Guideline: ccNSO Sessions Programming

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Table of contents

1. Introduction and Purpose of the Guideline....2
2. General Framework for ccNSO Sessions....2
2.1. Session Principles....2
2.1.1. Session purpose....2
2.1.2. Best use of time....2
2.1.3. Diversity....2
2.1.4. Priorities....2
2.2. Programming Roles and Responsibilities....3
2.3. Programming Process....3
3. Participation....3
4. Session Materials and Delivery....3
5. Consultations....4
6. Miscellaneous....4
6.1. ccNSO Internal Guideline....4
6.2. Omission in or unreasonable impact of the Guideline....4
6.3. Review of Guideline....4
Annex A - ccNSO Session Programming at ICANN Meetings: a phased approach....5
Introduction....5
General parameters....5
Phased approach....6
Phase 1 - Preparation Initial Draft Agenda....6
Phase 2 - Review Initial Draft Agenda....6
Phase 3 - Consultation on Version 1 of the agenda....6
Phase 4 - Submission of Agenda to ICANN Scheduling Process....7
Phase 5 - Publication of Meeting Agenda and Procedure Closure....7

1. Introduction and Purpose of the Guideline

The ccNSO organizes sessions during and between ICANN Public meetings (hereafter: "**ccNSO Sessions**"). These sessions are typically aligned with the meeting blocks of the ICANN Community Forum, the Policy Forum, and the Annual General Meeting, with occasional sessions organised in between ICANN meetings.

This Guideline focuses on the programming of the sessions held from Tuesday to Thursday (hereafter: "**ccNSO Community Days**"). It outlines the programming process and the roles and responsibilities of the ccNSO Council (hereafter: "**Council**"), the Council Chair, the Secretariat, the ccNSO Meeting Programme Committee (hereafter: "**MPC**") and other relevant ccNSO working groups and committees, as well as those involved in preparing and delivering the sessions. Where relevant, this Guideline may also apply to other ccNSO Sessions.

2. General Framework for ccNSO Sessions

The overall objective of ccNSO Sessions is to provide a platform for the ccTLD community to conduct its regular activities, share information, collaborate and engage with the broader ccTLD community and others, thereby contributing to the achievement of the ccNSO's Purpose and Goals[1].

2.1. Session Principles

2.1.1. Session purpose

Each session should have a clearly defined purpose and intended outcome. These should be clearly stated in the programme materials, enabling prospective attendees to understand the session's focus and determine where their participation would be most relevant.

2.1.2. Best use of time

The programme should prioritize activities and discussions that make effective use of the community's presence at ICANN meetings, recognizing that the community's time is a valuable and limited resource.

2.1.3. Diversity

The sessions should aim to engage a diverse range of ccTLD functions and regions, thereby maximizing opportunities for participation across the community.

2.1.4. Priorities

Critical ccNSO functions, such as Council elections and Policy Development, should be given priority in the programme.

[1] https://www.icann.org/en/ccnso/resources/governance/guidelines

2.2. Programming Roles and Responsibilities

The Council has overall responsibility for the organization and success of the ccNSO Sessions. For the programming of the ccNSO Community Days, the Council Chair works closely with the MPC to oversee the overall organization and content. The ccNSO Secretariat supports this process by facilitating the work of the MPC and managing logistics and operational delivery.

The MPC provides input on the ccNSO Community Days agenda, reflecting the perspectives of the ccTLD community. In doing so, it contributes to the ccNSO's strategic objective of facilitating meaningful engagement and knowledge exchange.

In preparing and drafting the agenda for ccNSO Sessions, representatives of the Council, the MPC, and other relevant groups involved in planning ccNSO Sessions during ICANN Meetings (for example, the Tech Working Group), may participate in the ICANN meeting planning activities.

2.3. Programming Process

The detailed process and timeline for ccNSO Session programming is documented in Annex A to this Guideline. Any intersessional ccNSO Session agendas are determined on an ad-hoc basis.

In designing the programme, the Council and MPC are encouraged to prioritise quality and relevance of sessions for ccTLDs. Where needed, the duration of the ccNSO Community Days and/or individual sessions may be adjusted, within the boundaries of the ICANN meeting blocks. Relevant programming materials, including for instance block schedules, session highlights, satisfaction survey results and other relevant materials, will be posted on the ccNSO website in a timely manner.

3. Participation

By default, all individuals may participate in ccNSO Sessions. Depending on the type of session, exceptions may apply, provided such exceptions are determined in advance and made publicly available.

Remote participation will be provided for ccNSO Sessions to the extent feasible and structured to allow remote participants to engage on equal footing with in-person attendees. However, this may not always be feasible, for example in interactive formats such as world café exercises.

4. Session Materials and Delivery

The MPC shall maintain guidance materials for session organizers and contributors, including practical guidance on session preparation, delivery, and audience engagement. The MPC shall review such materials at least every two (2) years and following significant changes to session formats.

Session organizers and contributors shall design and deliver sessions in a manner that enables meaningful participation by all attendees, including remote participants where applicable.

Where presentations, slides, or other session materials are used, contributors are expected to provide final materials in a timely manner, based on the instructions by the ccNSO Secretariat. The Secretariat will support the display and distribution of such materials in the meeting environment, as appropriate.

After the conclusion of ccNSO Sessions, the Secretariat will ensure that all presentation materials, recordings and transcripts, if available, are published on the relevant websites as soon as possible.

5. Consultations

The MPC organises, reviews and acts on feedback from session contributors and the broader community regarding ccNSO sessions.

If relevant and appropriate, the session Chair, moderator or presenter may invite the ccTLDs present at a ccNSO Session, both in person and remotely, to express their sentiment on a specific topic. This is referred to as taking the “temperature of the room”. Such expressions of sentiment are informal and do not constitute, nor replace, a formal vote or other formal expression of preference. The tool used for this action should, to the extent possible, provide equal opportunity for in-person and remote participants to express their sentiment.

If the “temperature of the room” indicates that further action by the Council is required, the session Chair should inform the Council accordingly.

6. Miscellaneous

6.1. ccNSO Internal Guideline

This Guideline is an operating procedure of the ccNSO per Article 10, section 3.(k) of the ICANN Bylaws.

6.2. Omission in or unreasonable impact of the Guideline

In the event that this Guideline does not provide guidance and/or the impact is unreasonable, the Chair of the ccNSO Council will decide upon any question or issue.

6.3. Review of Guideline

This Guideline will be reviewed every 3 years or when considered necessary at the suggestion of the Chair of the MPC or the Chair of the ccNSO Council. In order to become effective, the updated guideline needs to be adopted by the ccNSO Council and published on the ccNSO website. Before publishing the updated guideline, the Secretariat will include the version number and insert the date of adoption.

Annex A - ccNSO Session Programming at ICANN Meetings: a phased approach

Introduction

This Annex describes the operational process for developing the agenda for ccNSO Sessions held during ICANN Public Meetings. It clarifies the role of the Meetings Programme Committee (MPC) and other relevant parties in that process.

Annex A is operational guidance and may be adjusted where necessary by the Secretariat and Council Chair, provided the principles of this Guideline are maintained.

General parameters

In developing the ccNSO Sessions agenda for ICANN Public Meetings, the following parameters shall be taken into account:

a. ICANN's three-Meeting Annual Cycle:
    - Meeting A (Community Forum): 6 days, typically held in March
    - Meeting B (Policy Forum): 4 days, typically held in June.
    - Meeting C (Annual General Meeting): 6 days, typically held in October/November.
b. ccNSO meeting strategy as adopted by the ccNSO Council
c. General framework applied to ccNSO sessions:
    - Mondays are generally reserved for Tech Day and, where needed, bilateral meetings with other SO/ACs
    - Tuesdays, Wednesdays - and where needed Thursdays - are generally reserved for ccNSO Community Days.
    - Thursdays are generally reserved for the ccNSO Council meeting.
    - A community networking event is typically held on Tuesday evening; accordingly, Wednesday Block 1 is generally not scheduled for ccNSO sessions.
d. Additional sessions are typically scheduled at the Community Forum and AGM:
    - Working group and committee meetings, held Saturday and Sunday
    - Council workshop, held Saturday or Sunday
    - Bilateral with GAC, if scheduled, Tuesday or Wednesday
    - Bilateral with Board, where applicable
e. ICANN Meeting scheduling procedures and timelines
f. SO/AC meeting planning, specifically to influence topics and timing of plenary sessions that may be of interest to ccTLDs
g. ICANN's block schedule, including available session blocks, durations, and breaks
h. In accordance with ICANN meeting planning timelines, no later than approximately two (2) months before the start of the meeting, staff are generally required to:
    - Submit meeting room requests
    - Provide high-level session descriptions
    - Request additional services (e.g., stools, flipcharts)
i. Submit travel funding details in accordance with applicable ICANN deadlines (currently 120 days prior to the meeting).

Phased approach

Phase 1 - Preparation Initial Draft Agenda

Within approximately two (2) to three (3) weeks following the conclusion of an ICANN Public Meeting, the Secretariat shall prepare an initial draft agenda for the next ICANN Public Meeting. In preparing the initial draft agenda, the Secretariat shall take into account the parameters listed above and consider, among other things:

- Whether there is a need for community discussion on a substantive policy, operational, or strategic topic. Where a ccNSO committee or working group identifies a need for community interaction on a topic, the relevant group is consulted, and a session may be provisionally scheduled.
- Need for bilateral meetings (Board, GAC, others)
- Topics or themes emerging from previous meetings or relevant ICANN processes
- Survey results and attendance trends from previous ccNSO Sessions
- The need for working groups or committees to hold in-person sessions

The Secretariat is responsible for preparing the initial draft agenda, given its oversight of session planning requirements, working group progress, and external scheduling considerations.

Phase 2 - Review Initial Draft Agenda

The initial draft agenda is shared with the Chair of the ccNSO for review. Following consultation with the Chair, the Secretariat shall revise the draft agenda as appropriate and circulate Version 1 for broader consultation.

Phase 3 - Consultation on Version 1 of the agenda.

Version 1 of the draft agenda shall be presented to the MPC and the Council for feedback, input, and suggestions. In this phase, MPC shall:

- Provide input and feedback on the structure and substance of the agenda
- Represent the perspective and interests of the ccTLD community
- Assist, where requested, in the organization of specific sessions.

The Council shall be consulted in recognition of its overall responsibility for the administration of the ccNSO. Feedback may include suggested topics, alternative formats, proposed presenters, and other recommendations. The ccNSO Council retains final authority over the ccNSO Community Days agenda.

Following this consultation, relevant working groups and committees shall be engaged, as appropriate, to confirm the need, scope, timing, and organization of their sessions. Throughout this phase, the Secretariat shall support session preparation, including by:

- Preparing briefing papers
- Proposing formats
- Suggesting presenters and session chairs
- Organizing preparation meetings and dry runs

Phase 4 - Submission of Agenda to ICANN Scheduling Process

The agenda has to be finalized no later than approximately two (2) months prior to the meeting, subject to ICANN scheduling deadlines. The Secretariat shall submit the sessions in the ICANN meeting scheduling tool.

The submission has to include:

- Title and description of session,
- Proposed date and time
- Logistical requirements, including
    - Room layout
    - Interpretation
    - Transcription
    - Required room size
    - Additional equipment/services

Following submission of all proposed ICANN meeting sessions by the various SO/ACs and groups, ICANN staff will reconcile scheduling conflicts, overlaps, and related issues.

Phase 5 - Publication of Meeting Agenda and Procedure Closure

The process concludes upon publication of the final ICANN block schedule by ICANN.