
ICANN76 | CF – GNSO Guidance Process WG for Applicant Support
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TERRI AGNEW:

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MIKE SILBER:

Thank you, Terri. Much appreciated. Welcome to the working group, members as well as a fair amount of guests joining us. Thank you. I appreciate your interest in the topic. Just as Terri indicated, please, if you want to raise your hand, please do it in the Zoom room. I'll do my best with Steve's assistance to try and monitor that. Obviously the same applies to those who are participating remotely. If you want to engage, you're most welcome. We're not prejudiced in favor of those attending physically, in particular, our friend and colleague Julie, who's with us remotely.

That being said, Julie, let me kick over to you and let you start the discussion. Just a little bit of background for those people who may be joining us for the first time, and then we can go into the current status, and we can hopefully start going through the document that's been circulated, and we can start some discussion on the document itself. Thank you. Over to you, Julie.

JULIE HEDLUND:

Thank you, Mike. This is Julie Hedlund from staff. Welcome everyone to the GGP that is the GNSO Guidance Process Working Group working session. And this is a brief introduction and overview for those who may not be familiar with the GGP Working Group. So just to move along to the brief background. So in 2022, the GNSO council approved the GNSO Guidance Process, the GGP, to provide additional guidance to support the eventual implementation efforts relating to the Applicant Support Program as recommended in the new gTLD Subsequent Procedures, SubPro, final report.

Please note that the GGP Working Group is not intended to modify any SubPro recommendations or implementation guidance, and not to develop any new policy. At this working session, the working group plans to discuss guidance recommendations relating to data/metrics, and measures of success, and time permitting, creating a methodology for allocating financial support for there's an adequate funding for all qualified applicants. I'll know that it's unlikely that we'll have time to go over that ladder item, but I just thought I would mention it here. Moving right along, the current status is that the working group has completed task one, and that was to review the 2012 implementation of the Applicant Support Program.

It also has included test two which is to request input from the GGP representative groups to identify subject matter experts. The working group is now on task three, four, and five, which is to analyze and prioritize metrics, identify indicators of success, and determine impacts on the Applicant Support Program life cycle. Task six is to recommend a methodology for allocating financial support where there is inadequate funding for all qualified applicants. And here is the work plan and timeline for the working group, and they are currently on schedule where we'll see that we're at the 30th of March.

But we're finalizing task three, four, and five, and beginning task six, and that continuing into the 27th of March. And following these, following the completion of task three, four, five, and six, the working group will begin its draft report. And that is a report of GNSO Guidance Recommendations. And that report will be published for public comment in the July timeframe. And then following that, the working group will review the public comments and will develop a final report

with delivery to the GNSO Council expected in December, but hopefully sooner.

That's the overview, and I'm just looking to see if there's any questions in chat. I don't see any questions in the chat. So I'm going to go ahead and stop sharing this document and move over to the working document that we've circulated to the working group members. One moment, please while I do that. All right. So should I share screen. And it looks like I got the document up as far as I can see.

MIKE SILBER: Yes, it's showing. Thanks, Julie.

JULIE HEDLUND: Excellent. Thank you very much. So what I'd like to do now is go ahead and walk through the document so I can explain the structure. And then after I've done that, I will start looking at each of the goals that we have in the document and the various approaches indicators of success and metrics for each goal. And we can start the discussion with working group members. And staff will take notes of any edits, suggested edits, or comments in the Google Doc, which you see on screen in real time. And then we can send those around to working group members solving this meeting.

MIKE SILBER: Just [00:07:17 - inaudible] --

JULIE HEDLUND: Yes, please.

MIKE SILBER: -- continue. If you could maybe just increase the magnification.

JULIE HEDLUND: Absolutely. Thank you. Great idea. How's that?

MIKE SILBER: Looking good. Thank you.

JULIE HEDLUND: Excellent. All right, very good. And I assume I'm not seeing any hands up, I'm not seeing anything in chat, so I assume I'm good to continue.

MIKE SILBER: You're good to go.

JULIE HEDLUND: Excellent. Thank you. Okay, so as we explained, and when we send the document around to the working group members, what staff did in coordination with Mike, the chair, is we collected all of the various documents or texts so far circulated to working group members, and we compile those into one document, not only for ease of collecting all of the various inputs that the working group members have seen thus far and commented on, but also to try to help the working group move

towards developing guidance recommendations with respect to tasks three and five, relating to metrics and indicators of success.

So this document is not completely new. The structure is one that you haven't seen before, the structure is new. But the text in the document, there are the metrics that you've seen so far. And the metrics came from the SubPro final report.

We suggested index indicators of success summarized by the lifecycle element of the applicant support program, and the proposal that Mike Silber had sent around and that was discussed in our last working group meeting. So we have essentially three inputs into this document. And what we've done is, in addition to listing task three through five at the start of the document as a reminder of what we're working on here, we've structured the document in lifecycle elements of the Applicant Support Program.

And then under each of those elements, we have listed a suggested goal or goals approach for achieving that goal, indicators of success, and data/metrics to measure success. So, first we have is in this example, outreach awareness as the first of the lifecycle elements in the Applicant Support Program.

Our goal would be in this instance, just hold on a second. One more. I shifted screen just to make it easier to read. Okay, the goal is that potential applicants from underdeveloped and developing regions should be a priority target of events, communication channels, and publications. And then just as an example, the approaches, while not excluding any regional events, ICANN Org should prioritize targeting potential applicants from underdeveloped and developing regions, or

regions that are already well represented through events, communication channels and publications.

Indicators of success are that the majority of events, communication channels and publications are targeted to support applicants from underdeveloped and developing regions. And the data/metrics to measure success are percentage of events, communication channels and publications, targeted to support applicants from underdeveloped and developing regions.

So that is an example of structure with the lifecycle element, the goal approach indicators of success on data and metrics. And so then you'll see under this outreach element, we have a couple of other goals. Unless the goals are connected in some way, or related in some way, they are grouped together in their own box, so to speak.

If not, they're separated in separate boxes, as you see here. So just moving down through the structure of the document, and you'll see that there's a section that's blank right now, that is the rationale. So when the working group publishes its draft guidance recommendations report, each of the recommendations need to have a rationale associated with them. So we've got here a placeholder for the rationale, and that will be added as the working group discusses each of the guidance elements in the document. So we've left that as a placeholder for now.

So the second of the lifecycle elements is the business case, which is as the applicant understanding and determining the need opportunity and developing an application. That's number two. Number three is,

ICANN Org setup of application support program for success operationally speaking.

Third, lifecycle element is application submission and evaluation. Then we have contracting and delegation. And finally, ongoing operations of the gTLD. So moving, that's the structure, the document, and I'm going to move back to the top and we can take each of these goals individually and start up a discussion. But before we do that, let me pause-- Yes, go ahead.

MIKE SILBER:

I just wanted to emphasize again, that there's nothing new in this document, but [00:14:03 - inaudible] and Steve did a lot of work, and it's greatly appreciated in terms of reformatting, and to me the format works. If anybody disagrees, please let us have feedback, let us have comment, but not necessarily in this meeting, unless you feel it's a really burning issue. I was really hoping that people would have had the opportunity to engage with the document before they started traveling or once they've arrived.

And then we'd have the opportunity to actually start looking at the content of the document and hopefully knock off some of the sections as we go along so that we can confirm that we've actually in agreement in the document accurately captures the discussion that's taking place so far.

JULIE HEDLUND:

Thank you, Mike. I see we have a couple of hands up.

MIKE SILBER: Indeed. Let's take them in the order that they appear at least in my Zoom. So Gabriella.

JULIE HEDLUND: Gabriella, if you're speaking, you might be on mute you.

GABRIELLA SCHITTEK: You hear me? Yes. My name is Gabriella. I'm representative from Argentina in the GAC. I'm sorry for this question. Maybe you have already discussed in the definition is somewhere, but just for clarification, the difference between underdeveloped and developing countries? Is it a definition already set somewhere. Thank you very much.

JULIE HEDLUND: Thank you, Gabrielle. Mike, shall I take that question?

MIKE SILBER: Yes, please do.

JULIE HEDLUND: So that's a very good question. We don't actually have a definition set forth in the document, we certainly can add a section. And typically, these types of reports, at least for PDPs, do have a section that covers terminology and definitions. So we certainly can add a definition of

under developing, developing regions. And if you have a definition that you would like us to point to, we would certainly welcome that input as well, Gabrielle Thank you.

MIKE SILBER: Yes, I must confess, that's a term that I'm familiar with, and I started to use. But if somebody with more expertise wants to suggest an alternate, or wants to refer to a specific definition, please feel free. We are here to learn and grow. Lawrence.

LAWRENCE ROBERTS: Looks like she still has a follow-up question.

GABRIELLA SCHITTEK: Thank you. Just one more thing, I thought in previous documents, in also in the LAC, we were talking about underrepresented regions to be prioritized, or the geographical diversity, instead of the focus, we had in the first round with at least developed countries was in the first round, I think. And now we've expanded the scope, and will be interesting, maybe to discuss the concept of underrepresented or middle and least developed. Thank you very much.

MIKE SILBER: Valid comment. When this was presented previously, we didn't get any feedback. So if you have a proposal, I'd really appreciate it if you could bring it forward, so that we can actually engage with it. Because I'm not quite sure what underrepresented means. So I'd like to see

some language proposed so we can actually engage with the topic. But I think it's a very valid comment and something that we could certainly look at changing Tech.

JULIE HEDLUND: Thank you, Gabrielle. This is Julie Hedlund from staff. I'll just note that we're just adding a comment so that we can make note of this. And if you do have some terminology, then we'll be sending around, have a revised version of the document after this meeting. And if you have comments that you want to add with respect to the terminology in here, we will welcome you to add it. Thanks so much.

MIKE SILBER: Lawrence.

LAWRENCE ROBERTS: Thanks. Sure. So after our last meeting, I had had to go back to, I'm representing the commercial stakeholder group, and I've had to go back with regards the last discussions we've had. The feedback that and the feedback, I'd like to provide us here. So I understand that the face we are talking about has to do with outreach and awareness building. It is definitely going to be the prerogative of ICANN, maybe the system that we recommend to make a final decision on who gets support or not, but where it concerns outreach and engagement, we should to a very large extent, not limit that to any specific groups.

So, we should try to do our best to ensure that all sectors whether the not-for-profit, or the commercial sectors, which was the basis for my

contribution at the last year Attention should adequately be covered in our framework and in our plans for outreach and awareness. So, if that be the case, then I see that there is an edit to what we have here, which is okay. With regard to the document, the Google document all, suggesting that we dropped the last bit of the statement. But if we have to specify sectors, in terms of not-for-profit social enterprises, then we should definitely include business.

MIKE SILBER:

Respectfully, I don't agree with that. The key point is that we're looking at targets. If we're going to go a shotgun and try and hit everybody, then this program is doomed to fail. And Rafik pointed out previously, that we've had these debates before in the previous applicant support program that were not resolved, and it's one of the reasons why the previous program was unsuccessful.

Nobody is excluded. The key question here is what are we targeting, because if we're going to say, everyone, then ICANN can just blow a communications budget on everybody. This is specifically targeted applicant support, and they're going to be two elements of applicant support. There's going to be general applicant support to all applicants who need to be informed of the program, there's going to need to be an applicant guidebook,, there's going to need to be process.

But we're talking about a different type of applicant support, which is applicants who have additional needs based on where they're from and who they are, which goes beyond, in my opinion, at least businesses. Businesses should form part of the general applicant

support rather than this particular program. All businesses north, south, east, west, well off starting out, should be entitled to clear communication from ICANN Org, and there needs to be a clear communications program. But we're talking about a separate program, which relates specifically to entities that have additional needs over and above commercial entities.

LAWRENCE ROBERTS: So my follow up question, then will be at what points did the decision or rather at what point was a decision reach to signify or kind of suggest that businesses will not be requiring support, applicant support to be specific.

MIKE SILBER: No, it doesn't say that.

LAWRENCE ROBERTS: Yes. So if there's nothing in the community saying that, and the commercial-

MIKE SILBER: Sorry, Lawrence, you're misrepresenting me. There's nothing in the document that says that. It refers to priority target, nobody is excluded. But if there's a budget for outreach, and there are two events, one of which is a commercial and eventful commercial operations, and one of which is an event for non-commercial entities, the priority should be given to non-commercial, it doesn't say that

anybody is excluded. It's rather, who is the focus, we can't try and hit everybody.

LAWRENCE ROBERTS:

Sorry, not trying to take over discussion, but from what I know from the last rounds, the only group or subsets so to say that we're not eligible to receive applicants support were applications that had to do with a geo name, something that had the interest of a government or a place at stake, but where any other applicant will have come forward seeking applicant support, and what they wanted was a generic name, I'm sure that they would have been evaluated in the process.

I tend to think that rather than right from this particular point, trying to segment who gets what, a size where a geo name is going to be coming into the application pool, I think every other applicant, whether commercial or non-commercial should have a stake at this.

MIKE SILBER:

Lawrence, respectfully, you're not reading the document. This has got nothing to do with who's entitled to applicant support. This has to do with who is targeted for outreach, it's very clear. Potential applicants, and from those particular sectors should be a priority target of events, communication channels and publications over those with more commercial or technical focus, it has nothing to do with who's entitled to applicant support.

That's not a question we're asking at the moment or answering. So the idea is Org cannot attend every event even remotely in the world,

they need to prioritize. So the suggestion is to cancel. This is the type of applicant that is preferred. So therefore, the events that should be attended and focused on in terms of outreach, because we're discussing outreach here, are these types of people.

If we're going to turn around and say, everybody everywhere in the world, then that's such a broad target that we're unlikely to hit anything because it's overly broad. And that's my concern is I think we need to target. And this is just an outreach question. It's not an applicant qualification question. I don't know if you wanted to respond to this, because we do have Ross and Rafik. But are you jumping up and down the chair on this one? So I'm sorry to take you out of turn.

PAUL MCGRADY:

Oh, yes. Not at all. Thank, Mike. Paul McGrady here. It's always the goal of the council liaison to say nothing when possible, but I think in this case, it's a situation if we can understand this particular item within the broader context. And so for those that were in the session with Aubrey, and Becky, and Lars, they're about to kick off their communications program, they need to do that so that we can start counting down the 24 month window before the round open.

And so again, this particular item is not to include or exclude anyone from ultimately being able to access applicant support. Nor is it to exclude anyone from being communicated to, it's just our little group's way of saying to Becky and Aubrey, Lars, and ultimately to the PR firm that they're hiring, that when they go out and they have these events, when they give these talks, when they write these brochures,

when they have webinars to make sure that our people, the applicant support folks that we think are likely to be seeking applicants support, and it's disappeared, I was just about to turn to read it.

But whoever it was that we listed, it sounded right, but those people are not only not left out, but they're targeted during those things. And so as the communication program over the next 24 months moves away from just focusing in on universal acceptance, which is their starting point, we also want to move past universal acceptance and into more general communications, just the goal is to make sure that those from the nonprofit sector, social enterprise, and community organizations are not only not left out, but they're actually considered to be a priority target.

So I just think, Lawrence, that I think you and Mike are seeking the same goal. You want to make sure that that nobody's left out check. Under the new gTLD program, the communications program isn't meant to leave anybody else out. And I think you and Mike also both would like to see the folks who we think are the more likely folks to get applicants that would also be considered priority targets for those communications. And this is our way of asking the Board to ask the PR company to do that. I hope that's helpful.

MIKE SILBER:

I think we're in violent agreement people. Thank you. Rose.

AMANDA ROSE:

Thank you, Chair. And first, off just to say how fantastic it is to see everyone here in person in Cancun, and be able to meet face-to-face to discuss the hard work we've been putting in thus far to ensure that we have the successful applicant support program. This task is absolutely critical to ensuring geographic diversity across the top-level domain landscape. So really great to see everyone today. I just wanted to flag the excellent contribution from our colleague, Gabriella.

And in this regard to this very important question she raised, I'd welcome broad language on regions as opposed to countries in respect to inclusivity. We want to be able to cover struggling regions or geographies across the globe and allow that to be used more widely, so I would just make that point. I also put something in the chat as regard, and I know that in our metrics listed in the document, the 30% metric in place to ensure that no one region dominates. So I do think keeping that terminology on region is important to address inclusivity of struggling regions across the globe, and not just necessarily narrowing to countries.

And that would be in line as I think, a colleague flagged in the chat with the SubPro report as well. And then finally, just to conclude, also to support the chair's comments, Mike's comments, in regard to the previous issue discussed, targeting and prioritization will be a crucial part of this exercise, so thank you to Mike for delving into the detail for colleagues on that. Thanks very much.

MIKE SILBER:

Thanks. That's appreciated, and I'm always keen on friendly amendments. So if you feel that the current formulation around

countries is inadequate, then please can I see some suggested edits, because it's obvious that my understanding, and I take the blame squarely on my own shoulders, and we lay no blame on staffs. Obviously, my formulation was inadequate, so please help me define a more appropriate formulation so that we can get it in the document and the document can get better as we refine it. Rafik, you've been very patient, thank you.

RAFIK DAMMAK:

Rafik speaking. So I was just going maybe to suggest here since there are a lot of many words that may be more formal or too less formal like [00:32:03 - inaudible] and so on. So we're suggesting just maybe we can phrase that in the way to include those different, maybe not in existence, or just a fleece, but just to make clear that to the wider audience what we mean.

And we can also refer to more formal classification like from the UN or the World Bank, that, like the have clear list or ranking, or classification of what it means in the developed or the least developed countries and so on, and the way that also give during the implementation, some objective criteria to make decision and also to avoid just any kind of thoughts in any clarity. So that's what I suggest. I don't have a phrasing, but some something in that spirit, so.

MIKE SILBER:

I think that's very useful, Rafik. I'm already getting, I know that ICANN Org has done some work on this issue. So you know, if people have language that they can suggest that's fantastic. Otherwise,

potentially, Steven asked, we'll reach out to the rest of the team, because I know that they've done some work on the issue. Maureen.

MAUREEN HILYARD:

Thank you. Thank you, Mike. Yes, I just wanted to first of all, thank the staff for putting this document together. Very good. I really think it gives-- one of the things that I was having problems with, when we were going through-- just going through the Google Docs. We just needed something to just give us a little bit more clarity on what it was that we were actually asking for when we were looking at what do you mean by guidance? What is it that we're after?

And I think that what we've got here, and I love the way it's been set out that we've actually sort of like, got-- we're looking at our approach, we're looking at-- the sorts of things that are going to help us, and especially in light of the fact that we're going to take this back to our community, and it gives them a better idea of what it is that we're actually working towards.

So congratulations to [00:34:33 - inaudible] and Steven and anyone else who's actually had a hand in that. But yes, and looking at the statements, for example, relating to the discussion that you just had about the who actually gets prioritized, I think the statement that's actually here, sort of like says it quite clearly is that we're not excluding any applicant, because different applicants are going to want different types of support.

And it may not be financial, it may not be-- what we're actually trying to do is give a really a wide range of support activities that various

people will want to take part in. But I do think we do-- it's really important that we prioritize, and getting that definition of underserved and underdeveloped, all those sorts of things, we really do need to get that clarity as well. Thank you.

MIKE SILBER: I think a very useful comment. Steve, you wanted to add on?

STEVE CHAN: Yes, thanks, Mike. This is Steve from staff. And one general common is that you'll see that we're capturing some comments from discussion in the document just to try to capture things that we might want to adjust.

And then what I want to do is just draw some particular attention to the one that I've highlighted, that is priority target of events. And this goes back to the conversation between Lawrence and Mike, which the suggestion here is to maybe emphasize that the prioritization here is only in respect of outreach, and to make clear that it doesn't pertain to the eligibility elements. So it's purely just the outreach element where this prioritization is taking place. Thanks

MIKE SILBER: Well, if I can add on to that, Steve. Staff is going to have a very difficult set of decisions to make, and the more assistance we can provide, the easier it's going to be too, full stop. But at some stage, and Rafik will know this better than I do, we've got to accept that there may be attempts to game the process. So you may have a for profit entity who

tries to sneak through the applicant support program and get applicant support, especially because we're looking at the Applicant Support Program launching before political general availability for lack of a better term.

And is it possible that resources, not necessarily financial resources, but staff, time, and effort will be expended significantly, dealing with people who may actually not qualify in any shape or form or applicant support, but they decided to see if they could get a leg up by using the program. So I don't think it's our responsibility to try and design a foolproof program that staff is going to have to deal with. And they're well aware of the gaming, but I do think that we just need to give them a little bit of guidance, which allows them to prioritize and allows them to set some trim lines around it.

I mentioned the example to someone the other day, my employer operates in at latest count 16 countries and territories primarily in Africa, if we use a UK company, then we may not qualify, but we could just as easily use a company in South Sudan or Zimbabwe, and then potentially we could qualify, but it's all part of the same group. We just want to avoid gaming, and we want to avoid hopefully through the evaluation process that gaming would be identified and dealt with. But they could be a huge waste of time and effort from staff side where they have to deal with people attempting to game the process.

So just to be aware of, we're not discussing outreach, so we're not talking about disqualifying anybody, but we do just need to be aware that this is a potential concern, and that we should give staff as much useful guidance as possible or give council as much useful guidance as

possible that they can pass on to staff which will allow Org's operational design greater assistance to deal with these concerns and these issues. Gabriella.

GABRIELLA SCHITTEK: Yes, thank you very much. I'm thinking that maybe if we narrow down the scope for awareness, maybe will left things out for example, especially my region, the ecosystem that the entities interested in applying or in having a new gTLD are not so many.

So maybe we can leave this for a region expert to define the how and who will be the targeted in the event. Because maybe there are some specialties, I don't know. Maybe, and there are things that we don't know from the regions, specifically in the ecosystem there. So my thinking is, maybe we shouldn't narrow down the scope in the awareness, because we don't know the ecosystem in each regions. Thank you.

MIKE SILBER: So, again, not wanting to engage in a dialogue, but that to me is problematic, because again, we're giving Council no direction, and Council can give staff no direction. So then it's up in the air again, we're not telling people what to focus on. You're right, we do need to get the PR firm or communications firm to actually engage with local experts, but they need to be given a brief. We can't say to them, come back to us and tell us who we should be talking to.

We need to go to them and say, this is the target, now come back to us and tell us based on your regional expertise how to reach those people. But we need to at least give them some guidance as to the type of audience we're after, and then you're right, then we need to rely on their expertise because they're going to be appointed as experts to actually tell us how to get to those people.

And maybe they'll make some suggestions, because as you say, it's possible that in certain areas, in certain countries, in certain regions, people operate in a different basis. So it's not one-size-fits-all, but I don't think that we can just leave it silent. That becomes an implementation task, at least in my opinion. Who was next? Anne, your hand was next, please continue.

ANNE AIKMAN-SCALESE:

Yes, thank you very much. It's an Anne Aikman-Scalese, and I'm GNSO Councilor NomCom non-voting. To Lawrence's point, I think the group would want to be careful not to discourage entrepreneurial activity. Sometimes we assume that something that is "for profit" involves big corporations gaming the system, but, again, on the question of what's happening in underdeveloped countries with entrepreneurial efforts, I don't think you want to telescope any sort of preference against entrepreneurs.

And so I had made a suggestion by using a question in chat whether this might be addressed in the outreach efforts simply by ending that sentence after publications rather than communicating over those with a more commercial interests.

MIKE SILBER: I think that's been accepted. Anne. I think that was a very useful comment and as indicated, they already incorporated that as a common cue, you're not seeing it in the document, but it is highlighted up, that was an excellent edit, which, as you indicated, it allows us to focus on priority, but doesn't then oversell that by then trying to deprioritize another group who, as you say, are entirely valid potential applicants for additional support.

ANNE AIKMAN-SCALESE: Thank you.

JULIE HEDLUND: Mike. This is Julie Hedlund from staff. I'm wondering if we should move on.

MIKE SILBER: Yes, Julie, I think we've got some good comment on the specific issue. We've got some people are going to be doing some work, we've got some work for ourselves to do. So, yes, let's move on.

JULIE HEDLUND: Excellent. Thanks so much. And now just note too, that after this meeting, staff will produce a revised version of the document, and we'll send it around to the working group members as a Google doc allowing for comments. So you will have an opportunity to comment on the document after this meeting as well, but we will try to capture

as many comments as we can during this meeting. So, those will be included in the revised version. Thank you.

MIKE SILBER:

Thanks, Julie. If I could just ask one request and that is, when engaging on the document, I think it might be easier to insert comments rather than trying to insert edits, because then we may lose track of edits as we go through. So I think comment would be better, at least at this stage.

JULIE HEDLUND:

Thank you, Mike. And I think we are trying to do that. That's a very good point. Yes. So next under outreach was that more parties who potentially qualify for applicants board are aware of the gTLD program, engage with the gTLD program, and are well informed of the potential to obtain applicant support, and the related goal, create awareness of the next round of gTLD applications and the availability of applicants support, both online and at in-person events using both staff and community resources.

And for the approach, I'm not going to read all of these items, but there are a number of operational steps here relating to access to information online primarily. Various materials for events, publicly available materials, and non-traditional channels for raising awareness.

And related to those are the indicators of success, they have to do with numbers of events, holding and targeted feedback, statistic of at least

2.5% of the applicants of the next round of supported applications, and this is something we discussed previously in the proposal that might get sent around members of outreach events level of awareness as gauged by various feedback tools such as surveys, which I have mentioned above, and numbers of inquiries about the program, percentage number of applicants, first time applicants versus repeat, and single application versus portfolio, pre-existing trademarks, registrations for self-service resources, and then the corresponding data, which very much follow and track the indicators of success we have above. So I'm going to pause here, Mike, and see if people have any questions about the goals, the approach, the indicators of success and the metrics for this section.

MIKE SILBER:

Thanks, Julie. And I think one point to make is the thinking here is, if we just measure events, that is measuring efforts rather than outcome. So if we're able to use online tools, if we're able to drive people to some sort of registration process for them to access some of these resources, and I know we don't necessarily want to put things behind a payroll, or at least a registration war, but at least if we register people, we can track their journey through their engagement with the resources, we can survey them, we can understand who they are, where they're from, and we can survey them, if, for example, they drop out, we can ask, why.

Is it because you're not getting the information you need? In which case, that's not an indicator of success? Or is it because you got the

information you needed, but you realize it's not for you? That to me is successful.

Even if it doesn't result in an application, you've allowed somebody to go through a journey to understand the program, to understand what's available, to understand the full context and to make an informed decision, yes or no, this is right for me or not. So that's some of the thinking around it. Because otherwise, we run the risk of just measuring effort rather than outcomes.

JULIE HEDLUND:

Thank you, Mike.

MIKE SILBER:

I'm not seeing any hands. Please tell us if you think we've kind of got this right, or are we at least on the right track, and if there's any refinement, please, we'll greatly appreciate your input.

JULIE HEDLUND:

Thank you, Mike. This is Julie Hedlund again from staff. I'll go ahead and continue since I'm not seeing any hands. And this is to the point I think to what Mike just raised, and this next goal is to ensure that there are self-service resources available to interested parties.

And the approach is relating to enabling portals, requiring registration in the portals, creating content for the portal, and then indicators of success include polling and surveys with targeted feedback, and number of inquiries about the program and registrations for self-

service resources, and tracking those are the data and metrics to measure success, level of awareness, number of inquiries, number of registrations of self-service resources. So this is a fairly straightforward, and I'll just pause there and look for hands or questions in the chat.

MIKE SILBER:

Thanks, Julie. And reading it again, little colds often not looking at it for a few days, I think we might want to collect some of these, and we might want to move some things around. But I think we've captured at least my perception, I think we've captured a reasonable program as well as reasonable metrics, which will allow us to track success.

There's some terminology that may be a little fuzzy, portal may be the wrong term, but we do want registration to access it and resources, some of them are going to be static, some of them are going to be active, some of them are going to be interactive. The ability, for example, to book a live one-on-one consultation with ICANN Org would be very useful for some people. But you would need to have to go through a journey before you take up a human's time to actually have that engagement, because otherwise, staff would never sleep, and we'd have to hire a whole lot more of them.

JULIE HEDLUND:

Thank you, Mike.

MIKE SILBER: I see Maureen's hands. Thank you, Maureen. Always willing to engage, so that's appreciated.

MAUREEN HILYARD: Thank you, Mike. I'm actually like thinking that like a portal or something as a starting point could be helpful. Especially in light of the sorts of things that like just raising awareness. For example, just heading the basics of information so that we actually get an idea already of the interest and what might be areas that we may need to focus on. So I quite like some of the section. Thank you, Julie.

MIKE SILBER: Thank you. I appreciate it to get positive feedback. Thank you.

JULIE HEDLUND: Yes, thanks very much, Maureen. This is Julie from staff. Shall I continue, Mike. Excuse me.

MIKE SILBER: Please do. I also just want to indicate that there is a team that's really looking at the applicant journey, both from a supported applicant as well as a general applicant perspective. So there is actually a project that's running, and I've had some positive feedback to say, thank you, this gives them some real targeted approach to say they're kind of on the right track, and they've already started mapping. This gives them a little bit more direction in terms of the mapping. And then if Council

adopts this, it'll really just help emphasize an implementation approach, which hopefully will lead to some positive results.

JULIE HEDLUND:

Thank you, Mike. And just checking, I don't see any hands, so I'll move along. So in the applicant lifecycle, the next item is number two, business case, also known as applicant understanding and determining need/opportunity and developing application.

And we have two later goals to start here, and that is that those interested in applicant support are given access to details of the gTLD program and the applicant support program to enable them to make an informed decision regarding one proceeding with an application for a gTLD, and two, proceeding with a request for applicant support, [00:54:12 - inaudible] those interested in applying for a gTLD or applicant support are given access to a network of third parties willing to provide assistance at no or deferred cost.

Three, the goal is to funnel interested persons, which take their interests further into more in depth online engagement. And the approaches here have to do with giving interested parties access and ability to access more in-depth materials, reach out through a portal to third parties, providing assistance.

And this outreach will be monitored and measured, and interested parties should be encouraged with usefulness of assistance, to book virtual engagements with ICANN staff, to address queries not already covered in the available materials if they've been through the portal and access the in-depth materials, and this is the point that Mike had

made, the importance of going through the portal and taking that step of the journey.

Indicators of success include correlation between access to services, pro bono and others, and successful applications. Emphasis on gathering data on weather services encouraged applications, and diversity of applications, including whether some types of services were more successful than others.

Metrics and data to measure success, number of ICANN staff members and contractors supporting the applicant support program, number of service providers offering pro bono assistance and value of assistance offered and provided, number of applicants accessing using pro bono assistance, number of approved applicants for financial assistance, and number of applicants received bid credits, et cetera, value bid credits, et cetera, applicants who withdrew from auction, applicants who entered into business combination or the forms of joint ventures, and length of time before any change of ownership occurred. I'll stop there, and that is all the goals related to this particular lifecycle element.

MIKE SILBER:

I wanted to potentially just pause here and go back to the point that was raised by Lawrence, and then emphasized by it. It's very clear that there needs to be a very strong communications program around the application process. Everybody, it doesn't matter, large, small, for profit, not for profit, everybody needs to be able to get on to a common understanding. Because at the moment, we don't want a

situation where only ICANN insiders understand the program, everybody needs to understand the program.

What we're talking about is a particular type of applicant support which goes beyond giving everybody access to understanding of the program. But it's a particular type of additional support with an objective of increasing the geographic diversity as well as increasing the diversity of the types of applicants who participated within the gTLD program.

So on that basis, I don't think there's anything controversial here. But certainly, we can potentially refine it. And if anybody has any suggestions in terms of either general areas of refinement or specific language to refine it, please let us know. Or if you think I'm mistaken if there is anything objectionable also, let's raise your hand.

But I think it'll be really useful for people to go through, engage, and see if some of the ideas in the section make sense to you. For example, business combinations. Is that a useful metric to track? Does it indicate a problem, if somebody applies through the applicant support program, and then later enters into a joint venture with a more commercially minded entity? It may be an issue, it may not be an issue, I think it's worth tracking. But please, if you wouldn't mind going through the section, there's a fair amount of detail, there's some good ideas, make sure that they align with your thinking in the space as well so that we can pass the recommendation on to Council.

JULIE HEDLUND: Thank you, Mike. This is Julie Hedlund again, from staff. I'm not seeing any hands or anything in the chat. Shall I move on?

MIKE SILBER: I suspect, Julie, and we're not asking for any true confessions or rigor, but I suspect people started engaging with the document, and we may now be getting to a stage where they haven't necessarily gone into the detail of these particular points. So let's carry on and see if we get any comments. But I suspect that we may need to push the working group for online edits and feedback in a Google doc rather than getting a lot more meaningful interaction within this meeting, but let's see, I may be pleasantly surprised.

JULIE HEDLUND: Thank you, Mike. This is Julie Hedlund again from staff, and I think you're right. I think most people traveling. Getting to the meeting. I don't think folks have that much time to review the document, and provide comments nonetheless. And while in addition, I think it's much more useful that people have had a chance to walk through it with us and understand it better before commenting on it. And I see that Benjamin is asking for a link to the document.

We shared a PDF before the meeting, we'll be sharing a link to the Google document for the working group members to access following this meeting. So thank you for that. So lifecycle element number three, is ICANN Org setup of applicant support program for success, operationally speaking.

So this is to ensure that the Applicant Support Program has the necessary resources to be successfully operated or successful operationally. And the approach then is for ICANN Org to provide the resources necessary for the Application Support Program to be a success operationally. Indicators would be numbers of staff, members and contractors supporting members of service providers offering pro bono assistance, and adequate funding materials and resources that is mirrored in the data and metrics.

So while this is more of a nuts and bolts type of goal, it's nonetheless paramount to ensure that the applicant support program can indeed meet its goals, that it has the resources to do what it needs to do. I'm certainly interested in comments that anyone has here to indicate and add to the indicators of success and metrics and the approach, and certainly welcome comments in that regard from GDS colleagues as well.

MIKE SILBER:

I think I'm really hoping that people are going to put on their thinking caps and come back with some suggestions. Because in terms of indicators of success, Julie before you scroll down, if you wouldn't mind just scrolling back up? At the moment indicators, number of staff members, how many staff do we want dedicated to this? Do we want one person full time? Is it someone or is just generally wrapped up into the GDS program or the overall GDS staffing for the program?

So these are some areas where I think some feedback from the working group would be very useful, number of service providers, should we put a number there? Or is it adequate just to say that they

are service providers? Is it just one adequate? I know that there are some entities who are not going to be service providers, for example, existing registries, who may be willing to assist new registries and help them understand the contract negotiations, help them understand some of the intricacies of what they're going through.

But they're not necessarily going to be service providers. So I think that the language here could do with a bit of refinement. So I'd really welcome it if people would just engage with the document and give us some feedback, and let's try and improve what we have over here, because at the moment, it's somewhat generic and not necessarily specifically targeted. So yes, we're going to count, but what does success look like? Is it one, is it 10? What's a number that we think could be a reasonable measure of success that will allow us to actually claim that we've been successful?

JULIE HEDLUND: Mike, you have a hand up from Maureen.

MIKE SILBER: I do see Maureen's hand. Please continue, Maureen.

MAUREEN HILYARD: Yes, I was just actually just wondering about the pro bono assistance and how we keep metrics if we don't have. I know that there was an issue with pro bono that there was no idea of who had been approached, how many people had gotten any value from the services. So if we're talking metrics, and we're looking at something

that could actually add value, really, if it needs some kind of monitoring, so how do we do that? Is that at all being considered?

MIKE SILBER:

So, Maureen, that's part of the proposal around putting things behind a registration portal in inverted commas and in the very broadest sense, is that you would need to register to access those parties providing pro bono deferred cost services. The idea would be that ICANN provide a matchmaking service. So we would introduce, if a party is registered, they could then make use or they could then see the number of parties who are offering pro bono deferred services, they would set up an introduction through that, let's just call it a portal, for lack of a better term, and maybe more knowledgeable colleagues will refine it, but for now, let's just call it a portal.

Let's set up an appointment, ICANN then as the matchmaker, they're involvement stops. But what we can do is because it's behind the registration portal, is we can then send a message to both parties saying, did you actually meet? Was it useful? Is there something else you need in particular for the potential supported applicant? Is there something else? Did you stop engaging because it wasn't useful? Is there something else? Is there a different type of party? You may have chosen the wrong type of service provider or partner to assist you?

Can we help in the same way as an old-fashioned matchmaker as opposed to more modern swipe left, swipe right, but an actual matchmaking service where we say, this is what you're after, these are the people who are offering services, this seems to be a better match. If you're not satisfied with your date, let's help you find a better match

until we get to a position where they say, no, this is not been useful for us, thanks for trying, or this has been very useful, thank you, we're able to make a decision on the next step.

So that's part of the thinking by including those behind the registration requirements, which will allow us to at least have a bit more engagement in terms of how the other people who've introduced this ICANN are getting along with each other.

MAUREEN HILYARD:

Just one, Benjamin, so that the feedback would come back from the applicants rather than the services actually having to sort of like, provide anything that actually might-

MIKE SILBER:

Well, I think we can survey that, as long as we don't get into confidential information or run into the actual content of the interactions. But I think we can survey both to say, how useful was it? Was this applicant actually serious? Did you help them on the way? I think the GDS team indicated this was one of the weaknesses of the previous round, where there were some providers who are willing to provide pro bono or deferred payments support, but ICANN simply put them up on a static website and said, If you want to talk to somebody, here they are, and stepped out.

We don't want ICANN managing the process, because that is potentially a huge conflict of interest. But at least as an honest matchmaker, we'd like to know if the date went well. And if it didn't, if

there's anything else we could help with. So here, we have gone back in terms of-- sorry, so, Julie, not seeing any more hands, I think we can --

JULIE HEDLUND: Yes, I see a hand up from Benjamin.

MIKE SILBER: Sorry, Benjamin, please.

BENJAMIN LOUIS: Thank you. My name is Benjamin for the records. I was just looking at the metrics that you have there, and my question would be, wouldn't you want to look at the number of pro bono services or assistance offered that were accessed as against just the number of pro bono services that were available? And this only applies to those who have chosen to apply already, who have probably registered to apply. Okay. It does not, then I take that back. So, that was the first contribution I will make.

The other would be our diverse or wide are the number of people who access this service may also be a good metric. Because if probably communication or PR service or publicity only reach a segment, then you might not know how successful you are if it's not across wider region or demographics. If there's a way you can measure that particular reach, that will also help whoever is in charge of making sure it reaches every corner to pursue that indicator. Thank you.

MIKE SILBER:

So I think your comment about measuring use of services is a valid one. And I'd be quite keen to understand what number would success look like. It's one thing to say measure it, but what does success look like?

Because we could measure it and find the number is zero, and I'm assuming that's not successful. But it would be useful to think through that one as well. I think your point about the geographic spread, as well as the spread of types of applicants who register and access the portal, while it's not relevant for this particular section, I think it's a very good catch that we missed in the previous section in terms of outreach, and people then registering and making use of the online resources.

And I think we need to go back to [01:11:37 - inaudible] and Steve, and make sure that we capture that because we put in a potential metric around the number of applicants, but we didn't put in any sort of suggested metric around the number of people registering and the diversity of people registering to access information. So good suggestion, good catch. We'll just capture it in that previous block.

JULIE HEDLUND:

This is Julie Hedlund from staff. That is noted, Mike. And I'm just also seeing I think there's just a couple minutes left in the in this session, but I'm noting that Anne Aikman-Scalese has posted a question in the chat, which we probably should read out. If you don't mind, I could do that.

MIKE SILBER: Please do.

JULIE HEDLUND: Question, "Will there be metrics applicable to ICANN's outreach efforts to qualified potential pro bono service providers? Matchmaking services might depend on this, i.e. not just how many providers are there, but how were they recruited by ICANN, or are we saying ICANN cannot conduct this type of outreach?"

MIKE SILBER: Anne, maybe you want to speak to that, because I'm not quite sure what your question is. I agree with you, we need to capture some metrics, but I'm not understanding the rest of the question.

ANNE AIKMAN-SCALESE: Thank you. It's Anne Aikman-Scalese again. And the question really relates to whether there's any obligation or any metrics with respect to ICANN putting out outreach to potential pro bono providers, and I'm sorry, I don't know what was done in the last round in this regard.

But a lot of times, for instance, when you go to law firms, they don't answer unless they're asked, and so I don't know what was done before or what metrics might be, or even if ICANN feel that it can or cannot do this, but what's the outreach to potential pro bono providers, and what would the metrics be for how many were reached

to solicit pro bono services, that kind of thing? Is that doable, is that in scope?

MIKE SILBER:

So, Anne, I'm not sure that it's in scope in terms of how many were approached. I think it definitely is in scope in terms of how many agreed to participate, and that's the challenge that I presented this working group is what does success look like? Because to turn around and say indicators of success, number of service providers offering pro bono assistance and value of assistance offered, that's 100%, but what does success look like? Is it one?

To me, it's fantastic we've got one person who's willing to provide pro bono systems really appreciate them putting their hand up, but that doesn't feel, and I know we're not talking about feelings. We're trying to capture metrics here. It doesn't feel like success. So I think we need to say we need at least 10, for example, of whom five would be offering specific services, and others would be offering in kinds of systems.

So I've mentioned before one of the registries has said to me already, they're willing to provide mentoring and coaching, but they're not a service provider, they're not a consultant who sells the main application or gTLD application services, and they're willing to do it at no or deferred costs, they are willing to have a conversation with a potential colleague/competitor and say, this is how things work in the industry. I think that's useful.

Now do we say 10 in total of which at least five are people offering paid services and five offering mentorship? That to me is not a bad place to

start. Maybe a little light, but I think 10 in total, five of each might be a target. And if you think that I'm too light, well, let's get some numbers in here that you think are more appropriate. But you're right, we do need to put some numbers to this so that we can look at what success looks like.

And then, yes, Org and Council, because I think this is one area where we can push it back to Council to say, Council needs to encourage GNSO members to actually offer services. This is not Org going out to random third-party consulting houses. This is Org going to a lot of people who make up the GNSO, and saying, guys, are you willing to put your hands up and offer services?

JULIE HEDLUND:

Thank you, Mike. This is Julie Hedlund on for staff. And I'll note that we are three minutes past the end of the session, so we're going to have to wrap up. I would just note that, again, staff will be sending around a Google doc version of this document that will allow comments. So we'll encourage all working group members to provide their comments as homework for the next meeting. The next meeting is in two weeks, on the 27th of March, on a Monday, and that's at 20:00 UTC. And that information will be sent around in an invite, as usual.

MIKE SILBER:

Excellent. Julie. Unless there's another meeting about to start, maybe we can just take the last two comments. I'll take them in reverse order. Gabriella.

GABRIELLA SCHITTEK: Thank you. I will be very short. Text in comment about the timing, because for the success of the program, we need to launch timely on a happy a year before the standard window. So maybe it's an idea to include that the awareness events should be high and also timely for the success of the program. Thank you.

MIKE SILBER: I think that's a very valid comment. Thank you. And Benjamin? You look surprised. Is that an old hand? That was an old hand. Okay. So I think Gabriella's comment is a very valid one. We should put some timelines in here even if it's not specific in terms of dates, but at least I think there are a few places in this document where the word timely could be a very valuable inclusion.

Okay. Folks, thank you. I appreciate you staying the extra five minutes. That's much appreciated. Thank you for your input, thank you for your contributions. And please, when Julie circulates the link, really looking forward to your engagement on the document, friendly or not so friendly edits most welcome. So we close off. And thanks, Julie, for joining us remotely, and thanks to all the remote participants as well as to everybody in the room and echoing what was said. It is fantastic to be back in-person and being able to engage with people across the table.

JULIE HEDLUND: And thanks to Mike for chairing Thanks to all for joining in. This meeting is adjourned. Thank you again.

[END OF TRANSCRIPTION]