GNSO Council feedback to the ICANN Public Meeting Questions Survey (6 November 2020)

The Council recognizes that the format used for the AGM can be helpful to some, but challenging for others. Having a meeting extend over a longer period of time means that on the one hand, participants may need to carve out several weeks out of their personal and work schedule to effectively engage. On the other hand, the extended format potentially helps the balancing of personal/work commitments with meeting participation, as participants can prioritize which sessions they need to attend, while reviewing recordings as necessary. Taking into account these differing perspectives, the Council has the following feedback:

- Sessions at ICANN Public Meetings, in face to face situations but particularly in a virtual environment, should be considered through the lens of whether or not they are essential. In that regard, ideally a session should be seeking to address an objective or reach an outcome. The purpose of the session should be intentional with a stated goal. Why this is even more important for a virtual ICANN meeting is because of the considerable time zone challenges that arise from participants joining from all over the world. By establishing some basic criteria around when a session is appropriate for an ICANN meeting, there is the potential to streamline the meetings agenda and reduce the burden on the community, through fewer sessions and/or a shorter duration for the overall meeting. A more streamlined agenda also has the benefit of better accommodating cross-community engagement.
- The GNSO Council, in previous comments regarding the ICANN Meetings strategy, has communicated the desirability of establishing "themes" for days of the ICANN meeting. Doing so allows the community to converge on topics of mutual interest, like policy development, and also will reduce redundant and/or competing sessions on the same topic throughout the entire ICANN meeting agenda.
- The GNSO Council worked within the structure of the virtual Annual General Meeting and by and large was able to meet its needs. Generally, there was adequate time available for the GNSO Council and ongoing policy development, though the Council continues to believe that ICANN meetings should always accommodate focused attention on ongoing policy development, given that the impact of GNSO policy development usually extends beyond just the GNSO. The work of the GNSO Council and policy development serve as the GNSO Council's main priorities, but the Council dedicated time to engaging in bilateral meetings with other groups, including the Board. The Council continues to see the importance of bilateral meetings and dialogue, but at the same time, does not believe that those sorts of meetings must necessarily be attached to an ICANN meeting. In that regard, the GNSO Council believes that ICANN meetings in a virtual environment should not simply seek to mimic the face to face versions.