

Feedback on IGF 2016 Lightning and Unconference Sessions

At the beginning of this year, the Secretariat posted a short survey on the IGF's homepage to gather feedback on the new, experimental sessions (lightning and unconference) held for the first time at the 2016 annual meeting. Outreach was also done to the presenters in the sessions for their specific inputs. The public survey was open until Friday, 17 February, and **20 anonymous responses** were collected.

The majority of the responses concerned the lightning session format, with 13 out of the 20 respondents indicating they had attended this session type only, 6 indicating they had attended both session types, and only 1 indicating they had attended the unconference sessions only. **More than half the respondents – 12 out of 20 – were presenters** in the sessions.

The following synthesizes the responses received.

➤ *What did respondents think of the new sessions?*

Respondents called the **new sessions in general a “great addition” to the programme**; a “welcome addition”; a “great idea”; and noted that they featured “interesting content”.

Regarding the **lightning sessions in particular**, respondents said they were an **excellent way to include diverse and quick presentations**, especially on topics that would not otherwise neatly fit into the programme. They enjoyed the outdoor setting, the fact that the **lightning area was in a public, easy-to-find location, the informal atmosphere and the emphasis on participant engagement**.

Some commented that the **downside of holding the lightning sessions outdoors** was that they tended to be **interrupted by noise** or smells from the lunch area; one noted that at times the atmosphere could be “too relaxed”.

➤ *How did respondents think these types of sessions could be improved? Did they suggest other potential new session types for 2017?*

In general, respondents suggested that the **new sessions be actively promoted and made as visible as possible, both at the venue and in the programme/schedule**; most also **asked for the availability of remote participation** (this had not been possible in the outdoor lightning sessions). Some said the 20-minute **sessions could be made a little longer**, perhaps by about 10 minutes; one respondent suggested making the space given to new sessions conducive to break-out discussions.

Respondents suggested the addition of “**world café**” sessions for small and focused group discussions, provided there is appropriate room setup and a “model-type” session (as with Model UN).

➤ *On a scale of 1 to 5, how valuable did respondents think new sessions are to the IGF programme?*

The **vast majority of respondents** – 16 out of 20 – selected “5” to convey that they **thought new sessions were very valuable to the overall programme**. (Two respondents selected “4”; one selected “3”; another “2”).

Annex – Survey as published

Which new session type did you attend at the IGF? *

- Lightning Session
- Unconference
- Both
- Neither

Did you attend as a participant, presenter or both? *

- Participant
- Presenter
- Both
- N/A

Taking into account the content of the sessions, their organization and setting, please describe what you thought worked well and what you thought worked not so well. Please also ensure the specific session type (lightning or unconference) is referenced in your response.

If these session formats are re-introduced at the 2017 IGF, what improvements would you suggest? Should other new session types be launched?

On a scale of 1 to 5, 1 being lowest agreement and 5 highest agreement, do you think new session types are a valuable addition to the IGF programme? *

- 1
- 2
- 3
- 4
- 5

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