

Assessment Report
Document Development and Drafting Pilot Program
- Phase II -
Community Facilitation Pillar

In response to calls for support from ICANN community stakeholder group leaders, in 2016 ICANN Policy Development Support staff launched an effort to develop a functional capability to provide substantive community writing/drafting support to assist ICANN stakeholder groups in their policy development activities.

Community leaders asserted that they could be more effective and efficient in their policy development work if they had increased resources available to them to assist in the comprehensive process of researching and developing their policy positions and in drafting/writing their formal documents within ICANN policy processes.

This report reviews the second phase of the Document Development and Drafting Pilot Program. This five-month program built on the analysis, insights and experienced gained from from the first phase of the program.

Executive Summary

The objective of Document Development and Drafting Pilot Program was to provide ICANN Communities and Community leaders with additional capability and bandwidth to more fully participate in ICANN comment opportunities. The program was designed to build on the model established during Phase I of the program and continue to allow flexibility for each community to utilize the drafting resource in a way that best suited the unique approach each community took towards the development and drafting of comments.

Communities utilized the research writers in the program for the full range of development and drafting activities – unique community research projects on past comments; research for preparation of comments; drafting of comments; editing of draft comments; participation in community calls to plan and discuss issues and comments; preparation of materials for ICANN meetings; and finalizing comments for submission.

The flexibility of the pilot program continued to be a critical element to the success of Phase II as each participating community developed a unique working relationship and work plan for the research writer assigned under the program. Phase II also revealed that while flexibility for each community is important, there needs to be the fundamental commitment of each community to focus the work of the research writer on the development of comments with the formal comment process.

Just as in Phase I, Phase II allotted roughly 25 hours per month of research writer service. Phase II extended this work period from four months to five months for participating communities. This monthly time allocation again proved to be very reasonable and valuable for each community. If allowed, two communities could have exceeded this limit on a regular basis, while the other two communities were regularly just short of the suggested time limit for each month during the pilot.

Phase II of the pilot program continued the strong emphasis on the role of management and communication from the ICANN communities' leadership at the outset of the pilot and sustained engagement with the research writer to ensure the best output from the program. This component of the program was critical in Phase I and thus used as a key criteria to evaluate which ICANN communities were best prepared to fully utilize the resources of the Drafting Pilot Program during Phase II.

Background – Program Formation

The pilot program was designed to test the potential for enhancing the contribution of ICANN communities to the policy development discussions additional resources focused research support resources, and practical drafting/editing capabilities.

The objective of this Document Development and Draft Pilot Program (DDP) was to design, develop and launch a pilot program to assess the potential, practical processes and mechanisms for providing ICANN community groups with support for the research, development, collaboration, drafting and editing of documents for submission within the policy development processes of ICANN.

DDP Design – Phase II

The original DDP was designed with two major components in mind – an Individual Community Assistance component and a policy development process “primers” component. Based on the experiences from Phase I of the Pilot Program, Phase II continued with only the individual community assistance element of program.

Facilitation Expectations

The facilitation portion of Phase II of the pilot program featured the following capabilities:

- One hundred twenty five hours of research/writer support for a five month pilot period to community groups to utilize in the preparation of community comments.
- Pilot Resource available for five months for interested and prepared ICANN community groups (eligibility criteria was based on informational questionnaire completion and further input to ensure productive use of the resource).

Overview of Pilot Phase II

The communities that participated in the second phase of the Document Development and Drafting Pilot Program were:

- Business Constituency (BC);
- Registrar Stakeholder Group (RrSG);
- Internet Service Providers and Connectivity Providers (ISPCP); and
- Registries Stakeholder Group (RySG)

The BC; ISPCP; and the RySG all participated in Phase I of the DDP. The RrSG's participation in Phase II of the DDP was its first engagement with the pilot.

A key component of the pilot program was to engender the trust of the stakeholder community with the research writer. To accomplish this, the program ensured that each community would have its own unique research writer.

The pilot program presented an international spectrum of candidates for each community with a background in Internet Governance; the workings of Domain Name System (DNS); and ICANN operations. The RySG and the ISPCP maintained the same research as they had in Phase I of the DDP – lending an important element of continuity to the work and to the working relationship

Phase One Implementation

The second phase of the pilot program had the following research writers for each community:

- Business Constituency (BC) – **Anri van der Spuy**
- Registrar Stakeholders Group (RrSG) – **Timothy Denton**
- Internet Service Providers and Connectivity Providers (ISPCP) – **Jamal LeBlanc**
- Registries Stakeholder Group (RySG) – **Wim Degezelle**

As expected, each one of these working relationships was unique to the document development process for each stakeholder community. Just as was experienced during the Phase I portion of the pilot, not all of the experiences were successful in the traditional sense, but there was a tremendous amount of learning done and quality work done for these constituent communities within the ICANN comment process.

Community Experiences

For three of the ICANN communities, there was excellent interaction between the

community leadership and the research writer as well as regular interaction throughout each aspect of projects undertaken. This commitment and involvement on the part of the ICANN community has been found to be the most critical element in the success of the document drafting pilot. This leadership and direction from the community is vital.

Just as was the case in Phase I of the pilot program, the approach of these three pilot community groups were similar and comprehensive. Each had a primary focus on drafting comments; established a meaningful role for the research writer within the life cycle of the document development process; as well as additional individual projects for their respective communities.

The ICANN community relationship with the research writer in these three case demonstrated the most successful elements of the program:

1. The **flexibility** of the program design to allow communities to make individual decisions on the most effective way to deploy and utilize the research writer within their own unique document development process;
2. The importance of **trust** in the research writer to work within the community structure. This started with communities involved in the selection of the research writer and was built through engagement and collaboration through the drafting process.
3. The ability of the participating ICANN community to work with the research writer to **understand the proper role** within their unique system allowed for this individual to add significant value to the development and drafting process and increase the output of the ICANN community within the document development process to the benefit of all communities.
4. The critical aspect for success is the ICANN community **embracing** the research writer at the outset by providing **clear instruction** and staying engaged throughout the process to create a better product.
5. Successfully incorporating the research writer in the document development process demonstrated the value of additional bandwidth for community participation in this ICANN comment process.

For one community, the focus of the work of the research writer was on front-end research projects of great interest to the community. Unlike the approach for this community during the first phase of the DDP, the outline and vision for this project were not clearly developed. The specific focus and goal for the project were not well articulated by community leaders and the communication between the community leaders and the research writer was limited and inconsistent. As a result, the pilot program and the research writer were not able to provide the resources to research and develop the project.

This experience with the least successful of the community relationships merely reinforced one of the messages of the key element for success – the commitment

and engagement of the community to the program. But it also demonstrated another key element for the program – the primary focus for the work needs to be on a direct contribution to the development of public comments with the process. Without these – the research writer was not fully engaged throughout the pilot period; there was a lack of communication and focus; and the pilot was not able to make a positive impact on the document development for this community.

A commitment by the community to engage and manage the research writer is a key to success; as it a primary focus on direct input into the comment process – we saw the positive and negative side of this within the second phase of the pilot.

Recommendations and Expectations based on Pilot Phase 2

The second phase of the Document Development and Drafting Pilot Program provided both a valuable service to the ICANN communities that participated – as well as valuable information for improving the structure and performance of the program going forward.

Building on the lessons and the accomplishments of the Phase I pilot activities, the Phase II pilot program placed a strong emphasis on the commitment and organization of the participating ICANN communities prior to the start of the work phase. Phase II merely added emphasis to this critical point. Phase II demonstrated that even greater structure and agreement is needed on the primary focus of the work and that any special projects need to be clearly articulated and defined in advance.

In addition to completing the questionnaire to demonstrate the appropriate level of understanding and commitment to the parameters of the program, each new participating community will participate in an extensive interview, and needs to demonstrate an understanding of the focus of program and a workplan for utilization of the research writer. This interview and plan will assure the necessary level of management for the research writers within the pilot program to ensure these key components and lessons learned in Phase I and Phase II.

Phase II of the Document Development and Drafting Pilot Program demonstrated the value of increased human resources and focus on level of output within the ICANN comment process. The DDP will incorporate all of the feedback provided and lessons learned to be better equipped to provide the focus, structure and implementation tools to make the Document Development Pilot Program a strong component of tools available to ICANN communities to increase their ability to more fully participate in the ICANN comment process.

Both Phase I and Phase II have provided the necessary learning experiences and information to refine the DDP focus, structure and management. Overwhelming positive feedback from participating communities validate both the need and

worthiness of the DDP to expand the capabilities and engagement of ICANN communities in the ICANN comment process, and thus the public participation in this critical element of the ICANN function.