



The GNSO Intellectual Property Constituency (IPC) appreciates the opportunity to comment on the Draft Proposal for the NextGen@ICANN Program Improvements (Draft Proposal). The IPC responded to the survey conducted in July and August 2019 and suggested opportunities for improvements in our response. The IPC thanks ICANN for taking our suggestions on board and incorporating many of them into the Draft Proposal.

Overall, the IPC is supportive of the Draft Proposal in its current form. However, the IPC flags the following topics for review by ICANN.

Letter of Endorsement or Recommendation

While the option to include a letter of endorsement or recommendation is no doubt well intended, the IPC is concerned that an absence of a letter of endorsement or recommendation could inadvertently screen out otherwise qualified candidates. The purpose of the NextGen@ICANN Program per the Draft Proposal is to “**introduce** university students to ICANN’s work” (emphasis added). It is unreasonable to expect that any newcomer to ICANN be able to reach out to a community group for a letter of endorsement or recommendation. Potentially, without any introduction to ICANN, a university student would be expected to identify a group they are interested in engaging with and know the contact point for that group. Alternatively, the IPC suggests ICANN alter the letter of endorsement or recommendation to be from a university lecturer. This would enable applicants to provide support to their application without overburdening them with attempting to navigate an ICANN community group.

Metrics

The IPC previously encouraged metrics to be used when evaluating the NextGen@ICANN Program – specifically to measure ongoing engagement by former NextGen participants over time. The IPC welcomes ICANN setting out lists of proposed metrics for the short, and medium to long terms.

Mentors

The IPC supports mentors for the NextGen Program being identified by existing community members. However, the IPC does not support the mentors being identified by SOs and ACs. As the IPC, and others, have stated on multiple occasions before, the GNSO is a diverse collection of viewpoints and cannot be represented by a single person. Rather, the IPC suggests that each SO and AC has the option of appointing a pool of mentors, from which mentors can be identified for each meeting depending on the interests of the NextGen participants for that meeting.