

Public Participation Committee of the Board

Proposed Work Programme for 2010/2011

The Public Participation Committee proposes four main areas of work for the remainder of FY 2010, and throughout FY 2011 which would also form the core of the activities of the Senior Director for Participation and Engagement of ICANN.

Like all proposals which have a financial impact, these proposals are a part of the budget process for the forthcoming fiscal year.

The four main areas of work are briefly summarised below, followed by more detail in narrative form on the following pages:

- **Meetings for the Next Decade** – As ICANN enters its second decade, the time is right to look at the meetings ICANN holds each year from a holistic and truly bottom-up perspective, to ensure that ICANN meetings optimally serve the community in the most cost-effective and stakeholder-focussed ways possible.
- **Distance Communication Tools and Systems** – reviewing how the Stakeholder/Volunteer community communicates and works together over distance, both interessionally and at ICANN meetings, and proposing a suite of tools and related processes most suitable and incorporating lessons learnt to date.
- **Holistic Review of Public Participation Processes:** Many processes are used to facilitate input on the activities pursued within ICANN. How well do they work, for whom, and how could they be improved? This project incorporates several different conversations and activities that were a prominent part of the PPC's work in 2009, and where members have highlighted that further work should be done in 2010. Just two such are the public consultation process and the public forum at ICANN Meetings. The idea of looking at the various public participation options in a holistic way ensures that in developing options for improvements for the community to consider which impact individual systems, the overall suite of ways for stakeholders to be heard remains balanced and effective and increasingly effective from the perspective of the stakeholders themselves.
- **Creating a Comprehensive Stakeholder Outreach and Engagement Strategy:** Expanding the breadth, depth, and diversity of the directly participating stakeholder/volunteer communities is a strategic priority; this area of work would identify who we have now, who we need to reach out to, and what resources are required.

Meetings for the Next Decade

ICANN's International meetings, their structure, content, and everything else about them have always been very important - and everything about them has been a subject of debate since the very first one was convened. In fact, there are as many opinions about aspects of the meetings as there are members of the community - but everyone agrees on one thing: they're an essential part of the ICANN process.

Over the course of time, various consultations have been held about how meetings should evolve and change with the times. Most of these have started with a proposal, with the community asked to comment on that proposal. This time around we're reversing the process, starting with collecting the community's views and then building proposals based on those views - we think this is a truly bottom-up-based process.

A three-stage consultation process will run throughout much of calendar year 2010. Each of the three consultation windows will be 45-days in length, to ensure maximum participation.

By providing a better view of the needs and expectations of the community, this process will ensure the ICANN Board's Public Participation Committee is in a position to send a recommendation for action to the full Board later this year that is truly grounded in the expressed needs of the community.

Stage One: The community will be surveyed on their views about the objects and purposes that ICANN meetings serve. This will be done using a survey tool. It should incorporate both an announcement as per usual, but also solicit responses via email from those who have registered for and/or attended the last several ICANN meetings, with notice also being delivered to relevant community mailing lists and announced in ICANN News and the like.

Some of the subjects it will solicit answers for are:

- What the relative importance of various aspects of meetings is;
- What obstacles to regular attendance exist, and how attendance would change in several scenarios (for example, would attendance of some or all stakeholders rise if some meetings were held adjacent to other Internet-related meetings that take place during the year)
- Why participants attend and why they choose not to;
- What suggestions do they have for practical improvements;
- For those who attend remotely – and those who do not – what tools have they used, what do they think of them and how they impact the quality of both remote and face-to-face participants' experience of meetings;
- When choosing the location for a meeting, what is the relative priority of various criteria in location and site selection?

Stage Two: After analysis and publication of the results, it will then be possible to propose a set of options related to meetings. These proposals will be clearly linked to the results of stage one, to give the community confidence that the process was clearly related to their input. Of course, the resource impacts of various choices would also be incorporated into the decision-making process by reflecting these clearly in the proposals. Another survey will also accompany this consultation, to allow respondents to choose between different options and to weigh in on their support for given proposals.

Stage Three: After analysis and publication of the results of Stage Two, depending upon the variance between the proposals and the community's review/input related to them, either a revised proposal may be produced for a final consultation, or the amended proposal would be sent by the PPC for Board assent.

Distance Communication Tools (incorporates Remote Participation at meetings)

The PPC will oversee a process to understand better what facilities would best serve the ICANN community in facilitating communications over distance.

This is a larger question than simply how to facilitate remote participation at ICANN meetings. The rationale for taking the wider view is that the largest proportion of interaction between community members happens interessionally where the participants are *all* remote participants. The objective would be to understand how to best facilitate interaction over distance between participants in ICANN's work throughout the year, and whether (for example) tools used for regular intercessional work can be leveraged to facilitate remote participation at meetings, or vice versa.

This would start with a review / inventory of what distance communication tools are in use today in various communities for various purposes and why, and how effective they are or are not, and should take into account the different types of communication which are preferred depending upon socioeconomic origin of participants. Another essential factor to consider is the accessibility of Internet connectivity and the devices used for this purpose (which varies greatly depending upon the country the user is sitting in and the level of access they have to Internet-based services).

Review and Inventory of Public Participation Processes

The PPC spent considerable time and energy in 2009 on two of the most valuable mechanisms for public participation, the Public Comment process and the Public Forum at each ICANN Meeting. However, these are only two of the mechanisms that facilitate input from the Internet community. Reviewing all these mechanisms in a holistic way is the objective of this project.

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Many of the processes for taking input from the Internet community were created and structured when the stakeholder communities were much smaller, and ICANN's resources to manage these processes were very different than they are today. The public consultation process is an excellent example of this.

This programme of work would inventory all processes which facilitate input on the work of ICANN, review their suitability to present needs, and identify changes, replacements, or procedures which can be adopted to increase their utility and/or meet needs of the present, and design in capacity for future needs.

The existing public consultation process would be particularly focussed on, taking into account past and recent suggestions made on how it could be improved. At the same time, the work of 2009 by the PPC with respect to the structure of the Public Forum at ICANN meetings would be an integral part of this programme of work, as of course this mechanism for hearing from stakeholders is also very important.

Creating a Comprehensive Stakeholder Outreach and Engagement Strategy

All across the ICANN community, requests are being made for ICANN to do more to engage new stakeholders in its work. From requests from stakeholders to help reach out to new participants, to Board-approved initiatives in outreach as part of implementing independent reviews, recruitment is clearly important to everyone.

However, as these requests and directives multiply, there's a real need to tie all these efforts together into a holistic approach to ensure that:

- There is enterprise-wide coordination of recruitment;
- These efforts are targeted, broad-based, effective, and properly resourced
- The community is an integral participant in the development of recruitment efforts

Objectives of the Programme

Non-Directly Participating Stakeholders who aware of ICANN

These are people or organisations that have some awareness of ICANN, and who at some point have 'touched' ICANN – meaning, they've requested information, or attended an ICANN meeting.

- Create opportunities for these entities to engage directly in ICANN work by lowering the barriers to entry for such participants.
- Ensure that messages needed to reach these stakeholders are available and find routes to ensure they reach their target audiences
- Find mechanisms to capture the input from these stakeholders to 'lure' them into more active engagement.

Non-ICANN Stakeholders who are in target groups for participation

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- Identify groups of participants not currently engaged in ICANN, or from countries with low levels of engagement across stakeholder groups.
- Create targeted outreach programmes to reach these potential participants
- Find barriers to participation for non-traditional participants and identify mechanisms to lower these barriers

Overall Objectives and Mission:

The stakeholder communities are absolutely critical to the development of the policies that affect the systems that are in ICANN's remit to manage. Therefore, the objective overall must be attracting participants to ICANN that add depth and important perspectives to the policy development process. The objective is not large numbers of participants who rarely participate, but rather, increasing the number of active participants who are from more diverse environments – socioeconomic, geographic, and interest-based amongst others.