

Working Group on Workshop Review and Evaluation Process – IGF 2019

3rd Virtual meeting, 1 March 2019, 12.00 – 13.00 UTC

Minutes

1. The meeting focused on finalizing an outline of the various workshop process stages, from submission by proposers to evaluation by the MAG, including the criteria for evaluation. This outline has been provided with the workshops call for several years. The Secretariat shared an initial draft with the Working Group, which was then revised by Susan Chalmers and others ahead of the meeting.
2. Susan explained the outline had been edited with a view to making the language more concise, directly and readable, in response to feedback that a lengthy, detailed document would likely be skipped over by proposers. Another priority was to leave information that was relevant to the proposers only – rather than proposers and MAG members – as this document was for their benefit. It was agreed that these details should be kept separate in the interest of providing as clear public information as possible, and that an additional set of instructions could be drafted for the MAG.
3. Significant revisions to the form included adapting the criteria according to the Working Group's discussions, with the resulting list as follows: 1. Policy Question(s), 2. Relevance, 3. Format, 4. Diversity, 5. Content, 6. Interaction. The description of the 'Diversity' criterion in particular now reflected a wider variety of groups. Emphasis was also placed on the three themes framing the programme this year, and that the 'Relevance' criterion would be applied accordingly. Language regarding the number of workshops in which a single speaker could appear (a maximum of three) was removed, as this was not relevant for the proposer at the proposal stage. It was agreed that the burden of responsibility for setting this limit should not be on the proposer; an assessment can be made after the selection process as to whether there are too many repeated speakers.
4. Requirements for proposers to have at least three provisionally confirmed speakers, as well as to provide a report from their previous year(s)' participation, were retained. Regarding the former, it was asked whether there was a mechanism for preventing proposers from repeating the name of the same speaker three or two times, in an attempt to circumvent the requirement, to which the Secretariat responded that such submissions would be eliminated during the screening phase. Though a form is technically blocked from submission unless all fields are filled, it was agreed it should be specified that fields must be complete "with relevant information", in order to guard against submissions that contain minimal or nonsensical text.
5. A discussion followed on the inclusion of 'local communities' within the Diversity criterion. It was noted that it would be important to ensure that local (national, German) stakeholders have their perspectives represented in the programme. At the same time, it was felt that the situation in which these communities risked being under-represented was an exceptional one last year, as the host country, France, was not identified until a very late stage; this resulted in the French Internet governance community not having sufficient time to formalize their participation. If 'local communities' were to be explicitly inserted, a very clear definition of what is meant by this would have to be provided. Susan agreed to revise the text with assistance from Lucien Castex of ISOC France.
6. The suggestion was made to specify somewhere in the instructions to proposers that English was the working language of the MAG and Secretariat, and that due to an unfortunate lack of translation resources at this time, only submissions in English could be accepted.
7. A further suggestion was made that prior to Call for proposals launch, MAG members be given the opportunity to test the proposal form, which it was agreed would be possible.
8. All were largely satisfied with the current draft of the outline. It was decided only minor revisions needed for the final draft to be submitted by end of day (given the closeness of the Call for proposals on 4 March). The final changes would be as follows:

- Specification that proposers must complete fields with 'relevant information'.
- Removal of any pending language more suited for MAG instructions.
- Editing of 'Diversity' to appropriately reflect 'local communities' and how they are defined.

9. Referring to the next steps (please see below) the meeting was closed without any other business to be discussed.

Next Steps

Thursday, Feb 28th - Monday March 4th: Implementation of the changes to the proposal form; phrasing of the call for proposals

Monday March 4th: Publication of the Call for proposals

Participants

Lucien Castex

Susan Chalmers

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Host

Jutta Croll