Proposal for Modifications to
the Workshop Review and Evaluation Process

From the IGF website:
Principles: The MAG's workshop review and evaluation process should be: fair, transparent, inclusive, practical, and efficient.

I. Concerns with the current system:

1. All MAG members are asked to review all workshops, which is a considerable investment of time and resources.

2. Members rate every single workshop on 10 criteria, giving it a single score from 1 to 5. It is impossible to provide operational definitions for the scores given if one score is used to reflect 10 different criteria.

3. The scores given are therefore subjective in nature, and one proposal would get quite different scores depending on who gets to rate it, which is why MAG members feel they all need to evaluate every workshop.

4. Some speakers appear on too many sessions, thus affecting diversity of voices.

5. Some sessions end up with only one or two speakers, even though proposal listed several speakers.

II. Current system and Suggested Modifications:

Stage 1: Initial Screening by IGF Secretariat

System currently in place (from IGF website):

Why: To remove any proposals that do not satisfy minimum criteria
Who: IGF Secretariat
When: Completed by one week after proposal deadline
How: Secretariat recommends declining the proposals that do not satisfy the following minimum criteria:

- MAG members may not themselves submit workshop proposals, but their institutions may do so
- The subject matter of the workshop proposal must be of direct relevance to Internet Governance
- Proposal must be complete and ready for final consideration, with all fields of the proposal submission form completed

- Proposers who held a workshop at previous IGFs were required to have submitted a workshop report after the meeting. The proposer must provide a link to this workshop report in their new proposal for IGF2016
- Proposals submitted by those who held workshops in the 2014 or 2015 IGFs, but who failed to file a workshop report afterwards, will be declined
- No more than 3 proposals from any one individual or institution will be accepted for consideration

Result: MAG members will be given a list of the workshop proposals that satisfy minimum criteria. MAG members will then evaluate these proposals individually before the in-person meeting.

Proposed Modifications to First Stage:

- Introducing a "Speaker-Session Collaboration Space."
- Every proposed session should have at least three confirmed speakers. A confirmed speaker is defined as "a speaker who has been contacted, and expressed interest and intent to participate."
- Guidance to proposers: At a later stage, there will be an assessment of how many times a speaker appears on sessions. If a speaker appears on more than three sessions, they may be asked to relinquish their speaking spot.

Stage 2: Individual MAG member evaluation

System currently in place (from IGF website):

Why: To select a subset of the proposals according to the number of session slots available during the IGF event, the finalization of which will take place during an in-person MAG meeting
Who: Individual MAG members
When: Completed by _____, Synthesis paper prepared by Secretariat by _____
How: When evaluating a workshop proposal, MAG members should take the items listed below into consideration, and then give the proposal a score from 1 to 5, with 5 being the best score. This score represents that individual MAG member's balancing of the considerations. Proposals will be anonymized, though indication is provided if the proposer is from a developing country.

Considerations when Evaluating Proposals

1. Is the proposal well thought-through and complete?
2. Is the proposal relevant to Internet Governance and to the IGF2016 main theme, *Enabling Inclusive and Sustainable Growth*?
3. Does the proposal contain a list of proposed speakers, participating individuals and organizations, or a description of how different stakeholder perspectives will be represented?

4. Is this the first time this individual or organization has submitted a workshop proposal to the IGF? (first-time proposers are preferred over repeat-proposers)

5. Is the workshop session description consistent with the format listed? (for example, if the format is Debate, then does the proposal describe how the debate will be set up, with timings, etc., indicated)

6. Is the proposal for a new format? (Break-out Group Discussions, Debates, Flash Sessions, Birds of a Feather and Other formats are encouraged over the Panel format)

7. Is there diversity amongst the participants (gender, geography, stakeholder group, policy perspective, and inclusive of persons with disabilities)? (as a general matter, greater diversity is encouraged)

8. Is there developing country participation? (as a general matter, developing country participation is encouraged)

9. Does the description clearly specify the Internet Governance question to be addressed during the workshop?

10. Does the proposal include a well-considered plan for effective interaction with the workshop participants, both online and on-site?

Result: Individual MAG members will complete their review and evaluation ***of all workshop session proposals***, except for those in which they are involved. Further, MAG members who do not have expertise in a particular field are not obliged to rate a proposal. If the score is 3 or below, MAG members should provide feedback on the proposal. This feedback should be given to those whose workshops were declined, to assist with future proposals. The total score for each proposal will be the mean average of the grades received by MAG members. Proposals will be rank ordered and accepted according to available space.

Upon receiving the MAG scoring, the Secretariat will develop a synthesis document for the MAG.

Proposed Modifications to Second Stage:

- Each session format will be evaluated separately.

- Focus the criteria used for evaluation to the following:

    1. Relevance: Is the proposal relevant to Internet Governance and to the IGF main theme for that year? In other words: Does the proposal highlight the importance of the issue?

    2. Content: Is the proposal well thought out and does it cover enough aspects of the issue(s) of interest? Is the main Internet governance issue clearly spelled out? Background papers with the aim of informing the content are welcomed, but not a screening requirement.

    3. Speaker Diversity: Is the list of speakers diverse enough (in terms of gender, geography, stakeholder group, policy perspective, and/or persons with

disabilities)? Are the speakers qualified to tackle the topic? Are there speakers from developing countries? Are there speakers/organizers who are first-timers?

4. Format: Is the Workshop description consistent with the format listed (for example, if the format is Debate, then does the proposal describe how the debate will be set up, with timings, etc., indicated; are all sides of the issues represented)?

- Each reviewer will give a score from 1 to 5, with 5 being the best possible, on each criteria. The system will calculate an average score for the proposal based on the four scores given. MAG reviewers should provide brief feedback to the proposers if the overall average score given is below 3.

- Each proposal is to be randomly routed to 12 MAG members, 3 of each stakeholder group. If an evaluator cannot do the evaluation for any reason (possible conflict of interest, lack of experience in topic, etc.), the evaluator can indicate that on the system, and the system can randomly route that proposal to another member within the same stakeholder group.

- Given that the MAG gets around 250 proposals, and that each proposal will need 12 evaluations, this will be a total of about 3000 evaluations. This should average out to about 55 proposals per MAG member. Given that members of the different stakeholder groups are not equal, and that some evaluations will be re-routed, some members will end up with slightly more proposals than others. However, if this works out correctly, all members should end up with 55-60 proposals.

- This process would be further polished in 2018.

The overall average score from 1 to 5 should mean the following in terms of ranking the session:

o **5**: An excellent proposal.

o **4**: A good proposal overall, although could be enhanced.

o **3**: An average proposal.

o **2**: A weak proposal.

o **1**: Does not meet criteria.

Stage 3: In-person MAG discussion, merger candidates identified, and finalization

System currently in place (from IGF website):

Why: to determine the final programme
Who: MAG members and IGF Secretariat
When: MAG Meeting _____
How:

- MAG members look at the results to ensure an overall balance of the themes/topics covered.
- If two workshop proposals are very similar, the MAG may ask the proposers to work together and merge their workshops into one. Merger candidates will be identified during this meeting and contacted by the Secretariat to merge. MAG members are encouraged to assist. In the event that the proposers decline to collaborate the workshop slot can be lost.
- MAG members discuss 5-10 proposals just below the threshold of space availability to determine if improvements can be made to overcome proposal deficiencies.
- Proposers will then be contacted and asked to submit a revised proposal. If the proposer responds the expectation is they will get a workshop slot.
- Following the merger process and other necessary arrangements, the IGF programme will then be finalized.

Proposed Modifications to Third Stage:

- In an effort to minimize redundancy in the program, the "Speaker-Session Collaboration Space" will be offered for the participants at the beginning of the process. Mergers at this stage will take place by exception only.

- There will be an assessment by the MAG for the overall balance of the IGF program. Minimal adjustments may occur as a result.

III. Advantages of the Proposed System:

- The criteria are not different from those already in place by the MAG. They are just clustered and grouped differently. This means that workshop proposers will not be highly affected by the proposed changes since the expectations are not very different. (Speaker confirmation is the only change).

- Currently, MAG members assign one score based on ten criteria. Inadvertently, in the process, we tend to forget a few criteria on some proposals since we are not held to assigning a score to each single criterion. Doing that for over 250 proposals, evaluator fatigue is bound to occur at some point, making evaluations less consistent and less reliable. The proposed system means more attention is given to each individual proposal.

- Giving an individual score to four criteria rather than one score for ten criteria enables MAG members to evaluate proposals more accurately, and makes it clear which factors distinguish each proposal over others.

- Giving an individual score to four criteria rather than one score for ten criteria makes for less subjective evaluations, since each factor being judged is ultimately more defined.

- Under the proposed system, the final average score by each evaluator for a proposal could be a fraction, so the MAG member does not have to judge in terms of whole numbers.

- If all feedback is given to workshop proposers (including the scores), they would be able to know the strengths and weaknesses of their proposal just by looking at the different scores and knowing which items scored lower than others. This would also help them make better proposals the following year.

- Each MAG member evaluates around 55-60 proposals rather than 250, saving much time and resources.

- Each proposal is still being judged by a sufficient number of representatives from all stakeholder groups.

- No single entity or individual can be featured on too many sessions, thus opening up some space for more new-comers to the IGF community.

- No proposal can list speakers who may increase the ranking of that proposal, when those speakers are not confirmed and end up not showing up.