

RrSG response to the Draft FY22-26 Operating & Financial Plan and Draft FY22 Operating Plan & Budget

<https://www.icann.org/public-comments/draft-opplan-budget-fy22-26-2020-12-17-en>

Public comment period closes: 15 February 2021

The Registrar Stakeholder Group (RrSG) welcomes the opportunity to provide comment on the Draft FY22-26 Operating & Financial Plan and Draft FY22 Operating Plan & Budget. On a positive note, we were pleased to see that more detail and rationale has been provided than in previous operating and financial plans, particularly as this was something requested by the RrSG and other groups in previous comments.

Draft FY22 Operating Plan & Budget

The RrSG sees a notable increase in headcount (+10) between FY21 and FY22. Although this accounts for the increased personnel costs (+3.5 million USD), given there is not a lot of growth expected in the domain name industry, more information on what the additional staff are being hired for would be appropriate.

The RrSG further notes that in the breakdown of ICANN meeting constituency travel for ICANN72 - 74 (pg 12), Fellows have almost the same allocation as GNSO (45 v 49 trips per meeting), with NextGen receiving a further 15 trips per meeting. As the RrSG has previously commented on several occasions, in their current form the Fellowship and NextGen programs offer limited benefit to the majority of GNSO's SG/Cs. Given the GNSO is both responsible for policy development and are the primary participants in it, it seems inappropriate that less travel support be given to those who are actually involved in a key purpose of both ICANN and face to face meetings. To be clear, the RrSG is not necessarily advocating for a higher travel budget, but a reduction in size (and preferably a consolidation and streamlining) of the Fellowship and NextGen programs so that some of the travel funds can be redistributed to the GNSO, or at least others whose presence will actually help progress the important policy work done at ICANN meetings. The RrSG would further like to know whether the draft plan and budget accounted for the money saved from prior ICANN meetings that were held virtual, instead of face-to-face.

Finally, the forecast and adopted budget (pg 32) appear to be very different. The RrSG would like to know if there has been a change in method to make the forecast that accounts for the difference.

Draft FY22-26 Operating & Financial Plan

It appears that the FY22-26 Operating Plan & Budget does not take into consideration any new gTLD round launch in the next five years. Creating such a conservative budget in this respect may lead to issues, since a new round is certainly at least a possibility.

Ashley Heineman
RrSG Chair