



Year in Review: 2026 Nominating Committee Report



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2026 Nominating Committee Year In Review

Presented at the ICANN87 Annual General Meeting, Bali — 21 October 2026 *By Tom Barrett, Chair, 2026 ICANN Nominating Committee*

In 2026, the Nominating Committee (NomCom) received **223 completed applications** – the largest pool in NomCom history, and more than double the 106 received in 2025.

Every one of those applications was read. All 223 passed through an anonymous first-round review with personal information redacted, before any delegate saw a name. Accordingly, the delegates completed more work than ever before!

2026 Cycle	Count
Completed applications	223
Deep-dive interviews	47
Applicants carried to the final stage	20
Final interviews at ICANN86	11
Short lists maintained	6
NomCom sessions	17
Subcommittee sessions	16
Intersessionals	1
Mandatory training sessions	4
Leadership seats filled	7

The NomCom delegates absorbed that workload inside a calendar built for roughly half the volume. The soft-dive research that sits between the first read and the deep-dive interviews – verifying backgrounds, mapping skills against the job descriptions supplied by the receiving bodies, and surfacing the questions that drive the interviews – is where delegate judgment does its real work, and it is the first thing that gets squeezed when the pool grows faster than the calendar.

The measure that matters is how many days delegates had to review the full applicant pool before the March Community Forum, where prescreening and the soft dives were to be finished:

Cycle	Applications Period Closed	Community Forum Opened	Working Days Before the Forum
2025	28 March 2025	8 March 2025 (ICANN82)	None – applications were still open
2026	18 February 2026	7 March 2026 (ICANN85)	17 days

In the 2025 cycle, the March ICANN Public Meeting came and went while the NomCom application window was still open, so the committee could not begin assessing a complete pool at that time. Pulling the window forward in 2026 created 17 days of runway.

It is worth noting that the shorter application window did *not* hurt recruitment. The 2026 window was 11 days **shorter** than the 2025 window – 62 days versus 73 – and still drew more than twice the number of applications.

The 2026 Cycle in Review

Where the Growth Came From

The 2026 cycle implemented a set of foundational changes:

- **An application window pulled forward by more than a month**, opening 37 days earlier and closing 38 days earlier than the 2025 cycle, which created the first real assessment runway ahead of the March meeting.
- **A rebuilt outreach strategy**, with segmented social media outreach by open position that went directly to Internet governance communities and relevant forums, redirecting the budget previously spent on an external executive recruitment firm. Outreach was conducted by NomCom delegates and ICANN Communications. In our assessment, this was the largest single driver of the increase in applications – the window was 11 days shorter than the year before, so the growth cannot be explained by time alone.
- **A structured community-input campaign**, inviting community feedback on NomCom priorities and processes.
- **A second workshop synchronized with ICANN85 in Mumbai**, enabled by the earlier window. This avoided the expense of two stand-alone intersessionals and returned time to the assessment phase.
- **A revised incumbent peer survey and an AI-assisted Board skills heat map**, giving delegates new assessment tools for the open Board seats.

Who Applied

The 223 applications came from every ICANN geographic region:

Region	Share of Applicants
Asia, Australia, and the Pacific Islands	41.3%

Region	Share of Applicants
Africa	27.4%
Latin America and the Caribbean	12.5%
Europe	10.3%
North America	8.5%
Selected two or more countries	11%

Women made up **22.4 percent** of applicants; men 76.2 percent; and 1.3 percent preferred not to answer. That figure is essentially unchanged from prior cycles: We more than doubled the size of the pool without changing the mix.

The selection outcome tells a different story. **Three of the seven selectees are women – 43 percent, nearly double their share of the applicant pool.** The assessment process is not where the problem lies. Recruitment is, and improving it is the clearest challenge we are handing to the 2027 committee.

How the NomCom Decided

Every application passed through four rounds of confidential review and short-listing, beginning with the anonymous read described above. Soft-dive research, delegate ratings, and voting during the ICANN85 Mumbai workshop narrowed the pool. Deep-dive interviews and reference checks concluded at the Los Angeles intersessional in May, where the six short lists were finalized. During ICANN86 in Seville, the committee held face-to-face interviews with the final short-listed candidates for the ICANN Board and the Public Technical Identifiers (PTI) Board, and confirmed its selections and alternates. Following a period of due diligence, the selections were announced on 12 August 2026.

Delegates completed mandatory training in board governance, inclusive leadership, unconscious bias, and interview assessment before undertaking this work.

Who Was Selected

On 12 August 2026, the NomCom announced the following selections, who begin their terms at the conclusion of ICANN87:

Body	Selectee	Region
ICANN Board of Directors	Catherine Adeya	Africa
ICANN Board of Directors	Niel Harper	Latin America and the Caribbean
PTI Board of Directors	Tomslin Samme-Nlar	Africa

Body	Selectee	Region
At-Large Advisory Committee	Francesca Bosco	Europe
At-Large Advisory Committee	Emanuel Lukawiecki	North America
Country Code Names Supporting Organization (ccNSO) Council	Wafa Dahmani	Africa
Generic Names Supporting Organization (GNSO) Council	Alan Woods	Europe

Congratulations to all seven.

Closing

The complete record of the 2026 cycle – the phase-by-phase account and the detailed meeting and training summaries – appears as the appendix to this report.

My thanks go to the delegates of the 2026 NomCom and to the ICANN staff who supported them. A record applicant pool is only an achievement if someone does the work it creates, and they did – hundreds of hours of it, most of it unseen.

I want to remember our colleague **Arinola Akinyemi**, who we lost during this cycle. She served this committee with real generosity, and she is missed.

Sincerely,

Tom Barrett

2026 NomCom Chair

Appendix: 2026 Nominating Committee Year in Review

The complete record of the 2026 Nominating Committee (NomCom) cycle, from convening through the completion of selections.

A. 2026 at a Glance

Completed applications	223
Leadership positions filled	7
Short lists maintained	6
Workshop and intersessional meetings	4
NomCom sessions	17
Subcommittee sessions	16
Training sessions	4
Deep-dive interviews	47
Finalists	20
Final interviews at ICANN86	11
Application period	18 December 2025 – 18 February 2026

Regional Breakdown

The 2026 NomCom received 223 completed applications during the application period. Of those applicants:

Region	Share of Applicants
Asia, Australia, and the Pacific Islands	41.3%
Africa	27.4%
Latin America and the Caribbean	12.5%
Europe	10.3%

Region	Share of Applicants
North America	8.5%
Selected two or more countries (multicountry affiliation)	11%

Gender Breakdown

Gender	Share of Applicants
Female	22.4%
Male	76.2%
Preferred not to answer	1.3%

Three of the seven selectees are women – 43 percent of selections, against 22.4 percent of applicants.

B. Highlights of the 2026 Cycle

Record-breaking participation: 223 completed applications – the largest applicant pool in recent NomCom history.

Committee-led outreach: Unlike previous cycles, outreach was conducted directly by NomCom delegates and ICANN Communications, without the use of an external executive recruitment firm.

Streamlined assessment process: One intersessional and structured deep-dive interviews produced six final short lists before ICANN86.

C. Selection Cycle Overview

Phase 1 – Planning

- Convened the 2026 NomCom following the ICANN84 Annual General Meeting (October 2025).
- Reviewed key process and governance documents to establish a common understanding of the NomCom's responsibilities and operating procedures.
- Approved the 2026 NomCom timeline, milestones, meeting schedule, and key deliverables for the selection cycle.
- Established four subcommittees: Application, Assessment, Interview, and Recommendations.
- Reviewed recommendations from the 2025 Recommendations Subcommittee to identify opportunities for continuous improvement.
- Completed mandatory training sessions on board governance, inclusive leadership, and unconscious bias to support a fair, objective, and inclusive selection process.

Phase 2 – Outreach and Recruitment

- Record-breaking outreach led by delegates.
- Global communications campaign.
- Applications opened.
- No external recruitment firm used this year.
- Completed mandatory interview assessment training.

Phase 3 – Assessment

- Second workshop
- Application review.
- Deep-dive interviews.
- Intersessional.
- Six short lists finalized.

Phase 4 – Selection

- ICANN86 interviews.
- Final selections and confirmations.
- Due diligence.
- Selection announcement.

Phase 5 – Reporting

Recommendations Subcommittee report: The Recommendations Subcommittee developed proposed process improvements and recommendations for the next NomCom cycle.

Leadership evaluations: The NomCom support staff facilitated the performance evaluation processes for the NomCom leadership team through external reviews; the results of these evaluations were published on the committee webpage.

Candidate survey: All candidates who submitted applications for the 2026 cycle were invited to complete a feedback survey regarding the application process.

Year in Review and 2027 outreach: This report is published on the NomCom website and presented at ICANN87 in Bali, Indonesia. The Annual General Meeting also marks the introduction of the 2027 NomCom and the launch of outreach to recruit volunteers for the 2027 open positions.

D. Meeting and Training Summary

Total number of NomCom sessions: 17

Session Type	Number of Sessions
Onboarding/kickoff sessions	4

Session Type	Number of Sessions
March workshop sessions	4
Intersessional sessions	4
Final selection meeting sessions	5

Total number of subcommittee sessions: 16

Subcommittee	Number of Sessions
Application Subcommittee sessions	3
Assessment Subcommittee sessions	5
Interview Subcommittee sessions	5
Recommendations Subcommittee sessions	3

Total number of training sessions: 4

Training Type	Number of Sessions
Board governance training	1
Inclusive leadership training	1
Interview assessment training	1
Unconscious bias training	1

Deep-dive interviews: 47

Finalists: 20

Body	Number of Finalists
Final At-Large Advisory Committee (ALAC), ccNSO Council, and GNSO Council candidates	9
Final interviews at ICANN86 with ICANN Board and PTI Board candidates	11

E. Final Selections

The NomCom conducted its final deliberations before and during ICANN86. This included live interviews with the final short-listed candidates for the ICANN Board and the PTI Board. Following these interviews, the committee completed its final selections of candidates and alternates for the ICANN Board, PTI Board, GNSO Council, ALAC, and ccNSO Council positions.

Following a period of due diligence, on 12 August 2026, the NomCom announced the following selections:

ICANN Board of Directors

Name	Region
Catherine Adeya	Africa
Niel Harper	Latin America and the Caribbean

PTI Board of Directors

Name	Region
Tomslin Samme-Nlar	Africa

ALAC

Name	Region
Francesca Bosco	Europe
Emanuel Lukawiecki	North America

ccNSO Council

Name	Region
Wafa Dahmani	Africa

GNSO Council

Name	Region
Alan Woods	Europe