Overview of Updates for NextGen@ICANN Program Improvements

Background of NextGen @ICANN Program Improvement Process
- The [NextGen@ICANN Program](#) aims to broaden participation in ICANN by providing opportunities for students to better understand ICANN and the Internet ecosystem. It is intended for students ages 18-30 who are studying in the region where the ICANN meeting is taking place.
- The ICANN organization held a [community consultation](#) from July to September 2019 to gather community input on several aspects of the NextGen@ICANN Program existing practices and defining the vision for the future of the program. (A summary of findings from the consultation is available [here](#).)
- ICANN org created a draft [proposal](#) of program improvements based on the community's input, which took the same format as this document. The draft proposal of program improvements was released for [public comment](#) from February to March 2020, and a [staff report](#) was released in April 2020.
- ICANN org is planning to implement program improvements based on community input. This document has been updated to reflect feedback from the public comment period, and each section contains a summary of the program improvements.

Purpose & Goal
- The purpose of the NextGen@ICANN Program is to broaden participation in ICANN by providing opportunities for higher education students to better understand ICANN and the Internet ecosystem. The program's short-term goals are to:
  - Provide participants with an introduction to the ICANN ecosystem, ICANN community's policy and advice work, and policy development processes (PDPs).
  - Raise awareness and increase participation of NextGen@ICANN Program participants ("NextGenners") in ICANN and regional engagement activities.
  - Raise awareness of ICANN at higher education institutions and among young people in NextGenners' home countries (e.g., NextGenners present learnings at their institutions, facilitate visits of ICANN's regional engagement team, share their related research findings, etc.)
- The mid- and long-term goal is to increase the engagement of NextGenners in ICANN activities.

Summary of changes: Enhanced and clarified language, including specifying short-term and long-term program goals.

Outreach and Promotion
- Eligibility criteria: higher education students who are between the ages of 18 and 30 and are studying in the region where the Meeting takes place.
- Targeted outreach will include undergraduates and graduate/post-graduate students from higher education institutions in a broad range of relevant fields, including technology, international business, law, etc.
- Highlight NextGenner success stories on icann.org.

Summary of changes: More focused targeted outreach; NextGen success stories featured on icann.org.

Application
- Applicants will have the option to upload the following supporting documentation to their applications: a resume; a letter of endorsement or recommendation of a community group or lecturer from their higher education institution; and/or relevant work from the applicant such as source code, blue-prints for hardware, research papers, etc.
- Application will include questions about type of higher education (e.g., undergraduate, graduate/post-

graduate), diversity background (underserved, underrepresented, and indigenous communities), and subjects of interest relevant to ICANN's work.

Summary of changes: Option to upload supporting documentation (letter of recommendations and relevant work); updates to application questions.

Selection
- The criteria for selection of applicants will be reviewed with the new Selection Committee and will include consideration of the applicants' potential for engagement in ICANN.
- Selection criteria will be made public on icann.org at the opening of the application round.
- Selection Committee members will be appointed by ICANN community Supporting Organizations (SOs) and Advisory Committees (ACs) and respective Stakeholder Groups (SGs), Constituencies (Cs), and Regional At-Large Organizations (RALOs).
- Selection Committee membership composition, responsibilities, terms of service, as well as name of Selection Committee members (current and past), their profile, and term served will be published on icann.org.

Summary of changes: Selection Committee appointed by ICANN community groups; new Selection Committee to review selection criteria; ICANN org to publish selection criteria and Selection Committee information on icann.org.

Pre-Meeting Preparation & Support
- Mentors will be identified by SOs and ACs (and interested SGs/Cs/RALOs) and paired up with NextGenners based on the selectees' interests.
- Mentors will be required to complete prerequisite ICANN Learn courses, including an upcoming course on Mentoring Best Practices.
- NextGen mentors will be following Program Mentoring Guidelines to standardize the learning experience.

- NextGenners will complete required and suggested ICANN Learn courses.
- NextGenners' Statements of Interest (SOIs) will be published prior to each ICANN meeting.
- Links to each community group will be included in onboarding and welcome materials.
- NextGenners will be required to participate in the ICANN Prep Week.
- NextGenners will work with mentors for a period of eight (8) weeks prior to the ICANN meeting and design a personalized learning path.
- Community groups would have the opportunity to share information about their members' relevant academic work with the NextGen Program Manager, who would disseminate materials among the NextGen cohort.

Summary of changes: Replacement of NextGen Ambassadors by Mentors appointed by community groups; standardization and training of mentoring practices; enhancement of pre-meeting materials and activities.

On-Site
- NextGenners will continue to be introduced to a variety of stakeholder groups through networking and outreach, and recommended sessions.
- ICANN org will host Fellowship/NextGen shared sessions and a shared social event at the meetings.
- ICANN org will invite community groups to participate in the NextGen sessions and continue to invite them to NextGenners' presentations.

Summary of changes: Further integration of NextGenners with ICANN community members; shared activities

with Fellows and NextGenners

Post-Meeting
- ICANN org will publish a report written by the NextGen cohort that details their activities and indicates:
  - Which community group(s) they plan to observe and/or engage with
  - Their areas of interest related to ICANN
  - Plan for disseminating knowledge within their university
- ICANN org will create a page on icann.org to link relevant NextGen alumni research, blogs, and other publications. NextGen alumni publications will be highlighted in ICANN's newsletters.
- ICANN org encourages NextGenners who wish to continue to learn more and engage with the ICANN ecosystem to consider the Fellowship Program.

Summary of changes: Publishing of post-meeting reports created by each NextGen cohort; sharing of relevant NextGen alumni publications.

Metrics
- ICANN org will track the following data points, ensuring compliance with relevant privacy regulation, and report on data to the community:
  - Short-term metrics:
    - Number of program participants
    - Number of ICANN Learn courses completed
    - Number of awareness-raising activities by NextGenners (e.g. blogs, webinars, inviting ICANN regional representatives to present at universities, etc.)
    - Number of subscribers to ICANN SO/AC/SG/C mailing lists
    - Number of working group observers or participants
    - Number of participants in regional events
  - Mid- and long-term metrics (i.e. post-graduation)
    - Number affiliated with ICANN community group(s)
    - Number of participants in regional events
    - Number of contributors to public comments
    - Number of contributors to mailing list discussions
    - Number of participants in PDPs or cross-community activities
    - Number of pen holders or co-rapporteurs on policy reports and documents
    - Number elected to a position within the ICANN community
    - Number of chairs or co-chairs of groups or subgroups

Summary of changes: Enhanced program metrics and reporting.

Overview of Responsibilities and Expectations

ICANN org
- Revise program materials to clarify program purpose and goals
- Adjust outreach plan to recruit from a more diverse pool of candidates
- Update application to allow for applicants to attach a letter of recommendation from community groups
- Track and report on metrics agreed upon with community; metrics noted above
- Ensure all metrics fit within relevant privacy regulations
- Revise metrics to assess community participation and regional engagement efforts on a regular basis
- Develop a check-in process to gauge NextGenners' alignment with metrics; publish results and follow up with those alumni who are not engaging
- Create structured post-NextGen regional integration opportunities
- Develop mentoring toolkit for the NextGen Program and train mentors

Selection Committee
- Alter Committee Structure
  - SOs/ACs/SGs/Cs to select all committee members; individuals to serve two- to three-year terms to ensure familiarity and consistency with the process
  - SOs/ACs/SGs/Cs to identify criteria for selection of committee members; ICANN org to provide guidance on skills and commitment required
- Review and revamp criteria for selection of NextGen applicants
- Score candidates according to selection criteria
- Host an information session at one ICANN meeting per year on selection committee criteria; revise criteria as needed

	NextGenners	Mentors
Application	- Identify SO/AC/SG/C of interest - Option to upload a letter of recommendation from community groups; resume; relevant work	- Mentors must be active community members, as determined by their respective community group
Pre-Meeting Preparation and Support	- Complete required ICANN Learn courses; program manager to verify completion - Work with mentor to develop goals for meeting - Propose meeting schedule and receive feedback from mentor - Identify skills to build and knowledge to gain at meeting - Prepare for the presentation at the meeting - Submit Statement of Interest (SOI)	- Complete required ICANN Learn courses (e.g., Mentoring Best Practices) - Advise mentees on individual schedules - Assist NextGenners in planning meeting goals - Provide feedback on presentation
Meeting Structure	- Attend Newcomers Day - Attend mandatory sessions identified by mentor (must not interfere with required NextGen sessions) - Engage and network with relevant policy/advice experts - Present research at the ICANN meeting	- Introduce NextGenners to relevant community members - Select sessions for "shadowing" - Offer advice and support
Post-Meeting Expectations	Short-term: - Produce report detailing activities and	- Encourage NextGenners to participate on calls and mailing lists and offer ongoing mentorship

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<td>indicating the community group with their area(s) of interest, and plans to disseminate their learnings about ICANN at their universities
 - Share relevant research papers with ICANN to be featured on the NextGen page at icann.org
Long-term:
- Participate in policy development and regional engagement and provide regular updates on involvement</td>
<td>- Provide feedback on mentees
- Identify NextGenners with skills to contribute and work to involve them in policy work</td>
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Implementation Timeline

Review Timeline

July-September 2019	Community Consultation process
January 2020	Draft Program Improvement Plan released for public comment
March 2020	Public comment period ends; program changes revised and agreed upon
April 2020	Begin implementation of changes
October 2020	Changes to the following processes will take into effect with the ICANN69 cohort: pre-meeting preparation, onsite and post-meeting activities, and metrics reporting.
December 2020	Changes to the following processes will take into effect with the ICANN71 cohort: outreach and promotion, application, and selection.

The changes agreed upon by the community will go into effect about six months or two ICANN meetings after the next steps are agreed upon. Due to the current design of the program, applications are solicited six months in advance of the meeting date; this allows enough time to review applications and process the necessary travel steps. For example, if changes are agreed upon in March 2020, an additional two months shall be built into the plan to execute the changes. Based on this timeframe, most changes to the NextGen@ICANN Program would apply to the ICANN69 cohort. Changes to outreach and promotion and application process would apply to the ICANN71 cohort.