

Generic Names Supporting Organization (GNSO) Review 2014 – Frequently Asked Questions and Answers

Why is there a GNSO Review?

ICANN's [Bylaws](#) require that its structures, including the GNSO, be reviewed on a five-year cycle. According to the Bylaws, the goal of the review is “to determine (i) whether that organization has a continuing purpose in the ICANN structure, and (ii) if so, whether any change in structure or operations is desirable to improve its effectiveness.”

This review is part of ICANN's commitment to continuous improvement, accountability and transparency. It uses mechanisms and measures to maintain public confidence in the viability, reliability and accountability of ICANN.

The GNSO Review addresses the new, improved approach to conducting reviews. It will inform the work on evolving ICANN's Review Framework, as part of the broader accountability discussion.

What is the scope of the GNSO Review?

Based on direction from the Board, the current review comprises of an examination of the GNSO's **organizational effectiveness** in accordance with the ICANN-provided objective and quantifiable criteria. The [Structural Improvements Committee](#) of the Board (SIC) is responsible for the oversight of ICANN's structural reviews.

Within the organizational effectiveness context the review will focus on addressing areas such as purpose of the organization; its processes and means of conducting its work; and its outcomes. The operations of the GNSO Working Groups, the GNSO Council and the GNSO Stakeholder Groups and Constituencies will be evaluated. Structural topics are likely to come up as part of this work.

Will the review propose changes to the GNSO Structure?

While we cannot speculate what the outcome of the Review will be, the mandate outlined in the [Request for Proposal](#) does NOT include proposing a new structure.

Based on the [scope](#) of the review of the organizational effectiveness of the GNSO, the review will focus on addressing areas such as purpose of the organization; its processes and means of conducting its work; and its outcomes. The operations of the GNSO Working Groups, the GNSO Council and the GNSO Stakeholder Groups and Constituencies will be evaluated. Structural topics are likely to come up as part of this work.

The review and its requirements will be managed in a clear and scheduled process, empowering the GNSO and broader community to be a part of the solution and improvement efforts.

Who will perform the Review? How will the selection be made?

While an independent examiner will perform the review, the GNSO community also has an important role: performing a self-assessment, providing direct input and implementing improvements.

The independent examiner will be selected through a competitive bidding process, set by an open [Request for Proposal](#), which outlines:

- Selection criteria and business requirements.
- Submission of proposals; preliminary evaluation of proposals based on the stated selection criteria and business requirements.
- Selection of finalists.
- Presentations by finalists.
- Recommendation to the Structural Improvements Committee and confirmation of the independent examiner.

How can individuals and groups within the GNSO structure get involved?

You can get involved in a variety of ways. For groups, a call has gone out to each GNSO Stakeholder Group and Constituency to consider designating a representative to join the [GNSO Review Working Party](#). The names of the proposed candidates should be submitted to the GNSO Secretariat (gnso.secretariat@gnso.icann.org) by 19 May 2014. Other Supporting Organizations and Advisory Committees interested in joining the GNSO Review Working Party can appoint an observer.

Any interested individual is invited to provide direct input to the GNSO Review Working Party by contacting gnso-review-dt@icann.org and/or by participating in the [360 Assessment](#).

What is the 360 Assessment and how will it be used?

A new component within the organizational review, the 360 Assessment is designed to gather data for the [independent examiner](#) to use in the GNSO Review process and also may inform GNSO self-improvement efforts. This online tool will collect feedback from the GNSO community, other ICANN structures and community members, the Board and staff. The 360 Assessment questions will be developed based on criteria that will be used for the overall GNSO Review.

The 360 Assessment will be launched in June 2014 with a public announcement and all interested individuals are invited to participate.

What is the GNSO Review Working Party and what is its role?

The SIC has requested that a GNSO Review Working Party be assembled to act as a liaison between the GNSO, the [independent examiner](#) and the SIC. The Working Party will also provide input on review criteria and the [360 Assessment](#), coordinate interviews and objectively supply clarification and responses to the draft findings and recommendations. Once the final report is issued and the Board takes action on it, the GNSO Review Working Party is expected to coordinate with the GNSO community to prepare an Implementation Plan and champion implementation of improvement activities.

The membership of the GNSO Review Working Party may include members representing the diversity of the GNSO community. The activities of the GNSO Review Working Party will be conducted in an open and fully transparent manner. Contact gnso-review-dt@icann.org for more information.

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What methods will the independent examiner use to collect data and information?

The [independent examiner](#) may use the following methods to gather information:

- Examination of available documentation, records and reports.
- Outcomes from the [360 Assessment](#), an online mechanism to collect and summarize feedback from members of the GNSO structure, interested members from ICANN community and other structures, members of the Board and staff.
- Integration of Assessments of the Second Accountability and Transparency Review Team – see Appendix A of the Second Accountability and Transparency Review Team [Report and Recommendations](#).
- Limited interviews, if needed.

What happens when the independent examiner completes the review?

Once the [independent examiner](#) collects sufficient information and formulates his/her analysis and preliminary findings, he/she will engage with the GNSO to validate the accuracy and completeness of findings and the usefulness and feasibility of draft recommendations. The Draft Report, reflecting clarification and responses from the GNSO, will be published for public comment. The report will be updated to reflect public comments and published in its final form. The final report, along with public comments, will be considered by the Board. After the Board takes action and accepts the report, the implementation phase will begin.

What's the timeline for the GNSO Review?

Please see the chart below for key dates proposed for the GNSO Review.

Activity	Proposed Dates
RFP published	21 April 2014
Briefing with GNSO (webinar)	7 May
GNSO to identify GNSO Review Working Party	19 May
Refine examination criteria	30 May
Implement 360 assessment	15 June
Board appointment of independent reviewer	26 June
Start of review work	1 July
Summary results from 360 Assessment	30 July
Draft Report 1	30 September
Clarification and rebuttal from GNSO	11-12 October
Draft Report 2	31 October
Public comment period	1 November – 5 January 2015
Final Report	15 January 2015
Preparation of Implementation Plan	16 January – 20 February
Implement Recommendations	1 March 2015 – 28 February 2016

How will we know whether the recommendations made a difference?

The impact of implemented improvements will be tracked, measured and reported. In addition, all ICANN community members will have the opportunity to provide feedback on the effectiveness of the implemented improvements through the [360 Assessment](#), which is expected to become a standard part of the organizational review process.

Have other questions?

Please email your questions to larisa.gurnick@icann.org.