
ICANN79 | Prep Week – Board Engagement with Community Work Session
Wednesday, February 21, 2024 – 12:30 to 1:30 SJU

FRANCO LARIOS CARRASCO: Hello and welcome everybody to the ICANN Board Engagement with a Community Work Session. Please note that this session is being recorded and follows the ICANN expected standards of behavior. Interpretation for this session will include six languages, which are English, Arabic, Chinese, French, Russian, and Portuguese. Click on the interpretation icon in Zoom and select the language you will listen to during this session. All participants in this session are kindly asked to state their name for the record and to speak at a reasonable pace. If you wish to speak or ask a question during the session, please raise your hand in the Zoom room. Org staff will monitor the queue and you will be prompted to unmute yourself when the host calls on you. Having said all this, I now hand the floor over to the ICANN Board Chair, Tripti Sinha.

TRIPTI SINHA: Thank you, Franco. So welcome everyone. And thank you for joining us online today. It is a privilege to open this new Community Board Engagement Session ahead of ICANN 79 in Puerto Rico. As you know, the Board is committed to enhancing its partnership with the community. And this session is an opportunity to reinforce our cooperation and work together on three topics. Not just these three topics, but today's three topics that are very important for ICANN and our future.

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So this is how it will work. For this 60-minute session, there will be three breakout room discussions hosted by different Board members. And the discussion in each room will focus on a different topic. We will spend 40 minutes in these breakout rooms. In room one, led by Maarten Botterman and Chris Buckridge, you will hear about the work to date on developing the ICANN strategic plan for FY '26 through FY '30. They will share the high-level outcome of the environmental scan sessions conducted late last year and the working draft vision statement for FY '30. Strategic planning, as you know, is a collective effort that must involve all of ICANN, the community, the Board, and the org. Your insights are crucial during the strategic planning process. And we therefore look forward to your active participation in this discussion.

In room two, Becky Burr and Alan Barrett will lead another very important discussion to try to understand what avenues might exist to allow the Board to mitigate a situation where an already Board-approved community recommendation should not or cannot be implemented.

Finally, room three will be led by Sally Costerton and Leon Sanchez, and they will touch on environmental sustainability at ICANN. You will hear about the work conducted to date to initiate an ICANN environmental sustainability strategy that focuses on ICANN's business operations. Closely linked to these efforts is a broader discussion about balancing the environmental impacts of travel with the benefits of bringing participants of the multi-stakeholder model together face-to-face. We want to hear your thoughts and expertise on how we could advance this work together. We very much look forward to hearing your input and

perspectives on these three topics. After the 14-minute breakout room sessions, we will all come back together to listen to a summary from the different rooms presented by the Board of Shepherds. So with that, I will now ask our support team to explain the logistics of the breakout rooms. Franco, back to you.

FRANCO LARIOS CARRASCO: Thank you, Tripti. To select a breakout room, please click Breakout Rooms in your meeting controls. Choose from the list of the three rooms provided. Hover over the desired room, click Join, and confirm. Click Link Room to return to the main session. You may repeat this as necessary. If you need help, click on the Ask Help button in the meeting controls, and then click Invite Host to notify the host. The breakout rooms will not be recorded, live-captioned, interpreted, or transcribed. Instead, we will have work staff monitoring each breakout room and taking notes. You will be able to move freely in and out of the breakout rooms if you wish to change topics, or you can spend a full 40 minutes in each room. After 40 minutes, we'll all return to the main room where the board host from each breakout room will debrief the audience on their respective breakout room discussions. The summary discussions will be transcribed and interpreted. You may now join the breakout rooms as we're going to start.

TRIPTI SINHA: Franco, I'm not seeing the link to the breakout rooms.

FRANCO LARIOS CARRASCO: We are launching them now.

TRIPTI SINHA: Franco, is everyone back?

FRANCO LARIOS CARRASCO: Yes, Tripti, the three rooms have been closed now. Everyone should be. Everyone's back.

TRIPTI SINHA: Well, welcome back, everyone. I hope you enjoyed this new way of engaging together. So we're going to spend the remainder of this session now listening to a recap of what happened in each breakout room. Maarten and Chris, I'll start with you. Would you mind sharing with us a summary of what you heard in your breakout room, which focused on the strategic plan?

MAARTEN BOTTERMAN: Yes, thank you, and maybe first, thank for all those that joined us in that room for a good and positive discussion. We did share the working draft vision statement, which is as the trusted steward of the internet's unique identifier systems, ICANN is dedicated to strengthening the single globally interoperable internet for all. This was very well received, and we received very supportive comments to that as being aspirational, succinct, clear, also recognizing that we have a role in the bigger ecosystem, but a clear focus on our mission.

After that, we also talked more about what we learned from the environmental scan, and we had some interaction on that, including also the importance of having interaction together, because in the end, the strategic plan will be a plan from ICANN, which means community, organization, and board together.

There were a couple of discussions on different elements of this, how we can engage best together, and we listened to that, and look forward to learn and always improve. And we also pointed out that on Wednesday at 10:30, San Juan time, 14:30 UTC, there will be a strategic plan development community consultation to which you're all invited. Chris, anything specific you want to add that I missed?

CHRIS BUCKRIDGE:

No, Maarten, I think you covered it very well. I think there was some interesting continuation of discussions we've had in the board about what is the role of a strategic plan and how does it fit into the ecosystem of mission, vision, etc. And I think that's a really good discussion to have and to make sure that we all come to a bit of a common understanding there. And then there was also some very positive feedback about this new format of engagement, and I think it was showing its strength in being able to have that kind of discussion. So yeah, glad to have been here. Thanks.

TRIPTI SINHA:

Yeah, thank you, Maarten and Chris. Let's move on to room two. And this is turning it over to Becky and Alan, and they will share a summary of what was discussed in their room. And just to remind everyone, their

topic was board adopted policies that do not address the problems they would develop to solve. How do we deal with those? So over to Becky and Alan.

ALAN BARRETT:

Okay, thank you. This is Alan Barrett. So in room two, we were speaking about policies that are adopted by the board, but then after adoption, we realized that there was something wrong, and maybe the environment has changed such that the solution no longer applies. Maybe the board reassesses its decision and wants to change its mind about something.

So in our discussion, it came up that CCWGs and policy development processes, PDPs, are different and unlikely to have the same solutions. In the case of CCWGs, they're less formal. So perhaps if there's a need to go back on a board decision to change a recommendation, the board could go back to the chartering organizations, consult them, explain what the board sees as the problem, and then the chartering organizations could determine the next steps. Perhaps they could make a decision without reconstituting the CCWG, or perhaps they would want to reconstitute the group. That's not always easy because the same people might not be available.

For PDPs, it's possibly more difficult than with CCWGs. You can initiate a new PDP to come up with a new policy that revokes and amends the previous policy. But as a first step, it seems that the board could consult the GNSO council, explain the problems, ask the GNSO council to do something about it, and the council could create a new PDP to address

it. And one idea that came up was that perhaps there could be a bylaws change to allow modifications to policies without going through a new PDP. We didn't go into detail about how that might work.

And then another idea that came up is it's better to avoid this problem in the first place if we can identify issues earlier through board liaisons to the policy development groups, possibly discussing, pointing out potential issues. Maybe the board could be better at noticing when a recommendation is likely to lead to problems in the future. Okay, thanks.

TRIPTI SINHA:

Thank you, Alan and Becky. So let's move on to the last room, which is room three. And this one I will turn over to Leon and Sally, and their topic was environmental sustainability at ICANN. So a summary from you, Leon and Sally.

LEON SANCHEZ:

Thank you, thank you, Tripti. On room three, I think we heard overwhelming support for the work we've just started, for the goal that was established for the CEO. And we also heard about the need to begin thinking on the possibility of expanding the scope of the current CEO goal beyond to other topics and try to address ICANN's business footprint and those activities that could potentially include other areas of work.

We also heard about balancing between the need to travel and the need to mitigate the negative impacts of that aspect of ICANN work. And this

is an important factor to consider as we move forward, of course. We didn't hear anyone advocate for no meetings at all or a specific number of meetings being reduced, etc. The goal here is mostly to identify the efficiencies and the right balance that allows us as a community to fulfill our mission here at ICANN by, and of course, making efficient moves.

We also heard about the need to do a cost-benefit analysis, identify the trade-offs and make informed decisions. And I'm sure that Sally has other takeaways to highlight here, Sally.

SALLY COSTERTON:

Thanks, Leon. Yeah, all great, great observations. It was a really good discussion. And one of the things that came up, which was great, was recognizing the importance of looking at big issues, of course, which we discussed extensively, but also smaller ideas. And somebody was talking about, for example, the idea we piloted in Hamburg of not using plastic water bottles. And as part of that discussion, we recognized that we need to set up a mechanism that provides the community with a channel that's open all the time to share ideas. That's big and small as the project evolves so that our shared understanding of ways we might do things differently to make sure that we can deliver our mission more sustainably is really delivered more effectively and more quickly, and we're sharing our thinking and ideas. It was a really good participation in the session. We ran out of time, which is difficult, but always a great sign that everybody wants to talk about the subject. And it's clearly the beginning of a longer discussion. I hope we can do more of this type of thing, and we're very excited to work with you as we move forward. Thank you so much.

TRIPTI SINHA:

Yeah, thank you, Leon and Sally. And I did notice there was some friendly competition going on between the rooms as to who got more attendance. But we have four minutes left. We didn't allocate time for questions about the topic itself, but we would like to poll you on this experiment we conducted. And I've done a quick review of the chat session. It looks like this has been quite welcome. So if you could, in some manner, maybe do a thumbs up or something. Give us a sense whether you like this, real quick. I'm seeing some, all right. Yeah, I'm getting a sense that this was well-liked. I don't see any thumbs down. So what we'll do is, this is a takeaway for us. We will refine this. And again, apologies for the little glitch. I know we should have been able to seamlessly move between rooms, but this was an experiment, and experiments come with glitches, but we will likely improve this process.

So this actually brings us to the end of this session. We will debrief the community on this format, the subject areas, and how we should refine this for future ICANN meetings. In the meantime, again, thank you very much for your participation. I noticed we had 208 attendees, which is really good attendance for this. And we look forward to seeing you in Puerto Rico. Safe travels to everyone. And this session is closed. Thank you.

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