Summary and Analysis of Public Comments for Academia Representation on NomCom

Comment period: 30 April 2011 to 30 May 2011

General Disclaimer: This document is intended to broadly and comprehensively summarize the comments submitted to this Forum, but not to address every specific position stated by each contributor. Staff recommends that readers interested in specific aspects of any of the summarized comments, or the full context of others, refer directly to the specific contributions at:
http://forum.icann.org/lists/academia-nomcom/

Background

On 21 April 2011, the ICANN Board approved the initiation of a 30-day period of public comment to obtain community input to inform the BGC's future work on the feasibility of identifying an entity to make appointments to the NomCom as called for in Article VII, Section 2.8.c of the Bylaws. The public comment also sought community input on the proposed Bylaws amendments
http://www.icann.org/en/general/proposed-bylaws-revision-vii-30apr11-en.pdf
regarding the removal of this Bylaws provision in the event that community feedback does not result in the identification of an appropriate entity or process for identifying such an entity.

Comments received

A total of three comments were received.

Summary of relevant comments

In its submission, the At-Large Advisory Committee (ALAC) notes the focus on the Bylaws amendment proposal to remove Article VII, Section 2.8.c if no effective way is proposed by the community to select academia representatives for the NomCom. The ALAC states their in-principle agreement to this removal if no other proposals are made by the community and only provided "...that this is undertaken as part of a wider process that keeps academia involved in the Nominating Committee, whether via the GNSO or otherwise..."
http://forum.icann.org/lists/academia-nomcom/msg00000.html
http://forum.icann.org/lists/academia-nomcom/msg00001.html

Avri Doria suggests assembling organizations into an "ICANN Academic NomCom Representative List" using a rotation system similar to the model used with the Board Liaison appointment by the ICANN Technical Liaison Group, such that each organization, on a rotational basis, would be able to propose a nominee to serve a one-year term on the NomCom. Ms. Doria names "...GigaNet - Global Internet Governance Academic network, IRSG - Internet Research Sterring[sic]

Group and UNESCO…" as potential organizations that could be considered for inclusion on such a list. http://forum.icann.org/lists/academia-nomcom/msg00002.html

Roberto Gaetano submitted that the rationale for including academia representation was to "balance out representation of different stakeholders". Gaetano recounts his experiences of this issue as a previous chair of the Board Governance Committee and further acknowledges "a committee of the Board cannot have permanently the power to influence a decision of the NomCom." He refers to recent GNSO restructuring and emergence of new constituencies to suggest "…that there is the possibility to give a chance to the scientific and research academia to create a constituency, and it would be worthed to suspend the decision of eliminating this seat at least for one or two years, to see whether such a constituency will be formed…" http://forum.icann.org/lists/academia-nomcom/msg00003.html

Analysis and Next Steps

Of the three comments received, two individuals provided broad suggestions for possible academia representative selection process for the NomCom.

Ms. Doria's suggestion, while utilizing the precedent of an existing rotation selection model for the TLG (for Board liaison positions), would require further community discussion as there were no recommendations with respect to selection process, eligibility requirements, comparability criteria or optimal size of the proposed representative member list. In the case of the TLG, the constituent members of the TLG (IETF, ETSI, ITU-T and W3C) evolved from their involvement as original signatories to the 1999 Memorandum of Understanding for ICANN's Protocol Supporting Organization.[1] There is no such comparable basis for a group of academic organizations.

Mr. Gaetano's suggestion provides a means of potential future constituency self-formation and self-determination for academia within ICANN's existing multi-stakeholder representative structures. Further community feedback would, however, be required to gauge the extent of community interest and participation for any implementation of this proposal.

Two comments discussed the proposal for the removal of Article VII, Section 2.8.c of the Bylaws if the community could not identify a representative entity or process. The ALAC provided specific comment and its acceptance of any removal of the Bylaws Section was stated to be conditional on ensuring academia involvement in the NomCom. Mr. Gaetano suggests holding off deleting any Bylaws provision for one or two years to provide the time and opportunity for an academia constituency to form within the GNSO. Mr. Gaetano's suggestion that the revision to the Bylaws be suspended pending a possible academia constituency being developed does not,

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[1] http://tools.ietf.org/html/rfc2691

however, address the issue that currently this provision of the Bylaws is not being followed.

This summary will be presented to the Board Governance Committee for consideration at its next meeting during ICANN 41 in Singapore.

Contributors (chronological order of posting):
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