

Generic Names Supporting Organization (GNSO) Liaison to the Governmental Advisory Committee (GAC)

[Original 23 September 2021](#)

[Revised version adopted by the GNSO Council on 16 May 2024](#)

Background:

The GNSO Liaison to the GAC role was first piloted in FY15-16 (1 July 2014 to 30 June 2016) as part of a broader initiative of the GAC-GNSO Consultation Group to facilitate early engagement of the GAC in GNSO policy development activities. Due to the success of the pilot, the GNSO Liaison to the GAC is now a permanent role and an integral part of communications between the GAC and GNSO. On 23 September 2021, the GNSO Council decided to extend each term of the GNSO Council Liaison to the GAC to two years and to impose a term limit of two consecutive two-year terms.

Objective:

When the current term of the GNSO Liaison to the GAC ends, the GNSO Council will seek to fill the position of GNSO Liaison to the GAC (hereafter "the Liaison") to begin serving in the role following that year's Annual General Meeting.

The Liaison will be primarily responsible for providing timely updates to the GAC on GNSO policy development activities in order to complement the existing notification processes as well as answering questions in relation to these (GNSO) activities that GAC members may have. Furthermore, the Liaison will be responsible for providing the GNSO Council with regular updates on progress, including on GAC activities, specifically in so far as these relate to issues of interest to the GNSO. The objective of the liaison mechanism, in combination with other mechanisms and early engagement tools, is to facilitate effective early engagement of the GAC as well as generally assist with flow of information between the GAC and the GNSO. In addition to these engagement tools, regular monthly coordination calls are to be scheduled between the GNSO Liaison to the GAC and the GAC Point of Contact to ascertain that all the relevant information has been received by the GAC and progress is being made, following which a regular status update is provided by the Liaison to the GNSO Council.

Skills and Experience:

- Significant experience in and knowledge of the GNSO policy development process as well as of recent and current policy work under discussion and / or review in the GNSO.
- Availability to attend and participate in GAC meetings during the course of ICANN meetings and also, where applicable, intersessional meetings (via teleconference).
- A former GNSO Councillor or community policy lead is likely to be well-qualified for the position, but this is not a necessary criterion for the Liaison.

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Responsibilities Towards the GAC:

- Attend and participate as required in GAC meetings during ICANN meetings and possible interessional meetings (Note: to the extent that ICANN meetings are held face-to-face, travel funding is available for the ICANN meetings should the Liaison otherwise not be funded to attend an ICANN meeting).
- Represent and communicate the policy work of the GNSO in a neutral and objective manner.
- Guide the GAC in opportunities for early engagement.
- Keep the GAC updated on how its early input was considered by the GNSO.
- Be available during ICANN meetings to answer questions from the GAC and/or their individual members regarding all GNSO activities.

Towards the GNSO:

- Attend and participate as an observer in GNSO Council meetings. The Liaison is expected to only intervene in their Liaison capacity with interventions focused on any GAC activities as these relate to issues of interest and/or under discussion by the GNSO.
- Provide regular updates on GAC related issues to the GNSO Council by email or during Council meetings at the request of any Council member, including details of how an issue is being viewed within the GAC itself, i.e. what are the various views being presented.
- The GNSO Council may also request the Liaison to observe certain other GNSO activities if it deems this will benefit the Liaison in fulfilling its responsibilities. Unless otherwise directed, the Liaison will observe these activities and report back to Council and/or GAC with its observations, as deemed appropriate.
- Liaise with GNSO policy staff who may assist, as needed, in the preparation of briefing materials and/or responses to questions.
- Liaise with relevant working groups, utilizing GNSO Council liaisons where required, in order to be continuously current and knowledgeable on work in progress.
- Assist in the facilitation of GAC-GNSO discussions in cases where GAC early input is in conflict with GNSO views.
- Work with the GAC Point of Contact to establish agendas for GAC/GNSO Bi-lateral meetings that usually occur at or around ICANN Meetings: A preliminary agenda for these bi-lateral meetings are sent in advance to the GNSO Council Leadership team to prepare it for a GNSO Council Leadership / GAC Leadership bi-lateral meeting that generally occurs two-three 2-3 weeks prior to the full bi-lateral meeting. The agenda for the full bilateral meeting is finalized during the leadership call and then sent to the GNSO Council members.
- Produce an annual report to the GAC and GNSO that highlights the activities of the Liaison over the past year as well as possible improvements to be considered.

Practical Working:

- Attend all GAC open meetings and be allowed to request the floor.
- Attend GAC closed meetings discussing GNSO related topics and be allowed to request the floor.

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Commented [3]: Who is actually going to read this? Seems like busywork. They should write one of those when they leave the post to summarize the experience and help the new holder of the position along.

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- Attend GAC conference calls by invitation and accordingly be allowed to request the floor.
- Join GAC working groups by invitation and accordingly be allowed to request the floor.
- Will not be on the GAC mailing list but may send to it through the mailing list admin and receives replies by being cc'd.
- Attend all GNSO Council meetings as an observer and be allowed to request the floor if it pertains to the responsibilities of the Liaison. [Attendance at GNSO meetings should take precedence over GAC meetings absent approval from GNSO Council leadership.](#)

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Commented [4]: It seems like the liaison is required to attend both GAC and GNSO meetings at all times. Shall we specify the priority of attendance when there's a conflict between the 2?

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Application Process:

1. The leadership of each Stakeholder Group / Constituency may submit the application of its candidate(s), which should include at a minimum a link to a completed and current statement of interest as well as a brief note explaining why the candidate has applied for this role and how the candidate meets the specific requirements [by date] to the GNSO Secretariat (gnsos.secretariat@gnsos.icann.org). Candidates are requested to complete the attached application template.
2. The GNSO Secretariat will relay the applications received by the deadline to the [Standing Selection Committee \(SSC\)](#) [date].
3. The SSC will review the applications received and rank these taking into account the skills and experience required as outlined in this call for volunteers by [date].
4. Based on the outcome of the ranking process, the SSC will contact the number 1 candidate to confirm the selection by [date].
5. The SSC will submit its recommendation to the GNSO Council in the form of a motion for confirmation of GNSO Liaison to the GAC to the GNSO Council by [date] at the latest
6. Consideration of motion and approval of candidate by GNSO Council during GNSO Council meeting on [date].
7. Confirmation of candidate to GAC leadership (by [date]).
8. GNSO Liaison to the GAC officially takes up its role (by [date]).

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Removal:

In the case of significant issues identified with the performance of the liaison, the GNSO Council Leadership, in consultation with the GAC Leadership, may decide to remove (and possibly replace) the Liaison at any point during the Liaison's term, [provided that the liaison is made aware of the issue and has the opportunity to react.](#)

Review and Renewal:

The role is reviewed by the GNSO Council every [two years](#). As part of this review, the GNSO Council is expected to request the GAC and/or GAC Secretariat for input on the role and functioning of the GNSO Liaison to the GAC and also consider the Liaison's performance with respect to the criteria in this document.

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An existing Liaison may be reconfirmed for a second two- year term upon agreement by the Liaison and the GNSO Council. If: (a) the Liaison has served two consecutive two2-year terms, or (b) the Liaison has indicated that he/she is no longer available to continue in this role, or (c) the GNSO Council decides that a new liaison should be appointed, the application process as outlined above will take place.

Commented [6]: believe this should read 1 consecutive 2-year term

Commented [7]: I see what the confusion may have been and I think by adding the word "application" prior to process in the last sentence makes it more clear. So if the Liaison has served 2 consecutive two-year terms, the application process outlined above will take place.

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