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Call for Proposals

Global Internet Governance Academic Network (GigaNet) Second Annual Symposium

Hotel Windsor Barra, Rio de Janeiro, Brazil
11 November 2007

The Global Internet Governance Academic Network (GigaNet) is a recently-formed scholarly community that promotes the development of Internet governance as a recognized, interdisciplinary field of study and facilitates informed dialogue on policy issues and related matters between scholars and governments, international organizations, the private sector, and civil society. (See www.igloo.org/giganet for more information.)

Each year, GigaNet organizes a research symposium. The first was held October 2006 in Athens, Greece, a day prior to the inaugural meeting of the United Nations Internet Governance Forum (IGF). The second GigaNet symposium also will be held on site prior to the 2nd IGF meeting, on November 11, 2007 in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil. Attendance at the symposium will be open to all and free of charge. Registration with the UN as an IGF participant may be necessary to gain entry to the building.

This is a call for proposals from scholars interested in presenting an original research paper on one of the panels to be held at the conference. The panel themes are described below. The Program Committee will select several speakers for each panel, drawing on the following materials to be provided by applicants: 1) a one page maximum description of the proposed paper that includes the main research questions, its methods, and its relevance and value-added to the thematic area; and 2) a one page summary curriculum vitae listing in particular the applicant's current institutional affiliation(s), advanced degrees, scholarly publications relevant to Internet governance, and web sites, if available. If the proposed paper has already been drafted, applicants are welcome to include the paper in their submission in addition to the one-page summary.

These materials should be emailed directly to the chairperson of the 2007 Program Committee, Dr. Milton Mueller, at [info \[at\] internetgovernance.org](mailto:info@internetgovernance.org) by no later than **August 1, 2007**, midnight GMT. The Program Committee will notify applicants of its decisions via email by August 24. A full paper upon which the presentation will be based must be delivered to the same address by **October 1**, midnight GMT in order for the author(s) to be included in the relevant panel. The selected speakers will give ten-minute presentations, after which there will be open discussion with audience members. While GigaNet asserts no copyright to authors' work, it is expected that the version of the paper presented will be made available for posting on the GigaNet website.

Preliminary Theme Descriptions

1. The Changing Institutionalization of Internet Governance

The World Summit on the Information Society (WSIS) raised the profile and changed the global policy discourse of Internet governance. The creation of the Internet Governance Forum (IGF) was the most visible result, but other major signs should be noted, such as the willingness of more governments to participate in ICANN, the increased diversity of players entering Internet governance processes as stakeholders, and wider discussion of as yet inchoate changes to Internet governance mechanisms and decision making.

We invite paper submissions that explore the dynamics of the changing institutionalization process. Papers can examine institutionalization theoretically, by placing it in the context of theories of international relations, international regimes, and global governance; or empirically, through critical assessment of its outcomes so far. Submissions addressing the mechanisms of a given collaborative, deliberative process, and particularly how the different players behave, are especially welcome. We seek papers analyzing collaborative policy-making in Internet governance institutions; the mobilization of new actors, their roles and the power relationships between them; the role of the private sector in governance; the transformation (if any) of the role of governments and their means of intervention in relation to existing intergovernmental processes; and the interactions between Internet governance-related institutions such as IGF, IETF, the Regional Address Registries, ICANN, ITU, WIPO, or WTO. Case studies based on critical examination of the IGF, the multistakeholder partnership process and changes, if any, in ICANN dynamics after WSIS would bring particular highlights to the panel discussion.

2. Toward a Development Agenda for Internet Governance

In recent years, developing countries, civil society organizations, and concerned academics have sought to promote broad “development agendas” for reform of the international regimes and organizations dealing with such issues as trade, debt, and intellectual property. But in the field of Internet governance, no parallel initiative has taken shape. Developing countries and other stakeholders did call for what they said were pro-development institutional reforms during the World Summit on the Information Society (WSIS) process, but their suggestions were not systematically explored as elements of a coherent development agenda. Moreover, there was no broad consensus among the proponents as to what kinds of reforms would actually promote development, as opposed to satisfying more specifically political demands. In the post-WSIS environment, discussions of development have tended to focus on capacity building rather than on institutional reforms.

Accordingly, we invite research papers that analyze the positive and negative linkages between existing global Internet governance mechanisms and development; the possible need for new mechanisms; and the potential foundations of a holistic development agenda. The panel will not explore the Internet's role in development per se, or more general ICT4D themes; the focus will be on the mechanisms of Internet governance as defined by the WSIS. We welcome submission of theoretically informed, empirically rich papers addressing the following and related questions:

a) General Dynamics: The design and politics of development agendas. What are the potential risks and rewards of assessing individual Internet governance mechanisms in the context of a holistic development agenda? What applicable lessons, if any, can be learned from experiences with development agendas in other international arenas, e.g. trade, the environment, debt, and intellectual property? What political and institutional challenges would have to be overcome in order to establish a development agenda for Internet governance?

b) Case Studies of Problems and Reforms. Do current Internet governance mechanisms pose any substantive and procedural impediments to development? What reforms or even new mechanisms might be needed to promote development?

3. Critical Policy Issues in Internet Governance

The prior two sections deal with broad, cross-cutting themes in Internet governance. The Program Committee also encourages submission of research papers on how public policy or governance arrangements are being defined for specific, narrower Internet policy issues. Examples of such policy issues would include network neutrality, digital identity, privacy/security, content regulation, intellectual property rights/DRM, or others. Each of these issue-domains involves its own distinctive set of policy conflicts, stakeholders, technologies and institutional arrangements, and thus can profitably be examined independently. Papers about specific issues should, however, be written from a global perspective and/or utilize cross-national comparative research methods, and should be founded on a clear understanding of how the issue constitutes a form of Internet governance.

Although submissions in any of the enumerated issue-areas are welcome, the Committee would be particularly interested in forming a panel devoted to research on either network neutrality or digital identity. Papers on net neutrality might address, among other things, its relevance as a global norm for Internet governance; how technological, legal and business trends support or undermine neutrality in the delivery of Internet services; or the relationship between competing broadband networks and nondiscriminatory access to Internet content. Similarly, papers on digital identity might address the current status of standardization in digital identifiers and authentication, how privacy concerns are or are not addressed by proposals; interaction of international regimes with digital identity issues, international initiatives on data retention and data interception, or other related aspects of Internet governance and privacy.

To summarize:

* Symposium date and place: November 11, 2007, Hotel Windsor Barra, Rio de Janeiro, Brazil

* Deadline for submissions: August 1, 2007

* Submit to: GigaNet Program Committee, using the email address [info \(at\) internetgovernance.org](mailto:info@internetgovernance.org)

* Notification of status: August 24, 2007

* Papers due: October 1, 2007

GigaNet Program Committee:

- Seiiti Arata Jr., University of Sao Paulo, Brazil

- Ralf Bendrath, University of Bremen, Bremen, Germany

- William Drake, Graduate Institute of International Studies, Geneva, Switzerland

- Michael Gurstein, Executive Director of the Centre for Community Informatics Research, Development and Training, Vancouver BC, Canada

- Nanette Levinson, American University School of International Service, Washington DC, USA

- Meryem Marzouki, LIP6/PolyTIC-CNRS Laboratory, Paris, France

- Milton Mueller, Syracuse University School of Information Studies, Syracuse NY, USA

- Sergio Ramos, ETSI Telecomunicación-UPM, Madrid, Spain