ICANN At-Large Virtual Outreach and Engagement Strategy v1.0

# Introduction

Along with the world, At-Large is facing unprecedented challenges in the age of COVID-19. At-Large has identified its [2020 Priorities](https://community.icann.org/display/atlarge/At-Large+Priority+Activities+-+2020), which include activities being led by the Sub-Committee on Outreach and Engagement (SC on O/E). At the same time, the SC on O/E has identified a [set of proposed activities for the remainder of FY20 and for FY21](https://community.icann.org/display/atlarge/ALAC+Subcommittee+on+Outreach+and+Engagement).

Therefore, we need to look at ways and means of maintaining the goals of the SC on O/E, implementing the At-Large 2020 Priorities and SC on O/E proposed activities in order to ensure the continued interest and involvement of our community.

This includes our mandated work of engaging the wider community in At-Large Policy advice development and outreach to potential new At-Large members. A viable alternative approach is to create a **Virtual Outreach and Engagement Strategy** which supports At-Large efforts to engage the community to be more effective by supplementing face-to-face information sharing with technology. This document will detail the various elements of a strategy to achieve success in increasing engagement and expanding our community base despite the challenges facing us and without the benefit of face-to-face meetings.

# Values and Past Activities

The word “Crisis” in Chinese characters means *Danger and Opportunity*. This is what summarizes our situation as we start exploring the tools that we can implement to create a viable Virtual outreach and engagement strategy.

The presence of virtual communities isn’t new. One of the very first virtual communities was called “ The WELL” (1) established in 1985 in California which is an online community sharing similar values. They are members not of the same ethnicity, religion or political views but a communalistic shared view of a caring community. This idea then became a myriad of special interest discussions. Regardless of the topic, members engage with each online other because of a set of shared values and norms.

What are the shared values of the Outreach and Engagement Committee?

* Commitment to a positive role of At-Large in the ICANN ecosystem
* Dedication to supporting capacity building leading to greater engagement in At-Large policy advice development
* Outreach to Fellows, NextGen and interested members of the public at ICANN meetings and other Internet Governance meetings.
* Sharing best practices of techniques and tactics of outreach and engagement strategies
* Spread the word of the importance of At-Large policy advice
* Mutual respect for all members of the ICANN community.

Given these shared values, a strategy, whether activities include face-to-face activities or virtual, should include activities that reflect them. Previously, O/E activities have included:

**Outreach at ICANN and Internet Governance Meetings**

* At-Large and ICANN O/E activities during ICANN Meetings, including at the ICANN booth;
* At-Large O/E activities, including hosting workshops and a booth, at the global and regional IGF meetings, African Internet Summit, Canadian Internet Forum, etc
* RALO networking receptions and showcases
* At-Large and NCUC/NPOC information sessions
* Presentations at various Internet Governance events, including Schools of IG

**Information Exchange**

* Information sharing
  + RALO newsletters
  + Video summaries - At-Large Policy Videos and NARALO Insights
  + Short webinars at RALO’s monthly calls
* Publication of the Welcome package as an O&E tool?

**ALS Activities /Read Outs**

* Local initiatives by ALSs to their members and communities

# Priorities and their Implementation

There are many different methods that can be used in planning an At-Large virtual outreach and engagement strategy that incorporates the SC on O/E priorities.

However, what is being proposed is to develop and implement a systematic approach to virtual outreach and engagement that incorporates the following:

* [2020 At-Large Priorities](https://community.icann.org/display/atlarge/At-Large+Priority+Activities+-+2020)
* [Post-ATLAS III activities](https://community.icann.org/display/ATLAS3/Post-ATLAS+III+Activities)
* [FY20](https://community.icann.org/display/CRALO/At-Large+Regional+FY20+Outreach+and+Engagement+Strategic+Plans) and [FY21](https://community.icann.org/display/CRALO/At-Large+Regional+FY21+Outreach+and+Engagement+Strategic+Plans) Regional Outreach Strategies of the five RALOs
* Coordination with the [Capacity Building Working Group](https://community.icann.org/display/atlarge/At-Large+Capacity+Building+Working+Group), [Consolidated Policy Working Group](https://community.icann.org/pages/viewpage.action?pageId=82411661), and the [Social Media Working Group](https://community.icann.org/display/atlarge/At-Large+Social+Media+Working+Group)
* Collaboration with the GSE Regional VPs and their teams and the Fellowship and NextGen support leads

[All of these activities are noted on the SC on O/E table on FY20-FY21 Proposed Activities.](https://community.icann.org/display/atlarge/ALAC+Subcommittee+on+Outreach+and+Engagement)

**FY20 At-Lage Priorities and Post-ATLAS III Activities:**

The FY20 At-Large Priorities for the SC on O/E are the post-ATLAS III activities that were assigned to the group. These activities, most of which can be worked on virtually, consist of:

[**At-Large Participation Toolkit**](https://community.icann.org/display/atlarge/At-Large+Participation+Toolkit)

Develop a set of materials for each stage of involvement:

1) Onboarding;

2) Initial engagement (WG membership; assigned a coach/mentor)

3) Policy Advice development involvement;

4) At-Large leadership

**ACTION:** Each of these Participation Toolkit activities can be completed virtually. Thus, there is an opportunity to focus on their development and implementation during the current situation.

**FY21 General Assemblies**

EURALO and LACRALO are scheduled to hold General Assemblies (GAs) in the second half of FY21: March 2021 for LACRALO and June 2021 for EURALO.

Post-ATLAS III activities related to the General Assemblies include looking at ways how ATLAS III activities and learning can be carried on to GAs as a process of continued learning and skill-building resulting in increased engagement? Questions that should be answered in collaboration with EURALO and LACRALO leadership include:

* What kind of information is important to impart to members about At-Large to encourage greater engagement by individual members (unaffiliated and ALS)
* Has an assessment been carried out about those who were invited to the last RALO GA and how many are actually engaged a year later?

**ACTION:** Planning the overall approach to the upcoming cycle of RALO GAs as well as the planning for the EURALO and LACRALO GAs can be done virtually. The SC on O/E co-chairs should work closely with At-Large Regional Leadership (Leaders of all RALOs) in the overall approach to GAs.

The co-chairs from EURALO and LACRALO should work closely with their regional leadership on developing the aims and objectives for their GAs. Similar to ATLAS III, **capacity-building webinars and/or ICANN Learn courses could be utilized virtually to prepare GA participants for their GA.**

**RALO Outreach and Engagement Strategies**

Regional Outreach and Engagement Strategies are both a useful way to guide the regions in their outreach and engagement strategies as well as a requirement to be eligible for CROP funding.

In the current situation, these strategies will be even more important in order to ensure efficiency through **streamlining with GSE** activities and ensuring each activity and funded trip has as much impact as possible.

**ACTION:** The FY21 Regional Strategies are being developed. Current drafts are available at the Regional [FY21 Outreach and Engagement Strategy Workspace.](https://community.icann.org/display/CRALO/At-Large+Regional+FY21+Outreach+and+Engagement+Strategic+Plans)

SC on O/E Co-Chairs, in collaboration with their Regional Leadership and GSE Regional Vice President and At-Large Regional Manager, must complete their strategies by 29 May 2020.

Given the COVID-19 pandemic, these **Regional Outreach and Engagement Strategies need to incorporate virtual activities and be streamlined with ongoing GSE outreach and engagement** activities to the extent possible.

Proposed Process

* Each RALO is to work with their Regional leadership, their SC on O/E co-chair, their At-Large staff manager and GSE VP/liaison on the development of their region's FY21 Regional Strategic Outreach Plan.
* Regional calls will be set up with the above people.
* Strategies should incorporate virtual activities, use of social media, existing At-Large Participation tools such as capacity building webinars, videos, ICANN Learn courses, slide decks, etc.
* Strategies should consider involving the At-Large Ambassadors in their outreach and engagement plans.
* Strategies should incorporate Post-ATLAS III activities where relevant.
* Strategies should list the CROP trips and RALO Discretionary Funding activities.

# Engagement Strategies

In collaboration with RALO’s, the key At-Large policy issues were identified during ICANN63 in Barcelona through a bottom up process. These issues are noted in the At-Large Policy Platform. They are cornerstone themes for engagement with the community. The top 10 At-Large Policy issues are:

* DNS Abuse
* Cybersecurity
* International Domain Names (IDN)
* Universal Acceptance (UA)
* Multi-stakeholderism
* Transparency and Accountability
* Internet Governance
* Human Rights
* Consumer protection
* Jurisdiction / Geopolitics
* New gTLDs
* Accessibility

**Strategies and Tools for Implementation:**

**As noted above, key to any SC on O/E engagement strategy, both face-to-face or virtual, is that activities are developed and implemented in collaboration with the Capacity Building WG, the Consolidated Policy WG, and the Social Media WG. GSE regional strategies should also inform At-Large engagement activities. It is also essential that the At-Large Communications Strategy is considered during the implementation of engagement activities. This will ensure that At-Large engagement strategies are effective and carried out in an efficient manner.**

The tools that can be used include:

* **Zoom meeting rooms**: discussions on these themes in the regions
* **Poll or survey:** RALO members on their interest and capacity to lead the individual discussion and provide policy comments, i.e.

<https://forms.gle/YKmdaWYTVRMMtBgY9>

* RALO **Newsletters:** **Videos - The CBWG and CPWG are working on videos on key At-Large policy issues which can be used for engagement activities. RALOs could also prepare videos, for ex. the** [NARALO Insights series](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fjJr_3ASjxU&t=75s) on ICANN issues i.e.
* **Blogging**: Multilingual blog posting
* **ICANN Learn courses** on specific, At-Large related themes, such as At-Large policy development and penholder selection process, DNS Abuse and other end-user focused issues [JK]
* **Targeted events** at specific locations (preferably together with local ALSes) and/or during regular, planned events should those be made virtual (e.g. EuroDiG) [JK]
* Get to know At-Large Policy Issues or a Pre-ICANN ICANN68 webinar

### Outreach StrategiesStrategies and **Virtual Activities for Implementation:**

**Despite the inability to attend conferences in person, t**here are a growing number of conferences and meetings that are being held online or virtually. These meetings represent an area of potential opportunity for At-Large outreach as well as engagement.

The activities that are suitable for virtual outreach are currently being populated on a [Table of Virtual Events](https://community.icann.org/display/atlarge/Sub-Committee+on+Outreach+and+Engagement+Table+of+Virtual+Events+-+FY20-FY21)

The activities suggested vary from virtual conferences, virtual meetups, twitter chats using specific hashtag, among others. These activities should contribute to engagement when outreach is done in a virtual environment.

It may also be possible to engage in outreach through collaboration with GSE activities and those working with ICANN Fellows and NextGen students.

# Promotional Strategies

# **Strategies and Tools** **for Implementation:**

**There are many tools for the promotion of At-Large Outreach and Engagement Activiies. These include:**

## **Social media posts**

Social media posts will be coordinated by the Social Media (SoMe) WG with specific topic events in the region and ICANN in general.

Most members of the At-Large community have access to some form Social Media networking, and many have blogs, Twitter accounts, Instagram, and Facebook

* **YouTube videos**

These have been identified as a key way to build capacity for community members as videos have proven to drive knowledge adoption within ICANN. These YouTube videos will be a joint effort with the Capacity Building WG (CBWG)

* Blog posts, especially on the At-Large blog [JK]
* Video/photo reports from ongoing events [JK]
* RALO newsletters [JK]
* Linking to existing networks to ensure reaching beyond the siloed ICANN community (RIPE, GigaNet, etc). [JK]

It will be important to use an open, centralized database of resources used during At-Large outreach activities (set up in collaboration with CBWG) [JK]

As noted above, a crisis can be both a danger and an opportunity. It is up to the members of the SC on O/E and all of At-Large to ensure we use the current situation as an opportunity to strengthen our resources and tools, develop our regional strategies while continuing to meet the goals and responsibilities of the SC on O/E.

Refererence

1. <https://www.theatlantic.com/technology/archive/2012/07/what-the-wells-rise-and-fall-tell-us-about-online-community/259504/>