
ICANN82 | CF – ALAC Open House
Tuesday, March 11, 2025 – 15:00 to 16:00 PST

MICHELLE DESMYTER

Hello and welcome, everyone to the ALAC Open House. My name is Michelle DeSmyter. I'm the remote participation manager for this session. Please note that this session today is being recorded and is governed by the ICANN Expected Standards of Behavior and the ICANN Community Anti-Harassment Policy. During this session, questions or comments will only be read aloud if submitted within the Q&A pod.

Interpretation for this session today will include English, French, and Spanish. If you would like to speak during this session, please raise your hand in Zoom. When called upon, virtual participants will be given permission to unmute in Zoom. On-site participants will use a physical microphone to speak. Please state your name for the record, the language you will speak, if speaking a language other than English, and please speak at a reasonable pace. I will now hand the floor over to Jonathan Zuck, ALAC Chair.

JONATHAN ZUCK

Thank you, Michelle, and thank you everyone for coming. This is our second attempt at creating our little open house, open mic type scenario for like little micro discussions. And I think it worked out really well last time. And so, there's not much else to say. Let's just jump right in. And the first thing we were going to do was bring Liz

Note: The following is the output resulting from transcribing an audio file into a word/text document. Although the transcription is largely accurate, in some cases may be incomplete or inaccurate due to inaudible passages and grammatical corrections. It is posted as an aid to the original audio file, but should not be treated as an authoritative record.

back to talk to us about what she's been up to and how things are going. And so, without further ado, I think I would hand the microphone to Liz.

ELIZABETH FIELD

Thank you. This is Liz Field. For those who don't know me, I think I'll just introduce myself very quickly. I'm the ICANN Ombuds. My role and the role of the ICANN Ombuds is to ensure that community members are treated fairly and that the community is safe. So, I'm here to support you. Welcome to contact me with anything, questions, advice, but also obviously I will handle complaints as well under the Anti-Harassment Policy. So, that's me.

I wanted to start by saying a thank you to ALAC, not just for this opportunity to speak to you, but also because I know that I feel that ALAC is a really engaged supporter of the office and I really appreciate that. So, I'd like to hope, well, I'd like to encourage that support to, in the form of tough questions and useful feedback. So, I'm really happy to be here and to talk you through. I'll be very, very brief and then we can have, I'll take questions or comments from you and we can discuss whatever. But I was just going to give you updates a little bit on what I've been up to, as Jonathan said.

I'll touch very briefly on work stream two and how that's going. And I'll talk to you very, very briefly about the strategic priorities of the office and what this means and what you can look out for in terms of the office. So, any questions before I dive in? No? Okay. So, just kind of overall, we've been working very hard on establishing processes and really this, within the framework of the Work Stream

2 or WS2. And what's very important to me is that the implementation of these recommendations, although they're many years old now, that they're done in a really meaningful way.

So, I've spent quite a bit of time understanding not just what the recommendation is, but why it's been made and how to really address it effectively. So, what we're looking out for between now and June is going to be some updated procedures within the ombuds framework, which is a document that governs the ombuds office. So, I will be working on really bringing that up to another level and working out different procedures, including we're already categorizing the complaints and cases we handle within a new structure, which will help us communicate back to the community.

The other, one of the other aspects within this WS2 is the communication plan. So, we will look, we have a plan for the year with activities, but the first thing that I'd like to make you all aware of is we have a baseline survey that will be going out, which I would very much appreciate the highest possible engagement. It'll be short, it'll be sweet, but it will give us data and information about how to improve the office and where we are, and we can measure as we go across the year. So, that's something to look out for.

Another thing which I'd love engagement with is we're building a resource hub for the community. So, again, ideas about what would be useful and anyone who's interested in helping us test products would be great. So, that's a little bit of update there, just in terms of the strategic priorities. So, we're building a plan, there's three strategic priorities and one is really around the operational

excellence of the office, making sure, linking back to Workstream 2, that everything is, our processes are solid, that our case management is effective and efficient, and that we're really running the office professionally and well.

The other one, which is another one I'd really, building accessibility, trust, and stakeholder collaboration. So, this is really around engaging and communicating with the community, and looking out, we'll be in touch with blogs and the hub, and I'd love to do some engagement sessions as well with the community, so I'm very much looking forward to hearing advice and ideas from you about how ICANN connect well with the community and meet the needs of the community. And the final strategic priority is around driving systemic improvements.

So, we're handling both individual cases, but looking at also the pattern and what this tells us about things that need to be improved within ICANN. And as you know, there's a community Anti-Harassment Policy that's under revision, this is going to be rolled out, so that will be accompanied by a program of activities and communication and support. And then finally, just, my sort of ask to you is help me in terms of engagement, advice, feedback, challenging questions, I really would appreciate it. And a question for you all is, how I'll close, is are there any pain points that I in the office can help you with? So, that's everything from me, I would love your questions or ideas or anything, yeah. Thank you. Thank you.

JONATHAN ZUCK

I'll start out as we accumulate some things. I don't have a laptop open, so Michelle, I may ask you to check the queue online if people are raising their hands online. Two things you said that were interesting, that was all interesting, sorry, but that inspired questions. One was generating some kind of resource library and trying out products, and I'm curious what that means and what those kinds of products might be. And maybe some connection into ICANN Learn and what there exists there, because there is a harassment course there now, for example. And then related to that, on the Anti-Harassment Policy, that's been circulated a lot now.

Is it your sense that there's a better understanding in the community, this is a very cross-cultural environment, is that policy, is the fact that it's circulating having an impact, I think, on people's understanding on what represents acceptable behavior, or is it sort of too soon to tell? So, those are my two questions.

ELIZABETH FIELD

Thanks. Do you want to take a round of questions, or do you want me to answer one by one? Thanks.

JONATHAN ZUCK

I see a whole barrage of hands.

ELIZABETH FIELD

So, just on the resource library, so first, just to say one of the first things I'm doing with the resource hub is working with the team

that manages ICANN Learn, and we'll have a set of Ombuds curated courses that will link exactly to the harassment course, but other relevant courses that have already been designed. So, that will be one of the features. But in terms of the actual resources, it will depend on what people, what's useful for people, and what I hear, so what I can tell you from other types of groups of this nature, things like intercultural working, or communication, or managing conflict across cultures.

So, these things, I've produced them for other similar situations, but really, I'll be interested to hear from you all, what are the kinds of things that would help you in your work? So, that's the resource question. In terms of the Community Anti-Harassment Policy, so yeah, I think it's, we don't have the data, I think is the short answer to that question. The other thing I think to say with a policy is a policy is a response, and it's not prevention necessarily, so you might, within the policy, define the behavior that's prohibited, but what you want around that, and what I would like for us to do, and to do with the policy, is more around the prevention side, which is communicating the, promoting the positive behavior, and helping to, yeah, promote the positive behavior, and reduce, and kind of mitigate against the undesired behavior.

So, it's too soon, it's, yeah, we don't have the data to say the impact, but generally, organizations don't see that a policy prevents, a policy is what you use when something has happened already, if that helps. Yeah? But it's a good jumping off point to do the prevention work as well. Okay? Yes.

JUDITH HELLERSTEIN

Thanks so much, Liz. Judith Hellerstein, for the record. My question is on, because right now, the Anti-Harassment Policy is only for community members, and it's not also from staff and community, because it could be in a community, we have a harassment by a staff person, and so it's not going to be dealt with in yours, because it's only, until the bylaws are changed by the Board, we won't have that ability of doing that.

But also, my question is, do we know when, is there a timeline of when the Board might change its mind, and put it in there, and then also, how close, I think maybe you asked, do you work with the complaints department, because some people may go to complaints. Complaints in ICANN are DNS complaints, and not necessarily complaints in general.

So, that's sort of what maybe, if you have a newer person, they may go to the wrong area, and I'm just wondering how that, whether that gets moved back to you, what's the procedures or scenario for these types of things? Thanks.

ELIZABETH FIELD

Thanks, Judith, great set of questions there. So, the first thing to say about the new policy, and staff members, I think the kind of key point is that the Board are looking very closely to make sure that every single scenario is covered robustly, and by some policy and some process, right? So, they want, there will be no gaps. So, that is, there is an absolute commitment there that even if it's not

covered in the community Anti-Harassment Policy, there is another equally robust policy that covers these different, is it community member, staff member, staff member, community member, that, so everything is covered.

So, they're looking at this, and this, there will be coverage for those. So, there is, irrespective of your role or position in the organization, everyone has a right to be safe, and everyone has a right to be treated with dignity and respect and to expect that. So, I think that's the, how that's specifically going to work out, that's being done kind of over time. So, I think that's the first thing to say with that. And I don't, as the policy is updated, I don't know exactly what that's going to land on. I don't draft the policy, but I will be giving advice on that.

In terms of the kind of intersection between the work of the Complaints Office and the role of the ombuds, obviously if something comes in that is more suited one to the other, we will refer to each other with the right permissions, et cetera, et cetera. But there is some, yeah, connections and overlap, but not, I think, in a positive way. Does that help answer your question?

JUDITH HELLERSTEIN

All good.

KATHLEEN SCOGGIN

Hi, I'm Kathleen Scoggin. So, I guess this is very related to what Jonathan said. In the development of new courses and materials, et cetera, that's great and lovely, but not super impactful if no one

does them or reads them. Is there any idea that this would be mandatory for anyone? I know that there's mandatory sessions for, or courses, et cetera, for fellows. And maybe this is also a question to the broader community, and maybe I just don't know on what's mandatory here as of now and whether this involves an expansion of that, both in this constituency and outside.

ELIZABETH FIELD

Off, on, thank you. So, that's another great question. And I think you're absolutely right about, it's not just that the courses are there and the information's there, but it's, are the right people getting the information? Because does it help if the people who need to have some supports aren't accessing that? So, that's a really, really good question. I think the mandatory question, I'll set that aside because that's sort of a policy question, right? But what I will bring into it is my own experience. And I think there are other ways, I think, to create the incentives, the norms, the, what do you call it, the sort of, I can't think of the right word now, a kind of collective interest, which is probably much more effective at changing behavior than mandatory.

So, I personally have, I did years ago, I think, again, you look at outcomes, what are the outcomes we're looking for? We're looking to change behavior. So, what are the kind of pathways that are the most effective for that? Sometimes with mandatory training, you can have some positive outcomes in terms of really showing people that this is important and that sort of thing. But what you don't

necessarily get is behavior change because people who take it mandatorily generally aren't super receptive.

So, you don't necessarily get the learning or the change. But again, you work with the outcomes and there are ways to do that. And I think there are ways to create the norm around behavior and I think some of the courses should be aimed at the kind of bigger picture around culture and how we all contribute and where our role is and things like that. So, it's a great question. And it's a kind of perennial question around behavior in group settings and it's what I love to talk about. So, happy to chat more at any time.

JONATHAN ZUCK

So, more like torches and pitchforks then, peer pressure, creating an environment conducive to taking the class, I think.

ELIZABETH FIELD

Yes, that's right, exactly.

JONATHAN ZUCK

Any other questions? Oh, Aziz, please go ahead, please. That will be in French.

AZIZ HILALI

I have a question in French, yes. Yes, you talked about the survey. It's a very good idea, what I would like to know, this survey, is it going to be able to improve transparency and accountability not only at the top of ICANN, at the Board level, but also in the different

parts of ICANN, the SO and the ACs. So, are you going to, do you think deep in the community with that survey?

ELIZABETH FIELD

The question about the survey, the survey is only, it's only, I am only looking at the ombuds office and how feedback and information from the community can help me improve the ombuds office. Now, it will be transparent in the sense that I will be sharing the results, so people will know what the results of the survey are, so I'm hoping that we have more than, say, 20 people taking the survey.

So, I will share the results, there will be transparency, there will be accountability from my end in the sense of here's the action plan to deal with X, Y, and Z, and then we will run it again and look and see how things are progressing. So, from the Ombuds office, this is not about the ecosystem-wide, this is really a focus on the Ombuds office. Does that help?

JONATHAN ZUCK

All right, I think we need to roll onto our next topic, but thanks so much for joining us, and it's always good to keep the touches and make sure that people are aware of you and your office, and can come to you, and like I said, might be coming to you sooner rather than later about clearing up a conversation we just came out of. So, thank you, and with that, I'm going to hand the microphone to Eduardo to talk to us a little bit about the NomCom.

EDUARDO DIAZ

Thank you. This is Eduardo Diaz for The Record. I don't know if some of you don't know what the NomCom is, but I'm going to put it in context here within ICANN. The NomCom is a group of people that, the people that are there, the delegates that work in this group are selected from each SO and AC in ICANN, and the purpose is not to nominate, it's a nominating group, but it's to appoint people, persons to different openings that are in different SOs and ACs that are selected by the NomCom.

Their main idea of this, when this was created, is that they the idea is that you wanted to bring people from outside of ICANN to bring fresh ideas into these positions. However, this is open to everyone, and this is another path for people that are working in ICANN, that are interested in continuing to contribute to ICANN, and you can apply for these positions as well. So, it's, the purpose is one, but it's open to anyone. So, that's what we are, and we have a couple of delegates here.

This is Charles Mok, if you're from there, and then we have Tom Barrett at the end. He's the chair-elect, and Anne-Marie, she's also from here, from my lab, representing the EURALO, I'm representing the NARALO, and there are other ones that you see around. And at the end of this, please, I hope you are motivated to apply for a position, and as you will see, you can apply not only for one, for two positions at the same time. I mean, you have to fill out two different applications, but you will see that you will be able to apply for two positions.

So, if you're going to take the effort of applying, make sure you apply for a second one that you might be interested, because if you cannot get one, maybe you can get an opportunity in another position. Thank you, I'm going to defer now for Charles to go through his presentation.

CHARLES MOK

Yes, thank you, Eduardo. I will go through the positions available in this cycle. So, please, can we go to the next slide? We are looking for leaders, so that means you, the next slide. Yes, first of all, we are looking for three members for the ICANN Board of Directors, so, and the next slide. There's a little bit of caveat to the situation right now, some of you may have heard, because when we opened up the application in January, we were, well, anyone could apply at the time, but the situation changed very recently, because the ccNSO and the GNSO actually selected their Board members very recently.

So, that caused the situation that actually North America right now has hit the maximum of having five Board members on the Board. So, that would mean that, in fact, we can no longer consider North America persons to apply for the Board position. But of course, we know that in some situation, some individuals may have dual-citizenships or residencies and so on, so that they have to take into their own consideration whether they might be eligible to apply from another region or for those people who might have applied before this happened from North America, we will actually send them an email and inform them of the situation, because right now

they might be able to consider applying for another position instead.

The next slide, please. We are also looking for member of the PTI, the Public Technical Identified Board of Director. One position for that. Next. We are also looking for three ALAC members. So, they are going to be coming from the Africa region, the Asia, Australia, and Pacific Islands region, and the Latin America and Caribbean region.

Next. So, that would mean some of you here for the ALAC position, obviously. And also, for the ccNSO position. Oh, the face, oh. Okay, I don't mind. Because if I'm facing here, I can't see the slide, but anyway, that's always this problem. Okay, and we're also, yeah, thank you. Yes, we're also looking for one member of the ccNSO.

For the GNSO Council, we are looking for two positions, one from the contracted party house, and one from the non-contracted party house. So, that's the whole 10 regions, or 10 positions that we're looking for. And again, I think Eduardo also referred to it, you can all apply for up to two positions, okay? So, try not to apply for three, because if that's the case, we might have to drop the third applications that you have, which is not very nice. And so, please make sure that you are applying only up to a maximum of two positions. The deadline to apply will be March 28th at 23:59 UTC time, so make sure you do it before then. You still have a couple of weeks.

If you want to learn more about these positions, please go to this website, and you have all the information, and you can approach

also any of the delegates, well, four of us are here, and also any of the other delegates that you see or you know, you can find out our names from this website and approach us, or send us emails and so on to find out more if you have any questions. But of course, if we have a little bit of time, we can also answer some of the questions. Tom Barrett, who is the co-chair, is here, and Anne Marie is also here. I want to see if you have anything you'd like to add. Tom, no? Or Eduardo, anything to add?

EDUARDO DIAZ

I want to repeat myself that I encourage everyone here to apply, you don't lose anything by doing, you don't have to pay any money, you just apply. And that's another way that you can continue contributing with the ICANN organization and the things that we do here. And again, if you apply, apply to two positions, to the end of interest of you. Thank you.

JONATHAN ZUCK

Hi, Jonathan Zuck, for the record. I'm wondering what you guys do to reach outside of the immediate ICANN community for these roles. What does the, how does the group reach fresh faces for nominations?

CHARLES MOK

I'll try to answer, and then my colleagues can help. We also have found some recruiters to help us reach out to other communities. Obviously, these positions are also put onto social media. We got quite good reach from all the different social media Facebook or

LinkedIn and so on. So, people would notice it from that way. So yes, we do want to get some people, let's say, from outside of the immediate ICANN community to hopefully apply and maybe give us some fresh ideas. Anything to add, Eduardo?

EDUARDO DIAZ

Yes, the recruiter that is helping us and goes out and look for people, they take the criteria of the people that we're looking for and they around the globe, they have a network and they do what they do to find out applicants and motivate them to apply. Thank you.

NITIN WALIA

Yeah, I'm just curious here, are you using recruiters for only the Board or for the other positions also? All the positions, right?

JONATHAN ZUCK

Yeah, no, only the Board. That's it? Only the Board. Nitin?

NITIN WALIA

Sorry, Nitin, for the record, this is only for the Board, actually.

JONATHAN ZUCK

That's right.

NITIN WALIA

The recruiters are only hired for the Board. However, for all other positions, we are doing the paid social media campaigns. And

apart from that, we also, among us who are being associated with various other associations are reaching out to them. So, we have done outreach beyond the ICANN community also in all other fashions to ensure that the technical community, which are there across the globe, can be informed about that. Thank you.

JONATHAN ZUCK

All right, I don't see other hands up. So, thank you very much for the update. Do apply if you're interested to echo what Eduardo said and thank you, Charles, and thanks for all the members of the NomCom for all you do, because you come all the way out here to be sequestered away from everybody else. So, I'm glad you're getting to see a little bit of our icicle lighting at the very least here. So, thank you. I think we're going to move on to the next topic, which is Alan Greenberg to talk a little bit about Board seat 15.

ALAN GREENBERG

Sorry. All right, next slide, please. Okay, Board seat 15 is mandated by the bylaws. It was created originally. The ALAC had a liaison and as a result of indirectly of the first At-Large review. First? Yeah, I think so. We have one at-large director who's a former member of the Board. And as you may know, Leon is on his third term and the bylaws do restrict a Board member from having three consecutive, to having three consecutive terms.

So, for the first time in a few years, we are going to be looking at fresh new faces for the Board seat. The structure and process are somewhat complex one. It was created when we first had the

Board seat by a very large community of people involved in At-Large at the time and is now within the ALAC rules of procedure. There are two committees. A Board member selection process committee, BMSPC, that consists of a chair, one member from each RALO and an alternate from each RALO.

It also includes a Board candidate evaluation committee, which is a chair and two members from each RALO plus an alternate. The Board member, sorry, and just to note, and that becomes important when we select the members, any member of either of the committees cannot run for an office. So, when the time comes to select people for these committees, if you plan to put your name in, don't volunteer for the committee. The BMSPC essentially oversees the whole election process with the exception of the few tasks that are specifically associated with the ALAC, such as naming the chairs of the BMSPC and the BCEC and those that are specifically given to the BCEC.

So, this committee essentially runs the overall process. This is the fifth time we're going to be doing this, so things are down pretty well, Pat. We don't expect this committee to have either a lot of work or take a lot of time other than setting up the initial rules and operating procedures at the beginning.

The BCEC, and I'll quote directly from the rules of procedure, the task of the BCEC is to identify applicants who each would make an excellent Board director. Their tasks include defining the expression of interest, that is the survey that will be filled out by applicants. Again, this has been done several times before, so

we're not expecting this to be an exceedingly complex process, but we have to make sure it applies today and is not out of date. It will issue a request for expressions of interest and evaluate them.

The process will be similar to that done by the NomCom in that the process will include investigation of the possible applicants, will include evaluation by the members of the BCEC, and eventually, hopefully with reasonable consensus, the selection of the people who are on the final slate. As with the NomCom, this has to be done without bias. That is, you can't just vote for the person from your region or the one that you're friendly with, and there's a strong confidentiality aspect to it. The fact that someone applies may or may not be a secret from the rest of the community, but we have to respect whatever it is. To be quite blunt, there have been violations of confidentiality in the past, and we're going to try to make sure it doesn't happen again.

So, the process is a number of steps. The first one is we have to review the rules of procedure, and there's a couple of things that are either out of date because things have changed around our environment. There's a couple of areas that each time we run the process; someone points out that something isn't clear. So, there's a couple of things that we have to clarify. The intent is not to change the process whatsoever, and we're certainly not looking to reinvent this process. We spent an awful lot of time on it once upon a time. Hopefully, that's enough.

There will be a call, a request to the RALOs to select the various people. They have to be ratified by the ALAC. The expression of

interest has to be updated, as I mentioned, and then a call. Once the BCEC does its selection, it will publish the slate of members. At that point, there is an opportunity for the RALOs to add people to the slate. There's a whole bunch of ifs, buts, and ands associated with that, but that is part of the process. And then lastly, an election if needed. If there's only one candidate, then that person is declared the winner. Otherwise, there's a process that goes through.

There is an option in our rules, which we added last time around, to if there is an incumbent member who is eligible, then that person can simply be essentially elected by the electors, the ALAC and the RALO chairs, without going through the full process. That's not an option this time around.

So, as I mentioned, the electors are the 15 ALAC members and the RALO chairs. The process is, if there are more than three candidates, then there's essentially a runoff election that narrows the field down to three, and then one or more votes to actually select the winner. There are provisions for what happens if there are ties, and ties are not particularly impossible, given that we have an even number of electors. And if any of the candidates are among the electors, there's a provision for replacing them with other people. What else? The RALO chairs may be directed by their RALO. In other words, a RALO can decide to direct how their chair votes.

The decision to have a directed vote and the decision for how to vote must be done with a formal vote of the RALO. So, each RALO has an ability to take votes of their members, both individual and

ALSs, and that has to be done on a formal documented vote of the RALOs. ALAC votes may not be directed. ALAC members, of course, may consult with their constituencies if they choose, but they cannot be directed. They have to vote according to their own conscience.

From the RALOs point of view, as I said, you have to select members. You may nominate candidates not selected by the BCEC. These have to be people who have gone through the process, must have submitted an expression of interest, and must have given their permission to let people know that they did that, even if they're not selected. And then each RALO may identify a candidate they believe should be added to the slate. If three RALOs independently select a candidate, then that person will be added to the slate.

Timeline. The rules of procedure work will be going on very soon. By about June, and this is a tentative timeline, and the dates are rounded around, but somewhere around June, we'll have to start selecting the chair, or the chair, the ALAC must appoint the chairs, and before September, the RALOs need to select their members. The two committees will be convened somewhere around September 1st. We expect the expression of interest, the request for expression of interest to go out around about the 1st of October. We expect the slate to be announced approximately 1st of January.

Final slate, 1st of February, that is taking into account any RALO action, and February is an opportunity to meet and interview the various candidates, and we'll make sure we arrange some sort of

process for doing that, and we expect to be able to announce the candidate towards the end of March. It's conceivable that the voting may take place at ICANN85, or it might take place electronically other times. The absolute deadline that the bylaws give us is six months before the annual general meeting, and that makes it the 22nd of April, because the AGM ends on the 22nd of October. And that's all I have. Happy to take any questions. Avri?

JONATHAN ZUCK

Avri?

AVRI DORIA

Thank you. Avri speaking. I just wanted to ask a question. I know it's not that relevant. One of them is not relevant at all for this year. So, in other words, in the past, when you have an incumbent, you don't have to do any of this solicit for new candidates or anything. You can just decide, no process, we just go forward? Is that what I understood you to say?

ALAN GREENBERG

That's a process we added last time around. It wasn't originally in the original rules, and the answer is basically, yes, the vote of the ALAC and the RALO chairs can come after the process is started, but before the slate is announced.

AVRI DORIA

Thanks. And the other thing I assume, I didn't hear you mention that you're in the same constraint of no North Americans, assuming

that things remain as it is, because you have that same boundary of no more than five. So, you're still governed by that same rule. You didn't mention it, but I just wanted to make sure that that was the case.

ALAN GREENBERG

Well, remember, we're talking one year out. So, one would have to look at when terms end and things like that. It's possible.

AVRI DORIA

Okay, thanks.

ALAN GREENBERG

If, for instance, a NomCom appointee's term is ending, then we could get someone in. And remember, we will make the announcement by April, just about the time the NomCom is starting. So, they may be bound because of our rule.

AVRI DORIA

So, in other words, they could be bound not to produce an incumbent because--

ALAN GREENBERG

Yeah, and we might be bound also if there are five North Americans at the time and we don't see anyone leaving. I mean, someone could resign. But if we don't see a planned departure, but if we're

in that situation, we'll be talking to ICANN legal and make sure we're not going to be in an awkward bind. Sebastien?

SEBASTIEN BACHOLLET Yeah, to answer this question, there is one seat from the NomCom who is ending because it's a third term and it's from North America. Therefore, we will not have any bound for the election at that level.

ALAN GREENBERG Someone has done the homework. Thank you.

VANDA SCARTEZINI Yeah, Vanda for the record. What are the conditions for not to apply? For instance, people that is a share of some RALO can apply, cannot apply. How is that?

ALAN GREENBERG There is no such prescription.

VANDA SCARTEZINI No, no restrictions?

ALAN GREENBERG Not that I'm aware of. As I said, someone who's involved, who volunteers to be involved in the process can't apply

VANDA SCARTEZINI

Oh, of course.

ALAN GREENBERG

Other than that, I don't think there are any restrictions.

VANDA SCARTEZINI

Yeah.

ALAN GREENBERG

Obviously, a Board member who's leaving, who has already served three terms can't apply.

VANDA SCARTEZINI

That is the Board role, not ours. Yeah.

ALAN GREENBERG

There may be some restrictions somewhere of who can't apply. I can't think of what it is though.

VANDA SCARTEZINI

Okay, just to know.

ALAN GREENBERG

Eduardo?

-
- EDUARDO DIAZ I don't know if you said it there, but it's anyone in At-Large can apply? Is that, I think that's the question.
- ALAN GREENBERG Anyone can apply, what their chances are of getting selected if we've never heard of them before. That has, in several of the elections we have, we have had applicants who are not part of our community. That's fine. If they're really good, maybe they'll win.
- JONATHAN ZUCK All right, great. Thank you, Alan. Now we're going to move on to an update on the Grant Program. Giovanni?
- SHAYNA ROBINSON Yes. Hello. My name is Shayna Robinson.
- JONATHAN ZUCK Oh, hey Shana.
- SHAYNA ROBINSON Yes, hey. And I'm the Grant Program director and I'm here with my colleague, Giovanni Seppia, who is the vice president of implementation operations. And together we've been working to deliver the ICANN Grant Program. If we can go to the next slide. I'll try to move through this a bit quickly. Number one, because we have limited time here, but also because on Thursday we have a

session, a Grant Program session at 1:15 in region CB. So, it's just on the other side of the wall here.

Where we'll go through a bit more detail and share a bit more data with the group. So, if you'd like to ask more specific questions if we run out of time, please join us there. If we can go to the next slide. And the next one after that. The last time I spoke to this group, I think was to ask for your support in sharing information about the Grant Program with your networks and with your constituencies and communities as we open the Grant Program window in March of last year and closed it a few weeks later in May.

So, today I wanted to just talk a little bit about what has happened since then and where we find ourselves today. So, if we go to the next slide. At the close of our application window, we went through an evaluation process of all the applications that we received. The next few slides sort of outline what that process was. So, if we go to the next slide, we'll talk about the first step, which was a first internal review. This really was an opportunity for us at ICANN to assess all applications and screen them based on inadmissibility or ineligibility criteria and to label any items that we thought needed additional follow-up or to flag those for teams internally that we needed feedback from.

If we go to the next slide, you'll see where we have outlined that criteria. This was all detailed in the applicant guide. The application admissibility, all of the requirements of how that application had to be submitted, as well as organization eligibility,

and activities eligibility. So, again, all of those things were documented in our applicant guide.

We go to the next slide. We can talk a bit about our independent panel. This panel was supported by an external vendor. This was not managed by ICANN. This was a group of people outside of ICANN that we used to screen and assess all applications that made it to that stage based on a set of criteria. That again was outlined in the Applicant Guide. That group consisted of 52 different people from around the world, different expertise, different communities who looked at and assessed those applications in sub panels that were broken up according to thematic area.

Each application received a score for individual criteria, as well as an overall score and additional feedback for each of those criteria was given in a consensus report at the end of that assessment. ICANN received at the end of that a rank order list. So, this was all of the applications that were assessed in order from top to bottom of who scored the highest and all the way down.

We go to the next slide. We can look at sort of what was the criteria that was used by the panel to assess those applications. And again, this is detailed in the Applicant Guide, but they really were looking for specific information in each application and scored each criteria on a 0-1 scale or 0-4, excuse me, scale. Again, each application received a consensus report which details those scores and feedback per criteria.

Once we received back from that vendor, the ranked list, we went through again, our sort of short list of applicants, those who were

at the very top of that rank order list to verify and validate that they were in fact eligible and admissible to receive funding from the program. This included looking at things related to conflicts of interest and trade regulations, background checks, and additional due diligence, as well as mission alignment and any duplication of activities that ICANN is already funding.

And finally, we had to go through for certain applicants in different parts of the world an equivalency determination process to ensure that they were meeting all the standards for eligibility. If we go to the next slide, this is sort of what we just celebrated in January, which was the production of our final slate of applications that would move forward in funding, which was presented to the Board. The Board on January 26, Giovanni knows, passed a resolution to move forward with that final slate of applicants. And we are in the process of working with those applicants to sign contracts and grant agreements in order to start dispersing funds.

So, unfortunately, we have not concluded all of those negotiations and contracts just yet. So, we're not able to publicly announce those awards until we do so. So, at the moment, we're still keeping that information confidential, but we hope that very soon we'll be able to publish the awardees.

If we go to the next slide, even though we're not able to share specific information about grantees, we can share trends more broadly and just talk about sort of what we received, but also to provide data on the applicants that were selected. We received 247 applications overall. The final slate includes 23 applications. So,

the math on that is an acceptance rate of a bit under 10%, which means that this round was pretty competitive, which is good and bad, depending on how you look at it. But we had lots of participation from all over the world. And again, I want to thank this group in particular for helping us to spread the word about the program.

As I said, grant agreement negotiations are currently taking place. We hope that all 23 of those applications that were included in the final slate will make it to a successful negotiation and execution of the agreement, though it's not done yet. So, we're still working on it as we speak, but we're hopeful that we'll be able to complete that soon. If we go to the next slide, I'll share a little bit about regions of where those 23 applications come from, which is a pretty even split. I think we did pretty well.

Again, we had more participation from certain countries versus others. But in terms of the 23, I think there's great geographic diversity represented here. If we go to the next slide, we can see countries specifically. Out of the 247 applications that we received, 22% of all of those came from the United States. So, when you see five there at the top of the United States, the likelihood that they would be a bit more competitive in the process bears out because they submitted quite a bit of applications. But you also see that for Kenya, which submitted 11% of the total 247 applications.

The Netherlands, we also had great representation in terms of their awards. If we go to the next slide, the total amount of funding for this grant cycle, the very first grant cycle was \$10 million. That was

the ceiling that we used and that we communicated. So, as of today, again, we're still in the negotiation process. But as of today, total grant awards for this cycle would be just under that 10 million at 9.9 million. And you can see on the slide, again, the amount funded to each region representing quite a bit of diversity.

The average grant amount is over \$400,000 per grant. The cap, again, the ceiling for this cycle was 500,000. So, we have a few that are a bit lower than that, but also most of them skewing towards the higher end of 500,000. And then finally, if we go to the next slide, if we think about sort of the themes that the program was to support, and again, those themes are detailed in the applicant guide, you can see that there's great diversity as well in terms of the projects and the themes that they're working on. Though that big yellow one at the bottom is around security and stability of the DNS and other unique identifier systems. And that one certainly was mostly represented in the final slate.

So, again, we're really excited once we get through these negotiations to be able to publicly share the list of applicants and projects that will be funded for our inaugural grant cycle. We appreciate everyone who participated, those who submitted applications. Even if you weren't funded, we appreciate it. And we hope that you come back to resubmit applications in future cycles. As we had limited funding, again, with that \$10 million cap, but we hope continued participation and we hope to be able to provide more information about future cycles very soon. I think with that,

if we go to the next slide, I think that might be it. Yes, that's it. So, take any questions.

JONATHAN ZUCK

Hi, it's Jonathan Zuck for the record. Just quickly, in terms of the applications you received, do you have numbers for what percentage of those passed all the criteria? You reached the limit of the money, but how did the applicant pool do in terms of the criteria that you laid out?

SHAYNA ROBINSON

Yeah, that's a good question. We do have specifics. I don't have it off the top of my head, but I will say that there were many, most did, but there was a significant number that did not. And I think part of that has to do with ICANN being better able to articulate exactly the types of projects we want to support and the eligibility requirements. But we're also looking at how we can, for future cycles, either expand criteria so that more people become eligible, but also that we expand what the actual thematic areas are so that more projects become eligible or more activities become eligible. But I don't know exactly. Giovanni's writing. 111 were not eligible.

CHARLES MOK

No, all of them.

SHAYNA ROBINSON

All passed.

CHARLES MOK

111 passed.

SHAYNA ROBINSON

Passed. 111 passed all criteria, yes.

JONATHAN ZUCK

It was a little under half.

GIOVANNI SEPPIA

111 at the panel level.

JONATHAN ZUCK

Okay. Amrita.

AMRITA CHOUDHURY

Thank you. So, and thanks for this information. I had two questions. The numbers which you showed out here are the ones they have been selected or are the applications which reach the final stages? And if we look at the application program, it's taking quite a lot of time. Many people may have moved also from some organizations when they were doing. Are you looking at reducing this program? Because even the government have a shorter time span than this.

SHAYNA ROBINSON

Yes, thank you. Yes, so the data that is represented here is for all applications included in the final slate. So, there's just the 23. In terms of time, I could not agree more. I'm fairly new to ICANN, so I'm learning all the ins and outs and processes of how things work here. But certainly, that's something that we hope to speed up and make more efficient. Our ability from the time we open the application window to the time that we are contracting and giving out funds, we absolutely want to improve time on that. So, that's a key performance indicator for us moving forward of how we can improve that. And yes, people who have submitted applications in March of 2024, now in March 2025 things have changed.

So, we want to make sure that we are able to do that as quickly as possible, but still maintaining integrity of our program and of our due diligence process. So, thank you.

JONATHAN ZUCK

All right, I don't know who was first. So, using my Western bias, I'll go to Lance first.

LANCE HINDS

Thank you, sir. Just a comment, not so much a question. I hope that when you finalize all the contractual details that you need to, along with the list, if it is possible to give some more information on the successful projects, primarily because of the fact that when you responded to all the applicants, you either didn't get it or didn't get it, but you simply, because of the numbers, you couldn't say

why they didn't do it. So, we don't know, and you know, in which area we failed or we were insufficient or we didn't do that.

If by publishing those projects, it might be able to give us to some extent an understanding of what it is that the unsuccessful applicants didn't do in order to when the next time it comes around, you can submit a better application. Because in its current form, it's just that you know that you didn't make it and that's fine. But it's just that it would help if we understand to some level the reasons why we weren't successful.

SHAYNA ROBINSON

Yes. So, two things to that. So, yes, we are going to publish and make public the award winners. We won't share all the details of those projects, but yes, we will make them public. And secondly, if you did apply and you weren't awarded or you're not included in the final slate, please, as stated in the applicant guide, you can reach out to our Grant Program email to receive additional feedback about why that was. It was difficult for us to do that at the beginning and to make sure everyone got notice as quickly as possible. So, if you have done now, yes, you can send an email to our GrantProgram@ICANN.org and we'll be happy to provide additional information. No problem.

JONATHAN ZUCK

All right. I've got two more questions. We're going to close the queue.

ABDULKARIM OLOYEDE

Thank you very much for the presentation. For the records, my name is Abdikarim. I wanted to find out why the secrecy behind the winners? Because I was thinking generally you would announce winners, then you now start negotiating the contract. So, why is it like the other way around in this occasion? Then also in terms of feedback, which is just a follow-up, generally speaking, again, feedback is supposed to be sent. You're now saying it's the other way around and you need to ask for feedback before you get the feedback. Thank you.

SHAYNA ROBINSON

So, to your first question, so generally the practice is to ensure that we actually are awarding those grants to those organizations and we don't have certainty until we actually sign agreements. And so, that's why we've not made the list public. We want to make sure that in fact, we are entering into partnership with those organizations and that they are going to deliver those projects. So, it's not necessarily secrecy. It's just a technicality that we want to make sure that if we announce something, that in fact, that is what's going to take place. So, we have to have certainty around that.

And then secondly, for feedback, we did provide applicants, all applicants notice to let them know whether or not they were successful in being included in the final slate. If you would like specific feedback, individualized feedback, including information that was provided by the panel where they gave scores or written

feedback about your project, that's something that you would have to reach out to us for to request. But our system wasn't able to deliver that out to everyone automatically. And so, this is the best way that we can do that, if that makes sense. Thank you.

JONATHAN ZUCK

One more, one more. We really got to wrap up.

ALFREDO CALDERON

Thank you. This is Alfredo for the transcript record. And I guess Shayna knew that I was going to ask something sooner or later. I always do. But my question is in the applicant guide, is there a clear expectation of the timeline when I apply or the applicants did and that they had to wait almost a year after that so that the project that they were submitting met those criteria of the timeline?

SHAYNA ROBINSON

Yes, there was a timeline that was outlined. That timeline sort of ended and anticipated the Board taking the resolution at the end of the year. We were able to achieve that at the end of January instead. And now this sort of contracting negotiation process was anticipated for February and March. So, we're sort of in that and we're still following that timeline. But again, we recognize it's a long time. And so, we hope, again, this will be an indicator for us moving forward of how we improve that and make sure because these are living projects and they are time-bound. So, we want to

make sure that we're responding in a way that's very helpful. So, thank you for that feedback.

JONATHAN ZUCK

Thank you.

SHAYNA ROBINSON

Thanks.

JONATHAN ZUCK

This meeting is adjourned.

[END OF TRANSCRIPTION]