
ICANN84 | AGM – GNSO: NCSG Wrap-up
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ANDREA GLANDON

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RAFIK DAMAK

Thanks, Andrea, and thanks to everyone for making it to our last NCSG session of this long week. I hope you didn't get tired of my lovely voice this week, but here we are.

So this is the wrap-up session, something we are trying to hold in each ICANN meeting, and the idea is to have kind of retrospective and review, and to think if we have any follow-up on any Action

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Items. So, we got quite a packed agenda this week, but we are kind of trying to see, to share our thoughts. But for this time, we also took the opportunity to invite the ICANN Applicant Guidebook team to share with us some updates from the program, and to be accurate, they asked or they sent communication to all and the whole community if anyone interested to meet with them, and I could not miss this opportunity to have this interaction and to hear more about the program.

With that, we'll start with the update about the Applicant Guidebook, maybe for 40 minutes, we will see how long it takes, and then we will go to the second part about the proper wrap-up and review. And with that, I will ask maybe Marika.

MARIKA KONINGS

Yeah, thank you, Rafik. Hi, everyone. My name is Marika Konings. I serve as the lead for the New gTLD program here with a number of my colleagues, but I think as you are probably aware, it's an all army that is supporting us on getting the implementation of the program done.

We'll be covering the Applicant Guidebook, but we'll also go a little bit broader about the other work that is happening within the program. But obviously, we're a small group here. If you have any questions or any topics that we may not be covering, but that you would like to hear about, we can, of course, try to address those as well.

Go to the next slide, please. And the next one, and the next one. So, this one, you may have seen already in other meetings as well or in previous sessions that we've held, this is the way we present the status of implementation of the program. There are a number of elements that make up the program. The Applicant Guidebook is one of those, which appears on the first one here, Work Stream 1 Policy Implementation, but the various other aspects that need to come together for us to be able to open the window for applications in April 2026.

I won't go into much detail here, but maybe just encourage you to review the pre-ICANN84 briefing that we posted on our website, and hoping that one of my colleagues may have the link handy to put in the chat, where we go into details for each of these projects that are here on the list and cover their current status and what is the work that's still remaining, what are some of the issues that we're working through, and I said that we'll hopefully give you a good insight into all the work that's happening within the program.

If we go to the next one, please. So, this is one that we've been sharing previously as well, this is the Critical Path. So, these are really the must-have elements or the most complete aspects of the program before we're able to open the application window in April 2026. We shared this as well in our Prep Week session and as well as other meetings that we've had here this week.

One change that we did make here is that the finalization of the Base Registry Agreement is now foreseen to happen in March 2026.

That was originally foreseen for December 2025, but there are a number of ancillary documents that require updating and that we're still working through, so we kind of decided it made sense to finalize all that as a package. But having said that, I think you may be aware, I think the Public Comment 2 is currently open or may have recently closed on the Base Registry Agreement.

We don't anticipate any further changes there apart from one area where there is currently a placeholder, and as Dennis said, the ancillary documents, so it shouldn't prevent applicants from already reviewing that information and being aware of what obligations they will be signing up to once they've successfully gone through the program and signed their Registry Agreement.

And then we just have one more slide on the overall program that just kind of covers within each of these critical path items, what are some of the key dependencies. And you'll see here as well, there are quite a few items that we've already worked through, but still some pieces that need to complete. But I think main takeaway is that we're currently still on track to open the window for applications in April 2026.

And I think with that, I'm handing it over to Jared to give you a brief update on the Applicant Guidebook.

JARED ERWIN

Yes. Hi, everyone. My name is Jared Erwin. I think Lars was originally going to be here, Lars' team, but he's somewhere else

right now, so I'm going to fill in for him and just give you a brief update on the AGB, which we can go to the next slide. You may have seen some of this information in several of our other sessions that we've had in various fora throughout the week. But here's just some stats for you.

We actually had a fun little cocktail with the IRT last night where we quizzed them on some of these stats. But yes, we started over two years ago. Since then, we've had over 160 full IRT meetings. We also have four subgroups, one of which is ASP, and Kristy is here today, and 257 hours in calls, not including work time. So, a lot of different work, 125 members, a lot of different people working on this.

And so, all those people together and all that time resulted in the next slide, which shows you kind of the overview of the AGB. 441 pages about. That is the implementation details of over 300 outputs from the GNSO SubPro Final Report, which covered 41 different topics.

The AGB went through five different public comment proceedings since, I think, starting last year, the beginning of the year, and the most recent in May, and five different Board resolutions to cover all of those different outputs from the SubPro Final Report.

You can see there on the right kind of the skeleton of the AGB and the different areas that it covers. The first module there is really the one-stop shop of the AGB. So, this is the applicant journey. So, interested parties can go to that module first and kind of see the

whole life of the application from start to finish, and what it will require, and fees, and evaluations, and other things like that.

And then the rest of the modules cover what's in the applicant journey and in much more detail. And then also many 12 different appendices covering even more detail on different things, one of which the first appendix is the application questions. So, all the questions that will be asked of an applicant appear there and will be able to be looked at and prepared for prior to the opening of the round.

And the link to the latest draft is there at the top. And that's a good segue to the next slide, I think, which has a little bit about where we are right now, which is that we have submitted a kind of proposed, or not kind of, but a proposed final version to the Board for consideration. And they will consider that at their meeting in about an hour. And we are expecting that they'll adopt that AGB at that time.

And as part of that adoption, they will note that the Org has until 30th of December to formally publish the AGB. That gives us a little time to make sure everything's in line, maybe tiny copy edits, things like that, but also a couple things that need to be wrapped up, such as the DRSP rules. And you can see some of those things in that list there at the bottom of the slide.

And then, so essentially the work of the IRT is mostly done, but because there's a few things that we're still working on, one of which Marika mentioned related to the registry agreement, the

work will continue for a little bit longer with the IRT until January. I think that's it for me. We turn it to Christina.

KRISTY BUCKLEY

Thank you, Jared. Hello, everyone. My name is Kristy Buckley, and I serve as the lead for the New gTLD program's Applicant Support Program, or ASP. I believe the topic of interest that we were told in advance of this session was that you were looking into the non-financial support piece of it, so I'll talk a little bit about that more. But we thought it might be also helpful to give a bit of a status update on how things are going as well.

So if we go to the next slide, please. This is just a reminder of what ASP is. I think most of you are aware. But we do mention here that supported applicants will benefit both from the financial support in terms of the reduced fees, as well as the bid credit, and then the reduced Base Registry Agreement fees. And then they also have access to non-financial supports, such as capacity development, training, and resources to help guide them along their applicant journey, so to speak.

The next slide talks about audience segmentation. So, these are the sort of three ways that we've been thinking about the different audiences that we have in the Applicant Support Program. So, as many of you are probably aware, our Communications and Engagement team have done extensive awareness raising among prospective applicants globally, many of which have been in close

collaboration with community members, which we really appreciate.

As we move into the last couple of months and weeks of the program being open for applications, the team heavy focus is on the applicants that are in the pipeline, really helping to support them making progress and moving through that pipeline, and we have some updates on what we're doing there.

And then as you might have noted a couple of months ago, we had the first few applicants qualify for support, so that we're also thinking about them as a distinct audience and really trying to get them prepared to apply for a gTLD now that they've finished the ASP application process.

So, the next slide provides an update on that middle audience there, the pipeline applicants, and what we mean by that is just anyone that's already in the ASP application system. So, as you can see here, we have in the purple circle on the left a total of 115 applications. This is an increase of 12 since we last reported on this on the 7th of October.

And we have introduced a more sophisticated sort of aging report. We had some questions from the GAC, ALAC, and other community members to get a better sense of, okay, we're seeing a lot of numbers in terms of applications, but how many of those folks might actually be interested to apply, and how many of them might make it all the way through the program, versus maybe people that

were just curious or even community members that may have been poking around the system.

And of course, any time that an account is created, it adds to our numbers, right? So, we introduced an aging report, and that tells us when an applicant is the last active in the system. And so for those that have not been active in the last 90 days, we are considering them inactive when we've removed them from the active applicant pipeline.

So, that bottom row here in the gray shows we've pulled out 33 applications that we would consider inactive as not really being in the system in the last three months. And then all of the colored circles at the top are what we would consider still active applications as of the 19th of October. And this shows where each of those applications are in the stages of the application process.

The next slide shows the geographic distribution. So, when you add up all of the colored circles in the active applications in the pipeline, it's a total of 81. These are across all five regions, and 28 countries or territories. We have been asked a number of times to publish the list of all the countries that we've seen applications from. It's not something that we plan to do or feel like that we can do.

In talking with our colleagues in Global Stakeholder Engagement who are embedded in the regions, they have indicated that it's such a small community and small industry that if you were to see there were two applications from a certain country, you may be able to

guess with a high degree of certainty who those applicants are and maybe even what strings they're applying for.

So, this is to protect the business confidentiality of ASP applicants until reveal day when the public portions of all gTLD applications will be published. So, what we have shown here is the total number of applications in a region, and then to give people a sense of the geographic distribution, how many countries that cover.

So, in the Africa region we have 12 total, and this spans seven different countries. In APAC we have 28 total, and this spans 13 different countries. So, we're trying to give the community a sense of the geographic diversity, but without compromising every single country and the number of applications from those countries.

We have told the GAC, but if this is a concern for the community, you could talk to a GAC rep, for example, that if they really would like to understand if there are any applications from the country and how many, that they could certainly contact the stakeholder engagement regional vice presidents. We do provide that data confidentially to them to share with their GAC representatives.

Okay, next slide is, again, the focus on applicants in the pipeline. So we have outlined here the objectives for supporting applicants in the pipeline and some of the activities that we have undertaken to do so. We've reported out on this frequently in the last couple of months, so I don't want to belabor it, but a couple of things that I want to highlight are we are sending out bi-weekly emails to all applicants in the pipeline, and this is using an email management

system that allows us to see, you know, what percentage of those emails were opened and where they are clicking on the different resources.

So we're saying like, hey, you might want to check out the pro bono service providers and mentors list. Here's where you can find that. There's a recent resource or micro video that's been posted. Here's the link to that, and then we can see which resources different applicants are going to, and that also helps us refine what we're sending out to them every other week.

We've also recently introduced at the beginning of October virtual office hours. So, these are every week with alternating time zones to accommodate people in different regions, and there's no agenda, but we just say come with any questions, comments, concerns that you have. These are only available to applicants in the pipeline. They are anonymous in the sense that only the hosts of the webinar can see who's participating, and they could submit questions to the Q&A pod.

Those office hours are recorded and they're posted on the website along with a summary of the key topics or questions that were raised in the office hours in case it's helpful to other applicants. We've also had a number of webinars introducing the pro bono service providers and mentors, just trying to create awareness and visibility that those resources are available, and we also oriented all the pro bono service providers and mentors to let them know that they may be contacted by ASP applicants even before they

have qualified for support, maybe because they need help with their ASP application, and all of them have indicated that they're happy to provide that support.

Lastly, we have issued a survey to applicants in the pipeline back in May, and we've also issued a survey to pro bono service providers and mentors just to get a sense of any challenges, concerns, questions. Both of the survey responses have very low response rates, which is sort of typical of any survey anywhere these days, but we did hear some feedback from applicants in the survey pipeline of things that they were challenged by, that we had global support applicant councilor reach out to them directly to help address and alleviate, and on the pro bono service mentor survey, we just asked, like, how many of you have been contacted by an applicant? How many of you are providing services already to an applicant?

Again, only a handful of responses, and a handful of people saying, yes, I've been contacted, and yes, I'm providing services. We'll continue to remind people to fill out that survey so we can get more data, but so far, we're not seeing a ton of update on the pro bono service providers or mentors, so open to ideas on how to, you know, continue socializing that beyond what we're what we're already doing here.

Next slide is about that last audience segment that I mentioned earlier, the supported applicants, so these are folks that have gone through the application process and that have qualified for

support. So, the first were announced in August, and we've also announced recently an extension to the ASP application submission deadline, so for applicants that have created and submitted their organizational information by the 19th of November, we'll now have until the 19th of December to submit a full ASP application, and there's an announcement on the website. I can put that in the chat for more details.

We have also created a supported applicant toolkit, and that's been published on the website. It's geared towards supported applicants, but it is available for anyone publicly to use, and it may be helpful for any sort of New gTLD applicant in the next round, and again, we've partnered with pro bono service provider professionals to provide more in-depth guidance and also give them an opportunity to showcase what they have to offer, as well as the weekly touch points and trying to think about how we connect supported applicants to ICANN community groups as well.

The last slide just does a deeper dive on that supported applicant toolkit, as you can see here. So, it outlines starting their learning journey as they prepare to apply for a gTLD, as well as understanding the benefits of the full package of support that's available to them, when that's available to them, how they can utilize that, as well as getting more involved in building their knowledge.

So, this includes a curated list of available ICANN Learn courses and other resources that we suggest to get them started. And with that,

I think I turn it over back to Jared or Marika on the applicant journey. Jared, thank you.

JARED ERWIN

That's news to me, actually, but that's fine. Should know this in and out. Next slide, please. So, here, again, this is some information that we've presented a few different places this week and is, of course, also in the Applicant Guidebook. So, who can apply? That's legal entities, such as corporations, organizations, institutions, as well as governmental, non-governmental, and intergovernmental entities. The application submission period will open in April 2026.

There is currently in the AGB a placeholder for the exact date, but as I noted earlier, we have until the end of December, basically, to publish the final version, and at that time, the date would be inserted. And the submission period would be open for 12 to 15 weeks, and that will also be determined at that time, as well, by the 30th December date.

The fee for an application is \$227,000 plus any conditional fees, which are dependent on the type of application or string that you are applying for or submitting. And then the applications will be submitted via the TLD application management system, or TAMS, as we call it.

Next slide, please. So, here, you can see the full flow chart of the life of the application. It starts there at the top from the application

submission period and going through the string confirmation day when all the strings are finalized. I think we have a little bit more detail on the next slide. And then after string confirmation day is when it goes into the various different evaluations and the community input period.

That's the application comment period, objection period, GAC advice filing period. And then if it's in contention, it would go into contention resolution, and then after contention resolution would be the application and applicant evaluations. So, application evaluations are things like Geonames, geographic name review, reserve name review. And then applicant evaluations are things like background screening and financial evaluation. And then after that would be contracting and then on to delegation.

Oh, okay. That's it, actually. So, I was speeding through there thinking there was more. Sorry about that. But if you do have questions happy to answer, we can go back and look more if you'd like. Okay.

RAFIK DAMAK

Thanks, Jared. Thanks for all those updates. First, maybe I will ask Juan to speak as he is one of our members active in the IRT. Yes, Juan.

JUAN MANUEL ROJAS

Thank you, Rafik. This is Juan for the record. No, just to say maybe publicly thanks for all your work. It has been a hard work, even for

us. But it had been a lot of work during a long period of time. And maybe I have just one question just because you know that inside the SubPro it was a non-agreement and it was deferred to the council and they are discussing there the council.

I think it's a string similarity from the-- But it's just, how is the SubPro right now managing that? Because we have some options that maybe come out from the IRT, but now the council has new options. And maybe how are you going to manage this result in the final AGB or something like that, just in case that maybe it's not this result that you expected. Those are my questions. Thank you very much.

JARED ERWIN

Thanks, Juan. So, you're referring to whether or not reserve names will be considered as part of the string similarity evaluation. Thanks. Yeah. So, currently in the AGB, we have basically place holder language and we have a footnote in there noting that the GNSO council is currently considering that.

At the council meeting yesterday, I think, they decided to defer a decision on that. And as Lars mentioned in that meeting, because they were concerned about timing as it related to the AGB and the council noted that they're meeting again on the 13th. And Lars said that fits within the timeline, the 30th December date that I mentioned.

And essentially, all that staff can do or was waiting to do is, hear that decision and we'll make updates to the language as required. In terms of the options, I think they're the same or similar options that were presented in the letter. I hope that helps. I don't know if anyone has anything to add.

JUAN MANUEL ROJAS

I think it's almost the same, I think, as far as I understand, because they have another three or four options inside the decision of the council. I get lost with that. But, yeah, it was just how we are going to manage and maybe it's just a language thing that it's okay. Thank you very much.

RAFIK DAMAK

Okay. Thanks, Juan. So, before going to Pedro, I have myself a question to Kristy. So, Kristy, can you go back to that slide where we have the numbers?

KRISTY BUCKLEY

The pipeline numbers, the colored? Yeah.

RAFIK DAMAK

Yeah, okay. So, because I would like to ask here from the, because we had this discussion in the GDP about the applicant support and setting the metrics. For now, we have only two fully approved. I mean, the total numbers looks fine, but just I'm wondering if you, I

mean, you think that we will match the metrics that we set in the GDP group?

KRISTY BUCKLEY

Yeah, it's an excellent question. It's very hard to tell without maybe a crystal ball to get a sense of how many applicants will submit a complete application. Of those that a complete application, how many will really be eligible and qualify? Of those that are eligible and qualify, how many of them will in fact submit a gTLD application. Because maybe they qualify for ASP, but then they change their mind, and just for those that may not be aware, the GDP refers to the GNSO guidance process for ASP, for the Applicant Support Program.

And they were tasked by the GNSO council with defining metrics for success for the Applicant Support Program. And one of the metrics of success that they defined was that a certain percentage of all gTLD applicants should be supported. Sorry, let me restate that. A certain percentage of all gTLD applicants that are, make it all the way through to delegation should have been supported.

So it's not just the number that qualify, right? They really want to see success all the way through to delegation and that those supported applicants become registry operators. So, at this stage, this is several years away, a couple of years away now until we get to that stage. It's really hard to tell.

What I can say is that we are doing everything that we can to make resources available, to make ourselves available in a very transparent and equitable way to all ASP applicants in the pipeline and to encourage them to continue their application, to address any challenges or concerns or questions that they might have. And if you're hearing anything from applicants or you have additional ideas, especially as we are coming to the final weeks of the application submission period, to let us know what else you think might be helpful to support them through the pipeline. Thanks.

RAFIK DAMAK

Yeah, no, thanks Kristy, just as someone who worked in the first African support in 2011 and in GDP and just, I mean, we were also in GDP working, we spent so much time and I think we set quite low metric, but even with that I'm just worried that at the end we are not going to maybe match that target. So yeah, just I'm kind of afraid, I mean, the number for applicant applications looks good maybe, but the number of are inactive and so on, so it's kind of concerning. But anyway, so we have a queue, and sorry, Pedro, I put myself in the queue before you, it's just I don't need to self-raise my hand. Okay, so we have Pedro, then Tapani and Peter. Yeah, please go ahead.

PEDRO LANA

Thanks, Rafik, Pedro Lana for the records. The first question was actually about the nature of the applicants, the categories, we have the data, for the applications that were already submitted on the

ASP statistics websites, but I don't know if it's possible to have the data on the previous ones, the organization submitted, I don't know if it's available or if it can be public, if we could have it would be interesting to know how much of those that are actually non-commercial have started the process, but and abandoned during the way.

The second one related to this one is if we have motivations for those that became inactive or withdrawn, you mentioned that there was a continuous feedback process and we don't have many answers to that, but if there's a specific stage of asking when the organization, the application is becoming inactive or it is withdrawn, what were the reasons for that?

And the last one is about, since the non-financial support as far as I understand was not being used that much, if they are allowed to contact the applicants directly, I know that this may be an issue because of confidentiality, but if there's a possibility to create a channel for them to reach them directly in an anonymous way or something like that, and of course since it's a pro bono work, if they would be willing to do those kind of things, I know you can't have the answer right now, but just as a suggestion on how this service may could be used a little bit more.

KRISTY BUCKLEY

Thank you for those questions, I'll do my best to remember all three of them. So, I just put a link in the chat about, I think your first question was about the entity types, right? So at this stage, when

they submit what type of entity they are, that's really the phase two of the application process. For many of them, they've submitted maybe their legal form, so are they a non-profit organization, are they a limited liability company, but they haven't yet selected what entity type.

There're five eligible entity types for applicant support. Once we have that information, that will be updated on the website, and we do update those numbers monthly. And I believe, I'm not looking at it right now, we do have a number that are considered non-profit organizations, for example. The second question about understanding why applicants may have withdrawn or not completed an application 100%.

So, as part of the continuous monitoring and evaluation for the program, which was also related to the GDP guidance recommendations that we were talking about earlier, we have several surveys. One is a survey about engagement and awareness. So, if they've attended an event, we've asked them like, hey, you attended an event, please take a survey quickly. Let us know, was this information useful to you? Do you feel like you have a good sense of the program?

Again, survey responses are terrible on the response rate, but we have the survey available. We're still encouraging people to do it. We also have like an applicant pipeline survey, and that is issued to every applicant that's gone through this pipeline, but really only at the end of that process. So, for example, the first three that have

qualified have received that to say, hey, tell us like how is it to use the system? Were the materials accessible to you? Did you have any challenges? Because we want to use that information to, you know, think about continuous improvement for the next iteration of this.

When the application window closes, no matter where applicants were in that pipeline, they will also receive that same survey so that we can get a sense of, you know, you were in this pipeline process, please give us some feedback on how that experience was for you. If you were an applicant that did not submit a complete application, please indicate why so that we can again use that information to hopefully improve it in the future.

And then part of that continuous monitoring evaluation will include focus groups. This won't be until after we have, we don't have to worry about the protecting the business confidentiality of applicants, but inviting different types of applicants that were in the process, whether they completed it, whether they qualified or didn't qualify, just to hear different perspectives.

Ideally, we would have a mix from different regions as well as different entity types, like a non-profit and small business and so on, so that we can get a sense from diverse perspectives of how this process went for them. So, those are some of the continuous monitoring and evaluation mechanisms we have in place to learn and to inform future iterations.

And then your last question about the pro bono service providers. So, we have made the list available to applicants. We have sent that to them many times. We've had webinars inviting pro bono service providers and mentors to sort of pitch what they have to offer, what services, what languages, what regions, what their experience is in the industry.

In terms of sharing applicant data with a third party, including the GAC, because the GAC also asked for this, it's, I think there are sort of data privacy and data governance concerns with doing that. So, that is a limitation. But certainly, the list is available. We've encouraged people to utilize and reach out to pro bono service providers and mentors.

PEDRO LANA

Perfect, thanks. What I was thinking was actually creating a channel so they, like using the emails that ICANN Org has and creating a channel so the providers that are related, speak the same language, sorry, pro bono providers that speak the same language of their organizations could reach them, like kind of like a mailing list, just to remember continuously that they are available. I know this may not be that effective, but maybe saying hi, it's me, I'm able to do that, maybe a way for them to actually try to get those proven. I don't know how effective it would be.

RAFIK DAMAK

Thanks Pedro, just trying to be mindful about time. So, we'll maybe hear a question from Tapani and Peter and please be brief, because they're already like almost 38 minutes in this meeting and we want to wrap up on this part so we can move to the next.

TAPANI TARVAINEN

Okay, I have a question you may actually have heard in some way before, namely about what's going to happen with Latin Diacritics. And for you, I will phrase it simply that if, assume that the powers that be decided, make it happen, the Board gives you an order, make it happen, how hard would it be to do?

KRISTY BUCKLEY

Yeah, thank you for that question. It all depends as well what they exactly tell us to do. And obviously we'll do what the Board tells us, we'll just then need to make an assessment, what impact that has on the program and potentially the timeline.

I think at this point we cannot predict what that looks like, but again, once we have, I think specifically guidance from the council, because I think that's where that currently sits, who presumably would give their instructions to the Board and the Board will then tell us what to do. We'll take those instructions and assess if how we are able to implement that either, whether that's still possible within this round, because of course it depends on the timing or whether it's for a next round.

TAPANI TARVAINEN

So, is there actually a chance that something that the council decides on the next meeting will have an effect of that? Is it still in time possible at all? Because I've been getting answers that sound like, no, it can't be done, but we just won't say it directly.

KRISTY BUCKLEY

Again, it's very difficult to kind of do that. It will depend on what they tell us to do. Again, my understanding is that I think those conversations have taken place. If there would be a recommendation that if it's the same entity, they will not need to go through string similarity, that may be a fairly easy thing to do. If it's a recommendation that says you need to hold them, that may be much more complicated, because again, there are certain phases where all applications go through at the same time.

So, having someone on hold may impact others. So, again, I can't really speculate on what may be possible. It will probably depend on what the council and the Board would tell us. And again, based on that, we will need to assess when that happens, what is the impact and if how we are able to make it happen.

TAPANI TARVAINEN

Actually, the position is simple that PDP will take until next summer to get the result. Thanks.

RAFIK DAMAK I don't want to do that, but really need to manage the time. So, we have Peter, and that's maybe the last question or comment. Peter, can you speak up?

PETER AKINREMI Yeah. Can you hear me?

RAFIK DAMAK Yes, we can hear you. Please go ahead.

PETER AKINREMI Okay, great. Yeah, thank you, Rafik. First and foremost, I just wanted to thank the people working on this and the level of effort that has gone into this. My concern is at this stage when we currently have roughly 29% or 28% of applications inactive at this stage, and we don't even know the successful number of applicants at the end of this program. I'm just thinking this is a concern.

What are the things that this can be done to improve this? And what kind of statistics? I'm sure that Pedro has asked for the statistics of the inactive applicants. Just wanted to get an insight of that and as well as what can be done. Is it that the portal is not or the field or it could be different factors? Do you have an insight to share on these and how can this be improved? Thank you.

KRISTY BUCKLEY It's a good question. I don't have the inactive application data in front of me, but it's something that we could certainly bring to the

ICANN community in the future. Anecdotally, from what I recall, most of these inactive applications have very little data, so they've created an ICANN account.

Maybe they've put in a couple of initial fields, but it's not like they got 80% of the way through an application and then abandoned it. They really didn't, for the most part, seem to start the application. I have also anecdotally heard from some community members, like, oh, I created an account and went and looked at the system.

I think they were just curious to see what it looks like and how it feels, but they weren't necessarily intending to submit an application. What that was doing was skewering our numbers. It looks like we have a lot more, so that's why we started the more sophisticated aging report to try to disentangle people that may have just been curious and taking a look versus people that were actually filling out an application.

I can take a closer look at the inactive applications to see if there's any other indication there from that data, but for the most part, there's very little data in the application itself from those inactive.

PETER AKINREMI

Thank you.

RAFIK DAMAK

Thanks, Peter. Thanks, Kristy. Okay, so maybe I'll ask Marika for any last comment, because we will move from this topic.

MARIKA KONINGS

No, thanks. Maybe just to thank everyone, as you know, we're hoping that the Board in its next session will adopt the applicant guidebook, and of course, that wouldn't have been possible with all the support we've received from the community. I know there were quite a few members from your groups active in this as well. Obviously, there's still more work that needs to be done. I think Gerard already shared some of these items that we'll still be working through with the IRT.

At the same time, we're going to be switching our focus, and maybe, Andrea, in the meantime, go to the very last slide to kind of the more readiness for applicants, broader community, ICANN Org, vendors we work with. There are already a lot of materials available here, so I think that's where you can see and hear more from us over the coming months, kind of really focusing on this. How can we make sure everyone's ready for what will come in April? So, thank you for that.

RAFIK DAMAK

Thanks, Marika. Thanks for the whole team for joining us today. Okay, with that, we can move to the next agenda item. I believe we have 15 minutes left. We'll try to do our best. So, this part is just kind of review of this week. If there is any feedback, any suggestion, any idea for improvement, that's welcome.

So we had several sessions or meetings. Those really kind of more NCSG, like policy committee on Tuesday, and other more open to the community, like the MS blocking session, the HRI, and also yesterday the accuracy. And then we had a joint session, like with the Board, with At-Large, with CPH, and so on.

So those kind of three types of meeting we had. My take, I think, I believe we did well. There is still, of course, room for improvement. And some sessions, they were quite well attended, like yesterday about accuracy that people had to stand. So, I'm not sure if we can get bigger room next time. That's with Andrea to do some magic. But I think we are getting kind of good skeleton of the session we will have.

So you can expect that will be the same next meetings. Just maybe accept the policy forum, because that's shorter. So, if you have any suggestion, like how we can maybe just share whatever you have in mind. Of course, about the joint session, I want to give kind of caveat that it's not always possible to have all of them. There will be some clash. And we cannot get a GAC every time.

So that's one thing. The same, I guess, for the rest, I think that will be easier. And like At-Large, it's kind of somehow agreement that will happen every time. So, we're pretty sure. Just about the clash, it's really hard to avoid that. So, just bear with us. We are trying to do our best. But the more we have session, the more we will have those kinds of conflict. And yeah, we can try to coordinate better.

So this is just kind of, well, I see already three in the queue. I'm not sure, should I start with Pedro or not? But yes, Pedro.

PEDRO LANA

I already spoke, so honestly.

RAFIK DAMAK

No, no. Go ahead. Go ahead, Pedro.

PEDRO LANA

Just to mention that having a full room already happened twice, I think. Also, another Pais and Michaela session in the previous meeting. And just that it's good to identify those topics, those very hot topics that are happening to make our sessions. Because we had a proposal before trying to do more subject-centered sessions. And this is the way to go clearly.

RAFIK DAMAK

So just to be sure, Pedro, are you saying we should keep doing the same?

PEDRO LANA

Yeah, because this was proposal of one of our last wrap-ups. And we're talking some ways on doing that. And this is clearly the best way to do it.

RAFIK DAMAK

Thanks. I think like yesterday, there was that section we need to more follow up. So, it's something we'll discuss and to work. And what also helps us is to have the discussion paper to prepare beforehand. It's something we need to explore if that's possible to get more discussion paper and other topics.

PEDRO LANA

And also checking on the overall agenda, what are the topics that are appearing a lot of times and doing our session regarding that as well. Also identifying on the overall agenda, what are the topics that are happening a lot of times that are present in a lot of sessions and doing our sessions related to those as well.

RAFIK DAMAK

That's a little bit challenging because we can only know at later stage that when the full schedule is public.

PEDRO LANA

But only the debates that are happening on the other communities, like the proposals that are being made. We can ask to them, not through the agenda itself.

RAFIK DAMAK

I want to clarify about how the scheduling happens. So like us, we will start soon. In fact, we make our request. But I'm not sure if Andrea can get some visibility about the session to see. Because really, we can, I mean, the cross community, we can have that

because that's discussed at the planning or the, I forget the name, there is that kind of discussion. We can have idea. But for really, for the other, we don't have the visibility till the public schedule. I mean, the schedule is public, like two or three weeks before.

PEDRO LANA

Yeah, that's what I said, talking directly to them, to the other communities to see what they are planning to do.

RAFIK DAMAK

Oh, can try. Okay, yeah. Yes, Andrea, please.

ANDREA GLANDON

Okay. So, Pedro, just so you know, it is a little bit harder. Sometimes I can see some of the schedules for the other SOs and ACs. But you have to remember, they're also going up to the last minute. So, a lot of sessions change, and then they're trying to figure stuff out.

So it's not like I can say, oh, yes, this is their schedule. And now we can base our schedule off of their schedule. Everybody's working up to the last minute. So, it sounds like it should be easier than it actually is.

RAFIK DAMAK

Okay, okay. I mean, since we already have the joint meeting, we interact so we can try to get some ideas. But yeah, all the agents

are really finalized at the last minute. Okay. Yeah, they are not doing better than us, trust me. Bruna, Michaela, and then Peter.

BRUNA SANTOS

Just briefly, congratulations to the ones that organized our sessions this week. Also important to acknowledge it. We had, I mean, from the past meetings, it was one of the most productive for NCSG and for us to engage with the community. So, I do really appreciate it. And they were not empty sessions. So if one thing that helped makes the case for us to have bigger rooms and have more engagement. And I hope Andrea is nodding behind me right now. Yes. Yes, exactly. We are really managing to improve that.

So congrats to Rafik, Farzi, Michaela, and all of the others that helped organize it. The other thing I was going to say, it was just, I know it's a kind of a problematic topic. And I apologize for what I'm going to say. But I didn't fully appreciate some of the statements we did in the GAC session.

And I know it's kind of tricky for our position in the community. But I think that that's a space where we need to be slightly more careful in the way we present the discussions. Because something that was also, I mean, I heard from many people in the community that they were happy to see us chatting with the GAC. And because we have this impression, right?

That we sometimes don't have a proper dialogue and so on. And I think it would be nice to try to change a little bit the narrative that

we are frontally opposing all of them. We have some allies. We can have some allies in there. And then maybe the suggestion in that sense would be for us to try to do something more informal, you know, with the GAC as well. Instead of perhaps a public session in a coming meeting, try to do a breakfast with some of the GAC leaders or a lunch kind of thing with the GAC leaders in order to discuss some of the topics and so on.

So, it's just that. It's not a criticism. It's just a point about being slightly more careful in the way we frame the questions. And the last thing, I think the declarations on human rights. No, no, no, no, no, no, no, no. I honestly, Farzi, it's really not a criticism to you and not about what we say. But I think when we're reopening a line of conversation or trying to be a bit more, you know, in pair with them, it's important to play the games and play the part sometimes?

FARZANEH BADIEI

Sorry, can I? So, you mean when Indonesia said, what like human rights are different in different places and how about like cultural? So, I think that the line of arguments that the community can change it if they don't agree with me. The line of arguments is that cultural relativism has been the tool for oppression and Human Rights violation.

We have universal Human Rights that is similar everywhere. And I did mention like murder and prosecution taking away your liberty

of all human values. That should not be, I'm not going to back off from this and I'm not going to allow like cultural relativism to be...

RAFIK DAMAK

Sorry, sorry, sorry, sorry.

BRUNA SANTOS

Can I just wrap up? Sorry.

RAFIK DAMAK

Please, please, please, please, please, please. Please. Yes, yes. Okay.

FARZANEH BADIEI

No, I'm not finished speaking.

RAFIK DAMAK

We hear each other. I don't think we'll find right any agreement. We get this, we can work out. But please, we have a short time. Yeah, Bruna, please finish.

BRUNA SANTOS

I just want to put this on the record. Once again, it was not about your comment. I'm just saying that the conversation, there's always going to be a hard conversation. It's never going to be an easy one. And no, no, it's not. It's really not. I just think that we need sometimes to work a little better on the way we frame the

arguments, just for the GAC and for no one else, just so we can be heard and we can be even better heard in there.

I think we have achieved a lot and I'll give you kudos for a lot of the things you are doing on that and collaborating with folks. And I'm sorry if you got upset with that because I just wanted us to frame a little bit better the conversation. But I didn't refer to that. I'm very sorry. And Miracle, you don't need to interrupt anyone. We are friends. We work together. We're not in a fight. We have disagreements, just like everyone in this community. So, it's perfectly fine.

RAFIK DAMAK

Okay, Miracle, please. Miracle, please. I'm trying to manage this and to moderate, get tense. We don't need many people to intervene. I heard and try to calm things down. We get the two positions. We are not going to solve it right now. So, something we will work out and we are hearing the comments, so we don't need to argue. Sorry, there was, I'm not sure. There was Peter, but I see he's-- I see only Michaela in the queue, please.

MICHAELA SHAPIRO

Thank you, Rafik. I don't know, I don't want to open up. I think we've wrapped up that particular part of the topic. I was just going to comment that something to think about just as a community is because we're very lucky to have these kinds of cross-constituency discussions.

And something I've been thinking about is just more about framing, kind of how we frame and the kind of ways in which we go into those rooms and the approaches we take when we discuss with different constituency groups. So, I can't speak for Bruna, for Farzaneh, but I also had some concerns about how we, how our discussion went with the GAC that were raised to me.

And so, it's just something to, I think just good to be aware of. And so, I appreciate Bruna bringing that up. But on a very positive note, I was really excited about the position papers that we drafted as the NCSG, like huge thank you to Ken and to Farzana. And I'll thank myself because I communicated, I worked on the DNS Abuse one as well. And I found that to be hugely, hugely helpful as we went into these different discussions to be able to have just one clear place where we could go and say, this is NCSG's position on these topics.

I hope we can keep those going, especially on the hot topics. And I hope we can keep updating them as our discussions evolve, as they already have this week. Thank you.

RAFIK DAMAK

Okay, thanks. That was quite a drop of the mic. Thanks, Michaela. No, I mean, okay. Yeah, it's good. I think having those papers, that interaction helped us and not to reopen about the GAC. I mean, again, we won't probably have every time interaction with them. We can work out how to present what we present, but also at the end, there are some questions that will come like that. I have my opinion about this topic, but this doesn't matter right now. But

yeah, we can improve. We can try. I heard some idea about some maybe informal discussion with some of what we identify as allies.

So, something we can organize, we can think about. In fact, like that, the Working Group for the human rights and international law, we can work with them and we have some ideas. Okay, I think we have two minutes.

Please, please, guys, don't try to talk to me. It's really, I interrupt me because I'm trying to see who is in the queue. I was going to say, we have two minutes left. So, maybe we will run out. We can add three, maximum five. So, please don't interrupt me like that. We have Peter, Juan, and then Bruna.

PETER AKINREMI

Yeah, thank you, Rafik. Mine is just a kind of a comment and observation. And over the time, I've heard in the community that we just come and we're troublemaker, right? Because our views don't align with most of the stakeholder in the community.

Now I see that that is changing in terms of we actually proactive in those things, those issues that we're concerned with. And I really appreciate the folks that are actually taking the pains and the front of role in discussing this, I guess. We need to do this more, identifying those issues that we care more about and actually bring that out and also like do our own work and also lead that.

And I guess that would change our narrative that all the community member might have with regards to the NCSG and the non-

commercial in general. I guess we need to start doing that more and also start doing more of research because I could see the position papers and what we're-- I don't want to repeat most of what other folks have said. It's something good that we need to keep that practices.

And another thing I want us to, you know, have these more of research into what we do so we can better prepare and engage with whether GAC or the Board or the GNSO as well. So, that will be actually did pretty well, even if some things might have, you know, we've said some certain things that we don't need to say, but it's actually part of the process and part of improvement. And I guess we can learn from these and also like improve. Thank you.

PETER AKINREMI

Okay. Thanks, Peter. And appreciate that you are joining us remotely and being active as much as possible. So, we have Juan.

JUAN MANUEL ROJAS

Thank you, Rafik. This is Juan for the record. Just to follow the path, maybe in the line of thought that Michaela was trying to share, I just want to maybe add that we had some topic for this session, for this meeting in ICANN84 about, I don't remember, it was something like the paper of how the civil society is involved in ICANN. But from our perspective, from the non-commercial perspective, we didn't have that session in this meeting because we

didn't have enough time, but maybe we can plan to have it in the next one because it's Mumbai, it's a community forum.

So, maybe we can start to plan for that, to do that kind of session, maybe trying to have that session to have maybe fellows on our session to show them how are we working inside ICANN from our perspective. That's all. Thank you very much.

RAFIK DAMAK

Thanks, Juan. I think you talk about the topic you suggested, but we dropped that. Yeah, as we said, as we agreed, we will try to do that in Mumbai. And about fellows, we tried like to invite them, but I don't think it was that successful, something we will review. Yeah. So, we have that in our to-do list as we agreed. Yes, Miracle?

MIRACLE ONYEBUCHIM

Thank you very much. I have a couple of things that I wanted to say. Number one is that a lot of the work that I do has to do with nonprofits. I live and work in the U.S. and the NCSG is a very important vehicle for some of that work. And I know that by nature and just by nature of the work that we do, there's bound to be a lot of disagreements.

Whenever I say I want to join NCSG, the consensus and everybody says, oh, they never agree, they never agree. I think that that's a reputation that we need to manage. And the way to do that, for example, I don't have context as to what was happening before

now. Someone was speaking and I was just curious to hear what she was saying. I don't even know context of what's happening.

I was just curious and she didn't finish her point. And it's happened in the previous meetings I've joined. When someone is speaking, we would never always agree, but let's let people finish before we counter. So, that's the first thing because I've seen it in two meetings.

In the previous meeting that I was in, I think it was him. We had to vote and I think it was Pedro. We had to vote on policies and after the meeting, there was still no agreement. And I think that's just because people never finish when they have. I think we should let people finish so that even when you don't win the vote, there's no resentment that nobody hates you.

And the other thing I want to say is that I'm a fellow and in my fellowship cohort, a lot of us work in civil society and non-profits. And in my fellow meeting, I keep saying, guys, I just applied for NCSG. That's actually a good way for us to push some of these things because if we push it in the general forum, we won't get action. And they say, oh, I've heard so much about NCSG. Oh, they don't agree.

And so, I'll suggest, and I'm happy you mentioned it. I am happy to organize my fellowship cohorts. If we get volunteers from this group, maybe two people to meet us over Zoom and just sort of talk about the work that we do. I just think that work is just more important than that reputation. I'm happy to organize our cohort

so that you can come talk to us. Please let me know if it's something you guys interested in. And please, let's always hear people out just so that there's no resentment that nobody heard me speak or anything like that. That's what I want to say. Thank you.

RAFIK DAMAK

Okay. To respond to the point you raised, and probably we will be kicked out from the room soon, I appreciate your comment. But I also would like to ask something to everyone. When I'm trying to moderate, don't try to talk to me like this because it's not easy for me. I'm trying to look here and try to moderate. Interrupting me is not helpful, even if you think there is something needed to be done. That's why I try to calm down, to moderate, to stop.

So many people trying to jump, it's not helpful at all for me. So, that's why we try to pause here to stop because there is nothing good from that. And we will try to work out. But also, important to understand, we will have always disagreement, we cannot control that. And that's a problem of human nature. Here is we need to find out how to do it in the best way.

Of course, the interruption, it's not good. That's why sometimes people want to continue. I try, but it's not necessarily well received. But that's my job. I will do it. That's moderation. Does it mean censoring? It's just to keep this space for where we can discuss and

everyone can express themselves. So, we welcome your comment, just to explain to you like what we have to do.

And about fellows, yes, it's always the question how people can join, how we can get involved. And we welcome your support because you are one of them. I mean, we try to do something, it didn't work. That's my take. We try to engage, not sure the newcomer session, the best setting, because probably you heard like so many. We invited, but we had to send the request through the Siranush.

And so, we will try to brainstorm to see how the best way to engage with you guys. And we are welcoming. But of course, we will have to find out how to discuss more. With that, I mean, it was a little bit hit at the end, but I think that's a problem of discussion and how to work consensus and our position and also assign or approve how people are passionate about this topic. So, we try to do our best. At the end of the day, we are all friends, even if we have a lot of disagreement. And with that, more positive, we have to close.

MIRACLE ONYEBUCHIM

I just want to ask, maybe we can continue meeting after ICANN staff closes up.

RAFIK DAMAK

Okay. But we need to officially close this meeting and the recording. Thanks, everyone. Have safe travels back home. And with that, let's close this meeting.

ANDREA GLANDON

Thank you. You can stop the recording.

[END OF TRANSCRIPTION]