The deadline for FY22 Budget consideration is **29 January 2021.** All questions and completed forms should be sent to **planning@icann.org**.

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| REQUEST INFORMATION | | |
| Title of Proposed Activity |  |  |
| Threaded Discussion and Decision Support Toolset: Licensing, Adoption and Training |  |  |
| Community Requestor Name | Chair | |
| ALAC | Maureen Hilyard | |
| ICANN Staff Community Liaison |  | |
| Heidi Ullrich |  | |

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| request description |
| *1. Activity:* Please describe your proposed activity in detail |
| Procurement of, Approval of, Training on a threaded discussion and consensus tool. The two recommended by the Technology Task Force (TTF) are Loomio (<https://www.loomio.org/>) or Slack with an addon called Cloverpop (<https://www.cloverpop.com>)  ,  **Diversity Leads to Better Decisions**  Research shows that decision made with a diverse (gender, age and geography) set of participants tend to be better in terms of objective realization, buy-in and longevity. The good news is that ICANN, generally, and the At-Large community, in particular, are well positioned to enable consensus building and durable decisions with a very diverse population. Unfortunately, the tools at our disposal to do so (email, Skype and Confluence) are not fit for purpose. The barriers are technical, cultural and lack of focus.  **Good Discussions Require Focus**  While the high volume of Zoom calls play their part, a great deal of consensus building and decision making needs to take place asynchronously. To date, the primary asynchronous tool at our disposal is email which is fraught with pitfalls because conversation threads are informal, usually broken into multiple threads by various email clients and often diverted to other topics. So a random +1 rarely has its intended effect. This is where threaded discussion tools come into play. These tools demand structure and persistent threads of conversation that are easy to follow. For those less interested in being in a separate application, threaded tools allow for the primary interaction to, in fact, take place over email but threads are maintained.  **Consensus Building is Incremental**  With very few exceptions, most topics for discussion do not have a single decision to be addressed but a series of smaller decisions about priorities, costs and benefits, success measures and metrics. Here an important role is played by different kinds of ad hoc polling and “temperature taking.” Instead of endless prose, very specific questions are asked of participants along the way to ensure momentum towards consensus is maintained or at least the lack of consensus is recognized. There are certainly polling tools out there including Survey Monkey and Google Forms, etc. but unless those polls are integrated into the discussions and documented, they often fail at their objective.  **Decision Recording is Crucial**  Critical to the process of incremental consensus building, is the recording of decisions along the way. If a point is settled and documented, it is far less likely to be revisited haphazardly. Instead, if a participant wishes to bring a new perspective or data to a previous decision, it is with intention that a conversation is reopened. Dedicated decision support tools facilitate decision trees and documentation of “settled” questions so that forward momentum is retained.  **Asynchronous Threaded Decision Support Encourages Diversity of Participation**  There are a number of challenges to diverse participation in international consensus building including cultural differences with regards to speaking up on a call, time zone differences, languages and differences in information. processing. Dedicated decision support tools help to address these barriers in a number of ways. First, asynchronous participation allows for more contemplation at a time, convenient to the participant. Words can be considered carefully before being shared. Second, the extensive use of polling allows for silent participation in decision making. Most participants on Zoom calls are silent but participation in polls is much higher.  **Slack vs Loomio**  The Technology Task Force has evaluated a number of decision support tools and finds that Loomio is the best fit for the At-Large community. The decision support is integrated into the product, built from the ground up to support consensus building. Loomio is also open source so, if ICANN chose at some future date, it can be hosted on ICANN servers without requiring a relationship with an outside host. Even with hosting, the cost to non-profits is minimal, however.  Slack, on the other hand, is a more mature commercial product, with which ICANN staff are already familiar. The learning curve would onlv involve the decisions support addon, Cloverpop. The decision such support is integrated enough to serve the purpose and there might be some benefit to continuity with existing supported technologies inside ICANN. |
| *2. Type of Activity*: e.g. Outreach - Education/training - Travel support - Research/Study - Meetings - Other |
| Education, Outreach, Consensus building, Collaborative Decision making |
| *3. Proposed Timeline/Schedule:* e.g.one time activity, recurring activity |
| 1st Quarter FY22, ongoing |

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| request objectives |
| 1. *Strategic Alignment.* Which area of ICANN’s Strategic Plan does this request support? |
| A number of strategic objectives are applicable both from the 5-Year Strategic Plan and the At-Large Review Implementation Plan. From the ICANN Strategic Plan, this activity seeks to:   1. Evolve ICANN’s governance model to remain effective, transparent, and accountable. 2. Improve the effectiveness of ICANN’s policy development processes.   From the At-Large Review Implementation Plan, this activity seeks to:   1. Expand Participation in At-Large Discussions in terms of    1. Geography    2. Language    3. Gender    4. Ethnicity 2. Expand participation by Individual volunteers   More diverse voices in policy development, inside ICANN, will lead to better decisions that are owned by more stakeholders. Facilitating that participation demands evolution in what it means to participate and adoption of tools specifically fit to purpose will improve the odds we are successful. |
| 2. *Demographics.* What audience(s), in which geographies, does your request target? |
| **At-Large Participants. All geographies, all demographics.** |
| 3. *Deliverables.* What are the desired outcomes of your proposed activity? |
| 100 User, non-profit license, two trained At-Large staff members |
| 4. *Metrics.* What measurements will you use to determine whether your activity achieves its desired outcomes? |
| Adoption and participation by 50+ members of the At-Large Community in FY22 |

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| Resource Planning – incremental to accommodate this request |
| Staff Support Needed (not including subject matter expertise): |
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| Subject Matter Expert Support: |
| N/A |
| Technology Support: (telephone, Adobe Connect, web streaming, etc.) |
| N/A |
| Language Services Support: |
| N/A |
| Other: |
| N/A |
| Travel Support: |
| N/A |
| Potential/planned Sponsorship Contribution: |
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