
ICANN Transcription

Applicant Support GGP

Monday, 22 May 2023 at 20:00 UTC

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DEVAN REED:

Good morning, good afternoon, and good evening. Welcome to the GNSO Guidance Process, GGP, initiation request for applicant support call on Monday, 22 May 2023.

For today's call, we did receive apologies from Satish Babu.

Statements of interest must be kept up to date. Does anyone have any updates to share? If so, please raise your hand or speak up now. If you need assistance updating your statements of interest, please email the GNSO Secretariat.

All documentation and information can be found on the public wiki space. Recordings will be posted shortly at the end of the call. Please remember to state your name before speaking for the recording.

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As a reminder, those who take part in the ICANN multi-stakeholder process are to comply with the expected standards of behavior. With this, I turn it back over to our chair, Mike Silber. Please begin.

MIKE SILBER:

Thanks, Devan, and thanks everybody for joining. It's much appreciated. Before I hand over to Julie to take us through an overview of current status as well as hopefully getting on to further discussion on task six that we were discussing.

The one thing that I wanted to emphasize—and I know Julie will cover it in more detail—is we have no more runway left. We need to keep to our timelines, and we really need to focus on getting delivery and getting delivery timeously. But Julie, I think with that being said, let me hand it back to you because I think you can explain why I am ringing this particular bell very loudly.

JULIE HEDLUND:

Thank you, Mike, for that introduction. I'm going to go ahead and switch my screen over to the work plan and timeline. So just one moment while I do that. All right. Here we go. So you would have seen this when it was presented, the work plan and the timeline to the GNSO council quite some time ago. We have been sticking to the work plan, but we are now getting down to the wire as far as drafting the GGP recommendations guidance report, the draft report for public comment.

So here's where we are if we look at the schedule. We're in the finalizing task six and beginning the draft report development. And

this is leading up to ICANN 77. The ICANN 77 meeting schedule has been published. I don't know if you've seen it, but I think it just came out today. And on that schedule, we have a working session. And that working session is scheduled for Tuesday, June 13th, at 15:30 to 17:00 EDT local time. And that's a reminder that the ICANN 77 meeting will be held in Washington, DC in the US. And I hope some of you will be able to be there.

So at any rate, we will be using that working session to talk through the draft of the recommendations guidance report. So we're hoping to finalize task six by the next meeting, ideally, and have it finalized so that we'll be able to look at the recommendations when we're at ICANN 77. And just as a reminder, the next meeting will be on Monday, June 5. Next Monday is a US holiday and a number of working group members as well as ICANN offices—ICANN offices are closed in the US and some working group members will also be on holiday. So we're skipping next Monday, and we'll resume on the 5th. And that will be our last meeting before ICANN 77. So we'll hope to finalize task six by then. And then staff will present the text of the recommendations guidance, as well as the rationale, summarizing the rationale and assumptions for the working group to review. And the idea is to finalize the draft recommendations in June, so that by July, we can publish the draft report for public comment. And then following that public comment period, which would be 40 days, I believe, then we will review the public comments and determine what we want to change, if anything, in the final recommendations guidance report. And then finalize that report in the October to December timeframe, and deliver the final report to Council.

And I know this seems perhaps like a lot of time, but as I noted, the public comment period for the draft report is 40 days. And then the review of those comments will take several meetings. And then there's the revising of the report to produce the final report. We have to indicate how we've taken into consideration the comments received in the public comment. So there's still quite a few steps before we can deliver the final report to Council.

So this is what this looks like as a timeline. And we're in this draft report stage here. And then there will be the public comment, and then producing the final report and the delivery to Council. So I'm going to pause there and see if there are any questions with this work plan and timeline.

MIKE SILBER: Thanks, Julie. So no questions from me, except just an appreciation that we don't have a lot of room to spare.

JULIE HEDLUND: That's exactly right, Mike.

MIKE SILBER: Let's see if there's any other comment. Seeing none and no hands, let's proceed, Julie.

JULIE HEDLUND: Very good. I'll move to the next presentation. So what we did is with Mike, we produced a framework for discussion, a few slides to help to guide the discussion on task six, mainly to help us

understand what is essentially in scope and what is out of scope for this task. It's a very narrowly defined task. And while it may seem that there are many interesting questions that the working group could consider, the task is really fairly precise and quite prescribed.

And so we thought we could remind us all again of the task and the appropriate references for that task but then also to think of some of the discussion questions to guide us in developing the recommendation guidance for this task. So that's what these slides are, just a few here, and then we can proceed to a discussion.

So again, just as a reminder, and I hope this is helpful, but the task is very limited. Task six is to recommend a methodology for allocating financial support where there's inadequate funding for all qualified applicants. And the implementation guidance related to this is 1710. The dedicated implementation review team, but that in essence is this GGP working group, should consider how to allocate financial support in the case that available funding cannot provide fee reductions to all applicants that meet the scoring requirement threshold.

And then we've got some rationale that goes with that implementation guidance. Let me cover that here. The working group considered that in subsequent rounds, it may be the case that there are not sufficient funds available to provide fee reductions to all applicants that meet threshold scoring requirements.

The working group reviewed the 2012 approach to this issue, as well as public comments received on the working group's initial report, did not come to an agreement on any specific recommendations in this regard. The working group believes that this topic should be considered further by the dedicated implementation review team. So that's the task, as a reminder. And moving along to the next slide.

Also of interest is, and for reference, is the text from the operational design assessment that states, the ICANN board would need to consider allocating dedicated funds to support the ASP. Should demand overwhelm available funds, ICANN will explore the possibility of additional budget allocation and/or opportunities for ASP sponsorship, with the goal of providing meaningful levels of support for all eligible ASP applicants. ICANN Org intends to offer the following assistance to qualified applicants. Reduction of the base application fee, a curated list of pro bono and/or reduced cost providers to assist with the development of applications and related content, such as [registry] policies, reduction or elimination of certain other fees, such as community priority evaluation, a bid credit or multiplier if the application undergoes an ICANN auction of last resort. Next slide.

So, these are some framing assumptions to help guide our discussion. First assumption is, having more qualified applicants than available funding is a good thing. While welcomed, it is presumed, however, to be unlikely. And assumptions about the implementation, that budget should allow for support at the 75 to 85% range for 10 to 15 applicants. That would indicate a budget of approximately \$2 million for the ODA to support fee reduction. The

GGP's measurement for success is approximately 10 applicants. In respect of the GGP's task six, the ODA proposes addressing in a different manner. If there is inadequate funding, seek additional funding rather than trying to divide in some manner. And then, on to the next slide.

Here are some discussion questions. And then, I'll go over these and then I can turn it over to Mike for facilitation. Is there support for what the ODA proposes? Namely, seeking additional funding if there are more qualified applicants than available budget. Even if the GGP supports this idea, the provision of additional funding is not guaranteed. And even if made available, it may still not be enough to fully support all qualified applicants, which we consider a success.

In this instance, there are at least two approaches to provide limited funds. Fairness/equality of funding while not hindering the efficacy or efficiency of the process or prioritization of some sort or other. Consider the pros and cons of each. So I'll stop there and turn over to you, Mike, for facilitation. Thank you very much.

MIKE SILBER:

Thanks, Julie. So, as Julie indicated, we had a very interesting and wide-ranging discussion last week, but we didn't seem to be making much headway. So I really do appreciate the clarity in terms of the task that we're after.

So the key thing is we're looking at a budget of approximately \$2 million. And if we get more applicants than that budget would indicate, we need to go back and say [first prize,] we get more

funding. Because this is just a guidance process, we're not going to get into detail as to where that funding comes from. Let's look at getting more funding.

But in the outside chance that we have such an excess of bounty in terms of more applicants than the funding that's available, we need to address the question of what then. So I don't know if anybody has any thoughts before we go into the different ways of dealing with that embarrassment of riches that we may—unlikely to, but may face. Yes, Maureen, please continue.

MAUREEN HILYARD: Thank you, Mike. I have a query. There was one successful applicant last time. How much of the \$2 million that was allocated to the last round was that application assigned? Does anyone know?

MIKE SILBER: So Maureen, I'm not sure that there was a \$2 million budget allocated last time. And I'm not sure it's that relevant because we're talking about fee waivers here. So maybe I'm just not understanding.

MAUREEN HILYARD: Yeah, I was just sort of like trying to get—I don't know if we could actually assess how much was actually assigned to that particular applicant who was a successful applicant for applicant support. And we, I don't know, very easily sort of like very simplistically multiply it by 10 or 15. Would it be covered by the \$2 million that

we actually got? How do we know that the \$2 million—I mean, what was their success rate, or they didn't have one, for sort of like assessing how much they might spend?

MIKE SILBER: No, Maureen, we've done it the other way around. So the \$2 million—and Julie, I don't know if you want to go back to that slide, but the \$2 million is based on what we consider to be success and budget to allow for support in the 75 to 85% range. So that's how that was calculated. Nothing to do with historical.

MAUREEN HILYARD: Okay. Okay. Sorry. That's fine. Thanks.

MIKE SILBER: Julie, I don't know if you've seen the comment from Rubens in the chat.

JULIE HEDLUND: Yes, I did see that. And actually, I was going to point that out. Thank you for also raising it. And just for the recording, Rubens Kuhl has put in the chat, "Considering ODA prescribed that only applicant fees would fund applicant support, what are they suggesting in the provision of additional funding? Ask applicants for fee increase?"

I don't have some of the detail from the ODA in front of me. I'm wondering if I could ask one of the staff, Aaron or Leon, to

address where the additional funding is expected to come from, as suggested in the ODA. Aaron, please.

AARON HICKMAN:

Hi, Julie. I don't believe we suggested a source in the ODA, if I recall correctly. I think there would be a number of sources that the board could, of course, tap, but that would really be more up to them. There is certainly the funds in the program itself. When we build the application fee, there's a part of that which is meant for sort of unpredictable costs. And that often is thought of as things like accountability mechanisms, but also could be things like this, where there's a cost within the program that was unanticipated and that needs to be covered.

So, I think that's probably putting the cart before the horse, but I do think there's a number of options that could be used if that happy, terrible thing happens.

JULIE HEDLUND:

Thanks, Aaron. Before you mute, I'm seeing that Sarah also has a question in the chat, maybe you can address. During the call last week, I think Kristy mentioned that the \$2 million was related to 2012. And I maybe recall that as well. I know that as we point on the slide, and as here, Steve says, if memory serves, the allocation during 2012 was indeed \$2 million as well. For the estimate \$2 million in the next round, I do not believe that is definitive. Thanks, Steve.

MIKE SILBER: Yeah, I'm really not understanding what the obsession is. What do we care? Staff needs to recommend a budget. And we've said, if the number of applicants exceeds that budget, first thing to do is the board needs to see if they can find additional funding. Now, let's assume they can't, or they can, but it's still inadequate, then what? And I think we're getting a little stuck on \$2 million and what it was in 2012. And we're not actually answering the question that we need to address. So let's say it's \$10 million. It still doesn't address the question. We're not being asked, is \$2 million the right number?

JULIE HEDLUND: Thank you, Mike. And just to bring everybody back to the discussion question, let's assume, because task six, we have to answer task six, we have to address it in the recommendations guidance report. And that is to provide a methodology for dealing with the situation in which the funding, whatever it may be, even if there is additional funding, is inadequate to cover the number of qualified applicants. And how is this working group going to recommend that we deal with that eventuality? And some options are fairness, equality of funding, prioritization, other options. So maybe we can talk about those pros and cons.

MIKE SILBER: Thanks, Julie. Well, let me try kicking off. So as I indicated last time, my personal opinion is that fairness or equality of funding is going to be the most efficient way of dealing with it. I think that there is some equity looking at prioritization, but it also creates significant additional complexity. And it creates an obligation on

ICANN to run a new additional, potentially duplicate process to prioritize the allocation of applicant support, as opposed to this running as a separate process ahead of the application window being open.

So in my view, if we can't get more money, then we simply share the money that we have amongst the qualifying applicants.

JULIE HEDLUND:

Thank you, Mike. And I'll just note in the chat that there've been some more comments about the amount of funding, but that really is actually not in scope for this GGP. I see that Maureen is saying, let's leave the guessing for...

MIKE SILBER:

Yeah, I think Maureen, that's a very wise suggestion. I don't want to get into that because if we get it wrong, we're going to take the blame. I prefer to be able to throw stones at ICANN staff if they get it wrong, in terms of the budget, rather than us having to accept that responsibility. Gabriela, I see you have a question. So the question is, can we expand the fairness or equality of funding option? Steve, do you maybe want to just answer on the call rather than just in the chat?

STEVE CHAN:

I could. The comments I made are actually more about just the scope of this group's work. [It was] in response to some of the comments about the amount. And what I was just trying to do is make sure to steer us back to the central question, which is about

the methodology, two of which could be the ones that we're looking at right now, which could be some fairness or equality component, or otherwise, some prioritization or some other methodology. So for this fairness or equality of funding, there's probably quite a bit of available options. The simplistic option could be just to divide amongst all the qualified applicants. But there might be otherwise some other instances of trying to support the concept of equality by allocating some other method, which is escaping my mind and creativity. But the most simplistic way of dividing money equally is just that, divide equally. Thanks.

MIKE SILBER:

Thanks, Steve. So my understanding is exactly that. You know, let's say the budget is \$10 million. The recommendation is that if the number of qualifying applicants—remember, there is a qualification criteria—exceeds that, then staff should go to the board and say, we need more money.

So let's say, again, the board finds and scrapes together another few million dollars. And there's still not enough money to give all of the qualifying applicants the 75 to 85% fee reductions that are recommended. Then what happens is the fee reductions will reduce as much as is required to allow everybody to benefit from the fee reduction. So instead of a 75 to 85% fee reduction, it may end up being 70% to everybody or 68% fee reduction for everybody. But everybody who qualifies, who meets the criteria, who meets the scoring requirements, will enjoy the same level of support.

The alternative is that we have to recommend a prioritization methodology. ICANN staff then needs to do an evaluation based against the methodology and then splits it. So one person or one applicant may land up getting an 85% fee reduction and somebody else would get 80 and somebody else would get 75 and somebody else would get 70 based on those criteria.

And my concern with that is that it's significant additional complexity. And I could understand many applicants may very well feel hard done by that somebody else has been prioritized ahead of them and is getting a higher fee reduction based on some criteria that they may not necessarily agree with.

And I just think that it becomes incredibly complex to manage and administer, whereas the equality of treatment is maybe a little simplistic, but it also is very efficient in the way that it's dealt with. You qualify, you benefit. Is that making sense?

So Gabriela's comment, I think the rules should be clear and transparent from the beginning. Funds available, deadlines, criteria, number of beneficiaries. So funds available, I agree with you. Deadlines, completely agree with you. Criteria, completely agree with you. Number of beneficiaries, I don't think it's possible for us to determine. It's going to depend on the number of qualifying applicants. And as we've discussed, if we get more qualifying applicants than there is budget, first step is see if we can increase the budget. And only if we can't increase the budget or if the budget increase is possible, but still doesn't cover, what do we do then?

And I'm getting a message from Lawrence saying he supports the fairness or equality of funding. you qualify, you meet the criteria, you enjoy the benefits, and it's shared equally between all qualifying applicants. Anybody else want to comment? I don't know if somebody else has got an alternative suggestion, because Steve mentioned, I think we're not very creative at the moment. So maybe somebody's got a great creative suggestion that they want to share. I don't know this is a Monday issue, but the team's very quiet tonight or today, depending on your time of day.

JULIE HEDLUND:

So Mike, maybe I'll step in and see if I can help move the discussion along a little bit with a suggestion. So if we were to look at recommending fairness equality methodology for allocating the funding in the instance that there was not enough funding, so addressing task six, how might we want to develop that recommendation guidance? What do we want to say? This is maybe more than people want to do on the fly, but it's worth a shot. And I see Paul having overcome his technical difficulties and has joined us again. Thank you, Paul and welcome.

PAUL MCGRADY:

Thanks, Julie. At least this hour's technical difficulties, at least it wasn't the same problem that I had earlier today. But I'm beginning to think that most of my technical difficulties are coming from the fact that I landed about 18 hours ago from a weeklong trip to Singapore. So it may be me and not the computers. We'll see.

So I think the answer question, Julie, I think that's a great question, which is what's the justification for that and rationale? And without leaning on the decision one way or the other, I think that if you come back with the other answer and you say we don't think it should be divided equally based upon the number of dollars we have, we hope if we get more dollars and it's still not enough, whatever. But if you come back and you say it should not be divided equally, I think a question that council will ask is, oh, okay, well, what's the criteria then on how we divide that number? What's the basis upon which one applicant gets more support than the other one? Is it things like who filed first? Is it do we prefer one jurisdiction over another, one business model over another, right? And so all that gets very quick.

And so without trying to put my finger on the scale anywhere, it seems to me that in terms of looking for a rationale to divide things equally is that one of the advantages of that is that you get to circumvent all those questions that council will ask and you won't have to develop a whole new set of criteria for how those things are distributed.

So if that's helpful, I'm not trying to—as a liaison, it's not my role to suggest one path or the other. But if you choose the simpler path of dividing equally, I think that helps you avoid all kinds of questions that will take a lot of time to work out an answer, or at least for the IRT. Thanks.

MIKE SILBER:

I think that's a very useful intervention. And it's very much aligned with my thinking, which is it may be better, but it's going to be

incredibly complex and potentially gummy up the process. And my personal view is, and again, as you said, without wanting to put my finger too firmly on the scale, I think in this case, efficiency and simplicity of process may be preferable to trying to create a beautiful but complex process, which could get stymied in its implementation.

JULIE HEDLUND: Thank you, Paul. And thank you, Mike. I see Gabriela has in the chat, we can include the possibility to have no support for more than 10 qualified applications. That's an interesting question. That's another option.

MIKE SILBER: It is another option, but the assumptions that we put in is more applicants are better than fewer applicants. And we want to promote as many applicants as possible.

JULIE HEDLUND: Thank you, Mike. And I think it's important you raise the point about assumptions. Perhaps we should talk a little bit about our assumptions, or if we have principles before we're writing up the recommendation. So as you mentioned, one assumption could be to have as many applicants as possible. Are there others? Or support as many applicants as possible, pardon me.

MIKE SILBER: Yeah, Julie, I don't think it's specifically having as many as possible, but rather the more qualifying applicants that we're able to provide support to is a good thing, not a bad thing. We're not trying to block anybody who actually is deserving of support and meets the criteria from receiving it. So I think we're saying the same thing, maybe just the wording is slightly different.

JULIE HEDLUND: Exactly. I think you're right. I see Paul says, "Reading the tea leaves, I do wonder if ICANN Org would have the ODA suggest that more money may be possible if there's no chance that more money is possible."

MIKE SILBER: That sounds like one of those imponderables. Maureen, you have a question or comment?

MAUREEN HILYARD: Yeah, probably just one of those sort of like strange questions, but we're not actually giving people money. So how is the money actually going to be—how is it actually used?

JULIE HEDLUND: So the ODA suggests that the money is used for fee reductions and by a percentage of, say, 75% to 80% or 75% to 85%. I see Paul's hand is up.

PAUL MCGRADY:

Thanks. I apologize if I'm intervening too much. Again, as the council liaison, I'm supposed to kind of be in the background, but maybe it's my Singapore tiredness that's making me more brave. And so I don't know how many folks in this call were super active in this SubPro working group. I happen to be a glutton for punishment and went along with that thing for years.

Maureen's point is well taken. It's not like they're going to get a check back. But in terms of how the money will be spent, it will be spent in a fee reduction, as Julie said. And behind that fee reduction are all sorts of things that are meant to be shared by all the applicants across the program. The program is meant to be run as close as possible to a cost basis. And to build out the technology for the application system, to hire the internal processors at ICANN Org, to have all the various geographic panelists, name panelists, dispute resolution people, all these various vendors that ICANN Org will have to hire.

And so yes, the check won't be going to applicants, but there is a real cost to the program. And if ICANN discounts the application fees significantly, then the money will be going out to those vendors. And these applicants that we're worried about really won't be reimbursing ICANN for how much the program actually costs. So it is real money. It's just not a check to an applicant, if that makes sense. And it's not an inexpensive undertaking to run the program. So I think we should think of these in terms of real dollars, because they really are real dollars leaving the treasury of ICANN Org. And I hope that's a good thing to say. Thanks.

MIKE SILBER: Well, Paul, I think it gets one step beyond that. And that's the point that Rubens was making, which is it's money being paid by other applicants, which is not being paid by supported applicants, which is being paid proportionately less by supported applicants, which means essentially it's increasing the cost to unsupported applicants to some degree. And we need to see real benefit to the community in creating that differentiation in treatment. And I think the community does see there being value to it, and does see there being benefits to having supported applicants. But we need to keep that in mind, is that it's ultimately other applicants who are putting in the cash, which is then going to be set off by ICANN in terms of those costs you were talking about.

JULIE HEDLUND: Thanks, Mike. Thanks, Paul. Very helpful.

MIKE SILBER: I just want to get a sense, because we've had Lawrence, we've had a few other people suggesting that maybe equality of treatment is the way to go. Do we have some degree of rough consensus that we're not going to try prioritization, we're not going to try new criteria, we're not going to try something innovative, but rather, we're going to make a recommendation for equality of treatment?

JULIE HEDLUND: Do you want people to give some check marks or raised hands?

MIKE SILBER: Yeah, if you want to wave or put a thumbs up or do something that we at least know that we're sort of on the right track here.

JULIE HEDLUND: Thanks, Paul. And people, if you select reactions, you could check the green check mark or the thumbs up if you support or the raised hand. Like Lawrence is doing. Others?

MIKE SILBER: Yeah, I've got Lawrence, I've got Sarah. And yes, Maureen, you're right. The \$2 million or whatever the right number is for ICANN to spend on expenses for the application process as opposed to the applicant spending it. So it's essentially a credit or a fee reduction.

JULIE HEDLUND: And so I still see—well, there were two check marks. Mike, can I ask, do we have three from you? Do we have those that do not support fairness? That sounds bad.

MIKE SILBER: But I think we had Roz and Olga also indicated in the chat earlier that they were supporting it. I'm just looking at Lawrence's comment. We had Gabriela, we had Roz, we had Sarah all agreeing with that side. I think we've got at least some sort of rough consensus. And I'm going to call rough consensus on equality. And if anybody disagrees on that rough consensus call, please speak now so that we can address it.

Not seeing any hands or further comment in the chat. So let's call it rough consensus on equality. We need to deal with two issues. The first is what happens if equality leads to such a dilution that support becomes meaningless. We're splitting, for example, \$2 million between 200 qualifying applicants. That really dilutes it to such an extent that it may not be feasible.

I think there, ICANN needs to see in consultation with the board if there is budget to be found elsewhere. But I think that given that we are writing guidance, we need to put it into our guidance that this is a risk and Org should look at mitigating the risk. I don't think we can do I don't think we can do more than that.

The second issue is, and Kristy was going to come back to us on this, and that is how to deal with a situation where we don't force supported applicants to wait until everyone has come in before they get a result and before they get information from us. And I don't know if Steve or Julie, if you've got any feedback in terms of how that could potentially work. Or Leon, I don't know if you potentially have some feedback for us.

JULIE HEDLUND:

I don't have any guidance in that regard. I don't think that Kristy had been able to track down that input. Although I think that it may be that we could determine that that level of detail is one that we could provide some principles on, but maybe not have to provide the specific details of how this could be done.

MIKE SILBER: Completely agree with you, Julie. I wasn't suggesting that we needed to get into a detailed design, but rather, how do we describe this guidance in a way that gives staff the flexibility to move forward? Because what we ideally want is to tell qualifying applicants you have qualified. You are going to get support. We can't tell you exactly the quantum of support because it's dependent on a number of factors. But in building your business case, you can expect a minimum quantum, and it may be higher, but it's not going to be lower. Is that something that's possible? Because that would be ideal. If that's not possible, then we have to wait for the process to unfold, for the numbers, for the budget, and then we only tell people what they're likely to get. So, I agree with you. We don't want to get into the detail of designing that, but I do want us to give council advice which says create a flexible enough program so that applicants know as much as possible as early as possible, recognizing that final numbers may not be possible right up front, but it would be nice for an applicant to know as on a first-come, first-served basis, that they're qualifying and that they're going to get something and they can start building their business case.

JULIE HEDLUND: Thank you, Mike. I think that could be put into a form of recommendation guidance. I mean, that ICANN Org should create a flexible program that allows applicants to know as much as possible about their fee allocation or support allocation.

MIKE SILBER: The range of support.

JULIE HEDLUND: Their range of support, as early as possible.

MIKE SILBER: Yeah, I think that works. So, I think to my mind, that's the first thing. The second thing is we should, in our guidance, say some way that as much as we support the idea of equality, it should not lead to a situation where applicant support is diluted to such an extent as to cease to be meaningful.

JULIE HEDLUND: I'm making note of that, too. And I see Steve has a note in the chat. To make note about dilution to the point of it being meaningless, that probably aligns with the operational issue he's describing now. Org could be tasked with identifying a support floor, for instance.

STEVE CHAN: And I can expand on that, [but the concept of a floor doesn't make sense.] So, the ODA predicted a 75 to 80% support baseline. And so whatever that number is, I don't profess to have any insight on what it should be, but for instance, if the percent of support were to drop to 35 percent after there being so many qualified applicants, let's say that 35 percent is meaningless or below that is, then that's a point where you can't divide it any further, essentially. So, maybe there's a concept of a point where it cannot drop below that, after which maybe you defer the applicants to a future round or some other mechanism. Thanks.

JULIE HEDLUND: Thank you, Steve. We have five minutes to the top of the hour. Do people have more suggestions to raise? More options? More pros and cons? I see Gabriela notes, "Is it said already who would be evaluating qualifications that should also be published and transparent?" That may be the case, Gabriela, but I don't think that is—

MIKE SILBER: So, I don't think we know. I don't think we know yet, but I think it is part of the guidance that we need to give, because last time around, there were challenges because it was essentially community who were doing it and there were questions around transparency and some of the documentation was not as good as it could have been. So, I do think that one of the guidance areas is that this should be published and transparent so that there are no concerns raised at a later stage. Lawrence, I thought I saw a hand from you. I don't know if I missed it.

JULIE HEDLUND: I also saw a hand from Lawrence.

LAWRENCE OLAWALE ROBERTS: Yes, I was considering the time, but so thinking about where to get additional funds from just in case we have more applications than expected, which we've all agreed to be a good thing, my mind goes to something that happened not too far back

when we started, when the community and board started going in the direction of having...

JULIE HEDLUND: Lawrence, you're cutting out?

MIKE SILBER: Lawrence, we're really struggling.

JULIE HEDLUND: Can you type in the chat?

MIKE SILBER: Lawrence, we've lost your audio.

LAWRENCE OLAWALE ROBERTS: Okay, will try.

JULIE HEDLUND: Thank you. Let's see if Lawrence can type in the chat. Mike, I was going to suggest that staff could draft some suggested guidance based on today's discussion and put it out for review.

MIKE SILBER: Yeah, that will be appreciated and that was requested earlier as well, so I think that's a great idea. Lawrence, given that we're two minutes from the end of the call, if you don't get it into the chat,

then can I suggest you please circulate your comment on the mailing list?

Given where you started, and I had a very similar question last week and we started debating where the money was coming from and it was pointed out to me that that's not what we're here to do. The point of this working group is not to find the money. It's to make a recommendation and to provide guidance, and one of the elements of guidance is if there are more qualifying applicants than there is budget, find more money. It's not for us, it's out of scope for us to tell people where to find the money from. But let's see, and given that we're now coming to the end, maybe you can pop your comment onto the mailing list and I may have misunderstood completely, in which case I apologize.

But not seeing any further hands, not seeing any further comments, I'm going to thank everybody for their engagement and participation and wish you a very pleasant morning, afternoon, evening, depending where you are, and thank you for your engagement on this call.

JULIE HEDLUND:

Thank you very much, Mike, and thanks so much for sharing so ably today, and thanks, Paul, for your helpful contributions, and this meeting is adjourned. Have a great morning, afternoon, evening, everyone.

[END OF TRANSCRIPTION]