
ICANN76 | CF – ICANN Fellowship Program: The Art of Small Talk
Saturday, March 11, 2023 – 15:00 to 16:00 CUN

SIRANUSH VARDANYAN: Melissa, if we can have you here so we are going to start. I don't see the rest of the group here, but I hope they're just coming in. Yes, so consensus...

MELISSA ALLGOOD: I wore them all out with all that consensus talk, huh? Are we recorded this one?

SIRANUSH VARDANYAN: Yes, we are recording, and I'll just do the...Guys if you can come a bit forward and take your seats.

Hello, my name is Siranush Vardanyan, and I will be the remote moderator for this session. This is the session for Art of Small Talk with Melissa Allgood who was with Fellows before this session. I will be posting in the chat space in the Zoom room the way how you should ask the questions. To listen to the interpretation menu, please click on the interpretation icon in the Zoom toolbar and select the language you will listen to and/or speak during the session. To view the real-time transcription, click on the closed caption button in the Zoom toolbar. Please join the Zoom with your full name—name and surname. Otherwise, if you don't use your full name you may be removed from

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the Zoom space as well. Please note that this session is being recorded and archived and governed by the ICANN Expected Standards of Behavior, and I will be putting the link to the Standards of Behavior in the chat space. With that, I would like to give the floor to Melissa Allgood. By the way, if you want to ask a question, I know many of us are here in person, but we have remote participants joining us so I will be taking the questions which are raised via Zoom link. Please join the Zoom link, and you have the link posted on the ICANN schedule under this particular session information. Thank you.

MELISSA ALGOOD:

Thank you, Siranush. So nice to see all the Fellows again. Hello to those of you that weren't in our last session. I'm Melissa Allgood. I'm on the Policy Team. I'm joined here by my colleague Alp who is also on the Policy Team and a former Fellow.

The origin of the session—the session is called the Art of Small Talk. Where it came from was maybe last year I was doing some capacity-building work with the At-Large, and the At-Large wanted to have a conversation about how do you have small talk at an ICANN meeting? What's appropriate to talk about? What should you expect? Working with them, they cultivated a series of ideas and tools that was a pretty robust webinar. I connected with Siranush, and she thought it would be great to do for you guys.

You're not going to be surprised that this is going to be pretty informal. Siranush, I will look to you periodically to tell me who has their hand up in the Zoom room. Those of you that are in the room though, feel free

to raise your hand, and we'll just kind of flip flop back and forth through the room.

I would imagine that the majority of you are here for networking in some way, shape or form, is that right? Raise your hand if you're not here to network? You're going to talk to no one? You don't want to make any connections?

So the question then becomes how do you do this? I'm sure all of you as you prepared to come here for this week thought "Okay, what do I need to do to get ready? What do I need to do? How am I going to have these conversations in a very diverse group of people? How do I introduce myself to people? How do I get their attention? Who do I want to talk to?" All of those types of things you naturally think about.

Let's open it up to you guys. What are some of the things you thought about in terms of preparing to network, to talk to people at an ICANN meeting? Raise your hand. I will call on you, you know I'm not afraid. So raise the hands. Those of you that I know, be prepared.

What did you think about when you decided to prepare for an ICANN meeting? What did you think you needed to have to talk about or consider in talking to new people?

UNIDENTIFIED MALE: Hi, may I speak in Spanish?

MELISSA ALLGOOD: Of course, hopefully everyone has their interpretation.

UNIDENTIFIED MALE: I can wait if they are going to [inaudible]

MELISSA ALLGOOD: Let's give everyone a chance to get their headsets. We'll come back. Anybody else on this front row, what did you think about when you were preparing to come to the ICANN meeting?

UNIDENTIFIED MALE: Can you repeat the question?

MELISSA ALLGOOD: When you were preparing to come to this ICANN meeting, how did you prepare for conversations you're going to have with strangers for networking? How did you prepare?

UNIDENTIFIED MALE: In order to prepare myself to be talking with strangers in the ICANN meeting, I was thinking first what are my objectives in the ICANN meeting. My objectives are very clear for me now. I also tried to organize my thoughts in a Word document so at different sessions that I know I will be going I know what I need to say in those sessions. Depending on the flux of the sessions, I also have different questions to ask. So that was some of my preparations for the ICANN meeting.

MELISSA ALLGOOD: Turned off the microphone. Excellent. So for those of you that couldn't hear, the thought was preparing for what sessions am I going to attend?

Who do I want to find? Who do I want to talk to? What do I want to talk to them about? Being strategic and thoughtful and deliberate on how to approach networking at the meeting.

Has everyone gotten their headsets?

UNIDENTIFIED MALE: [inaudible]

MELISSA ALLGOOD: Thank you. So let me ask this. You sparked a question for me for everyone to answer. How many of you prepared coming to this meeting to talk about specific topics—that there is a policy topic you’re interested in? A handful? How many people came to the meeting really focused on maybe the efforts in your region? Who’s really interested in the regional efforts? So you can see even by the hands that are raised, you might prepare a bit differently in terms of who you’re looking to talk to, what you’re going to be talking about.

But it sounds like many of you have given this thought in terms of where you want to focus your energy. Regardless of where that is, whether that’s in a region or that’s a particular person or group of people about a policy topic, how do you approach someone you don’t know? What do you do? Any ideas? Anything that you think about as you approach someone you don’t know in this setting?

NAMRA NASEER: I guess it's an eye connection and then I go ahead and say hello, smile a little, see the response and then introduce myself. So they naturally are introducing themselves also.

MELISSA ALLGOOD: Excellent comment. Catching someone's eye. Seeing if they acknowledge you and smile back or not. We're going to talk about some kind of really rudimentary and basic things. These might be things that come naturally to some of you but might not be as natural to others. In terms of, when you're walking into a group of people much like this, Namra raises an excellent point about who catches your eye? Who looks like they're available? They have open body language. They might smile at you. But also did you guys give any thoughts about the number of people to approach? Let me ask you this, would you think differently about approaching a group of three or more people versus two people? How so? Namra, you're nodding. What would be your thoughts?

NAMRA NASEER: I don't know. I guess it kind of gives you a sense that they are already in a conversation. With me, I don't want to interrupt or be uninvited so that's what goes in my mind.

MELISSA ALLGOOD: Excellent point and something I encourage you guys to consider. As you're surveying a room and deciding who to approach, two people might be in a private conversation, especially if they're two people you don't know. I would encourage you when you're really just approaching

strangers to either approach people that are on their own or groups just to prevent a bit of uncomfortableness possibly.

So in this post-COVID world, we think a lot about how we approach people. How do you plan to approach people you don't know both in terms of—we do have the lanyards which help, but what else do you consider in terms of how you approach someone you don't know? Raise your hands, please.

UNIDENTIFIED MALE: I usually try to approach people that I have already some level of contact through mailing lists or some online meeting that happened and say, “Oh, we met before in that place that time about that subject.” So that gives it a starter to talk about what I think is even a subject of the meeting that happened.

MELISSA ALLGOOD: That's an excellent approach. Go to someone that you have met before. That's a softer situation. Yet, we can't always do that. That's not how you expand your network. So what else can you do? What else should you think about when you're approaching someone new? I'll give you a hint. We're fortunate that we can look at lanyards. Here you can understand if someone is likely open to a handshake if they have on a green lanyard versus maybe you know like a fist bump or an elbow bump. I haven't seen any red lanyards since I've been here but I'm sure there are some out there. The lanyards help because it can be awkward to come up and, “What do we do?” as you introduce yourself. But think about those things. Think about how you want to approach people.

Also, how many of you have kind of an elevator pitch ready? Do any of you know what an elevator pitch is? Alp, you want to talk about an elevator pitch?

ALPEREN EKEN:

Hello, everyone. I think you can hear me. An elevator pitch is basically the time you spend in an elevator. Take that and bring it together with a topic that you want to talk about. Can you really talk about that topic you are interested in or you are specialized in in 20 seconds or 30 seconds? It depends on the elevator basically. But let's say 30 seconds. Doing that is really, really useful during the first meeting because they know what you're talking about. You are understandable. They can get your passion. These are really important so that people can invest in you by introducing you to other people, for example. I think that in the ICANN context this is an elevator pitch.

MELISSA ALLGOOD:

Have any of you thought about your elevator pitch? Has anyone given this a thought? The idea is you get 30 seconds in front of someone that you are really excited to talk to. Whether that's a leader in your region or that's someone who's very involved in certain policy work that you're interested in. Have you thought about how you're going to use that time? Raise your hand if you've thought about that. I'd like to hear some of your elevator pitches. When you go and introduce yourself to an established community member, have you thought about what you're going to talk about, how you're going to get their attention?

SIRANUSH VARDANYAN: Melissa, if I can. Jemesa Lave, one of our virtual Fellows has input in the chat if I can read it aloud? “Approaching people, I don’t know is to first maybe approach and smile. Would smile and say hello and strike up a conversation. First, try and let the person you don’t know introduce him or herself.” So that is his input for the discussion.

MELISSA ALLGOOD: Thank you so much, James. Who else wants to build on that? Please?

UNIDENTIFIED FEMALE: Also I think an idea is to give key information about you that the person can connect. For example, for me it’s that I’m a lawyer, I work in data protection and at ICANN I’m part of the Policy Transition Program. So the person can already know that I’m interested in these topics.

MELISSA ALLGOOD: Excellent. Great way to approach it. Think about what you’re here to do and share that. People love talking about themselves. So anyone you approach who you can say, “Oh, I really appreciated that intervention you made in that last session,” or, “I heard you speaking about xyz. Could you tell me more?” That’s always a great way to engage with new people. Ask questions. Those of you that were in the last session—open ended, neutral questions. They’re going to save you every time. Ask questions. Over to you.

UNIDENTIFIED MALE: We were talking about open ended questions. You can approach someone, you can ask questions. But it feels like you need to know

about the topic itself. That's why you have to be a little bit strategic in what sessions you want to go in, what sessions you want to really watch more carefully, and some others there are a lot of sessions so you cannot watch all of them really carefully. To that, when you watch carefully, when you pick out a person who you really like, then you can follow his moves and can approach the person so that you can connect in that sense later.

MELISSA ALLGOOD:

How many of you know about ICANNWiki? Raise your hands. Thank you for raising your hands, I didn't mean to sound so direct there. That was a little much. ICANNWiki is a great resource for you guys. It's not comprehensive but it certainly is a great jumping off place to learn backgrounds, information about many of the people who have been volunteering in this space for years and years and years, people that you might want to make contact with. I encourage you to look at that and see where there are points of connection. So if you do decide you want to approach—I'm just going to use Cheryl—Cheryl Langdon-Orr in the At-Large space, you want to really find Cheryl who is someone who loves to foster new talent. She likes to invest in new community members. She also is someone who is a very busy person. So she's going to want to hear quickly who you are, what you're about, what's the point of connection because you want to maximize on this time you have. The face-to-face that you have both being a Fellow or a NextGen really is invaluable. If you really are committed to growing in this community and this ecosphere, you want to maximize on it. So if you haven't done that elevator pitch, if you can't tell us in 30 seconds why you're here and what you hope to accomplish, what you're interested

in, what your point of connection is, I'd really encourage you to do that to think about that now as we're at the beginning of the meeting because that's going to serve you well.

The other thing that I think is worth talking about—it's going to be a bit of a review for Fellows from our last session—we talked about active listening skills. NextGen, you guys weren't in here for our last session, but active listening skills are essential to create connection. You know, I said people like to talk about themselves so find a point of entry. "I really enjoyed your intervention in that last session. Can we talk about more about that? Can you explain more?" Then when the person you're speaking to responds, ask follow-up questions. Ask follow-up points of connection. Are there any questions on what active listening skills actually are because I don't want to waste time if we know what they are. Do we feel good?

SIRANUSH VARDANYAN: There is a remote question from Lavish. "Do interactions always have to move through the stages of cold to warm, warm to hot, etc.? Are there instances where one can move into the hot stage right away?"

MELISSA ALLGOOD: Straight to the hot-hot-hot, huh? I do love that question as well. I think that it really depends on who you're talking to. We all come from different cultures. We have different backgrounds. We have different dispositions and those are kind of multi-layered. I personally am someone that can go very quickly from cold to hot, but I could name right now five colleagues who aren't the same way. None of it's right or

wrong, but that does bring up something that I really encourage you guys to think about. Don't be discouraged if the person you're seeking out doesn't engage with you. Because what you don't know is, is that person rushing off to a different session? Do they have somewhere else they need to be? They have some sort of other pressing matter. I will say by and large, this entire community is very interested in getting to know one another and getting to know new people, but you also don't know what's going on in anyone's day. So if you do get rebuffed, don't get discouraged. Just keep trying. Kind of get your tough skin on. Let interactions that are less than ideal roll off your back and keep going and keep trying because it really is such a unique moment in time that you have to make connections.

ALPEREN EKEN:

In general, maybe I am just reading your sequence here. But the whole ICANN community looks like really siloed because there are groups that are doing their thing. But actually it's not because every individual in those groups are working with each other on some topics like IDNs. There's a group of people working on IDNs, they're from different communities. You are facilitating your group now that are from different communities so they normally look like they are in different places. They do different stuff in their daily life, but they're interconnected. So I think you can strategically work that, too. So you can go ahead and ask some experienced community member if they can introduce you to someone that they think is an expert or can help you with. So that's what I think are important parts. This community is really entirely connected to each other.

MELISSA ALLGOOD: Many people have been working in this space for a really long time, too. So you never know where one interaction could lead you.

I would always encourage you to be professional. Of course, that goes without saying. But also take risks, you know? If there is a board member that you are dying to talk to about a given thing, try. Recognize board members are incredibly busy, so you might get very politely rebuffed. But if there is a connection that you want to make, just come prepared. Come prepared for why you're seeking that person out. Know what you hope to get out of your interactions. Because sometimes it will be just making new friends, making new professional connections. But there really might also be people that you are very professionally inspired by or motivated by. Be really deliberate in those interactions.

You guys are the quietest group I've ever done this for, so you're kind of making me feel a little freaked out. We certainly have a quick tip sheet for you that we'll share here momentarily. But has this discussion at all prompted any thoughts? Do you guys feel prepared to be released out into the ICANN wild and make those meaningful connections? Any questions? You really are killing me, guys. Come on. Nothing? You guys are experts? You are ready to have all the conversations? We're good?

UNIDENTIFIED MALE: I can speak in French, please. Okay, thank you. [inaudible]

MELISSA ALLGOOD: Excellent intervention and excellent idea. One way to make contact with the person you're really looking to talk to is to find someone else who's in that person's orbit. I'm assuming many of you in here have supporting organizations or advisory committees that you're generally interested in learning more about. If you're dying to talk to Sebastien Ducos who is the chair of the GNSO Council, one way is to go talk to Seb. He is a very busy man. But there are other ways to connect with him in terms of the people in his orbit. So excellent, excellent thought and point.

Any other brainstormed ideas?

HANNAH FRANK: Hi, everyone. I'm Hannah from Cordoba, Argentina. I am a NextGen participant. I was thinking about ICANNWiki as a tool. Also you can share your LinkedIn profile or your Gmail account. I was thinking maybe this is old school but giving your personal card if you have it, that's deeply interesting.

MELISSA ALLGOOD: Excellent idea. Nothing wrong with an old school business card. Another trick with business cards for those of you that have them and use them or receive them. Write something that helps you remember who that person is on the back of it—something you talked about, something that you think will jog your memory when you engage later. But regardless of if you do business cards or you connect in other spaces, following up is key. I always encourage you with the people that you make connections with and you want to cultivate and grow those

relationships, send them an email, send them a message in whatever platform you're using. Excellent point.

Any other ideas?

SIRANUSH VARDANYAN: Yes, there was a remote intervention here. From Shanelle McPherson, I guess she's ICANN76 NextGen participating virtually. So her intervention is that, "I would find someone that is close to that person that could set the stage for our interaction and then other ways to find similar interests with that person and start our conversation with that."

MELISSA ALLGOOD: It's always great if you can find an ally, that person whose hand you can hold so to speak to move you through the world. The great thing about all of you Fellows and NextGen is you do have mentors. So your mentors are another resource that I can encourage you to consider. If there is someone you want to meet or a group that you want to know more about, lean on your mentors. That's what they're here for.

ALBERT DANIELS: Hi, I'm Albert Daniels from ICANN Staff. I know this is a safe place and I am a Fellow so I'll share one of my secrets with you. It's really an attitude of how you make contact with someone, especially someone who's at the head table or some distance away. You really need to be focused. When I say focused, it's almost like a hunter. You sit and you watch this person. You watch where they put their bag down, you try to think what direction they're going to walk in to go to the exit, and you

find yourself at that exit waiting for them. So when they happen to coincidentally pop by you, then you can apply one of these other techniques - “I really like that point that you made. Can you tell me more about that?” But you really have to be focused. Your friends and colleagues might wonder, “Well, I’m trying to talk to Albert. Why isn’t he being attentive to me?” No, no. I’m focused. There is Siranush. When she’s going out for her break, I’m going to be at that door to make sure I make some kind of connection with her. If I don’t get her at the door, I’ll follow her around a little bit during the coffee break, and I’ll coincidentally end up somewhere close to her again. See, this is a wonderful opportunity that we have. Everybody is right here. You don’t have to make a call to a secretary to speak to somebody. You go to a cocktail, and the person you want to speak to is about to go up and sing karaoke. So what do you do? You sing karaoke as well.

MELISSA ALLGOOD:

Spoken like someone who has used all of those techniques. Thank you for that. You put it in plain language right there. That’s exactly it. When there’s people you want to talk to you find them and you are laser focused to get them, but that is also why it’s so important that you’re prepared with what you want to get out of that exchange, what you’re looking for, what you need, and what you want that connection to be.

I mean, I know this is the end of the first day, but I’m feeling kind of a low energy in this room. Are you guys going to pep it up a little bit? Come on, it’s the beginning of the meeting. You can be like this at the end.

SIRANUSH VARDANYAN: We have again a remote intervention. So Lavish who was a Fellow during the last meeting is saying, “As the capacity training is called the Art of Small Talk, it all starts with the small talk and the courage to say, ‘Hello, I’m Lavish. And you?’”

MELISSA ALLGOOD: Fantastic and also raises another excellent point. Small talk doesn’t always have to be about ICANN. Small talk can be about, “How are your travels?” Small talk can be getting to know someone as an individual. I mean, there are clear things that I would encourage you to stay away from like politics and religion but otherwise, “What brings you here? What do you like to do in your spare time?” It doesn’t have to be about Internet governance at every moment of every day either.

UNIDENTIFIED FEMALE: Just wanted to add this point. I think it’s also very important how you leave your conversations. Because this was something I wasn’t good at at first. I’m learning. But how you cut off and if you’re going to talk to somebody else or if you’re going for a session or something. So that is very important how do you leave any conversation.

MELISSA ALLGOOD: Excellent point as always. Always close your conversation. Close it with, “It’s been great talking to you. I really enjoyed hearing about X. I hope we can connect tomorrow at the Y session. What that does, if you close a conversation well, then when you see that person at the Board and SSAC session, “It’s great to see you again. How’s your day going?” You have another point of contact.

The other thing, too, is people in ICANN, especially our experienced community members, they're so anxious to help. So one of the things you can also consider is, "What would you encourage me to get involved in? What sessions would you encourage me to go listen to?" You know, "Here's a little bit about me." You have your elevator pitch. "Do you have any ideas of where I should start?" The reality is the ICANN ecosphere is incredibly complicated. Nobody can be expected to be an expert on it out of the gates. There are people who have been here for decades that would say they are still not experts on it. People like giving advice. They like helping. So you can also use that as a way to connect. Bukola.

BUKOLA ORONTI:

Thank you. Just to add to some of the points that have been raised. I want to say, to start a small talk, one thing that I realized has helped me so far is preparing myself for the kind of conversation I want and also trying not to barge into a groups. If they're already in twos and threes involved in a serious conversation, let the person be. Probably they are having a discussion from before. I can just say hi in passing. But if I want a deep conversation, I'll wait for when the person is alone and, first of all, show my card. It's also helped when I've been in a particular mailing list space before. Most of them already know my name but they may not know me in person. So showing them, they recall it fast and we start from there.

Another thing is [inaudible] the veterans, the elders in ICANN, you don't meet with them like you already know all. I notice that when you approach them like Melissa said—they are always ready to help, ready

to advise. So when you go there with the open mind of learning or hearing from them, you see them divulging a lot of things that will actually help. I think that is what I would just want to add, is that most of the time, don't go with closed mind like you already know what you want to do but keep your mind open to the conversation. In that you will realize you have quite a lot to learn and then they guide your way. Thank you.

MELISSA ALLGOOD:

Excellent intervention. Really go in with an open mind and a broad lens. Somebody could give you advice that you would immediately dismiss. That's fine. But if you have an open mind and an open point of view, you might get some advice or suggestions that you've never heard before and are really valuable. Excellent, thank you.

Any other interventions? Alp is handing out just a one-page kind of tips and tools. Again, like any advice, you can accept it or reject it. Are we out? For those of you who did not get one, we will print a couple more. I apologize. More people are here than I thought. So we'll get you guys more.

SIRANUSH VARDANYAN:

An intervention from a remote participant. James was mentioning that, "I think another way of approaching people is to maybe join them during meals for a chat either at breakfast or lunch or dinner and strike up a conversation." I responded to him actually there that we used to say that many important discussions take place during the breaks.

Lavish said, “If the first time it didn’t go well, don’t give up. Give it another try.”

MELISSA ALLGOOD: Totally agree, Lavish. For the four of you that we didn’t have printouts for, we can either drop it in the chat or we can make you a printout. You can just let us know.

UNIDENTIFIED MALE: I want to speak again in French, please. [inaudible]

MELISSA ALLGOOD: You raise such an excellent and such a challenging point. How do you approach someone who does not speak your language when you’re not supported by our fantastic interpreters? I do not have an answer for that. My apologies. One of our greatest challenges in ICANN is supporting a multitude of languages when the way it ends up looking much of the time is much of the work happening in English. So very, very well noted. I wish I could fix that.

[ALBERT DANIELS:] That’s another opportunity where you can use some tactics that can work for you. You may not have interpreters out in the coffee break, but you may have a colleague or a friend who speaks the two languages. So you find that colleague and then you go back and look for the person that you wanted to speak to again.

MELISSA ALLGOOD: That's definitely a way to use your colleagues. Find your own interpreter.

UNIDENTIFIED MALE: I think also that attitude and mannerisms are important. For example, I did not know [Sanjay] but his approach and his keen interests in being a part of the group and understanding what was going on prompted me to engage him and sit next to him and listen very carefully to what he was saying. While English is not his primary language, he spoke sufficient words for me to understand and to be able to explain what was going on. So I think if we have the collegiate approach and come with that mutual understanding to help, and I think I heard that most of the day that we are a team and that we're here to help each other and to learn from each other. There is a tremendous amount of expertise walking around. You have presidents of companies here but you would not know it until you engage them because they may not be dressed in business attire. So that mutual respect, that keen interest wanting to help, I think goes a long way.

MELISSA ALLGOOD: So I have to say even though you guys have been relatively quiet, you have raised a point that we haven't had in any of the other sessions we've done with this which I think is an excellent one.

Oftentimes in this session, we focus on what you can do to connect with others that you want to connect to, but you guys have raised such a great point in how you can support each other in your own desires to

connect both within this group and again with the broader ICANN community. Fantastic. Thank you, gentleman.

So Alp is going to make 15 more so these two rows will get copies. Again, my apologies. That's completely my fault. Anything else you guys? Please, all the way in the back.

UNIDENTIFIED MALE: Not to plug Google, we can also use the app Google Translate.

SIRANUSH VARDANYAN: Actually, there was exactly the comment from Shanelle of NextGen. She was asking, "Is it appropriate to use our devices to have a conversation with someone who speaks another language if there is no one to translate?"

MELISSA ALLGOOD: Another fantastic solution. I think I've never experienced that myself. But I do think we have a community that would be pretty receptive to trying to find the way forward.

BUKOLA ORONTI: Yes. To support that comment, I recall ICANN66, and there was a language barrier between myself and a particular person. Funny enough, I just noticed the person who used Google Translator spoke the words in Spanish into the translator, then read out the English to me. It was also fascinating that time I realized now language is no longer a

barrier. It's something that I've seen done in real life, and it's something that can [inculcated too]. Thank you.

MELISSA ALLGOOD:

Fantastic. Those of you who have been to an ICANN meeting before, I've spent a lot of time giving you my ideas and tips and tools. But let's spend the rest of our time together hearing your tips and tools. Do you want to start?

UNIDENTIFIED MALE:

Hi, my name is [inaudible]. I think one issue we have with communication skills is that we forget that we are people. We are kind of scared to talk with another person if we speak correctly the language. But we all speak in different ways. If we are from Mexico, we're from India, we're from Russia, we're from everywhere. So I think one tip I can give you all is that you can try to copy how another person communicates. You can learn from them. Just watching how they communicate. How they express their body language. Because sometimes, yes, the language is a barrier. But they tend to communicate more with their body than with the language. For example, Italian people use a lot of the hands. They speak more with their hands than with their mouth. Sometimes you don't understand what they're saying when they speak Italian but if you look at their hands you understand what they're saying. Don't be afraid to talk with a person. Just that.

MELISSA ALLGOOD: Again, so much of communication is actually non-verbal. Smiling, eye contact, being open versus being closed. Those nonverbals are universal. Leaning into those people that are making eye contact with you, are smiling, are trying to connect.

UNIDENTIFIED FEMALE: [inaudible]

MELISSA ALLGOOD: That is a fantastic idea that we will take to the Meetings Team.

SIRANUSH VARDANYAN: I remember in my first meeting in ICANN 61 in Puerto Rico using a pin and say “I speak Spanish. I speak English. I speak French. I speak Portuguese.” [Use it in the dress.]

MELISSA ALLGOOD: Fantastic. Thank you very much.

FIRUZ AZIMOV: Hello, my name is Firus Azimov. I’m a Fellow. I have a tip on networking. For example, before last year there was a pandemic situation. The only networking was virtually. For me, for example, I preferred to say Hello, to say who I am to make it first virtually. For example, we have a website of ICANN and there are all the attendees. You can write to someone you want, for example, to write who you are, what your interests are, and make some appointment with him. He can agree because everybody is

very busy and you have a limited time to talk with him. So if you write it, I think it's better.

MELISSA ALLGOOD: That is such a great reminder. That ability to connect using the scheduling tool. Excellent, excellent reminder. Thank you.

ALBERT DANIELS: So one of the things I've found at an ICANN meeting that can be useful is having the courage to step out of yourself. Having the courage to attempt things that you may be timid to do. I go back to my favorite karaoke. You may not be accustomed to going up on a stage in front of people and using the microphone. But there may be a karaoke session going on. Pick up the microphone and try it out. That is one extreme example but I was somebody who never used to go on the tours. So I would be happy to just stay in the hotel room the entire time until a friend said, "Let's go Albert. You are in Paris. Go to the Eiffel Tower." Whatever it is. So sometimes you think twice about saying no to go out to a networking event or to take part in something that's happening during the break or to go to a luncheon meeting or a dinner meeting, and that is the time where you find that you get exposed and connected with people you never thought you would get connected to. So have that courage.

MELISSA ALLGOOD: The theme of the week—have courage. I love it. Have courage. Again, if you are rebuffed, let it roll off your back because it's not about you. It's not about anything you did wrong or a mistake you made. Everybody

has their own stuff going on. So if you do get rebuffed, hang on to that courage that you have and try again. I think that's a great theme.

Anything else?

PEDRO LANA:

One thing that is also interesting to do is I was thinking about networking with people we have an aim at networking with them but It's also important to notice people around us, other newcomers who have some difficulty in engaging with other people and getting to them and trying to make them feel comfortable. It's easier for them to talk to someone having the same experience they are having. So it is important for us to do our part to help others network as well.

MELISSA ALLGOOD:

You raised a thought for me. If I were you, I would definitely be prepared to answer the question, "How's it going for you? What have you liked?" Because as you connect with someone who's an established community member, they are going to want to know what's happening for you. So have it at the ready, "Oh, I really liked this session—The Consensus Playbook Session for instance. If you enjoyed that, you can reference that. I'm just teasing you guys. But think about what so far in your first day what's been your favorite thing that's happened. Have that kind of at the back of your mind because what you probably don't realize is absent your wonderful mentors, most of the community doesn't know what you guys do. They don't know what you're exposed to. They don't know what your curriculum looks like. So you have an opportunity to also share with them the different things you're being

exposed to. That's another point of connection and shared learning. Anything else?

You guys picked it up at the end. You recovered well. Thank you for engaging a little bit more at the end. I think with that, Alp do you have anything? My thanks to Alp for doing this with me. We'll hand it back to you, Siranush.

SIRANUSH VARDANYAN: Thank you very much. The round of applause is to you. Thank you. I think it was an interesting discussion for all of us to know how to approach other people. But here at ICANN your tag—newcomer, NextGen, fellow—it should give you the power to approach anyone you want to talk to. Please, go ask your question. You met a lot of people from ICANN Staff today from your region. They will be running all around the week but make sure you stop them and ask your questions. Don't stop asking your questions. Yes, please?

UNIDENTIFIED MALE: For those people like me who are shy, maybe let's look at the faces of the people who are here. Since we are all here, that means that we are open for networking. So that's all.

MELISSA ALLGOOD: Buddy system. Find a buddy. Buddy system.

SIRANUSH VARDANYAN: Yes, [inaudible]. Thank you for the intervention. That's exactly the case for us. With that, I would like to thank Melissa and Alp for their great support and facilitation of this session. Thank you guys.

This meeting is adjourned now. Can we stop the recording please?

[END OF TRANSCRIPTION]