longer be available on <https://icann.org> as of 15 March 2021.

Read more [here](#) about which Registry Reports will be available and how to register for the Open Data platform.

ICANN Perspectives on EU Digital Initiatives

On 27 January, ICANN Europe hosted a stakeholder assembly for the European regional stakeholders presenting ICANN org reflections on current European Union initiatives, including:

- Digital Services Act (DSA)
- Digital Market Act (DMA)
- Network and Information Security (NIS2) Directive

The recorded webinar and presentations can be found [here](#).



ICANN Org Audit of Registrar Compliance with DNS Security Threat Obligations

ICANN org has launched an audit program aimed at reviewing how registrars are fulfilling their contractual obligations related to addressing reports of potentially abusive domains. On 11 January 2021, ICANN Contractual Compliance sent pre-audit

notifications to the registrars selected for the audit. The selected registrars received a [Request for Information](#) (RFI) on 25 January 2021 containing the audit questions.

For more information, read this [announcement](#).



POLICY UPDATE

Nominations Now Open for 2021 ICANN Community Excellence Award

The nomination period for the 2021 ICANN Community Excellence Award is now open. Each year, the ICANN Community Excellence Award recognizes ICANN community participants who substantively contribute to policymaking within the ICANN ecosystem and who are deeply invested in developing consensus-based solutions within the ICANN multistakeholder model. The recipient will be recognized at ICANN71.



Learn more about the [nomination process](#) and submit your nomination(s) [here](#). The deadline for nominations is 29 March.

GNSO Council Confirms EPDP Intent to Modify Thick WHOIS Transition Policy

The Generic Names Supporting Organization (GNSO) Council confirmed that the intent of [Recommendation 7](#) from the Expedited Policy



Development Process on the Temporary Specification for gTLD Registration Data (EPDP) is to modify the Thick WHOIS Transition Policy. The confirmation comes in response to a question from the Registration Data Policy Implementation Review Team.

The GNSO Council additionally recommended that this excerpt of the EPDP Team’s original language – “must be transferred from registrar to registry

– should be included in the text of the Registration Data Policy.

[Learn more.](#)

GNSO Council Adopts Phase 1 Final Report of GNSO Review of All RPMs in All gTLDs PDP

On 21 January 2021, the Generic Names Supporting Organization (GNSO) Council [approved](#) the Phase 1 Final Report from the Policy Development Process (PDP) Working Group on the Review of All Rights Protection Mechanisms (RPMs) in All gTLDs.

Prior to its vote, the GNSO Council held a [webinar](#) to discuss the details of the 35 final PDP Phase 1 recommendations. The RPM Working Group reached full consensus on 34 recommendations and consensus on 1 recommendation.



The GNSO Council expects to approve a Recommendations Report in February 2021 and transmit it to the ICANN Board for consideration.

[Learn more.](#)

ccPDP4 Begins Important Work on IDN ccTLD Variant Management

A new subgroup within the Country Code Names Supporting Organization (ccNSO) Working Group on the deselection of Internationalized Domain Name (IDN) ccTLD strings (ccPDP4) started its work on variant management this month. The 2013 ccNSO policy proposals for IDN ccTLD string selection criteria, processes, and required documentation did not include variant management. The ICANN Board requested the ccNSO address variant management in coordination with the Generic Names Supporting Organization. The results of ccPDP4 will replace the 2009 IDN ccTLD Fast Track Process.

The ccPDP4 Working Group and the subgroup will work in parallel; each group will meet on alternate Tuesdays. In the future, ccPDP4 may form two additional subgroups related to confusing similarity and the deselection of IDN ccTLDs.

Learn more about the work of ccPDP4 [here](#).

New GNSO Representatives

On 21 January 2021, the Generic Names Supporting Organization (GNSO) Council made several appointments.

- Heather Forrest was appointed to the Community Representatives Group that will nominate the Independent Review Process (IRP) Standing Panel.

- Milton Mueller was appointed as the GNSO Non-Registry Liaison to the Customer Standing Committee.
- Farrell Folly was appointed as the GNSO mentor to the ICANN Fellowship Program for three consecutive ICANN Public Meetings, beginning with ICANN72.

[Learn more.](#)



GDS UPDATE

ICANN Teams with APTLD to Launch Regional Program to Promote Universal Acceptance



Last month, ICANN launched the first of its regional Universal Acceptance (UA) training programs, which are collaborative efforts between ICANN and regional top-level domain (TLD) organizations to raise awareness of UA.

Each program will provide a series of trainings on the technical aspects of UA and serve as a forum to discuss how to effectively address UA issues specific to each region. The first program was started in partnership with the Asia Pacific Top Level Domain Association (APTLD) for the APAC region; [view the training schedule here.](#)

ICANN is looking to expand the program and collaborate with more regional top-level domain organizations. Interested in this opportunity? Contact uaprogram@icann.org for more.

New Second-Level Reference Label Generation Rules (LGRs)

Additional second-level reference Label Generation Rules (LGRs) have been published, totaling 30 language-based reference LGRs and 13 script-based reference LGRs.

These rules help improve the transparency and consistency of the Internationalized Domain Name (IDN) table review process that facilitates the registry operations of new generic top-level domains (gTLDs). The remaining languages and scripts will be included in future releases as relevant community input becomes available.



[Click here for more.](#)

Planning Ahead for Supporting a Diverse and Global Internet

2020 was a year unlike any other. At a time when we've been more physically distant than ever, it's important to continue to make sure that the Internet becomes more inclusive, diverse, and multilingual for users around the world.

The Universal Acceptance Steering Group (UASG) is committed to advancing UA-readiness in the year ahead, and 2021 is already proving to be a busy and productive year. Check out the most recent UASG content that includes a look at planned work in



2021, exciting Email Address Internationalization (EAI) developments, new working group leadership, and a special video on what UA means to its members.

Follow [@UASGtech](#) on Twitter to stay up to date all year long.

- [Looking Back and Planning Ahead for Supporting a Diverse and Global Internet Universal Acceptance \(UA\) Readiness](#) (Blog)
- [UASG Finds Promising Results for Internationalized Email Support Among Global Systems](#) (Blog)
- [UASG Announces New Working Group Leadership for 2021](#) (Announcement)
- [What does Universal Acceptance Mean to You?](#) (Video)



WHAT'S NEW IN REVIEWS

Specific Reviews

The **second Security, Stability, and Resiliency Review (SSR2)** Final Report is now available for [Public Comment](#).

The [Final Report](#) contains 63 full consensus recommendations in the following areas: SSR1 implementation and intended effects.

- Key stability issues within ICANN.
- Contracts, compliance, and transparency around Domain Name System (DNS) abuse.
- Additional SSR-related concerns regarding the global DNS.

The SSR2 Review Team will host a webinar to brief the community on its final recommendations. Please see the [wiki page](#) for webinar details.

Per the ICANN Bylaws ([Section 4.6\(a\)\(vii\)\(C\)](#)), the Board shall consider the SSR2 Review Team Final Report within six months of receipt, by 25 July 2021.

Organizational Reviews

The **Nominating Committee Review Implementation Working Group (NomComRIWG)** [submitted its second implementation report](#) on progress to the Organizational Effectiveness Committee (OEC) of the ICANN Board.

This report provides an update on the implementation of the 27 recommendations and highlights two main areas of focus and activity during the past six months: Proposed changes to the ICANN Bylaws and a proposed charter for the NomCom Standing Committee.

Find out more about NomComRIWG work [here](#).

The **second Organizational Review of the Root Server System Advisory Committee Review Implementation Work Party (RSSAC2 RWP)** submitted its [second implementation report on progress](#) to the OEC. RSSAC2 RWP reported that of the six recommendations, two have been implemented, two are ongoing, and two are dependent on the progress of Root Server System Governance Working Group.

Find out more about RSSAC2 RWP work [here](#).

The **second Organizational Review of the Security and Stability Advisory Committee Review Working Party (SSAC2 RWP)** submitted its [second implementation report on progress](#) to the OEC. SSAC2 RWP reported that all 24 recommendations have now been either

completed or integrated into ongoing SSAC processes, as documented in the SSAC Operational Procedures.

Find out more about SSAC2 RWP work [here](#).

Visit the [Reviews Status Update Table](#) for the latest progress of [Specific](#) and [Organizational](#) Reviews and links to additional key resources for each.



GETTING TO KNOW YOUR ICANN COMMUNITY

Dr. Balaji Rajendran

Dr. Balaji Rajendran is the Joint Director with the Centre for Development of Advanced Computing (C-DAC) in Bangalore, India.

An Internet evangelist, Dr. Rajendran promoted the development of Internet Protocol Standards in India through the Indian Internet Research and Engineering Forum. He also organized several workshops for authoring Internet drafts and brainstorming sessions to discuss the security issues of the Internet.



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Dr. Rajendran is currently leading the Centre of Excellence in Domain Name System (DNS) Security at C-DAC. In this capacity, he has organized several joint technical training programs with ICANN for the benefit of DNS community members.

Dr. Rajendran is interested in helping strengthen the DNS ecosystem via his research on preventing the exploitation of DNS for malicious activities, conducting trainings on DNS Security Extensions (DNSSEC) and DNS Security, and helping to deploy secure public DNS resolvers. He is also keen on Resource Public Key Infrastructure (RPKI) and other technological issues concerning the Internet.



UPCOMING EVENTS

ICANN will be participating in these upcoming events:

18 February

[NetMission Academy 2021: Training VI](#)

22-26 February

[Asia Pacific Regional Internet Conference on Operational Technologies](#) (APRICOT) 2021 (Technical Training)

1-4 March

[APRICOT 2021](#) (Conference)

SINGAPORE

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