



FY18 COMMUNITY REQUEST FORM

All questions and completed forms should be sent to staff@atlarge.icann.org or controller@icann.org. Please remember that the deadline for FY18 Budget consideration is **10 February 2017**.

REQUEST INFORMATION		
Title of Proposed Activity		
Real-time Captioning of Adobe Connect Meetings In English, Spanish, and French		
Community Requestor Name	Chair	
Judith Hellerstein	Judith Hellerstein (Secretary of NARALO), but this is a CROSS RALO Proposal. Alan Greenberg is the ALAC Chair.	
ICANN Staff Community Liaison		
Heidi Ullrich		

REQUEST DESCRIPTION
1. Activity: Please describe your proposed activity in detail
<p>This is a continuation of our current pilot program of captioning for 5 RALO and/or ALAC monthly meetings, and/or 5 Working Group meetings or webinars over a 6 month period in FY18.</p> <p>The ALAC believes that it is time for ICANN to integrate real-time captioning into its core budget, but on a larger scale than has been the case with the At-Large trials.</p> <p>Should ICANN not follow this more ambitious path, our goal in this continuation of the pilot is to provide real-time captioning for either 5 RALO meetings a month or 4 RALO and 1 ALAC meeting, and/or 5 working group meetings or webinars a month to enable full participation of all At-Large users within ICANN. An additional objective of this third phase of the pilot is to test the concept for the implementation of a permanent captioning program to replace the transcription program currently available. The metrics obtained from the second phase of the captioning pilot clearly indicates strong support for captioning.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • More than 91% described captioning as either extremely helpful or helpful. • More than 75% indicated the ability to understand the session more effectively • More than 54% had a greater understanding of the topics <p>The standard of captioning is now at such a high level that it is effectively a transcript. Captioning has the benefit of people being able to check facts and terminology during a call and thus being able to participate in a more informed manner. This is especially valuable for people whose primary language is not English, French or Spanish. On the CCWG Accountability WS2 Diversity call #9, 61% of participants stated that English was not their primary language. Most of the AFRALO call participants either did not have English as their primary language and/or had low bandwidth and 75% were able to understand the session more effectively and the topic better with captioning. This was even higher in the WS2 Diversity call at 84%. There were many comments about the advantage of being able to catch up especially if a speaker spoke quickly or the audio was not so clear.</p>



FY18 COMMUNITY REQUEST FORM

We also want to raise awareness of the importance of including captioning whenever language support is offered. We are targeting RALO meetings since our goal is to increase engagement in ICANN within each of the respective regions. We are also targeting the working groups and webinars for the same reason as well as to promote more engagement from RALOs in these working groups. We think this will lead to more effective participation and engagement within ICANN. This is especially the case for people who are coming from bandwidth challenged countries where lack of bandwidth has limited their participation within ICANN. Adobe Connect is a large user of bandwidth and as such makes it difficult for those with limited bandwidth to fully participate. Adigo calls are helpful in that regard, but often in many places cell coverage is sparse and calls often drop or use up too much of a person's quota.

Participants were enthusiastic and wanted captioning on working group and CCWG calls while 50% of WS2 Diversity participants wanted captioning on all calls.

The goal of the pilot is to continue to gather the necessary metrics to illustrate the need for captioning not only for accessibility reasons but also for those with limited bandwidth and novice without a clear understanding about the terminology used in key ICANN meetings. The data gained from this third phase of the pilot should help us meet these goals and show the need for captioning ICANN wide. This next phase of the project intends therefore to extend the reach of captioning even further so that it meets the intended goals. This means offering more sessions with captioning including in French and Spanish and reaching out to any persons who have a hearing impairment. It would assist ICANN staff to evaluate the cost-effectiveness of captioning compared to the provision of transcripts after the call.

Background information on captioning

In the first two phases of the pilot we restricted ourselves to mainly providing English Language captions and an experiment in Spanish and French, but in this third phase we want to add more support for Spanish and French as we have gotten requests for captioning in these languages.

Captions, composed of text, are used by people who are deaf or hard of hearing to access content delivered by spoken words and sounds. Real-time captions, or Computer Assisted Real-time Translation (CART), are created as an event takes place.

A captioner (often trained as a court reporter or stenographer) uses a stenotype machine with a phonetic keyboard and special software. A computer translates the phonetic symbols into captions almost instantaneously and displays them on a laptop within a conference program, on a separate URL, or on a large display screen. (<http://www.washington.edu/doi/what-real-time-captioning>).

Captioning is done by trained operators who can either be local or remote as long as they have a direct feed to the speakers. This tool makes all ICANN activities and programs accessible to people who are deaf or have a hearing impairment. Additionally, it aids users who have limited bandwidth or where English is not their native language to better participate and engage within ICANN. It does this by offering a text-only URL of the captions. Since this text stream consumes little bandwidth it would better enable those with limited bandwidth to more effectively engage within ICANN. Having a low bandwidth stream of the text should allow for increase participation and engagement by all members.

Adobe Connect is a large user of bandwidth and as such makes it difficult for those with limited bandwidth to fully participate. Adigo calls are helpful in that regard, but often in many places cell coverage is sparse and calls often drop or use up too much of a person's quota.



FY18 COMMUNITY REQUEST FORM

Having the captions available in English, Spanish, or French also helps people in the ICANN community whose first language is not one of these three languages as most people can read English, Spanish, or French even if they cannot speak or understand. Also users who have limited bandwidth and have difficulty in loading and using the Adobe Connect application and participating in the meeting will have an easier time engaging and participating in the groups if they could read what is happening.

Captioning is mandated under the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (ADA), which prohibits discrimination and ensures equal opportunity for persons with disabilities in all areas. This is why ICANN as a US corporation should adopt captioning on all its calls to best meet these obligations under the Act. Accessibility is the degree to which a product, device, service, or environment is available to as many people as possible. Both Harvard and MIT Universities have recently been sued for failing to provide captioning for its online classes and podcasts. Other universities and capacity building projects worldwide have adopted captioning. ICANN's webinars are similar to these classes and podcasts. It is also why we have included webinars in our pilot study.

2. Type of Activity: e.g. Outreach - Education/training - Travel support - Research/Study - Meetings - Other

Language Support, Public Interest, Meetings awareness and education.

3. Proposed Timeline/Schedule: e.g. one time activity, recurring activity

Recurring Activity about 5 times a month for six months.

REQUEST OBJECTIVES

1. Strategic Alignment. Which area of ICANN's Strategic Plan does this request support?

ICANN'S strategic goals are:

- Evolve and further **globalize ICANN**
- Support a healthy, stable, and resilient **unique identifier ecosystem**
- Advance **organizational, technological and operational excellence**
- Promote ICANN's role **and multi-stakeholder approach**
- Develop and implement a **global public interest framework bounded by ICANN's mission.**

This request meets all these goals plus it helps ICANN meet its Public Interest Commitment and act as a steward of the Public Interest as it claims to be in Objective 5.1 of its Strategic Plan. Moreover, it advances ICANN's goal of developing a globally diverse culture of knowledge and expertise available to ICANN's Board, staff and stakeholders. ICANN's goal of global inclusivity, transparency and accountability are critical to being trusted by its stakeholders. It is this inclusivity that this request is directed at. This request supports inclusion and cultural diversity through the implementation of services that embraces the various communities, which have historically suffered from barriers of access. These barriers are not just for those who have not been able to participate because of accessibility issues, because of deafness or hearing impairment, but also for those who have limited bandwidth and are not able to use Adobe Connect because of bandwidth limitations in their countries. Also this will help those on working groups whose native language is not English fully engage, interact, and participate in these groups.



FY18 COMMUNITY REQUEST FORM

It also helps ICANN meet its goal of developing a globally diverse culture of knowledge and expertise available to ICANN's Board, staff and stakeholders. It also meets with the goals under 4.1 of the strategic plan that states: encourage engagement with the existing Internet governance ecosystem at national, regional and international levels. Captioning enables all to participate in the evolution of a global, trusted, inclusive multi-stakeholder Internet governance ecosystem that addresses Internet issues. This proposal also empowers current and new stakeholders to fully participate in ICANN activities as stated in Objective 5.3 of ICANN's Strategic Plan ("Empower current and new stakeholders to fully participate in ICANN activities.").

2. Demographics. What audience(s), in which geographies, does your request target?

The World Health Organization states that there are over one billion people with disability globally. It is estimated that one in six people are deaf or have a hearing impairment. Additionally the audience includes people with limited bandwidth and people whose first language is not English who could participate in a working group or RALO meeting more effectively with captioning.

3. Deliverables. What are the desired outcomes of your proposed activity?

This project has several desired outcomes, including:

- Live and recorded rough transcripts of meetings.
- Enabling ICANN to better meet its public interest requirements.
- Increased participation by end users and stakeholders within ALAC and the At-Large community.
- Increased inclusion and diversity through the implementation of services that embraces the various communities, which have historically suffered from barriers of access, either due to physical disabilities or limited bandwidth.
- Facilitates keeping up with content delivered during a meeting, especially those of intense debate or where content is complex. A survey respondent noted that the captioning helps in taking notes.
- Makes it possible to have a better comprehension of ICANN terminology.
- Helps members understand presenters who struggle to share information in a direct and clear manner.
- Generates more participation in the meetings.
- Enhances the interactivity of meetings
- Helps participants continue to follow discussion despite communications gaps. A survey respondent noted that captioning facilitates following a call when there are audio issues.
- Understanding via review increases as users can go back and check specific points during the meeting in the transcript.
- Allows user to catch up when not paying attention.
- Helps understand slang used by showing how they are written and helping look up during the meeting.
- Makes it easier to understand when someone with a strong accent is speaking. A survey respondent noted that captioning is useful for non-native EN speakers when a native EN speaker is speaking too fast.
- Enables review and understanding of the context when a participant is unexpectedly taken away from a meeting.
- Aids on accessibility of different kinds during the meeting.



FY18 COMMUNITY REQUEST FORM

4. Metrics. What measurements will you use to determine whether your activity achieves its desired outcomes?

In the first two versions of the Pilot a survey was given to each of the participants. Also in the second phase the survey was made available on the web in the form of a Google Doc and an Adobe survey so that we could capture all participants whether in Adigo or on the call. Also the participants who listened to the call after it was completed could also participate. The survey asked a series of questions about how it may have helped users become more involved/engaged within ICANN and increased their ability to contribute to, and participate within ICANN. Results will be cataloged and analyzed over the pilot year and a report written summarizing how well providing captions met these goals.

Main results summarized so far:

- * 91% described captioning as either extremely helpful or helpful
- * More than 75% indicated the ability to understand the session more effectively
- * More than 54% had a greater understanding of the topics
- * More than 31% was able to participate more fully and engage with presenters

See surveys at: [AFRALO Survey](#); [CCWG-WS2 Survey](#); and [EURALO Survey](#).

RESOURCE PLANNING – INCREMENTAL TO ACCOMMODATE THIS REQUEST

Staff Support Needed (not including subject matter expertise):

Description	Timeline	Assumptions	Costs basis or parameters	Additional Comments
Captioning of meetings. Continuation of contract with Captions First or other captioning firm.	5 meetings per month for a semester. 60 meetings per year.		These costs are from Caption First 130 USD per hour English 145 USD per hour Spanish 171 USD per hour French if available \$0.10 USD per min for every call using captioning, which will cover the cost of the StreamText service within Adobe Connect. NOTE: There may be a net cost savings associated with this proposal as captioning	Caption First offers newcomers a 10% discount of their general rates for the first 6 months. After that the discount will be determined based on the volume discount ICANN has negotiated. Costs listed at left are a 10% reduction of the normal fees, but ICANN's discount may be different.



FY18 COMMUNITY REQUEST FORM

			eliminates the need for transcripts that ICANN currently provides.	
Survey Evaluation person	Administration of 5 surveys per month and tabulation of results			

Subject Matter Expert Support:

Expertise in creating the survey questions and analysis needed for evaluating this pilot program. Hiring of a captioning firm, such as Caption First, to perform the captioning either in Spanish, English, or French. Current staff assigned to the meeting can accomplish what is needed to load the caption pod to Adobe.

Technology Support: (telephone, Adobe Connect, web streaming, etc.)

Adobe Connect, loading the Caption Pod. All of this is normal staff support for RALO or working group sessions.

Language Services Support:

Spanish interpreters desired if captioning is done for LACRALO Meetings along with Spanish and or English captions. French interpreters desired if captioning is done for AFRALO Meetings with French captions. Spanish, English, and French desired if captioning a webinar.

Other:

None

Travel Support:

None

Potential/planned Sponsorship Contribution:

None