ICANN Transcription

GNSO Standing Selection Committee

Tuesday, 17 November 2022 at 19:00 UTC

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TERRI AGNEW: Good morning, good afternoon, and good evening. And welcome to the GNSO Standing Selection Committee taking place on Tuesday the 15th of November 2022 at 19:00 UTC.

In the interest of time, there will be no roll call. Attendance will be taken by the Zoom room. We have no listed apologies for today's meeting. All documentation and information can be found on the Wiki space. Recordings will be posted on the public Wiki space shortly after the end of the call. Please remember to state your name before speaking for the recording.

As a reminder, those who take part in ICANN multistakeholder process are to comply with the Expected Standards of Behavior.

With this, I'll turn it back over to Emily Barabas. Please begin.

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EMILY BARABAS:	Thanks, Terri. Hi, everyone. This is Emily Barnabas from staff. And actually, if you don't mind I'll turn it over to Arinola, who has been our chair for the group in our previous year. And we'll be talking about leadership for this year, but since she's been in the role on an ongoing basis, we'll let her do the honors of kicking us off. Thanks.
ARINOLA AKINYEMI:	Okay. Thank you very much, Emily. Thanks, everybody. Good morning, good afternoon, good evening, everybody. Welcome to the GNSO SSC call for the 15th of November, our first call for the year to kick off. I welcome everybody. For those who have been part of the committee before, I welcome you. And I welcome the new members especially, hoping that we would have fruitful deliberations this time around, too, just like we had the last time.
	Without further ado, I would want to ask if anybody has any updates to their SOI or perhaps anything that you think will be of good use to all of us here.
SAM LANFRANCO:	I might mention between last and this year, I've changed my relationship to NCSG. I was with a health organization that merged, and I'm no longer with them. I'm on the executive of an organization called the Society for the Advancement of Science in Africa, and they suggested that they join and so I'm on the executive and I'm representing them.
ARINOLA AKINYEMI:	Great to hear that, Sam. Congratulations on the new job.

SAM LANFRANCO: It comes without pay.

ANNE AIKMAN-SCALESE: Congratulations, Sam. I should just mention that I am the NomCom appointee, non-voting, to GNSO Council. So I think it was maybe Paul McGrady who was serving on this committee previously, and I think Paul is stepping down. So the other two NomCom appointees were asked if they wanted to volunteer, so ultimately I just volunteered. So I think Paul's gone and I'm here. Thank you.

ARINOLA AKINYEMI: Oh, great to have you here with us, Anne. You're welcome. Looking forward to your contributions.

ANNE AIKMAN-SCALESE: Thank you.

ARINOLA AKINYEMI: Any other person with anything that we should know about? Okay, seeing there's no one, we might need to move to the second item on the agenda which will be to introduce ourselves and get to know each other, our constituencies. And I'll kick it off by introducing myself. My name is Arinola Akinyemi. I represent the BC on the SSC. Sam.

SAM LANFRANCO: Sam Lanfranco. I've been on the Standing Selection Committee for a while. I was checking. I am older than most presidents and kings that are alive today, so I think my role is to kind of be an elder and mentor and advise as opposed to be going for any leadership. Thank you.

GLEN DE SAINT GÉRY: This is Glen de Saint Géry. I'm the alternative on the IPC for Brian Winterfeldt who, unfortunately, cannot be at the meeting today because there is INTA meeting going on in Miami. And he's literally from morning to night in meetings himself. So I think you probably all know me, but I am the alternative for Brian. Thank you.

ALAN WOODS: If I might jump in then.

ARINOLA AKINYEMI: Yes, please.

ALAN WOODS: Thank you. I'm Alan Woods. I'm the vice-chair of administration for the Registries Stakeholder Group. And I'm also the Director of Compliance and Policy for Identity Digital, as you would probably better know as Donuts, as we changed our name last year at some point. That is me.

ARINOLA AKINYEMI: Glad to have you, [Brian].

CHRISTIAN DAWSON: This is Christian Dawson. I'll go ahead and go. I have been tapped by the ISPCP to fill this role, to take over from Osvaldo Novoa who has been in this group historically. So I am a new face here and looking forward to working with you on this project with this committee.

ARINOLA AKINYEMI: Welcome on board, Christian. Do we have any other member of the committee online? Perhaps the staff could also take time to introduce themselves, too.

EMILY BARABAS: Hi, everyone. This is Emily Barabas. I've worked with a number of you on the SSC and other GNSO projects. I'm a member of the support team and have been supporting the SSC, gosh, I think since the beginning—2017 or so. Look forward to working with you all this year. Feel free to reach out if you have any questions. Thanks.

JULIE HEDLUND: This is Julie Hedlund. Sorry, I'm trying to raise my hand, and I'm not sure ... Yep, there it is. Welcome, everyone—those who are new to SSC and those who are not. I, the same as Emily, have been supporting the SSC basically since the beginning, I think. And, anyway, looking forward to continuing to support. And very happy to be here. Thanks, all.

TERRI AGNEW: Hi, everyone. I am Terri Agnew with ICANN Org as well. I am one of a handful of GNSO secretariats that you will see send out e-mail invitations and join meetings and help along the way. Thank you.

ARINOLA AKINYEMI: Good to have a strong team for support. Looking forward to working with all of you this time around, too.

Okay, now that we're done with introductions to each other, we will then move into #3 on the agenda which will be the brief overview of the SSC. For those who were with me last time, we were able to go through this. But it will be nice for every one of us to go through it. Like [the e-mail] said, the Charter is very important. We will be working strictly with the Charter.

The SSC has a very unique system which, relative to its operations, we're expected to work with a full consensus every time we work or deliberate on any selection process. So unlike other ones that are by majority vote, this will be by full consensus. That means every one of us has to be on board.

Without further ado, I would like to turn it over to Emily, I believe, who will be walking us through this brief overview of the SSC and its work. Emily, I yield the floor to you.

EMILY BARABAS: Thanks. Hi, everyone. This is Emily from staff again. For many of you, this is a review so we'll keep it relatively quick. But for those who are new, these are just a few highlights from the SSC's Charter which is available here and included in chat. Please do

get familiar with it. It will answer a lot of questions about some of the operational pieces of the SSC.

It's sort of an interesting group because it is not meeting throughout the year. It's a Standing Committee, which means that the group only holds meetings when it has a decision to make, when it's received an assignment from Council. But when an assignment is received, the work usually needs to progress relatively quickly. So it's good for everyone to be up to speed when that time comes. And that's why we're kicking off now, so that, should an assignment come up, everyone is ready to go.

And another resource I'll drop into chat here is a Frequently Asked Questions document for new members that the leadership team developed last year which provides some highlights as well, based both on the Charter and just some practical experience in working with the SSC in the past.

So what is the SSC about? As I mentioned, it's a standing committee of the Council, so it works at the request of the GNSO Council to, where applicable, prepare and issue calls for applications related to the selection or nomination of candidates for ICANN structures. Typically, the group does not actually prepare and issue the calls for applications. The Council in the past has typically done that, and the SSC has focused more on the second task on this list which is reviewing and evaluating the relevant applicants and candidates based on the criteria provided by Council. The SSC then ranks candidates and makes selection or appointment recommendations for the Council to review. Those are passed on to the Council which then will vote on the

selections. And then based on the outcome of that, the selections are communicated to all interested parties.

Any questions about that first slide, Mission and Scope?

The Composition of the SSC. There's not a full house here today, so we had to have some members who are not in attendance. You can see the full membership list in the chat. There's a link there. So each stakeholder group of the Contracted Party House has one member. There's one member appointed by each of the Business Constituency, the Intellectual Property Constituency, and the Internet Service Provider and Connectivity Provider Constituency.

There are three members appointed by the Non-Commercial Stakeholder Group, and currently there's just one seat filled from the NCSG. We're still waiting for two additional names to be put forward, but we're hoping that those will be filled soon so that we have a full slate.

And then there's one member from among the three NomCom (Nominating Committee) appointees to the GNSO Council. Anne mentioned at the beginning of the call that she is our NomCom appointee from Council. And then there is one member of the GNSO Council leadership who serves as an ex officio non-voting member, and that is Greg DiBiase. And Greg's job is really to maintain that link between Council and Council leadership and the SSC to make sure that the information is flowing effectively between those groups.

One item that we often get questions about is absences and recusals. So if you're not able to participate in a selection process

because you'll be away or for other reasons, it's important to work within the processes of your SG or C to identify an alternate who will be participating in the case of your absence or in the case that you're conflicted—for example, you want to apply for one of the positions that the SSC is considering—you're also going to want to find an alternate there and work with your SG or C to make that happen. And of course it's the SG or C that is, in fact, reconfirming or confirming that alternate. So we need to make sure that link is maintained.

Any questions about absence or recusal?

One recent revision to the Charter based on the Charter review that occurred last year was around a question that came up about if you have a personal or professional relationship with a candidate that you're considering. And the Charter now specifies that you should use your best judgment in those cases about whether it's appropriate or necessary to recuse yourself, but it is not required. But it is expected that you share any of those links that seem appropriate and material to the potential process at play—that you share those with your fellow SSC members. So please, just read the Charter language around that to make sure it's clear.

I think we already touched on this, that the group does operate by full consensus, which means that the full group needs to agree with any decision. And if it can't come to agreement, that information needs to be shared with the GNSO Council with further information about why the group couldn't reach an agreement. But in terms of full consensus and practice, usually what's done is that the group comes to a preliminary agreement

on a call, and then there's a call for non-objections over the mailing list in case anyone has missed the call and has a major concern about the decision.

An important point to consider when you're thinking about the way that deliberations run with the SSC is that unless otherwise directed by Council, the names of all applicants and the application documents received for a selection process will be considered public and published on the GNSO website or other ICANN websites as standard practice. If the SSC feels that it needs to do some of its deliberations in private, there are resources to do that, including a private Wiki space. But it's important to include a rationale for why that's necessary. And it is an exception to the way the SSC typically operates. And as a default, meeting recordings, meeting notes, and mailing list archives are also public by default.

And just very briefly, what a standard process looks like. In a standard case, the Council will design and launch an Expression of Interest process for a particular nomination that it needs to make for community structure and assign the selection to the SSC. It's also possible that the Council will ask the SSC to design an EOI, but I don't think that's actually ever happened in practice. But it is a possibility.

Staff will set up a Wiki page with all of the relevant materials to support the process, including the list of candidates, the EOI materials, any background that you need, the suggested timeline for the process, and so forth. And we'll confirm the affiliation that they've provided in their application, if that's applicable.

The SSC will meet and look at the assignment, make sure it's understood, consider the evaluation criteria and make sure those are understood. And then everyone will take some time to individually look at the application materials of the different candidates, fill out a sort of survey poll to organize their thoughts a little bit about the candidates and how they look relative to the criteria.

And then the group will meet to look at those poll results, deliberate on the candidates, and come to a preliminary agreement. That could be in one call or, if it's necessary, it could be across multiple calls. And once preliminary agreement is reached by the group, if that's possible, then a consensus call is held on the mailing list by non-objection.

And then finally the SSC submits its recommendation to the GNSO Council by a motion, and the Council puts that on the agenda for the following Council meeting. And the timeline of all of that is somewhat based, working backwards from if the GNSO Council has a final deadline by which it needs to make a nomination and so forth. We make sure that we build in the timeline so that there's time for the Council to make that decision by meeting wherever possible, if necessary by an online vote. But typically, we're able to make it happen by standard process in a meeting.

So that's the very brief overview. I'm happy to answer any questions. I think for a lot of you, this is all very familiar. But for those who are new, we're here to support you and happy to answer any questions or provide clarifications where necessary. Thanks.

ARINOLA AKINYEMI: Thank you, Emily, for that wonderful and excellent presentation. That is a good overview. I want to add that the SSC duties are actually mostly lightweight, like she rightly noted. And it usually is, from my experience, a lot easier to come to a consensus than otherwise.

So we were able to develop the Frequently Asked Questions last year, and if the new members and even the returning members are able to also look through and think that there are additions to this document it will be great, at least since it's going to serve as a resource document for subsequent SSC members.

So do we have any questions for Emily? Okay, Anne. You can go.

ANNE AIKMAN-SCALESE: Yeah, thank you. I appreciate that overview, especially being new to the committee and to the Council. I just wanted to say that I enjoy the process of working to full consensus because there was this committee years ago called the GNSO Council Standing Committee on Improvement Implementation which was a procedural effort that took assignments from Council with respect to its operating procedures. And we always worked on full consensus, and I found that a very enjoyable experience.

My question is related to whether or not the Council, when it assigns work to the SSC, do they specify the qualifications that they're looking for in the candidates to be evaluated? Or is that left to the SSC to determine what qualifications should be evaluated? Thank you.

ARINOLA AKINYEMI: Emily, please go ahead.

EMILY BARABAS: Thanks, Anne. That's a great question. So typically, the Council, in designing Expression of Interest materials, seeks to include the criteria and an application that asks the candidates to speak to those criteria to make the process for the SSC more straightforward. So it will say, "These are the desired characteristics of a candidate" or desired experience. And typically, the EOI application will say, "How do you line up with these criteria?" So that's typically the basis for the selection that the SSC makes.

I think if the SSC feels strongly that something doesn't make sense or is not aligned at the point at which the assignment comes to them, that's certainly a point of communication that can take place to the Council. But the expectation isn't that the SSC is going to significantly veer from what is laid out in the assignment from Council. Thanks.

ANNE AIKMAN-SCALESE: Thank you.

ARINOLA AKINYEMI: Any other questions for Emily? Okay. Thank you, all. Seeing no hands, I think we might need to move to the next item on the agenda. This time around, I would also yield the floor to Emily to take us through that, which is the—

EMILY BARABAS: Thanks, Arinola. So the next item on our agenda is ... Let me just pull this up again.

ARINOLA AKINYEMI: Selection of the—

EMILY BARABAS: Yep. The selection of the SSC leadership team for the 2020-2023 term. So the way that the Charter lays this out is that, just as the SSC itself is renewed each year around the AGM, once the SSC is formed each year the SSC will select, from amongst the membership, a leadership team typically comprised of a chair and a vice-chair. And the leadership is a little bit different for the SSC than for some other groups.

So if you have participated in a GNSO working group where the chair is really expected to be only a neutral facilitator, because this group is so small, because the volunteer pool is a bit strained, you can participate in the leadership team and also participate as a member in this group. It just needs to be clear in which capacity you're speaking. So you're obviously a facilitator as the chair, but if you want to weigh in with your own feedback on the candidates as a member representing your group, you're free to do that as well. So you're not losing your seat in the SSC by volunteering for the leadership team. Hopefully, that's clear.

Arinola has kindly offered to stay on a second term. So she was the chair last year and has volunteered to serve an additional year, which is very generous of her. So if it folks are happy with

that, then that's a pretty easy decision. And what we can do is just put that out for a non-objection on the list. Of course, we open that up. If other people have strong feelings in that regard, please speak up. Alan is supportive.

Our Vice-chair Peter termed out, so we do need a vice-chair, if we can find a volunteer for that. The lift is not significant compared to a member. You have support staff to do all of the administrative stuff and so forth, so I hope that those who have been on the leadership team have found it a relatively enjoyable experience. And we'd love if anyone is willing to step forward already. And if not, if you need time to think about it, that's fine. And we can settle it on the mailing list as well.

But I'll pause for a moment if anyone would like to speak up. Thanks.

EMILY BARABAS: Alan.

ALAN WOODS: Thanks very much. I suppose at this point I would just say, because I hold, actually, two chairships—well, one vice-chair and a chairship already—to be honest, I don't really want to overburden the plate but at the same time, if there are no other alternatives, I'm happy to step up for vice-chair in this one and support Arinola in that one. But with the proviso that I will defer to anybody else who would like to do that, considering I do have a few other things on my plate.

EN

EMILY BARABAS: Thanks very much for that. Much appreciated. So maybe what we'll do is take it to the list, see if there's anyone who's not present on this call who might be interested, and finally accept your offer if it doesn't seem anyone else will step up. And we'll try to keep the burden light on you if that ends up being the case.

I think we might as well say something, like, ask for any further responses by the end of the week, if that works for everyone. So the end of the day Friday. And if it seems like there's no further comments from folks, we'll call that leadership team set and pass that on to Council to approve during their ... It would be their December meeting.

Any final comments on this item before we move on? Arinola, I had just one AOB. Shall I go ahead and cover that?

ARINOLA AKINYEMI: Please go ahead, Emily.

EMILY BARABAS: Thanks. So I wanted to mention that we don't have any SSC assignments currently handed over to the SSC at this stage. There is one nomination on the GNSO's plate coming up for the end of January, which is the nomination of the Fellowship Program mentor. The Council will be discussing that under AOB on the Council meeting this coming Thursday. So two days from now. And should the Council assign that selection process to the SSC, that will be communicated to the SSC and we'll set up some additional materials and a meeting to kick things off as the time allows. So more on that soon, should there be anything coming

up. But other than that, there's nothing else that the Council is expected to make a selection on in the coming month or so. So we will certainly keep you updated on the list if anything changes.

And that was all I had for AOB. Are there any other items there that folks want to cover under AOB? Okay. Seeing none, I guess I'll pass it over to Arinola to close us out.

ARINOLA AKINYEMI: Okay. Thank you, Emily. As always, you've all been supportive, and I appreciate the support from both members and staff. Alan, that's great of you. Thanks for stepping forward. I would look forward to working with you, should everything go through.

And then, once again, I welcome the new members. And especially, thank you for stepping forward. I'm hoping that we will have fruitful deliberation as always.

Seeing that there's nothing else to discuss, I'm sure it will be our usual, except we have a long one. I might be able to give back, like, 29 minutes of our time to everybody so that we can do something else with it. And I can have a super dinner.

CHRISTIAN DAWSON: Sounds great.

ALAN WOODS: Thank you, all.

ARINOLA AKINYEMI: Thanks, all. Thank you all for joining the call. Hope to see you soon.

UNIDENTIFIED MALE: Until we meet again.

JULIE HEDLUND: Thanks, everyone.

CHRISTIAN DAWSON: Talk to you all [soon].

SAM LANFRANCO: Thank you.

UNIDENTIFIED FEMALE: Bye.

SAM LANFRANCO: Bye-bye.

UNIDENTIFIED FEMALE: Thank you. Bye-bye.

TERRI AGNEW: Thank you, everyone. Once again, the meeting has been adjourned. I will stop the recording and disconnect all remaining lines. Stay well.

[END OF TRANSCRIPTION]