

Working Group on Workshop Review and Evaluation Process – IGF 2019

5th Virtual meeting, 21 March 2019, 13.00 – 14.00 UTC

Minutes

1. The meeting focused on reviewing the form that members will complete during the evaluation process and finalizing any proposed changes made in the last weeks. The evaluation of proposals is set to begin on 19 April.
2. Sylvia Cadena, who had actively contributed a number of revisions to the form, outlined these for other members on the call. These were captured in a shared Google doc: https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/1TtWPeqkGaiZTLCKDoCnuyweo2_EhfKgCYbl8lkij6l8/edit#gid=0
- In contrast with past years, the proposed new form would contain clear descriptions of each criterion against which MAG members are evaluating proposals. In addition, an explanation would be provided of what each score means, ranging from 1 to 5, in the context of the given criterion, e.g., a score of 2 under Diversity: ‘Poor - Diversity is somewhat addressed in 1 or 2 elements listed and there is no plan to remedy or address the lack of diversity’. This was proposed in an effort to increase evaluators’ common understanding, and minimize confusion, over the values of the numerical scores. Sylvia informed these descriptions would continue to be worked on.
3. Working group members reacted favourably to this approach, agreeing that although each MAG member is necessarily subjective when evaluating, a measure of neutrality could be maintained through these tweaks. It was also cautioned, however, that it would be important to look at specific criteria with a critical lens. For instance, policy questions should always be evaluated in terms of quality, rather than number of policy questions proposed. Similarly, when looking at Diversity, members should be wary against a tendency toward tokenism on panels and examine carefully whether selected speakers serve the purpose of the workshop.
4. The revised form for this year also departs from past practice by proposing different weights for the six criteria (Policy Questions, Relevance, Format, Diversity, Content & Interaction). Different options were laid out, including two where Format would receive a lower weight.
5. It was decided that the language around descriptions would be revised according to the comments in the meeting, as well as from the mailing list over the next week. Furthermore, the issue of MAG members’ potential conflicts of interest during evaluation would need to be further discussed.
6. Luis Bobo confirmed that from the Secretariat side, all suggested revisions were technically implementable.
7. The next virtual meeting of the full MAG would take place the following week. Group members agreed that these proposed changes – namely the introduction of descriptions and weights per criterion – would be presented to the MAG for approval at that time. It was agreed that the working group’s official recommendation would be to apply weights of some kind.

Next Steps

- Finalize changes to Google doc and via discussions on the mailing list ahead of MAG call on Wednesday 27 March.

Participants

Sylvia Cadena

Paul Charlton

Afi Edoh

Lianna Galstyan

June Parris

Paul Rowney

Timea Suto

Mary Uduma

Secretariat

Luis Bobo

Anja Gengo

Eleonora Mazzucchi

Host

Jutta Croll