GNSO Council Communications Small Team Final Report

Status of This Document

This is the Final Report of the GNSO Council Communications Small Team. This Final Report has been submitted to the GNSO Council for its consideration.

Preamble

The objective of this Final Report is to document the GNSO Council Communications Small Team's deliberations on the tasks as assigned by the GNSO Council in April 2023. By adopting this report, the GNSO Council would confirm the proposed strategic communications plan and implement the specific recommendations as outlined in this report.

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1 Executive Summary

This report documents the deliberations of the GNSO Council Small Team on Communications, which was tasked to develop a strategic communications plan for the GNSO Council.

In accordance with its [Assignment Form](#), the small team completed all of its five tasks, namely:
1. Situation analysis of current communications efforts
2. Clarify the overall objectives
3. Identify the target audience(s)
4. Recommend communications mechanism / products
5. Determine the measures of success

In completing assignment 1, the small team conducted a thorough analysis of the existing communications products and mechanisms that the GNSO Council has been using to promote its activities and accomplishments. It identified fifteen (15) types of products / mechanisms under three (3) categories, and discussed their respective purpose, target audience, distribution channel, publishing frequency / timing, and content ownership. As part of this analysis, the small team summarized some overarching weaknesses of the current communications practice:
- Repetition of information shared across different products and platforms
- Outdated, stale, or tedious format
- Lack of timely update and low publishing frequency
- Underutilization of existing tools and platforms due to resource constraints and unknown impact
- Information is difficult to access or not user-friendly
- Lack of community voice as the vast majority of content is staff generated
- Webinar: lack of interactions; timezone difficulties to encourage participation

With regard to assignment 2, the small team agreed that the overall objective of the GNSO Council communications efforts is to promote the success and progress made through the bottom-up, multi-stakeholder policy making process in the GNSO.

For assignment 3, the small team identified a "gap" with respect to the target audience – people who care about what ICANN does but do not directly participate in the community. Accordingly, the small team agreed that further enhancement or tweak of the current communications efforts should be made to effectively target this group of audience as well.

In completing assignment 4, the small team agreed that the existing mechanisms / products are abundant and they should continue. However, incremental improvements should be made in order to counter the weaknesses identified by the small team and make ICANN information user-friendly. Nevertheless, the small team put forward two substantive recommendations for new mechanisms to enhance GNSO Council's communications practice: 1) appoint a member in the GNSO Council to serve as the "PR officer" to guide / support policy staff in implementing

the communications strategy and proposed improvements; and 2) establish a LinkedIn page for the GNSO Council.

Finally, with respect to assignment 5, the small team suggested metrics, benchmarks, and what "success" looks like for the dedicated GNSO Council communications products / mechanisms. This analysis was not done for the other products / mechanisms that are managed by ICANN org's policy and communications functions.

2 Background

During the GNSO Council Strategic Planning Session (SPS) that was held from 14-16 December 2022, the GNSO Council identified the need to enhance its communication efforts to promote its work and outcomes to a broader audience, as well as to counterbalance negative stories and misinformation about GNSO policy work that seemed to have gained prominence on social media and industry blogs. Those negative stories often provide a one-sided, and sometimes misleading view of events.

In addition, the GNSO Council submitted an [Additional Budget Request (ABR)](#) for FY2024, which intends to secure a commitment from ICANN org to provide the necessary support on an ongoing basis to implement the communications plan. However, this ABR [did not receive support](#) as ICANN org noted that policy and communications functions already work closely to support the work and outcomes of the ICANN community in general. This result serves as another impetus for the GNSO Council to clarify its communications strategy in order to comprehensively promote specific activities and milestones through existing mechanisms, as well as new mechanisms if warranted.

As a result, a GNSO Council small team was formed in April 2023 to develop a strategic communications plan for the GNSO Council. The small team consists of the following members: Antonia Chu, Greg DiBiase, Juan Manuel Roas, Mark Datysgeld, Thomas Rickert, Tomslin Samme-Nlar, and Wisdom Donkor. Tomslin served as the small team lead.

The small team focused on the following tasks in developing the GNSO Council strategic communications plan:

1. Conduct a situation analysis of the current communications efforts of the GNSO Council

   a. Review the current communication practices

   b. Identify gaps and weaknesses

2. Clarify the overall objectives of the GNSO Council strategic communications plan

3. Identify the target audience(s) that the GNSO Council aims to reach

4. Recommend communications mechanisms / products based on the analysis of the overall objectives and target audience, including specification for the following:

   a. Tactic: what communication mechanism / product should be developed

   b. Purpose: why such a mechanism / product is needed

   c. Timing: when and how frequent to use such a mechanism / product

   d. Ownership: who is expected to develop such a mechanism / product and how it

should be done

5. Determine what "success" looks like and develop metrics to help the GNSO Council understand whether the overall communications objectives are achieved through the implementation of the strategic communications plan

From May to October 2023, the small team held a total of 11 meetings, including informal sessions during ICANN77 and ICANN78. The small team also engaged with ICANN org communications department, via facilitation by policy staff, to seek input for the completion of its assignments.

3 Assignment 1 - Situation Analysis of Current Communications Efforts

The first assignment of the small team is to conduct a situation analysis of the current communications efforts of the GNSO Council by: a) reviewing the current communication practices and b) identifying gaps and weaknesses.

The small team identified three categories of communications products / mechanisms that GNSO Council has been using to promote its activities and accomplishments:
1. Dedicated GNSO Council Communications Products / Mechanisms:
    a. GNSO Policy Briefing
    b. GNSO Policy Update Webinar
    c. PDP Working Group Newsletter
    d. GNSO X, formerly known as Twitter
    e. GNSO Website
2. Products / Mechanisms Managed by ICANN Policy Function
    a. Outlook Report
    b. Outcomes Report
    c. Policy and Advice Update Webinar
    d. Community Digest Newsletter
3. Products / Mechanisms Managed by ICANN Communications Function:
    a. ICANN Meeting Daily Newsletter
    b. Monthly Regional Newsletter
    c. Announcement on icann.org
    d. Blog on icann.org
    e. Video Interview
    f. ICANN Social Media Channels

For each one of these products / mechanisms, the small team reviewed and identified its purpose, target audience, distribution channel, publication frequency / timing, content ownership, and weakness (if applicable). This rough analysis was conducted based on small team members' observations as well as discussion with ICANN org's policy and communications staff, hence it is not intended to be comprehensive or authoritative. Furthermore, as some of the weaknesses were evident in multiple products / mechanisms, a summary was produced to capture the small team's overall analysis.

3.1 Situation Analysis Details

3.1.1 Situation Analysis of Dedicated GNSO Council Communications Products / Mechanisms

1a. GNSO Policy Briefing
- **Source:** https://gnso.icann.org/en/issues/policy-briefing
- **Purpose**: To provide detailed updates to ICANN community on GNSO Council-led policy efforts
- **Target audience**: GNSO community; ICANN meeting attendees
- **Distribution channel**: Community mailing lists; ICANN meeting promotion channels (e.g., social media, newsletters, schedule page, announcements, etc.)
- **Frequency / timing**: Before each ICANN meeting (3 times per calendar year)
- **Content ownership**: Policy staff (in support of GNSO Council)
- **Weakness**: None identified

1b. GNSO Policy Update Webinar
- **Source**: https://icann79.sched.com/ (most recent example)
- **Purpose**: To provide moderately detailed update on GNSO Council-led policy efforts
- **Target audience**: GNSO Council; ICANN meeting attendees
- **Distribution channel**: GNSO Council mailing list; ICANN meeting promotion channels (e.g., social media, newsletters, schedule page, announcements, etc.)
- **Frequency / timing**: Prep week before each ICANN public meeting (3 times per calendar year)
- **Content ownership**: GNSO Council leadership; working group leaders; policy staff (in support of GNSO Council)
- **Weakness**: Repetition / redundancy with other forms of updates, information overload; stale format and lack of interactions; lack of GNSO Council participation due to unclear understanding of objectives

1c. PDP Working Group Newsletter
- **Source**: https://gnso.icann.org/en/news/working-group-newsletters
- **Purpose**: To provide timely update on PDP Working Group progresses and milestones
- **Target audience**: Working Group members; followers of Working Group activities
- **Distribution channel**: Working Group mailing lists; GNSO X (formerly known as Twitter) handle; ICANN social media channels and newsletters
- **Frequency / timing**: Monthly or bi-monthly
- **Content ownership**: PDP working group leadership; policy staff (in support of GNSO Council)
- **Weakness**: Only two working groups used this mechanism (Temp-Spec EPDP and SubPro PDP); lack of promotion and consistent usage

1d. GNSO X, formerly known as Twitter
- **Source**: https://twitter.com/icann_gnso?lang=en
- **Purpose**: To serve as an accessible and real-time platform by linking to diverse information pertaining to the GNSO Council
- **Target audience**: GNSO community; ICANN meeting attendees; followers of GNSO / ICANN
- **Distribution channel**: N/A
- **Frequency / timing**: On-demand basis; more frequent posting during ICANN meetings about GNSO Council-led sessions
- **Content ownership**: Policy staff (in support of GNSO Council)
- **Weakness**: Dwindling activities over the years; inactivity in between ICANN meetings; lack of engaging content; lack of staff resources for the upkeep

1e. GNSO Website
- **Source**: https://gnso.icann.org/en
- **Purpose**: To serve as the central communications platform of comprehensive information pertaining to the GNSO Council
- **Target audience**: GNSO community; followers of GNSO / ICANN
- **Distribution channel**: N/A
- **Frequency / timing**: N/A
- **Content ownership**: Policy staff (in support of GNSO Council)
- **Weakness**: Outdated platform, not user-friendly, revamp is long overdue; dwindling activities with regard to the publication of announcements and news; lack of staff resources for the upkeep

3.1.2 Situation Analysis of Products / Mechanisms Managed by ICANN Policy Function

2a. Outlook Report
- **Source**: https://go.icann.org/outlook79 (most recent example)
- **Purpose**: To provide moderately detailed update about SO/AC activities in between ICANN meetings, including GNSO Council-led policy efforts
- **Target audience**: ICANN community; ICANN meeting attendees
- **Distribution channel**: Community mailing lists; ICANN meeting promotion channels (e.g., social media, newsletters, schedule page, announcements, etc.)
- **Frequency / timing**: Before each ICANN public meeting (3 times per calendar year)
- **Content ownership**: Policy staff (GNSO Council related content is developed by GNSO support staff)
- **Weakness**: Redundancy with GNSO Policy Briefing; publication frequency may not be adequate to provide timely update

2b. Outcomes Report
- **Source**: https://www.icann.org/sites/default/files/meetings/icann78-policy-outcome-report-21nov23-en.pdf (most recent example)
- **Purpose**: To provide an update on SO/AC activities happened during the ICANN meeting, including summary of GNSO Council and PDP working group sessions
- **Target audience**: ICANN community; ICANN meeting attendees
- **Distribution channel**: Community mailing lists; ICANN meeting promotion channels (e.g., social media, newsletters, schedule page, announcements, etc.)
- **Frequency / timing**: After each ICANN public meeting (3 times per calendar year)
- **Content ownership**: Policy staff (GNSO Council related content is developed by GNSO support staff)
- **Weakness**: Publication frequency may not be adequate to provide timely update

2c. Policy and Advice Update Webinar
- **Source**: https://icann79.sched.com/ (most recent example)
- **Purpose**: To highlight SO/AC activities as well as their planned events during the upcoming ICANN meeting, including GNSO Council-led policy efforts
- **Target audience**: ICANN community; ICANN meeting attendees
- **Distribution channel**: Community mailing lists; ICANN meeting promotion channels (e.g., social media, newsletters, schedule page, announcements, etc.)
- **Frequency / timing**: Prep week before each ICANN public meeting (3 times per calendar year)
- **Content ownership**: Policy staff (GNSO Council related content is presented by GNSO support staff)
- **Weakness**: Timezone difficulty (not taking into consideration the timezone of participants from the ICANN meeting region); content overlap with GNSO policy update webinar

2d. Community Digest Newsletter
- **Source**: https://community.icann.org/x/2wVIBg
- **Purpose**: To provide news alerts about things happening in ICANN, including public comments, community actions, events, announcements / blogs on icann.org, etc.
- **Target audience**: ICANN community; followers of ICANN
- **Distribution channel**: Community mailing lists
- **Frequency / timing**: Bi-weekly (every Monday and Thursday)
- **Content ownership**: Policy staff (GNSO Council related content is contributed by GNSO support staff)
- **Weakness**: Hard to find subscription link

3.1.3 Situation Analysis of Products / Mechanisms Managed by ICANN Communications Function

3a. ICANN Meeting Daily Newsletter
- **Source**: Link not available
- **Purpose**: To promote specific sessions or highlights during ICANN meetings, including GNSO Council-led sessions
- **Target audience**: ICANN community; ICANN meeting attendees
- **Distribution channel**: Email subscription; ICANN meeting promotion channels (e.g., social media, newsletters, schedule page, announcements, etc.)
- **Frequency / timing**: Daily throughout ICANN meeting duration
- **Content ownership**: Communications staff (GNSO Council related content is contributed by GNSO support staff)
- **Weakness**: None identified

3b. Monthly Regional Newsletter
- **Source**: Link not available
- **Purpose**: To highlight ICANN news, events, and milestones, including policy updates from the GNSO Council (e.g., resolutions, decisions, and key progresses in PDP working groups)
- **Target audience**: ICANN community; followers of ICANN
- **Distribution channel**: Email subscription; community mailing lists
- **Frequency / timing**: Monthly
- **Content ownership**: Communications staff (GNSO Council related content is contributed by GNSO support staff)
- **Weakness**: None identified

3c. Announcement on icann.org
- **Source**: https://www.icann.org/en/announcements
- **Purpose**: To provide timely update on ICANN news, events, and milestones based on specific parameters defined by ICANN Communications department, including GNSO Council-led policy efforts (e.g., public comments on PDP outputs)
- **Target audience**: ICANN community; followers of ICANN
- **Distribution channel**: Community mailing lists; ICANN social media channels and newsletters
- **Frequency / timing**: On-demand basis
- **Content ownership**: Communications staff (GNSO Council related content is contributed by GNSO support staff)
- **Weakness**: None identified

3d. Blog on icann.org
- **Source**: https://www.icann.org/en/blogs
- **Purpose**: To provide personal insights and perspectives pertaining to important ICANN news, events, and milestones, including GNSO Council-led policy efforts

- **Target audience**: ICANN community; followers of ICANN
- **Distribution channel**: Community mailing lists; ICANN social media channels and newsletters
- **Frequency / timing**: On-demand basis
- **Content ownership**: Communications staff (GNSO Council related content is contributed jointly by GNSO support staff and GNSO members as appropriate)
- **Weakness**: Community-drafted blog posts were rarely published in recent years

3e. Video Interview
- **Source**: https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCl7rV9qJaQEx3GKhtSLx4QA
- **Purpose**: To spotlight community leaders, including GNSO Council and PDP working group leaders, and promote key ICANN news, events, and milestones in a more engaging format
- **Target audience**: ICANN community; ICANN meeting attendees, including newcomers; followers of ICANN
- **Distribution channel**: Community mailing lists; ICANN social media channels and newsletters
- **Frequency / timing**: On-demand basis
- **Content ownership**: Communications staff (GNSO videos were produced with participation from GNSO support staff and GNSO members as appropriate)
- **Weakness**: Long / tedious content for some videos, low viewership; video interviews have not been widely offered to the ICANN community post 2020 due to cost-effectiveness consideration

3f. ICANN Social Media
- **Source**: https://www.icann.org/resources/pages/social-media-2020-12-14-en
- **Purpose**: To promote key events, news, and milestones at ICANN in real time
- **Target audience**: ICANN community; ICANN meeting attendees; followers of ICANN; general public
- **Distribution channel**: N/A
- **Frequency / timing**: Daily posting(s)
- **Content ownership**: Communications staff (with occasional contribution from policy staff for GNSO Council related content)
- **Weakness**: GNSO Council related content is a tiny portion of ICANN's social media feed

3.2 Summary of Weakness of Current Communications Practice

After reviewing the weakness identified for each communications product / mechanism, the small team identified some overarching themes and common weaknesses of the current communications practice as follows:
- Repetition of information shared across different products and platforms
- Outdated, stale, or tedious format
- Lack of timely update and low publishing frequency

- Underutilization of existing tools and platforms due to resource constraints and unknown impact
- Information is difficult to access or not user-friendly
- Lack of community voice as the vast majority of content is staff generated
- Webinar: lack of interactions; timezone difficulties to encourage participation

4 Assignment 2 - Overall Objective

The second assignment of the small team is to clarify the overall objectives of the GNSO Council strategic communications plan. The small team proposed the following:

> To promote the success and progress made through the
>
> bottom-up, multi-stakeholder policy making process in the GNSO

Rationale:

Small team members discussed the current reality where there has been ongoing doubt raised in different fora regarding the effectiveness of the multi-stakeholder model for policy making. The legitimacy of ICANN has been challenged by some stakeholders and players, and there is a lack of comfort in knowing whether ICANN has been doing its job successfully. Therefore, the small team believes that it is critical to invest in communications efforts to promote the good work and even "small wins" at ICANN, which should include the policy efforts led by the GNSO Council.

5 Assignment 3 - Target Audience

The third assignment of the small team is to identify the target audience(s) that the GNSO Council aims to reach. The small team proposed the following:

People who care about what ICANN does but do not directly participate in the community

Rationale:

After working through assignment 1, small team members agreed that the current communications efforts are heavily focused on the ICANN community and people who, at a minimum, have the basic knowledge of ICANN. The vast majority of the communications products and mechanisms require participation in ICANN. This is manifested in not only the way they manage to subscribe to those communications channels, but also the knowledge required to understand the substance and content being communicated. The small team also believes the various types of communications products and mechanisms that currently exist seem to be sufficient in reaching these known audiences.

However, with regard to the stakeholders and players who have raised doubts about ICANN's multi-stakeholder model and legitimacy, some of them may not necessarily be involved in the ICANN community or understand how ICANN works. However, they seem to have a desire to follow ICANN's activities and care about the effectiveness of ICANN. The small team identified this group of audience as a "gap" that needs to be bridged. Accordingly, the GNSO Council's communications efforts should be tweaked or enhanced to effectively target this group of audience as well.

6 Assignment 4 - Communications Mechanism Recommendations

The fourth assignment of the small team is to recommend communication mechanisms / products based on the analysis of the overall objectives and target audience, including specification for tactic, purpose, timing, and ownership.

In summary, the small team agreed that the existing mechanisms / products are abundant and they should continue. However, incremental improvements should be made in order to counter the weaknesses identified by the small team and make ICANN information user-friendly. The small team understood that among the products that are managed by ICANN policy and communications functions, the GNSO Council may have limited remit in proposing substantive improvements. Hence, some of the suggested improvements for those products / mechanisms seem minor.

Nevertheless, the small team put forward two substantive recommendations for new mechanisms to enhance GNSO Council's communications practice: 1) appoint a member in the GNSO Council to serve as the "PR officer" to guide / support policy staff in implementing the communications strategy and proposed improvements; and 2) establish a LinkedIn page for the GNSO Council.

The small team also noted there are additional mechanisms outside of the ICANN channels, such as industry blogs (e.g., CircleID) and mainstream media, where articles about ICANN are published. Individual GNSO Councilors should feel empowered to self publish content to help promote the communications objectives of the GNSO Council.

6.1 Incremental Improvements to Existing Communications Practice

6.1.1 Suggested Improvements for Dedicated GNSO Council Communications Products / Mechanisms

1a. GNSO Policy Briefing
- None identified (status quo is satisfactory)

1b. GNSO Policy Update Webinar
- Improve GNSO Council attendance by clarifying the objectives and attendance requirement of this webinar, as well as explaining its difference from the Policy and Advice Update webinar
- Enhance the engagement effect by proposing "harder" questions to PDP Working Group leaders and GNSO Council leadership

- Solicit broader feedback from the GNSO Council for suggestions on additional improvements

1c. PDP Working Group Newsletter
- Encourage utilization of the newsletter by raising awareness among PDP Working Groups, but with the understanding that one size may not fit all and not all Working Groups may choose to use this tool
- If a newsletter is being used by a PDP Working Group, promote its subscription and content by cross-posting on different communications platforms (e.g., community mailing lists, newsletters, social media, etc.)

1d. GNSO X, formerly known as Twitter
- Increase activities and ensure consistent engagement by cross-posting contents from the GNSO Council Linkedin Page (see details in Section 6.2)

1e. GNSO Website
- The small team understood that the GNSO website is in queue for a revamp. This will be a major undertaking and require intensive effort between staff and community in order to make ICANN information more user-friendly. Detailed improvement suggestions may be raised at the time of the revamp.

6.1.2 Suggested Improvements for Products / Mechanisms Managed by ICANN Policy Function

2a. Outlook Report
- Promote the link on GNSO's communication channels (e.g., social media, website)

2b. Outcomes Report
- Promote the link on GNSO's communication channels (e.g., social media, website)

2c. Policy and Advice Update Webinar
- Raise the timezone concerns to relevant ICANN departments in organizing the Prep Week webinars and urge them to take into consideration the participants from ICANN meeting regions

2d. Community Digest Newsletter
- Promote subscription of this newsletter on GNSO's communication channels (e.g., social media, website)
- Increase content contribution to promote GNSO news, events, and milestones via policy staff

6.1.3 Suggested Improvements for Products / Mechanisms Managed by ICANN Communications Function

3a. ICANN Meeting Daily Newsletter
- None identified (status quo is satisfactory)

3b. Monthly Regional Newsletter
- Increase content contribution to promote "small wins" and "out of the box" stories about the GNSO Council (beyond GNSO Council resolutions and decisions)

3c. Announcement on icann.org
- None identified (status quo is satisfactory)

3d. Blog on icann.org
- When occasion warrants, request exception to ICANN org with regard to publishing community-drafted blog post, especially pertaining to GNSO Council-led efforts

3e. Video Interview
- The small team learned that ICANN org has been using the OpenReel application to conduct video interviews, and it could be done virtually. However, there will be substantial editing costs associated with each video
- When occasion warrants, request ICANN org's assistance in filming targeted videos, as it is possible to do so. However, the purpose of conducting video interviews must be clear as resource is required.
- If ICANN org is unable to provide assistance in filming videos, consider asking help from community members who have the equipment or skillset.

3f. ICANN Social Media
- Make ICANN information more user-friendly by increasing interaction with ICANN social media accounts (e.g., retweet on X, repost on LinkedIn)

6.2 New Mechanisms to Enhance Communications Practice

6.2.1 Appoint A Member in GNSO Council to Serve as the "PR Officer"

Recognizing one of the key weaknesses of the current communications practice is the lack of "community voice", the small team agreed that having a dedicated member from the GNSO Council to serve as the "PR Officer" would be beneficial in providing support and guidance to policy staff in implementing the communications strategy and incremental improvements.

The PR Officer is expected to engage with staff on a regular basis, signing off on the staff proposed content for newsletter stories and social media posts, as well as suggesting ideas and inspirations for additional content that staff may have not considered. The PR Officer's role

would be especially important in developing the "content calendar" for the proposed LinkedIn page for the GNSO Council, as explained in the section below.

The small team recommends appointing one member of the <u>GNSO Council leadership</u> as the PR Officer for the following two reasons:
1. **Neutrality**: Members of the GNSO Council leadership are expected to assume a neutral role, refrain from promoting a specific agenda, and ensure fair treatment of all opinions and objectivity in identifying areas of agreement. Such an expectation of neutrality should help ensure that the PR Officer provides guidance to ICANN staff by taking into account the various stakeholders and interests represented in the GNSO Council.
2. **Logistics**: GNSO Council leadership has regular meetings (e.g., 2-3 meetings per month) with policy staff in support of GNSO Council. The communications related tasks and questions can be addressed via one of those meetings on a monthly basis. There is also a dedicated communications platform for staff and GNSO Council leadership to touch base and work collaboratively.

While the small team put forward this recommendation, it agreed that it is at the discretion of the GNSO Council to consider whether the PR Officer position should be limited to members of the leadership team, or should be open to the broader GNSO Council.

6.2.2 Establish A Linkedin Page for GNSO Council

The small team agreed that the GNSO Council should maintain at least one dedicated social media channel for consistent engagement. This will help produce timely updates on the success / progress made through GNSO policy efforts and make information more accessible, reaching the target audience who care about ICANN but do not necessarily participate in the community.

After consulting with the ICANN Communications department on the effectiveness of the various social media platforms that ICANN has employed, the small team agreed that a LinkedIn page may be the most suitable platform targeting professionals globally. It put forward a strawman proposal that may serve as a starting point for the GNSO Council to consider how to populate the content. Specific elements such as purpose, timing, and ownership are also included in the strawman proposal, in accordance with the requirement of assignment 4.

The small team would like to draw attention to three specific elements:
1. **Account Management:** The Linkedin account should be created and maintained by policy staff in support of GNSO. This is for continuity consideration, ensuring that the account will continue existing despite turnover of GNSO Council leadership and members. However, the "PR Officer" appointed by the GNSO Council should be the direct manager of the account and have admin / posting rights.
2. **Content Calendar:** The success of a Linkedin Page depends on the quality of the content. Frequent posting is also key to maintaining consistent engagement. Therefore, having a content calendar to plan out posts ahead of time will be crucial to ensure the page is well maintained. The development of the content calendar would be a joint effort between the PR Officer and the dedicated policy staff in support of GNSO Council.

3. **Cross-Posting:** While the small team recommended establishing a new social media account, it also recognized that the GNSO X (Twitter) handle has more than 4,000 followers and still has value in maintaining and reaching audiences not covered by Linkedin. The same content posted on Linkedin can be cross-posted on X as well (adjustment can be made to adhere to the character limit).

Strawman Proposal: GNSO Council LinkedIn Page

Purpose:
- To provide timely and frequent update on the success and progress made through the bottom-up, multi-stakeholder policy making process in the GNSO

Target Audience:
- Professionals who care about what ICANN does but do not directly participate

Ownership:
- Direct Manager: GNSO Council "PR Officer"
- Support: Dedicated policy staff in support of GNSO

Frequency:
- Intersessional: 2 posts / week (minimum)
- ICANN Meeting: 1 post / day (minimum)

Potential Topics for Linkedin Posts:
- PDP Working Group milestones
- GNSO Council decisions / resolutions
- Small team / scoping team milestones
- Key interaction with Board, Org, and Community on hot topics
- GNSO Council events (in person & virtual)
- Evergreen content related to the GNSO Council, GNSO community, and PDP topics

Existing Content to Promote / Repurpose:
- Newsletter blurbs (e.g., monthly regional newsletter, ICANN meeting daily newsletter, PDP working group newsletter)
- GNSO Policy Briefing
- Outlook Report
- Outcomes Report
- Announcements & blogs on icann.org
- Linkedin posts from ICANN account
- Linkedin posts from GNSO Councillors
- Relevant ICANN Learn courses

Planning Tactics:

- Use of content calendar to plan out posts on a monthly basis
- Solicit broader input from GNSO Council, PDP working groups, and small teams for post ideas

Potential Challenges:
- Lack of visuals outside ICANN meetings
- Progress may be slow and new update may be limited in a short time frame
- Content may be dry / not engaging

7 Assignment 5 - Measures of Success

The fifth assignment of the small team is to determine what "success" looks like and develop metrics to help the GNSO Council understand whether the overall communications objectives are achieved through the implementation of the strategic communications plan.

The small team conducted this analysis for the dedicated GNSO Council communications products / mechanisms by identifying metrics and benchmarks, as well as suggesting the specific tools and platforms for tracking purposes.

This analysis was not done for the other products / mechanisms that are managed by ICANN org's policy and communications functions. The reason is that GNSO Council related content constitutes only part of the overall content developed for those products / mechanisms. Furthermore, the small team understood that ICANN org's policy and communications functions are responsible for tracking their performance based on the measures of success they have defined.

7.1 Suggested "Measures of Success" for Dedicated GNSO Council Communications Products / Mechanisms

1a. GNSO Policy Briefing
- **Metrics**: (Bitly.com, where the short URL to the document is created, to track those metrics)
    - Number of downloads
    - Geographic locations of readers
    - How readers reached the document (e.g., direct link, google, twitter, linkedin, etc.)
- **Benchmark**:
    - Number of downloads of comparable documents (e.g., Outlook Report, Outcomes Report)
- **What "Success" Looks Like:**
    - Increasing download rate over time
    - Engagement from geographic regions that are underrepresented at ICANN

1b. GNSO Policy Update Webinar
- **Metrics**: (ICANN org staff to track those metrics)
    - Number of community attendees, particularly from the GNSO Council and ICANN meeting regions
- **Benchmark**:
    - Number of community attendees for comparable webinars (e.g., Policy and Advice Update webinar, other Prep Week webinars)
- **What "Success" Looks Like:**

- ○ Increasing community attendance over time, particularly from the GNSO Council
- ○ Engagement from ICANN meeting regions

1c. PDP Working Group Newsletter
- **Metrics**: (Constant Contact, the platform where the newsletter is built, to track those metrics)
  - ○ Open rate: percentage of recipients that opened the newsletter
  - ○ Click rate: percentage of recipients that click through on the newsletter
  - ○ Subscriber growth: total number of newsletter subscribers
- **Benchmark**:
  - ○ Open rate and click rate of comparable newsletters (e.g., Monthly Regional Newsletter)
- **What "Success" Looks Like:**
  - ○ Increasing number of subscribers

1d. GNSO X, formerly known as Twitter
- **Metrics**: (Twitter Analytics to track those metrics)
  - ○ Follower growth
  - ○ Impressions: Number of times a tweet has been organically seen by other users
  - ○ Engagements: Number of interactions made with a tweet
  - ○ Link clicks: The number of times someone clicked on a link inside a tweet
- **Benchmark**:
  - ○ Engagements and average tweets per week/month of comparable X handles (e.g., @icannatlarge, @NCUC, etc.)
- **What "Success" Looks Like:**
  - ○ Increasing number of followers
  - ○ Increasing number of engagements with tweets

1e. GNSO Website
- **Metrics**:
  - ○ As the website is in queue for revamp, the small team generally suggested referencing industry metrics for tracking its performance, such as overall traffic, average time on site, average page views per visit, visitor demographics, etc. Specific metrics may be discussed with ICANN org at the time of the revamp. Tools / platforms to track performance to be determined at the time of revamp.
- **Benchmark**:
  - ○ Performance of comparable community websites (e.g., https://atlarge.icann.org/, https://gac.icann.org/, https://ccnso.icann.org/)

1f. GNSO Linkedin Page
- **Metrics:** (Linkedin Page Analytics to track those metrics)
  - ○ Follower growth
  - ○ Post clicks
  - ○ Engagements

- **Benchmark:**
  - Engagements and average posts per week/month of comparable Linkedin pages
- **What "Success" Looks Like:**
  - Increasing number of followers
  - Increasing number of engagements with posts

8 Next Steps

During the 2023 Strategic Planning Session held in Washington DC, USA from 28 November - 1 December 2023, the small team presented to the GNSO Council an overview of this draft strategic communications plan that includes details pertaining to the five assignments.

Incorporating feedback received, the communications small team plans to submit this report to the GNSO Council for its consideration and approval of the recommendations. Subsequently, the GNSO Council is expected to review the report with their respective Stakeholder Groups and Constituencies prior to taking action.

In addition, the GNSO Council may consider engaging with ICANN org's communications function, especially related to additional resources such as a comms liaison, which could further enhance the overall communication efforts.