
ICANN77 | Prep Week – ICANN Board Members Welcome Fellows and NextGen Participants
Thursday, June 1 2023 – 18:00 to 19:00 DCA

SIRANUSH VARDANYAN: Thank you. Hello and welcome everyone to the last session during the ICANN 77 prep week. This is the session where our ICANN board members will welcome ICANN 77 fellows and NextGen participants. My name is Siranush Vardanyan and I am the remote participation manager for this session. Please note that this session is being recorded and is governed by the ICANN expected standards of behavior.

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To ensure transparency of participation in ICANN's multi-stakeholder model, we ask that you sign in to Zoom session using your full name. For example, a first name and last name or surname. You may be removed from the session if you do not sign in using your full name. With that, I would like to welcome all participants for today's session once again. And if we can have the next slide, Deborah. I also would like to thank my colleague, Deborah, who will be supporting today.

So the agenda for this session, we will have three speakers. Tripti Sinha, ICANN board chair. León Sanchez, ICANN board member. And Sally Costerton, ICANN interim president and CEO. And then we will open the floor for the open dialogue. So this is the session for fellows and NextGeners and everyone who is here to ask the questions directly to our board members. With that, I would like to give the floor to ICANN board chair Tripti Sinha. Tripti, the floor is yours.

TRIPTI SINHA:

Thank you very much, Sirinush. First, a very warm welcome to all our NextGen and fellow participants. This is a very important program inside of ICANN. And I will very briefly go over what the mission of ICANN is and the objectives of these programs. So I am sure you are quite well aware that ICANN is essentially a global multi-stakeholder program in

which the community comes together to ensure the secure and the stable operation of the Internet's unique identifier systems.

And what this essentially means is it's coordinating the procedures that maintain several databases related to the Internet's namespaces and numerical spaces and at the same time, ensuring the network's stable and secure operation. So these programs are very important to us because ICANN operates within a multi-stakeholder model and development of policies occurs with a bottom-up process. So the community members initiate this process and the community is derived from the global population.

So the Fellows Program in particular seeks to strengthen the diversity of this model by bringing in individuals from underserved and underrepresented communities. And so it's very important for us to grow this participation so we get all different viewpoints and individuals from the global population because the Internet serves the global population. And everyone's voice is important as we articulate policies and governance models for the stable and secure operation of the Internet.

The NextGen program is targeted at bringing in exactly that, the next generation. And so we look to bring in students and similar individuals, which all of you translate into that community. So we are absolutely delighted to have you here. And we strengthen the community of ICANN by bringing in new blood. And you are the future of ICANN as this institution continues to grow and sustain itself. Its sustainability comes from these programs where we look deep into the recesses of the global

community and bring in the next generation and the Fellows from various corners of the world.

So with that, I welcome you warmly to ICANN and we look forward to seeing you at ICANN 77. This is the first time that this public meeting will be held in Washington, D.C., in ICANN's soon-to-be 25-year history. So with that, welcome, and I will now turn it back to Siranush.

SIRANUSH VARDANYAN:

Thank you, Tripti. Deborah, can we have the next slide on the screen? Thank you. And with that, I would like to give the floor to León Sanchez, who is an ICANN fellow alumni member and now is serving in the ICANN board. León, the floor is yours.

LEON SANCHEZ:

Thank you very much, Siranush. Hello, everyone. To take advantage of the interpretation services, I'm going to speak in Spanish, which is my native language. So allow me to switch channels and start speaking in Spanish. All right. It's always a pleasure being with you. I'm sure you have heard about me some other time. I have very good friends here from old times, and I'm so pleased to see them, especially starting by Siranush, who was a fellow. And remember what we always say, once a fellow, always a fellow. We never cease to be fellows, so Siranush will continue to be a fellow. And my dear friend, Alexander, also I'm so pleased to see him and many of you with whom I've had the chance to share programs. And of course, not talk about just the important things such as Tripti has said as to this program, but also having the

opportunity so that we as members of this program can return part of what the program is given this community.

Let me tell you a bit about my history in ICANN thanks to this program. I first started a fellow at the Prague meeting back in 2011, if I'm not wrong, 2012. And that was my first time as a fellow. Before that, I have to tell you that I applied a number of times to become accepted into the program and I was rejected several times. So that didn't run the drive away from me and I kept on applying and I finally did it in Prague.

And from Prague's meeting, I started with a lot of commitment and effort to try and leverage this program. Because if you are returning fellows, and I think many of you are returning fellows because this is the second meeting in this year, you know that this program grabs our hands and gives us the chance to introduce ourselves to the different groups part of the community.

And that is done in such a way that we are always welcome as fellows. We have that big advantage. We can go almost anywhere and reach any corner at the ICANN community, introduce ourselves as fellows. And right there, there is like an aura around us taking us, like a veil protected in this universe, this ecosystem of ICANN.

And after that, I had another participation in Beijing and then the third one as a fellow in Buenos Aires. And this number of opportunities as fellow, I also applied to the NomCom to become an ALAC member for the Latin American Caribbean region, my place. The NomCom selected me and I became a member of ALAC at that very meeting in Buenos

Aires. So it was like a dual opportunity. I was a fellow, but at the same time, at the end of that meeting, I took over as an ALAC member.

After that, again, with a lot of work and effort, I won the confidence of my ALAC colleagues. There was a historic event which we know as a transition, the IANA transition. ALAC entrusted me with the effort of being one of the co-chairs of the accountability group, of the first community working group with accountability. There was the co-chair with Mathieu Weill from the ccNSO and Thomas Rickert from GNSO. So we had a lot of fun, but we worked a lot as well, but still had a lot of fun.

So we had the great chance to give birth to what ICANN is today. This new ICANN with bylaws completely redesigned, thought of as a time of accountability, more transparency, building together with the community and for the community. In the previous version, this was another ballgame. I don't mean something bad, but I mean that this is a new version that gives us tools that will provide more transparency and accountability powers toward the community.

Then I had the chance to actually volunteer for a seat at the board. My ALAC colleagues honored me with their vote and I was appointed a board member. That was back in 2017. And between 2017 and the present time, I had the chance to serve the community on the board in the different qualities. I've been part of different committees, working groups. I had the chance to serve as vice chair of the board for a while. And now we have a new leadership led by Tripti and Danko.

And of course, they have all my support and my ongoing effort because something that should be highlighted, not just by Tripti but by anyone

who can ask me in the ICANN, is I believe that having leadership positions in ICANN is a possibility of serving. As I said before at the beginning of my talk, giving the community back something of what they give us. So that is the lenses through which I look.

Having the names may be appealing, having the titles may be appealing, and at some point in time it may satisfy our professional or personal lives. But I believe that at the end of the day, the only important thing is to have the chance to serve apart from any position you may hold. If you are in a leadership position, you have to leverage it to go and do something. That's my piece of advice as a fellow. Work a lot, get involved, do it with conviction, with passion, and that will naturally lead you to occupy leadership positions. And once you are there, remember, these are positions to serve the community, not ourselves. Thank you, Siranush, for this opportunity again to be with you, and I will be very pleased to see you in Washington. Please don't hesitate to write to me, to get in touch with me. You know that I always answer. It may take a bit, but I always do it. And if you see me down the hallway, just say hi, talk to me. My door is always open for you. Thank you very much.

SIRANUSH VARDANYAN:

Thank you. And you always serve as a real role model for many newcomers who can learn from you how to join as a newcomer and ending up in ICANN board. So thank you for always being with us. With that, I would like to give the floor to ICANN interim president and CEO, Sally Costerton. Sally, the floor is yours, please.

SALLY COSTERTON:

Thank you, Siranush. Welcome to all our fellows and NextGen participants. It is so good to have you with us. I couldn't agree more with what Tripti and León have said. These programs are the jewel in the crown in ICANN. The need to bring newcomers to ICANN has never been greater. The world's Internet user group is expanding dramatically and is expanding outside its traditional areas of growth. And that means we need to see those. It's in our mission.

What León described with the IANA transition, which he was being very understated about his role, was the creation of the new mission and bylaws. And if you haven't already read those as part of your fellowship and NextGen preparations, I would advise you to do it. It's quick and easy. They're on the website. And it will show you that is our North Star. That is what we all share.

And as the interim CEO and president, I often say it's a very rare case where you become the CEO of an organization and you don't need to ask what should I do or how should I do it because it's right there in the mission and the bylaws. It tells you what to do and how to do it. And that gives us as a community this extraordinary common purpose. And it tells us that we serve the public interest. And it is that which gives ICANN its mandate and its legitimacy.

And that, as León says, in a way ICANN is designed to serve. It's not just us as individuals or us as fellows. We are a service, a public service, a public interest organization. So we bring you in with our arms wide open. We couldn't want you here more. And we want you to stay

because what León describes here is a journey of years. In León's case, probably not that many years. It was speedy. But for us, the programs are a deep commitment. We've grown them over the years. We've increased the online participation in them during the COVID pandemic was phenomenal. Our community has been very consistent and very loyal. And we prioritize you. You are, as Tripti said, part of our future. And I wanted you to come away from this meeting, I want you to come into Washington, I want you to feel that you are in the center of things and that we want to hear what you think. And we want to hear your voice, because although we're only 25, 25 Internet years is actually a long time. And it feels like, it sounds like a short time. But so much has changed in a while because of what's happened with Internet in the last 25 years that it is unrecognizable everywhere around the world. And even in the 10 years since I have been at ICANN, it is unrecognizable. And the issues and challenges that we face today are not all different from the ones 10 years ago, but there are many new ones. And they are global challenges. And we can only be successful in continuing to deliver our mission if we evolve and we flex to suit our new Internet users. And many of you are in that group and from countries where there are unique and different challenges that we need to understand. And we need as a group and as a community to be able to understand how to tackle those together in a way that will keep ICANN on track in the next years to come and to be strong and resilient and to deal with the challenges that we must deal with as we move forward.

And for any of you who, like me, are coming to ICANN as newcomers for the first time, you are lucky. I wasn't a fellow or a NextGenner. I just came as a newcomer and it's quite, quite daunting, quite

overwhelming. Now, you shouldn't have that problem in the same way because you've been in our newcomer programs. And of course, they're designed to help you to deal with the things that may seem unfamiliar. But even so, some of it will feel strange to begin with.

And please know that you are not alone. Every newcomer to ICANN has been through that. But we and the programs are there to help to get you through that as easily as possible so that you can build your confidence quickly and start to contribute. And hopefully see that future contribution that León outlined so well for yourself and what will make sense for you in the future. And keep talking to us, keep telling us what motivates you, what excites you, what inspires you, what kind of opportunities you would like to be able to have as you get stronger and more confident.

And I would like to take this opportunity to publicly thank and recognize Siranush specifically, who, as León says, when I first knew Siranush, she was a community member. She was a passionate supporter of the fellows, having been one. Nobody can be more focused and supportive of the ethos of fellowship than Siranush. And we owe her a great debt. And I know that she will take the greatest of care of you through this meeting. And I look forward to meeting as many of you as possible in person in Washington.

So with that, safe travels for those of you that need to travel. I hope to see you in the meeting or see you online and look forward to not just meeting you now, but watching you and your time at ICANN grow and develop. Thank you very much, Siranush. Back to you.

SIRANUSH VARDANYAN: Thank you, Sally. Thank you for a warm welcome and for the great welcome of the newcomers and sharing the feeling of how newcomer can be felt in ICANN, but at the same time can be warm, welcomed by the ICANN community. If I can ask Deborah to take out the slides so whenever we can speak to each other, we can see each other's faces. And with that, I open the floor for the questions from the participants. And I will go with the first question posted by Shadrach Ankrah, ICANN fellow. So the question is to León. What advice would you give to us who are in a way babies in the ICANN community to keep spirit of volunteerism, to contribute greatly to the Internet community as you have done? León, please.

LEON SANCHEZ: Thank you, Siranush. As I posted in the chat, I think the key here is to be passionate about the Internet, about the global public interest and about our community. If you are passionate about those three things, you'll find it easy to work and to get involved within the ICANN ecosystem. So my advice would be don't quit, even if it sometimes might seem hard, it might be challenging in terms of time, in terms of the amount of resources that you need to invest, etc. If you are really passionate about this, you'll make a good job. So hang in there. Don't quit. Keep going.

SIRANUSH VARDANYAN: Thank you, León. Thank you very much. I don't see any questions there, but this is always the case with our sessions. At the beginning, people

are shy for asking, but at the end, we don't have enough time to cover all the questions. So I call for everyone not to be shy. This is the place for you to ask the questions directly to our board members. And I see Lily as a NextGen participant. Lily, please unmute yourself and ask your question.

LILY BOTSYOE:

All right. Hi, everyone. Good morning, good afternoon, or good evening, everyone, depending on where in the world you're joining. My name is Lily. I'm from Ghana, but currently in Cincinnati, Ohio. So my question is in regards to how to bring your interest into ICANN. So right now, I'm pursuing a PhD, and I want to focus on privacy engineering. So among the committees that exist in this community, the work that you do in the different groups, how can you bring such passion and such focus into the group? So just to see where to start, if you have a passion or interest like that.

SIRANUSH VARDANYAN:

So who would like to respond to that question? León, maybe you will start?

LEON SANCHEZ:

I mean, I don't want to monopolize the mic, but happy to jump in whenever needed. Well, as I was saying also in the chat, I think you also need to be curious. That's one thing that I forgot to say in my last intervention. When I first came into ICANN, I am an intellectual property attorney by training. That's how I make a living, right? I do intellectual

property. So for me, it was just natural to join the IPC and attend their meetings and try to find my way within the IPC.

But a sideline or a personal passion that I've always had was to advocate for users' rights. So, I mean, they are obviously not mutually exclusive, but they kind of collide sometimes. So I, again, started joining the IPC meetings. I liked them. But I found that I was more keen on joining those meetings of the end users. That's why I joined At-Large and I later became an ALAC member. And if I hadn't had that curiosity of going into places that were not necessarily my natural place, so to speak, being, again, an intellectual property attorney, then I would have missed a huge opportunity of getting to know very valuable people, hardworking people that, in a way, embraced me and gave me these opportunities.

So I think that is the way in which you may find your place within the community. By being curious, by having no fear to jump into new groups of people, regardless of whether you are familiar with what they're doing or not. As newcomers, we are not familiar with pretty much anything, right? We are just like, how do you say, we're drinking out of the water hose, right? And it feels sometimes challenging. So don't be afraid. Be curious and that way you will find your place within the ICANN community.

SIRANUSH VARDANYAN:

Thank you, León. And what I always suggest to newcomers, don't stuck in one community. Go and participate in different sessions to learn more about others, because you may come with one purpose in your

mind and then end up with another sector of interest. And I know also Tripti came to ICANN board as a part of the community. So Tripti, the question is to you as well. So which ICANN structure you belong to and how you joined the ICANN community and your perspective on this.

TRIPTI SINHA: Thank you, Siranush. I just wanted to add to what León was saying. And Lily, thank you for your question. And if I understood it correctly, I think if I heard you correctly, you said you're doing your PhD. Was it, did you say privacy engineering?

LILY BOTSJOE: You're right. Yeah. IT and a focus in privacy engineering, yes.

TRIPTI SINHA: Correct. So actually, you couldn't have come to a more apt place for that kind of work. So as you know, privacy has taken on a significant role in our society today. And ICANN is dealing with many, many privacy related issues when it comes to DNS. So as León was saying, my advice to you would be to attend as many sessions as you can, no matter how different they are. You will find a thread that runs through many, many community discussions that focus on exactly that privacy. Privacy from a technical perspective, privacy from what are the technical ramifications should information not be held private? And you'll find extreme thoughts in this area. Some people say privacy is a foregone thought. I mean we've lost control of privacy, right? I'm sure you're doing that in your studies. And others say, no, we need to rein it back in.

And there's legislation across the world that is speaking to privacy. So as León was saying, and as Siranush was saying, attend as many sessions as you can, and you will hone in on exactly where you need to be. And if you're looking at privacy from an individual perspective, as León was saying, ALAC speaks to the end user. So that would be a great area to look at. So thank you again for your question, Lily.

SIRANUSH VARDANYAN: Thank you, Tripti. Sally, if I can come to you as well. You are in this field for a long time. So how you ended up in ICANN?

SALLY COSTERTON: Well, I often get asked this question, and the answer is by accident, which is the truth. And I came to do a project for three weeks, and that involved me going to an ICANN meeting like you're about to do. And my first ICANN meeting was in Toronto. So that shows how long ago it was. I can tell you, because only ICANN insiders will be able to tell you, oh, yes, that was ICANN in such and such a year. By the way, that's a thing. But I still can't do that. I can tell you it was in real human dates, the end of 2012. It was the AGM meeting in 2012. So nearly 11 years ago, 10 and a half years ago.

And honestly, I thought that I had accidentally joined a cult and that I couldn't escape. And you know what? Ten years later, I can say that I did in the nicest possible way I can imagine. Cult's the upside. And I don't want to escape because it's addictive. I have found it to be addictive. Now, some of that is because we work in the internet space. And as I said earlier in my comments, it changes hourly, daily, weekly. Even in

the last three or four years, Tripti's talking about the extraordinary acceleration of privacy regulation and privacy issues. When I first came to ICANN, they existed. They were nothing like as prominent as they are now. So it's a constantly moving, fascinating environment. And as the internet has become more mission critical to the world, which it has, particularly during COVID. And I don't think we will go back to a time when that was not understood in the way that it is now. What we do has become more high profile and more critical and more relevant, really, for more people around the world.

So I came to ICANN by mistake, but I stayed out of choice. And I can't imagine not having this in my life now. I mean, that might sound a bit sad, but it's so exciting to be able to make a difference. And one of the areas of ICANN that I find most rewarding and looking at a lot of the people on this call who we've done this together over the years is you get people together in a room around a common problem, which they don't agree about at all. But you find a way to find answers that may eventually turn into policies. And this is like a magic trick. And even though I've seen it happen so many times, the fact that it can happen is extraordinary. So that's how I got here. That's why I stayed here.

And although I come from a business background originally, and if I'd come in as a constituency member, I guess that I would have gone to maybe the BC perhaps might have been a place for me. Or perhaps I might have become a registrar or a registry or a brand registry, maybe something like that, because of my background.

I'm completely with the recommendation that throw yourself into all sorts of things. And I have found so many things that I can. I never

thought that would be intriguing and capture my attention that really do. Because if you go in with an open mind, as Tripti says, you'll find the place. And then you know how to make that work. And we're here to support you to do that.

SIRANUSH VARDANYAN: Thank you. Thank you. It's encouraging. And we have a next question from one of our bright NextGeners, Nico Middleton. And the question is, as a student studying cyber security, is there a particular space or group where I can grow in that field at ICANN? Who can take this question?

TRIPTI SINHA: I can take this, Siranush. So thank you, Nico, for the question. Yes, there is a space for you. So as I said earlier, my advice to you as NextGeners is first, attend as many sessions as you can. But there is a particular constituency and advisory group that's called the Security and Stability Advisory Committee. And that actually deals with cybersecurity issues pertaining to DNS. And there's also something called the RSSAC Caucus. And that is an extended group beyond the root server operators that are technologists who are dealing with technical aspects of DNS again. And both these groups look at security very, very closely. So if you are a techie and looking to land in the right group, either one of these groups would work for you. But that does not say the other groups don't have value. They absolutely have value. They come from different angles. Some come from policy. Some come from the end-user perspective. And so I would encourage you to certainly participate in as many sessions as you can and then find your home. Thank you.

SIRANUSH VARDANYAN: Thank you, Tripti. And actually, you well said that everybody has the voice in ICANN. So every person, even if you are not with technical background, you have the place to come. So we all, at the end, are end users. So everybody has the interest and everybody has the space. And actually, Nojus Saad's question is related to what we have said, that he wants to know whether health care professionals have a role in the work of ICANN and what opportunities you believe are there for us to foster digital health care through ICANN's work. I know that it's very important for all of us to go and read the specific mission of ICANN. But these are the questions which, for newcomers, are very interesting to know. And I see León who would like to respond to this question. León, please go ahead.

LEON SANCHEZ: Thanks, Siranush. Well, I would like to take a step back to the previous question and then address this next question. I think Tripti described very well what you can do as a cybersecurity student within ICANN. But then again, and I've said this many times, I know I am repeating myself, but trying to explore the ways in which the different parts of our community see or look at a certain problem, in this case cybersecurity, might not necessarily be what you would expect of deep diving into cybersecurity within ICANN, but it will give you a wider perspective of what concerns different stakeholders and different actors within the ecosystem.

So again, as Tripti was saying, if you jump into different sessions, then you will learn what concerns each of the groups within ICANN in terms of cybersecurity. And as a cybersecurity student, I guess that you would be interested in getting to know these different insights from different groups.

Now, to the question of healthcare, that is a very good question that I haven't thought of and I hadn't heard before. But I mean, just speaking out loud here, I'm thinking about all the devices that need to be connected to the Internet in order to provide these healthcare services. So if you are a healthcare provider or a healthcare professional, then you might be looking at how to promote IPv6 adoption, so that all the devices that need a connection to the Internet are able to get an IP through the IPv6 protocol and therefore be connected and provide these health services. I know it doesn't sound as sexy as it could. It's very technical maybe, but that's what I think right now in terms of relating healthcare services with the ICANN mission and what we do within ICANN.

SIRANUSH VARDANYAN:

Thank you, León. Thank you. Thank you. And there is a comment from Olévié, who is ICANN 77 fellow, another alumni, who is saying cybersecurity within ICANN ecosystem is related to DNS, domain name system, and the DNS abuse is the hot topic, actually. There will be several sessions on DNS at ICANN 77, and there are also many professionals coming from this area, so you can always talk to them during the networking sessions. I don't see any other questions here. Thank you, Nico, for your question as well, and Nico also thanking Tripti

and León for guidance. Any other questions? We still have several minutes to go. So I see the hand raised by Zoe Filomeno, a NextGen participant. Zoe, please unmute yourself and ask your question.

ZOE FILOMENO:

Hello, everyone. My name is Zoe Filomeno. I'm a NextGen originally from San Juan, Puerto Rico, but now I reside in Washington State. I come from an interdisciplinary background in fashion, design, corporate for fashion shows around the world. I also deal with cybersecurity, neurotechnology. I study neuroscience and physics, and I want to understand more about any organization that might be interdisciplinary within ICANN, not only for me, but for the other fellows in NextGen. Thank you.

SIRANUSH VARDANYAN:

Thank you, Zoe. Sally, you would like to say something?

SALLY COSTERTON:

Welcome. It's great to meet you. And I'm always deeply impressed by somebody that can do physics and fashion design. I say always. It's not often you come across people who can do physics and fashion design. So, wow, is what first thing I would say. Can't wait to meet you and hear more about that.

I would make a couple of observations. From a subject matter perspective, yes, we organize ourselves in these structures that we call the SOAC structures, which is like the SSAC and the RSSAC, and the At-Large, you've been hearing lots of acronyms. But those groups focus on

some of their own issues that are specific to their constituency groups, but increasingly on common issues. And I would say those are interdisciplinary issues, if you like. So regardless of where you might be physically sitting and where you find your natural orientation from a sort of participation point of view, I would encourage you to look at the big issues that the community is facing, which are issues about regulation, issues about participation, issues about languages, issues about universal acceptance and scripts.

I mean, if you're a fashion brand in, I don't know, Korea, for the sake of argument, or Vietnam, and you might say, what's in it for me? I might want to have a domain name in the next, if there's another round of top-level domains. So you might be really interested in becoming a new registry or a new registrar perhaps inside new registries that would allow you to use a script like Vietnamese or Japanese. And that is what we will be focusing on, on universal acceptance, so non-ASCII scripts.

Now, if you're a physics student, then you, unlike me, will be able to probably understand how that actually happens in terms of the technical layer that is required in universal acceptance to make that possible inside a domain name. Whereas my world and my background, which is about brands, and not in fashion, by the way, but brands generally, is all about a business. How do I become successful commercially by using the domain name system, by using the Internet in a commercial environment?

So I would say you are at a great advantage here if you have that sort of mental flexibility and interest that takes you through the bigger issues that the Internet is facing, that domain name is facing, which we discuss

all the time at ICANN, and they're a very important part of what we do and where we make policy. But you're coming at it from that, from that very sort of diverse perspective. So I would say don't get too hung up about where you're based, because you're going to have that ability to contribute to those issues. And the more diverse your perspective is, I think that the greater you'll find the impact is. So good luck. Look forward to seeing what you do.

SIRANUSH VARDANYAN: Thank you for the great question, Zoe, and I'm looking forward to seeing all of you in D.C. very soon. I don't see any other questions or any other hand raised, but—yes, I see the hand from Allan Magezi. please go ahead.

ALLAN MAGEZI: Thank you so much. My name is Allan Magezi. I'm a telecommunications engineer currently in Nairobi, but I'm from Uganda. My question is in regards to the ICANN ecosystem. As a newcomer, in most times, the ICANN ecosystem is very complex for you to navigate and contribute meaningfully. So my question, especially to León, is what are some of those key aspects, those key takeaway someone, a newcomer can stick to in order to contribute and navigate meaningfully in the ICANN ecosystem?

LEON SANCHEZ: Allan, you are privileged to be part of the fellowship program. And all I can tell you is, use that privilege and take advantage of it to navigate

your way through the ICANN ecosystem. As I said in my first intervention, we are very lucky to be fellows and to have a very open community that embraces us when they know we are fellows. So wherever you go, just let them know that you are a fellow, that you are a newcomer, and you will find a lot of people who are kind enough to guide you, to embrace you, to teach you and to share their knowledge with you.

And I guess on the other side, it takes for you to be fearless about taking that dive into our community. If you use those two elements, I am sure that you'll navigate yourself successfully within our ecosystem.

SIRANUSH VARDANYAN:

Thank you, León. And just letting everyone know that Allan Magezi, being the technical professional from Africa, he is also the recipient of the Paul Muchene Award as an ICANN 77 Fellow. So congratulations, Allan. Though he's still struggling with his U.S. visa to get it on time, but we are looking forward to see you and celebrate together in Washington, D.C.

I saw also the hand from Shadrach.

SHADRACH ANKRAH:

Initially, my question was more related to what Allan asked, but to just echo it. Like naturally, I'm someone who is very shy, like trying to make new friends and like if someone is just standing there, like going to the person and asking the person about question, it seems very difficult for me. Based on your experiences you've had attending ICANN meetings,

what are some of the tips or tricks that would make maybe someone who is more like me to be able to step into some of the conversation and then be able to ask more questions? So for example, if I should meet León, I should be able to interact more with León or Sally. Yeah, so what are some of the challenges that you've had and you were able to overcome it and then be able to understand the community very well? Thank you.

SIRANUSH VARDANYAN:

Thank you very much for your question. And before giving the floor to León and Sally, you are in the best place at your first in-person meeting. You had been part of the virtual fellowship, but you will be a part of the fellowship in Washington DC in person. And the interaction there and the welcoming atmosphere there, I hope will give you the chances not to shy and learn to speak with those people openly. And León, Sally, if you want to add, please go ahead. Go ahead.

LEON SANCHEZ:

Thank you. So thank you Shadrach for this comment and this question. What I would advise you is whenever you feel like you might be shying away from a certain group or situation within ICANN, just think that everyone within that room was once a newcomer and everyone within that room was once fearsome to approach other people in that space. And dive into the pool. I mean, I know it can be hard sometimes, but again, everyone in that space was once a newcomer and felt that exact fear that you are feeling at that moment. And everyone or almost everyone just found their way. Most of us are a bunch of nerds that are

passionate about the Internet and that are shy in certain ways and in certain spaces. So once you break the ice, you'll be able to start feeling more comfortable and more easy going within the community. So just think of that. Everyone was there once and everyone was once a newcomer and felt that exact same fear that you are feeling.

SIRANUSH VARDANYAN:

Thank you, León. I actually remembered when I came first time as a newcomer, I was thinking, what I'm doing here? And then 15 years, I'm still with ICANN. So that's how addiction happens, as Sally mentioned. And actually, Sally, there is a question to you from Nojus, who is asking, how challenging is to lead such a complex global organization as ICANN? Any recommendations you can give to younger presidents of international NGOs like myself to lead such international teams more effectively?

SALLY COSTERTON:

Wow. Well, congratulations to you. It's a great—well done, you. I think, gosh, that's a difficult question to answer, isn't it? I think that we have to be careful not to think—we use this term exceptionalism. Sometimes the ICANN, because the way we do things is very unusual to some of the ways that you will have done things in other roles and other jobs, we think that—it's a tendency to go, everything is completely different here.

You know, it really isn't. The Internet is really about trust, more than about anything else. And trust is built on people and the belief that people have that the systems they put in place will work, that it's

trusted technology, that it's trusted systems. We have trusted identifiers and we have trusted relationships inside ICANN.

And so is it hard to do it? I think it's in many ways very like being a CEO of anything. I was a CEO before of a for profit organization and being the CEO of a not for profit is completely different. And you're in that situation. You're running a not for profit. And so one of the most important things I would say is focus on what is the outcome that your organization is there—what is its purpose? How will you know if it is being successful?

When you're leading a for profit organization, it's really quite straightforward. You either make money or you don't. That doesn't mean you don't have any other goals, but it's really kind of easy to see whether you're making headway. When you're in a not for profit, particularly one like ours that has a public service commitment, you may be the same with your NGO, your IGO, you need to think very hard about purpose. And how will you know whether you are delivering that purpose? What will be different because of what your organization has done? And in ICANN's case, our purpose is to support our volunteers, our community to deliver ICANN's mission and to partner with ICANN's board to make sure that we do that in a way that observes the mission and purpose and bylaws of ICANN.

And that clarity of focus helps me enormously in terms of leading the organization because I'm able to give all my team, wherever they work in the world, whatever role they have, I'm able to show them that they all have a role because we are all doing the same thing. And not just in the organization but in the board and in the community.

So common purpose and how do you know whether you're making progress and how do you give all your team a sense of ownership around that outcome? I hope that's helpful. Happy to meet up with anybody when we're at ICANN, when we're at DC or to chat online about some of these issues because I think that we should take this opportunity. And this is how you build relationships. My piece of advice to Shadrach is what you've just done, Nojus, ask questions.

You will go into the ICANN meeting, you'll have a lanyard like we all wear them. So a lanyard around your neck, which will have your badge on it. And it will have a code on it that will tell people that you are a newcomer, that you're a fellow. And you'll have one that tells you that I work in the organization and Tripti will have one saying, León will have one saying they're on the board. So it's unlike a cocktail party where you have to go and shake hands and say, hello, who are you? What do you do? You won't have to do that. You'll be in a very structured environment where everybody around you will know who you are and you will know who they are. And that allows you to get right into the, "I'm really interested to understand this. Can we talk about, can I ask you a question? Can we talk about this?" And I've never been in an ICANN meeting where people would say, "I'm not going to talk to you, I'm not going to answer your question." It just doesn't happen.

So hopefully, even if you do feel a little bit shy and a little bit anxious, León says, we've all been newcomers. Remember I said I joined and I felt like I didn't understand anything that he said for about a week. And I thought it was just extraordinary and very unusual and strange. But the people were so friendly and everybody I met, they tried to explain

to me, "Let me explain, Sally, come and meet my guys and we'll take you out for dinner. I'll explain how the multi-stakeholder process works." I mean, that would never happen in a company. It would never happen at a trade show, but it happened at ICANN. And I hope that we can give you that sense of confidence and belonging. And good luck with the IGO. Let me know how you get on. Sounds really fascinating.

SIRANUSH VARDANYAN: Thank you, Sally. We are not expecting more questions, but I would like to give the floor to our speakers. 30 seconds for Tripti, León and Sally, your final word before we meet in person in Washington, D.C. to our Nextgeners, fellows and newcomers. Tripti, please go ahead.

TRIPTI SINHA: Thank you, Siranush. Once again, a very warm welcome to all of you. And we look forward to seeing you at ICANN 77. And as has been said over and over again during this hour, please embrace the meeting, the agenda, go to as many sessions as you can, overcome your shyness. Everyone's been in this boat before. This is a very vibrant community. Embrace it and believe you me, you will enjoy every minute of it.

LEON SANCHEZ: Thank you. León.

LEON SANCHEZ: Thank you, Siranush. Well, all I can say is that I'm very grateful to be here with you guys again. And go rock ICANN. The ICANN Fellows rock ICANN.

So go rock ICANN, take advantage of the program. And if you see me, stop me, say hi, and let's definitely have a chat.

SIRANUSH VARDANYAN: Thank you, León. Sally, please.

SALLY COSTERTON: Great advice. Have fun. Enjoy it. Don't forget the social stuff. When you're there, face to face, you will have things going on most evenings. Throw yourself into that too. So they count in going to the sessions and enjoy that and just get to meet people, get to chat to them and enjoy that side of it. It's an important part of our community. It's, as I said, because it's those relationships that grow over years is where the trust gets built. They really do. So looking forward to seeing you all and safe travels.

SIRANUSH VARDANYAN: Thank you. And thank you, Tripti, León and Sally for this amazing one hour with your warm welcome. I see Lily wonderfully put there, have fun, learn and connect. Yes, that's what we are going to do in Washington. So everybody, with that, I would like to thank for the amazing session, for great questions, and looking forward to see everyone in person in DC very soon. I would like to thank also our interpreters, our tech support behind the scene. This is the last session during the prep week, and we will be meeting all of you on Monday, 12th of June in Washington, DC. Safe travels, everyone. With that, this meeting is adjourned. Thank you very much.

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