

# ICANN78 Fellowship Program Post-Meeting Report

Annual General Meeting | 21–26 October 2023 | Hamburg, Germany



**Barkha Manral**

**Paulo Marcos Drewiacki**

**On behalf of the ICANN78 Annual  
General Meeting Fellows**

# Table of Contents

## **3 ICANN78 Overview**

## **4 What is the Fellowship Program?**

## **5 ICANN78 Fellowship Participants**

## **7 Program Statistics**

7 Application Process

7 Fellowship Cohort Profile

8 Community Engagement

9 Fellows Rating for ICANN78

## **11 Main Takeaways from the Fellowship**

## **12 ICANN78 Fellowship Program Activities**

12 ICANN Learn Courses

12 Mentoring Process

12 Prep Week

13 ICANN Meeting Activities

14 Post Meeting Activities

## **15 Fellows' Feedback on Prep Week Activities and Suggestions**

## **17 What's Next?**

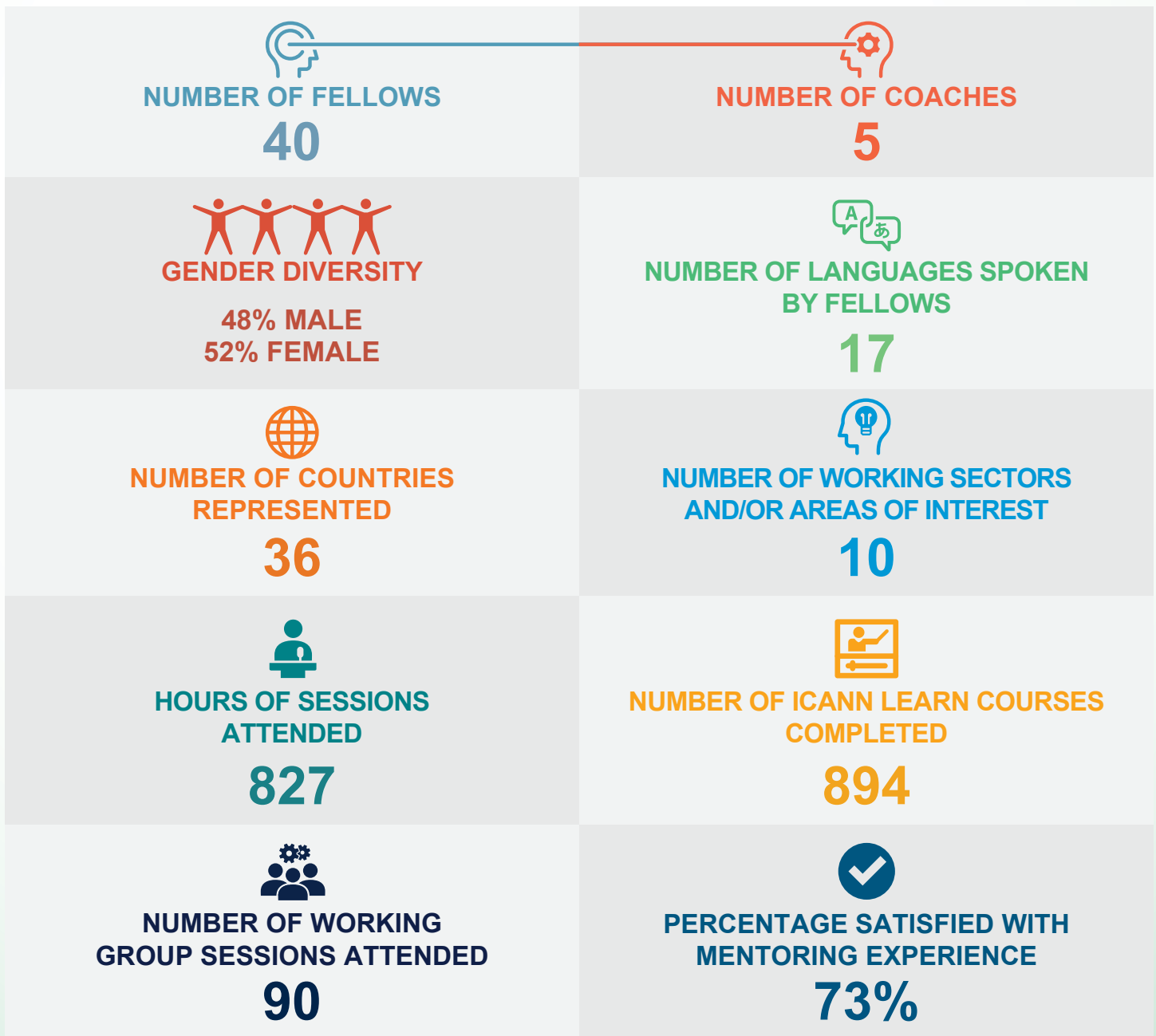
## **22 Acknowledgement**



# Fellowship Program ICANN78 Overview



The Fellowship Program strengthens the diversity of the multistakeholder model by fostering opportunities for individuals from underserved and underrepresented communities to become active participants in the ICANN community. This visual represents an overview of the latest cohort of fellows. To learn more and to read the fellows' complete report, go to <http://www.icann.org/en/fellowships>.



# What is the Fellowship Program?

Since its establishment in 2007, the Fellowship Program has successfully cultivated a robust community of fellows actively participating within ICANN and in various entities across the Internet ecosystem. The ICANN Fellowship Program aims to enhance the diversity of the multistakeholder model by creating opportunities for individuals from underserved and underrepresented communities to engage actively in the ICANN community.

Fellows get the chance to understand the workings of the ICANN community by being assigned to a mentor and participating in comprehensive training covering various areas of knowledge and skill development before, during, and after an ICANN meeting. Travel assistance is also provided to support attendance to in-person meetings.

To apply or learn more about the Fellowship Program, visit <https://www.icann.org/fellowshipprogram>.



# ICANN78 Fellowship Participants

The Fellowship Program for the ICANN78 Annual General Meeting (AGM) consisted of 40 fellows from 36 countries, with 35 participating in person and five virtually. Five mentors were appointed by ICANN's Supporting Organizations (SOs) and Advisory Committees (ACs) to support the fellows' learning process.

FELLOWS	COUNTRY OR REGION OF RESIDENCE	WORKING SECTOR/AREA OF INTEREST
Abdirashid Ibrahim Abdirahman	Somaliland	Academia, Civil Society, Intellectual Property (Participated Virtually)
Adebunmi Akinbo	Nigeria	Civil Society - <b>Recipient of the Paul Muchene Fellowship Award</b>
Ankhzaya Tseden	Mongolia	ccTLD Operations
Athanase Bahizire	The Democratic Republic of the Congo	Academia, Civil Society, Technical, Security (Participated Virtually)
Barkha Manral	India	Technical
Bibek Silwal	Nepal	Civil Society, Internet End User
Chuma Akana	United States of America	Academia, Business and Commerce, ICANN Contracted Party
Cristina Mercedes Arrieta Gonzalez	Puerto Rico	Academia, Business and Commerce, Civil Society
Edwin Sandys	Fiji	ccTLD Operations, Technical, Security
El-Hoima Barthelus	United States of America	Academia, Civil Society, Intellectual Property, Technical
Elif Güldüz Gürel	Republic of Türkiye	ccTLD Operations, Intellectual Property
Eunice Alejandra Perez Coello	Mexico	Academia - <b>Recipient of Tarek Kamel Fellowship Recognition</b>
Gerardo Martinez Hernandez	Mexico	Academia, Civil Society, Internet End User
Hannah Frank	Argentina	Academia, Civil Society, Internet End User
Houda Chihi	Tunisia	Internet Service Providers and Connectivity Providers
Jelena Suh	Serbia	Academia, Internet Service Providers and Connectivity Providers, Technical
Jemesa Robarobalevu	Fiji	ccTLD Operations, ICANN Contracted Party, Technical, Security
Jesse Nathan Kalange	Uganda	Academia, Civil Society, Security
Joel Naoki Ernesto Christoph	Italy	Academia, Civil Society, Internet End User
Letitia Adeline Masaea	Solomon Islands	Civil Society, Technical, Security
Lourdes Leon	Peru	Civil Society, Intellectual Property
Marianna Kaninets	Ukraine	Internet Service Providers and Connectivity Providers
Maud Adjeley Ashong Elliot	Ghana	Academia, Civil Society, Technical
Naima Awan	Pakistan	Academia, Civil Society, Internet End User
Nancy Wachira	Canada	Technical, Security

FELLOWS	COUNTRY OR REGION OF RESIDENCE	WORKING SECTOR/AREA OF INTEREST
Neli Odishvili	Georgia	Academia, Civil Society, Security
Norman Angel Agong	Uganda	Academia, Civil Society, Technical (Participated Virtually)
Norman Warput	Vanuatu	Business and Commerce, ccTLD Operations
Noveck Gowandan	Trinidad and Tobago	Civil Society, Technical, Security
Oscar Giudice	Uruguay	Academia, Technical, Security
Paulo Marcos Gampel Drewiacki	Brazil	ccTLD Operations, ICANN Contracted Party
Phyo Thiri Lwin	Republic of the Union of Myanmar	Civil Society, Internet End User (Participated Virtually)
Romia Lasmin	United Kingdom	Business and Commerce, ICANN Contracted Party, Intellectual Property
Sara Ali Ahmed Mohamed	Sudan	Civil Society, Internet Service Providers and Connectivity Providers (Participated Virtually)
Sarai Faleupolu Tevita	Samoa	Academia, Technical, Security
Shita Laksmi	Indonesia	Academia, Civil Society
Tamas Leval	Hungary	Academia
Tidjani Mahamat Adoum	Republic of Chad	ccTLD Operations, Internet Service Providers and Connectivity Providers, Technical
Tracy Johnson	New Zealand	Business and Commerce, ccTLD operations, Internet service providers and connectivity providers, Security
Vesmira Harutyunyan	Armenia	Civil Society, Internet End User

Note: All information above is self-reported by applicants.

MENTORS	APPOINTED BY
Jenifer López	Country Code Names Supporting Organization (ccNSO)
Arinola Akinyemi	Generic Names Supporting Organization (GNSO)
Laxmi Prasad Yadav	Government Advisory Committee (GAC)
Abdulkarim Oloyede	Root Server System Advisory Committee (RSSAC)
Shreedeep Rayamajhi	At-Large Advisory Committee (ALAC)

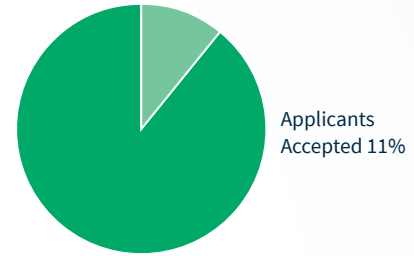
# Program Statistics

The metrics in this section are derived from data provided by the fellows during the application process and the fellowship post-meeting survey:

## Application Process

The ICANN Organization (org) received 378 applications for the ICANN78 Fellowship Program. Forty applicants from 36 countries were selected to participate in person, but due to visa issues, 5 selected fellows joined the meeting virtually.

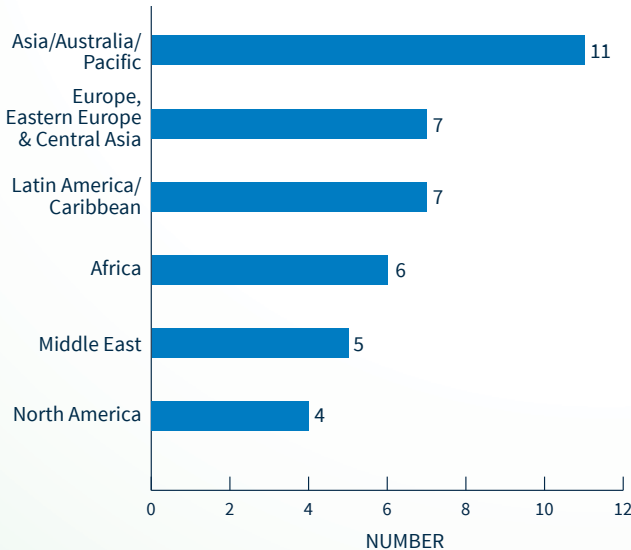
## Fellowship Program Acceptance Rate



## Fellowship Cohort Profile

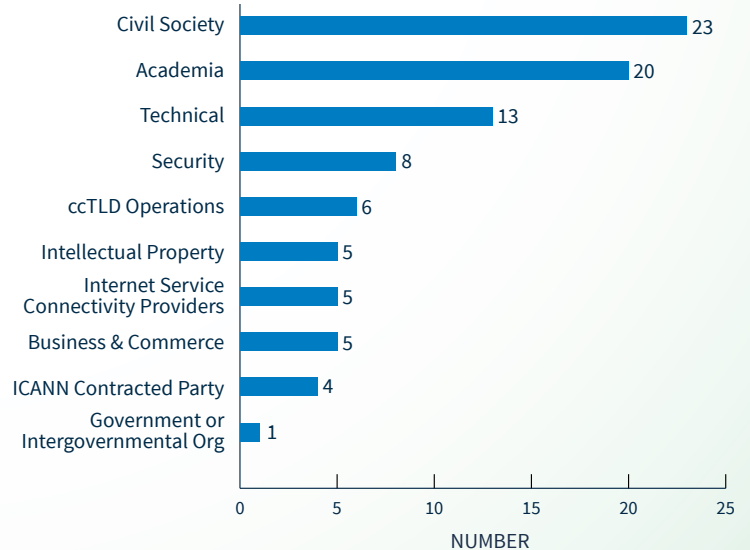
The forty ICANN78 fellows came from different regions, with Asia/Australia/Pacific being the most common, followed by the Latin America and Caribbean and Europe.

### Regional Representation



The regions reflect the ICANN regions.

### Working Sector and/or Area of Interest

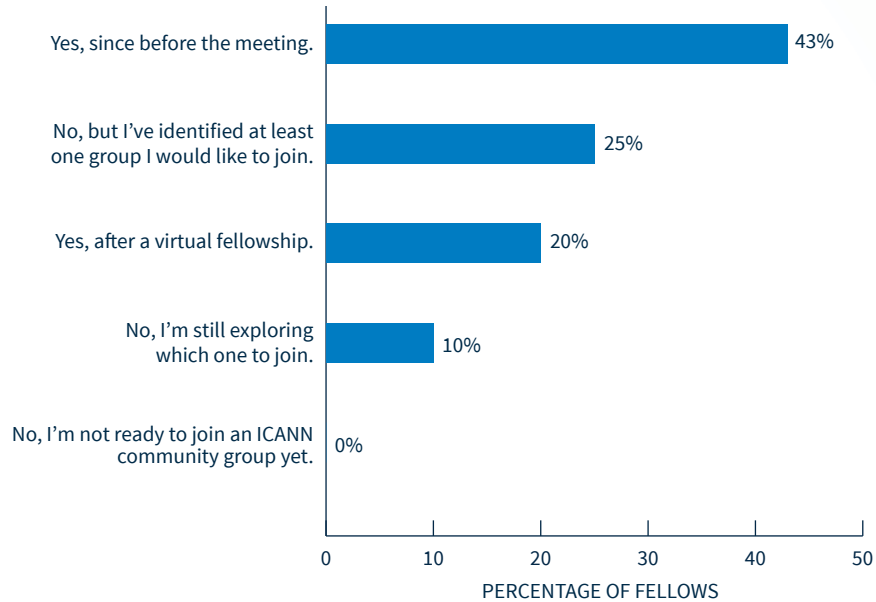


Note that applicants and fellows could select multiple stakeholder groups.

## Community Engagement

In total, 43 percent of the fellows indicated that they were affiliated with at least one ICANN community group (SO, AC, Stakeholder Group, or Constituency) before the ICANN78 meeting, 20 percent that they became affiliated after ICANN78, 25 percent have already identified at least one group to join, while 10 percent are still exploring which group to join.

### Are you affiliated with at least one ICANN community group?



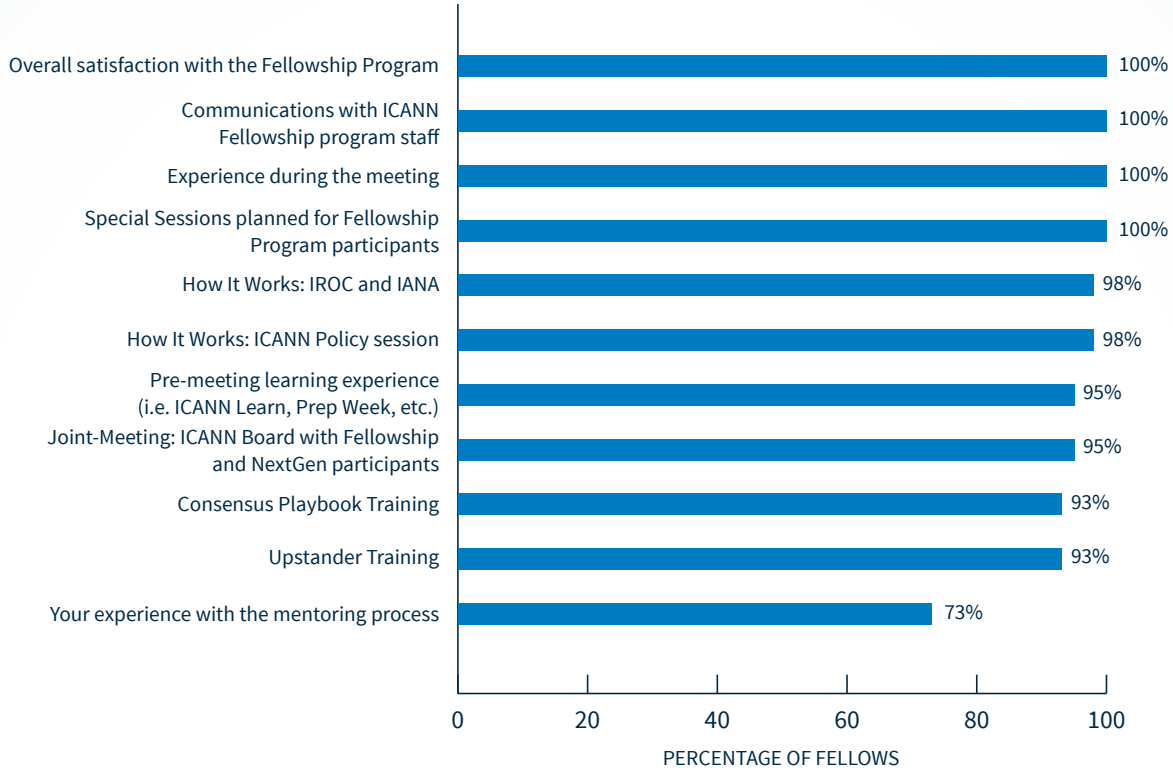
### Out of the 40 fellows:

- 18 mentioned that they are affiliated with the At-Large Community
- 8 with the Asian, Australasian, and Pacific Islands Regional At-Large Organization (APRALO)
- 7 with the Latin American and Caribbean Islands Regional At-Large Organization (LACRALO)
- 5 with the African Regional At-Large Organization (AFRALO)
- 2 with the North American Regional At-Large Organization (NARALO)
- 1 with the European Regional At-Large Organization (EURALO)
- 8 with the GNSO
- 5 with the ccNSO
- 2 with the Address Supporting Organization (ASO)
- 1 respectively with the GAC and the Security and Stability Advisory Committee (SSAC)

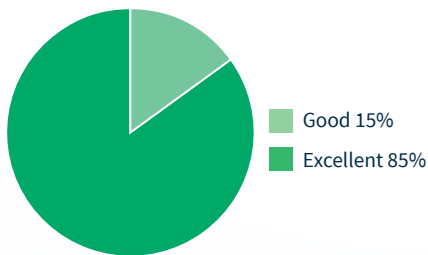


## Fellows Rating for ICANN78

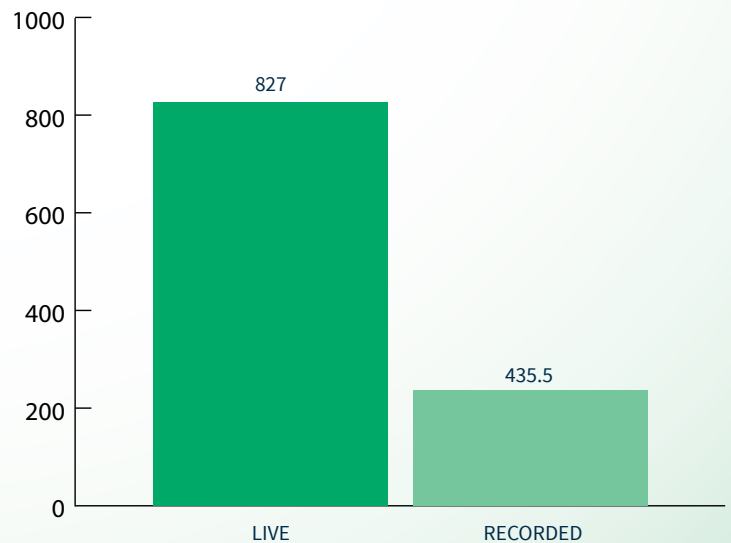
### Fellows Satisfied with the Fellowship Program



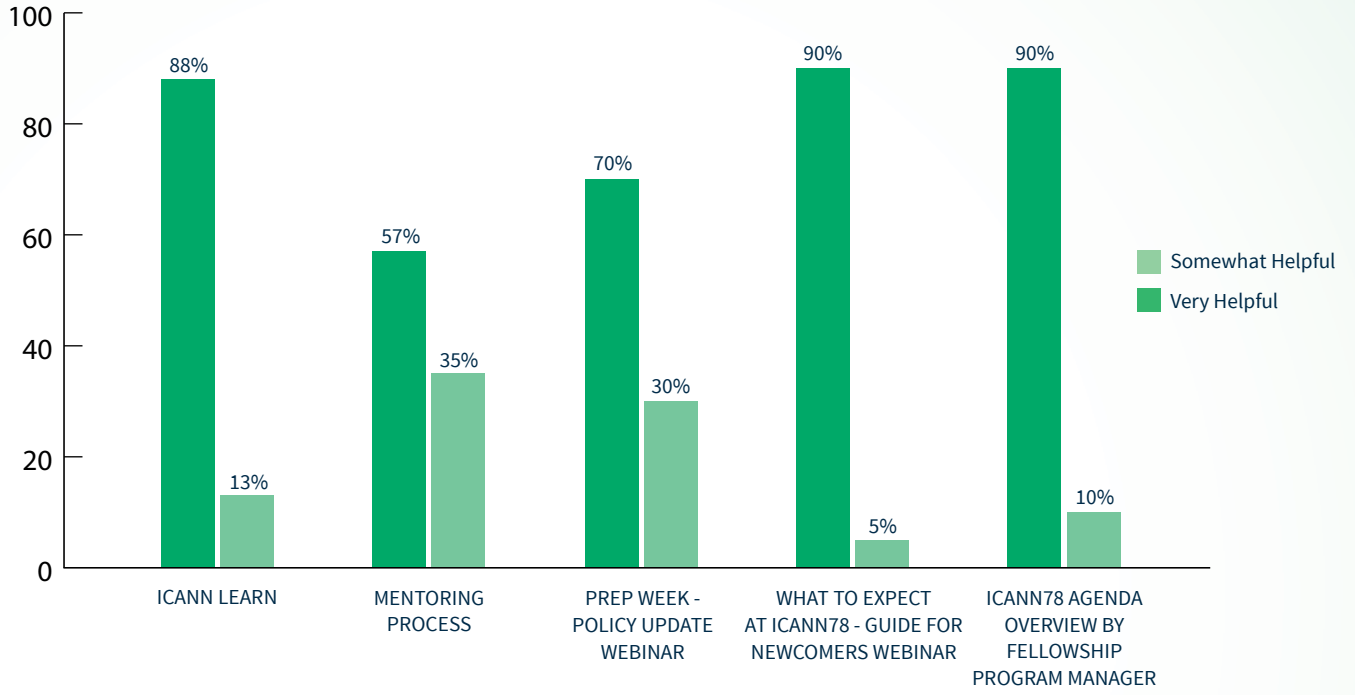
### Tools and Opportunities Available to Interact during the Meeting



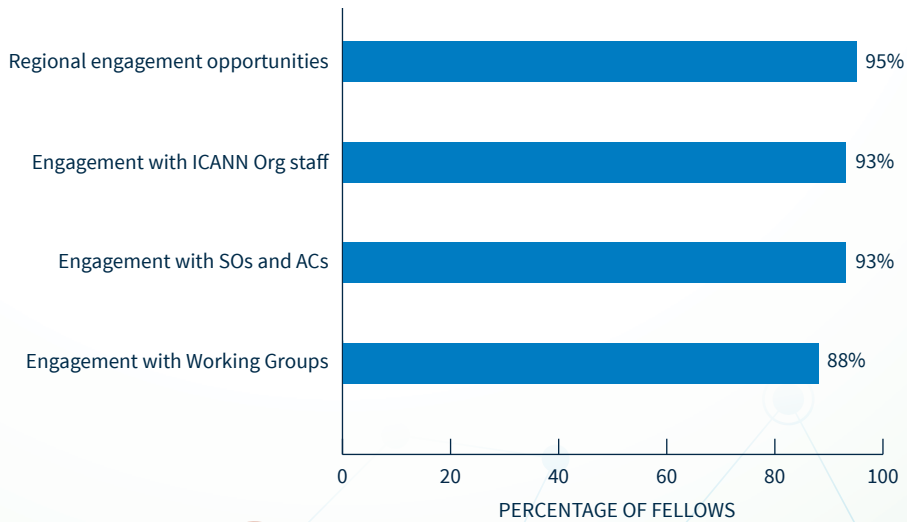
### Hours of Sessions Attended by Fellows



## Fellows Rating for ICANN78 *cont'd*



## How satisfied are you with engagement opportunities before, during, and after the ICANN meeting?



# Main Takeaways from the Fellowship

Below are the main takeaways from the ICANN77 Fellowship Program, as highlighted by the participants:

- ICANN's multistakeholder model puts a great emphasis on the technical side of matters. The fellowship program, however, enables participants to discover the significant contributions of this approach to the organization's policy and community development.
- Fellows have realized that being selected to participate in the Fellowship Program provides a unique opportunity to comprehend the broader significance of ICANN's work. Names and numbers are just a part of the organization's mission. Worldwide policy discussions and intercontinental collaboration promote the global expansiveness and inclusivity of the Internet. The ACs and SOs and the organization's bottom-up policymaking underscore the idea of 'ONE WORLD, ONE INTERNET.'
- As fellows, we've had the opportunity to connect with individuals from different backgrounds and with a multitude of professional expertise and academic pursuits, representing several cultures and regions. This diversity among the fellows has given us a deeper understanding of different regions' distinct challenges. It has allowed us to witness firsthand how to address these challenges with consensus solutions and how individuals have emerged as advocates for their respective regions throughout our collective journey with ICANN.
- Fellows have highlighted the value of the interactive sessions they participated in, including both mandatory sessions with the fellowship manager, a constant guiding presence, and those centered around multistakeholder engagements. By the end of the program, fellows expressed a notable familiarity with acronyms that initially seemed challenging to grasp. The fellowship provided an opportunity to gain insights into ICANN's modus operandi and to learn how to become a part of different stakeholder groups, enabling alums to be advocates for positive change in the functioning of the Internet world.
- Fellows emphasized the tremendous networking opportunities presented at ICANN meetings, with an atmosphere marked by warmth and a willingness to help newcomers comprehend the intricate workings of stakeholders and communities, guiding them on how to participate actively. Beyond connecting with fellow ICANN participants, fellows also had the chance to engage with NextGen participants, who hailed from diverse backgrounds like them.
- Fellows noted that the Prep Week, Consensus Playbook role play, and Upstander training sessions were highly engaging and thought-provoking. These sessions played a crucial role in stimulating cognitive processes and preparing fellows to navigate the complexities of an ICANN meeting and working group sessions.
- Last but not least, fellows sincerely thank the dedicated ICANN staff for their hard work and warm welcome. They also thank mentors who provided guidance before, during, and after ICANN meetings, acknowledging that understanding the journey would have been considerably more challenging without their mentorship. The ICANN Travel Team also received thanks for their virtual presence and responsiveness, which is always just an email away.

# ICANN78 Fellowship Program Activities

## ICANN Learn Courses

Fellows initiated their ICANN journey with ICANN Learn courses. This comprehensive program consisted of 22 courses strategically divided into various sets, including mandatory modules. The **ICANN Learn platform** is open and available to individuals who are enthusiastic about joining ICANN. The Learn courses proved to be highly elucidating and informative, with clearly defined objectives. Covering several essential topics, these courses extended beyond technical aspects, delving into areas such as policymaking, understanding ICANN's functioning, and its perspectives on various issues.

## Mentoring Process

Mentors were a key part of the Fellowship Program, helping to facilitate fellows' understanding of ICANN and its mission. Participants were assigned to mentors as part of the mentoring process. These mentors organized engaging and interactive sessions, ensuring timely responses to fellows' queries, and actively involving them in the learning process. Collaboratively, mentors and fellows navigated the path towards the ICANN78 meeting. This mentoring proved highly beneficial and essential for the newcomers in the fellowship program.

## Prep Week

A week before the ICANN78 meeting in Hamburg, fellows attended virtual Prep Week sessions. These sessions encompassed several mandatory components, including the following:

DATE & DAY	TIME	ICANN78 PREP WEEK SESSION
09/10/2023, Monday	14:30–15:30 UTC	New gTLD Program Next Round: Implementation Status Update
	17:30–19:00 UTC	What to Expect During ICANN78: A Guide for Newcomers
10/10/2023, Tuesday	13:00–14:00 UTC	Generic Name Supporting Organization Update
	17:30–19:00 UTC	Planning and Finance Update
11/10/2023, Wednesday	17:30–19:00 UTC	Planning and Finance Update
	17:30–19:00 UTC	Policy and Advice Update

Friday, October 13, 2023, ICANN Mentors, Fellowship Manager, and Fellows meet and greet session with an agenda of knowing each other, interacting with mentors, and greeting each other virtually for the very first time before the Annual General Meeting.

## ICANN78 Meeting Activities

Mandatory sessions attended by Fellows are listed below.

DATE & DAY	ICANN78 PREP WEEK SESSION
21/10/2023, Saturday	ICANN78 Fellowship and NextGen@ICANN programs participants Meet and Greet
	ICANN78 Fellowship Program: Consensus Playbook Training
	How It works: IROS and IANA
	Get to know ICANN Community-Meet ALAC and EURALO Members
	GNSO 20th Anniversary
	ICANN78 Fellowship Social Networking Hour
22/10/2023, Sunday	Upstander Training
	Get to know the ICANN Community: Meet NCSG Members
	Get to know the ICANN Community: Meet IPC and UASG Members
	Get to know ICANN Community-Meet ccNSO and GAC Members
	How it works: ICANN Policy
23/10/2023, Monday	Welcome Ceremony
	25th Anniversary Session
	Q&A with ICANN organization executive team
	Tech Day
	Geopolitical, Legislative, and Regulatory Development Update
	Welcome Reception by the Government of Germany
24/10/2023, Tuesday	NextGen Presentations
	Five-Year Planning for Universal Acceptance (UA) and Governance of UA Steering Group (UASG)
	ccNSO: Corporate Social Responsibility
	DNS Women: Expanding our Impact Session
	DNS Women Recognition Cocktail

## ICANN78 Meeting Activities *cont'd*

Mandatory sessions attended by Fellows are listed below.

DATE & DAY	ICANN78 PREP WEEK SESSION
25/10/2023, Wednesday	DNSSEC and Security Workshop
	Planning for Universal Acceptance (UA)
	Joint Session: ICANN Board and GNSO Council
	ALAC Anniversary - Brainstorming on the Future
	ICANN 25th Anniversary Celebration
26/10/2023, Thursday	ICANN Fellowship Program Wrap Up
	ICANN Public Forum
	ICANN Board Members Welcome Fellows and NextGen Program Participants
	Approval Action Community Forum
	ICANN 25th Annual General Meeting

### Working Group Sessions Attended by Fellows:

- **GNSO**: Transfer Policy Review PDP Working Group
- **ALAC**: Operations, Finance and Budget Working Group
- **ccNSO**: The ccNSO Internet Governance Liaison Committee and WSIS+20
- **GAC**: Operational Matters (NomCom, Planning, Working Groups, etc.)
- **RSSAC**: Governance and Operations
- **NCAP**: Discussion Working Group Meeting

### Post-Meeting Activities

Most fellows were new to the program, although some were already involved in various groups or actively contributing. Fellows from diverse backgrounds were familiar with the roles played by their respective stakeholder groups, while others had the opportunity to explore these roles during the sessions. Most fellows had identified the community or working group they wished to join, with UASG, APAC, and NCUC being popular choices for the start of their journey.

While some fellows were already making significant contributions in their regions, others drew inspiration from their efforts and sought to follow in their footsteps. Some fellows entered the program to bring regional issues to the global stage, and many felt they succeeded in achieving this aim.



# Fellows' Feedback on Prep Week Activities and Suggestions

## Feedback On Prep Week Sessions

Fellows mentioned that Prep Week is one of the crucial parts of the ICANN Fellowship. It helps fellows to prepare, engage with the agenda, familiarize themselves with specific policy sessions, and establish connections with fellow attendees and mentors. Fellows expressed the value of the pre-meeting sessions, highlighting how they provided valuable insights into what to anticipate during the ICANN78 Annual General Meeting. The schedule was meticulously planned, incorporating mandatory sessions, and allowing fellows to choose some of the sessions they attended by interest or affinity. ICANN Learn courses played an essential role, offering critical knowledge that equipped participants to derive maximum benefit from the overall meeting experience.

## Areas of Improvement for New Fellows Experience

The ICANN fellowship program, its procedures, and engagement tools equip participants to delve more profoundly into ICANN and familiarize them with the operations of the ICANN communities and groups. Despite continuous enhancements made by ICANN to the overall program, processes, tools, and engagement methods in every meeting, fellows propose the following suggestions:

- A first session offering a quick recap and to resolve potential questions or issues that have arisen after taking the ICANN Learn courses.
- Facilitate breakout group discussions with community leaders from interested constituencies. Arrange additional meetings with the Board or Board members.
- Incorporate additional sessions akin to the Consensus Playbook and Upstander Training, integrating scenario-based activities. Supply newcomers with a daily reporting sheet for completion. Distribute an explanatory card detailing abbreviations in the ICANN Fellows kit.
- Improve the ICANN Meetings mobile app by incorporating features designed for new attendees and promoting community-building activities. Introduce a feedback system for ongoing enhancement and provide post-event support through supplementary resources and contact details. These initiatives aim to foster a more inclusive and supportive atmosphere, encouraging active participation from newcomers in the ICANN community.

- Increase opportunities for participants to explore the functioning of working groups, including the organization of operational tasks and an understanding of the challenges they face. Incorporate practical simulations of working groups to assist newcomers in comprehending the operational dynamics of ICANN.
- Pair newcomers with seasoned ICANN members to guide them through the agenda, assist in identifying key sessions aligned with their interests, and facilitate networking opportunities. Introduce a dedicated newcomer track featuring sessions tailored to simplify and elucidate ICANN's intricate structures and processes to ease the acclimatization process.
- Create a list of experts in various domains for newcomers. This list would enable new participants to communicate directly with experts in specific areas, such as Domain Name System Security Extensions (DNSSEC). While recognizing the existence of mandatory sessions for newcomers, having a supplementary resource that includes names and contacts of relevant experts would be beneficial. Sometimes, it can be challenging to locate specific individuals, and this suggestion aims to address that.
- Pair fellows and NextGen participants who share similar interests in a mentor-mentee manner. This pairing aims to give newcomers more comfort during the meeting and, as their careers in ICANN ACs and SOs progress, community knowledge and networking is improved. This may also increase the number of qualified candidates for future vacancies in ICANN org.
- Consider teaming up NextGen participants with ICANN community members that have a strong technical background and can assist in bridging the gap between their research methodology and a practical application of their work.
- Start the meeting preparation process sooner to give fellows sufficient time to complete mandatory courses and solve doubts.





# What's Next?

Fellows showed interest in becoming members of local Internet Society chapters and some already actively engaged in policy development through mailing lists and hold memberships in Regional At-Large Structures. The following outlines a summary of future engagement plans by ICANN78 fellows within ICANN and the broader Internet governance ecosystem:

**ABDIRASHID IBRAHIM ABDIRAHMAN:** *As an ICANN78 Fellow, I gained valuable insights into ICANN's role in Internet governance and fostered global connections. The collaborative spirit among participants was inspiring. My future engagement includes volunteering with AFRALO, collaborating with the ICANN Africa Team, participating in policy development, and sharing knowledge to promote a free and open Internet in Africa. I'm committed to contributing to a positive Internet future.*

**ADEBUNMI ADEOLA AKINBO:** *Since my first ICANN meeting in 2011, my mission has been to engage Africa in ICANN. Over 13 years, as a media expert, I've tried to explain ICANN's activities in a clear and concise way. Active in working groups and committees, I aim to increase African involvement. By becoming an ICANN Fellow, I realized a dream. My future plans include leveraging SENDiWSA and introducing PAMESA to empower the next generation of ICANNers. My commitment is to collaborate for ICANN's transparency and effectiveness in Internet governance.*

**ANKHZAYA TSEDEN:** *Give more emphasis to ccNSO because it represents the Internet domain names of every country. It is distinct in how each country implements and manages its Internet names. ICANN provides an opportunity to exchange experiences and showcase our unique consensus approaches.*

**ATHANASE BAHIZIRE:** *Participating in ICANN78 as a fellow was a transformative experience for me. I aim to become a member of the SSAC and join the At-Large community. Additionally, I plan to increase my involvement in the UASG, where I've been a member for several months. Working towards celebrating UA Day in my country, I anticipate this initiative will amplify the UA message and draw more Congolese into the ICANN ecosystem.*

**BARKHA MANRAL:** *My participation in this fellowship has allowed me to connect with many individuals and gain invaluable insights into their experiences. I have already joined the ALAC community and also have become part of APRALO. I am also looking forward to UA Day and to becoming part of UASG to contribute more to UA work and objectives.*

**BIBEK SILWAL:** *I want to get more involved in the community by joining GNSO NCUC. Additionally, I plan to organize UA Day 2024 in Nepal, fostering greater awareness of UA and actively contributing to the ICANN ecosystem.*



**CHUMA AKANA:** *Being an ICANN78 Fellow gave me the opportunity to experience the ICANN community in a unique way and to capture the importance of 'one world, one internet.' I have always been passionate about domain name abuse and privacy considerations for internet users, therefore I have signed up as a member of the Non-Commercial Stakeholder Group, while I would also be actively involved at the policy level with NARALO. Through the ICANN multistakeholder approach, I am keen to contribute to policy development and internet stability.*

**CRISTINA M ARRIETA GONZALEZ:** *As a first-time ICANN participant, I immersed myself in a collaborative community dedicated to shaping our digital future. This experience emphasized the importance of collective efforts. In the future, my focus will be on ethical considerations and building trust in Internet governance, particularly within ICANN. I plan to delve into ICANN's policies, emphasizing the integration of ethical principles to foster a transparent and morally grounded environment amid technological advancements.*

**DR HOUDA CHIH:** *I will organize free workshops, since I already teach at an engineering school to encourage university students to participate in NextGen programs.*

**EDWIN SANDYS:** *As a ccTLD, there was much I did not understand of ICANN and its operations; nor the expectations required to continue to efficiently operate our services.*

**EL-HOIMA KEDASSA BARTHELUS:** *My first ICANN meeting as a fellow this year was enriching. Engaging in public comments and delving into the policy development process provided valuable insights. Moving forward, I plan to sustain active involvement, deepen my understanding of cross-community activities, and contribute to ongoing discussions, eager to enhance my impact within the ICANN community.*

**ELIF GÜLDÜZ GÜREL:** *Specializing in domain name law, I provide online training in my country, aiming to benefit both ccTLD and ICANN in developing domain name policies. With ICANN, I aim to actively participate in policy development, serving as a legal expert. I also plan to contribute to ccNSO working groups and become an ICANN World Intellectual Property Organization arbitrator through my alternative dispute resolution studies.*

**EUNICE ALEJANDRA PÉREZ COELLO:** *Attending ICANN78 in person allowed me to stay current on DNS security, understand challenges, decision-making processes, and stakeholder concerns. I engaged with participants to explore collaboration opportunities for the academy.*

**GERARDO MARTÍNEZ HERNÁNDEZ:** *Active participation in ICANN is essential, therefore I am willing to contribute knowledge, time, enthusiasm, and empathy to my colleagues, always with the aim of helping newcomers. I would also like to be a mentor and contribute what is necessary to the fellows and to ICANN. At ICANN78, it was a great experience to meet again with great people and colleagues, share knowledge and work. Participating in this meeting with the NextGen group was a great opportunity for me.*

**HANNAH FRANK:** *Within the ICANN ecosystem, I am interested in promoting a greener and more sustainable Internet. I also am keenly interested to cooperate with the At-Large Committee with the goal of expanding it. Moreover, I would like to strengthen the experiences for newcomers through increased cooperation. I hope to navigate and learn more about the DNS infrastructure, multistakeholderism, and the multicultural ICANN community.*



**JELENA ŠUH:** *I am a first-time fellow and a newcomer to ICANN. I have technical background and I am aware of challenges related to improving the quality, performance, openness, and security of Internet. Participation in the Fellowship Program provided me with the priceless experience that broadened my knowledge and inspired to extend my involvement by participation in the future events, promoting Fellowship program and ICANN Learn courses and sharing knowledge and experience with the community at regional and global level.*

**JEMESA LAVE ROBAROBALEVU:** *I am currently trying to implement what I have learned at ICANN78 and then come back for my final fellowship.*

**JESSE NATHAN KALANGE:** *I actively participated in person in the ICANN78 meeting held in Hamburg, Germany, and I was honored to contribute valuable insights to discussions about the Internet.*

**JOEL CHRISTOPH:** *Future plans involve using fellowship insights to promote regional awareness, contribute to local Internet communities, and encourage diverse voices in ICANN's policymaking. This underscores my commitment to a more inclusive Internet governance landscape.*

**LETITIA MASAEA:** *I aim to continue the engagement with our local organisation and PICISOC, support and register the local organisation with APRALO and DNS Women ensuring other members can benefit from ICANN's ecosystem with the aim to broaden our knowledge, skills and understanding to bridge gaps between end-users, government, civil societies, and ccTLDs in a multi-stakeholder approach for a resilient internet. I look forward to joining the NCUC to be one of the voices for the Pacific region in this space.*

**LOURDES LUCÍA LEÓN PACHECO:** *I'm delighted that Hiperderecho, my organization, is part of LACRALO. I look forward to soon joining the NCUC and exploring additional advocacy spaces, aligning with my interest in public policy on digital issues in Peru.*

**MARIANNA KANINETS:** *The ICANN meeting was extremely important for obtaining valuable information about the work of ICANN, meeting like-minded people who are ready to improve the work of ICANN by joining working groups and raising socially important issues for their quick resolution.*

**MAUD ADJELEY ASHONG ELLIOT:** *My in-person participation in the ICANN meeting was different than my online participation. It was an amazing experience to share ideas with like-minded individuals whose mission is to develop the Internet ecosystem. I joined the council's mailing list as an observer and observed transparency in every activity.*

**NAIMA AWAN:** *I find myself drawn to the work of NCSG and NCUC. The welcoming atmosphere within these groups has notably enhanced my overall experience. Their inclusive approach resonates well with my interests, and I eagerly anticipate delving deeper into their initiatives and contributing meaningfully to their shared goals.*

**NANCY WACHIRA:** *I attended various working groups in person and networked with other participants after the meeting. In particular, I am eager to participate in the new round of new gTLDs and UA. I also look forward to participating in a Policy Forum meeting soon.*



**NELI ODISHVILI:** *In the future, I plan to collaborate closely with diverse stakeholders, including tech experts, legal professionals, and global policymakers at ICANN. Prioritizing outreach for public awareness on Internet governance issues and active participation in policy development, I aim to address emerging digital challenges innovatively. Leveraging technology, I seek to streamline ICANN processes for greater effectiveness in shaping the future of the Internet.*

**NORMAN ANGEL AGONG:** *As a member of the AFRALO, I've been actively involved in ICANN meetings. As a fellow, I aim to enhance my engagement, actively participate in mailing lists, and contribute to policy creation. I intend to share my expertise locally, join relevant ICANN groups, and play a proactive role in shaping a multilingual and inclusive digital future.*

**NORMAN WARPUT:** *I actively research ICANN's crucial role in maintaining the Internet's functionality and policy through the multistakeholder model. Learning best practices, especially in awareness and policy, and managing our ccTLD, I've networked with ICANN experts. Future plans include ongoing meeting participation, promoting the multistakeholder model, engaging communities, and establishing a model for the Pacific ccTLD working group. I aim to bring ICANN meetings to the Pacific, promote the fellowship program, and become a community engagement staff. Grateful for the opportunity, I look forward to contributing to a safe and resilient Internet. "Once a fellow, always a fellow."*

**NOVECK GOWANDAN:** *After being introduced to SSAC and UASG groups, I am confident in contributing as both an academic and practitioner. I plan to delve into further research, immerse myself in these groups, and participate in meetings, emphasizing the importance of thorough preparation before committing to serve.*

**OSCAR GIUDICE:** *I am clearer about what I can work on at ICANN and what I can contribute. Specifically, at ICANN78 I made a commitment to work at LACRALO on the issue of DNS abuse by disseminating information on this issue. I also applied to join the RSSAC Caucus and I am waiting for their response. I plan to follow the next ICANN meetings virtually during 2024 and as soon as I have the possibility, I will apply to attend to participate in person. I am currently thinking about how to open a space in ICANN linked to the Internet of Things and the security of DNS systems.*

**PAULO MARCOS GAMPEL DREWIACKI:** *I intend to engage with different SOs/ACs and get to know more about ICANN so that I can contribute meaningfully to the community. I also see a potential for cooperation between fellows and NextGen participants, and I am interested in developing ways to make this happen.*

**PHYO THIRI LWIN:** *I'm enthusiastic about staying engaged in the ICANN community and actively contributing to a working group that resonates with my interests. This experience has inspired me to persist in my involvement as a young learner and newcomer, taking meaningful actions in the community and moving forward.*

**ROMIA LASMIN:** *I'm committed to deepening involvement in ICANN by joining working groups, contributing to policy discussions, and promoting Internet governance awareness. I also want to support ICANN's mission for a stable, secure, and open global Internet, collaborating with fellow stakeholders.*

**SARA ALI AHMED MOHAMED:** *ICANN78 exposure inspired active regional representation and meaningful contribution to Internet policy development. The experience broadened horizons, fostered continuous learning, and provided valuable networking opportunities. Overall, it transformed my engagement with ICANN, motivating me to become an influential member, eager for future possibilities.*

**SARAI TEVITA:** *I'm very happy I joined this ICANN meeting for the first time and as a fellow. I am glad to have experienced the diversity as promoted by ICANN and also understand various SOs and ACs. I would like to contribute and engage more in the future especially via APRALO, NCUC, and the group focused on DNSSEC.*

**SHITA LAKSMI:** *To focus on issues I understand, I aim to be more active in ICANN, particularly in GNSO, with a focus on NCUC. I've submitted my interest in joining APRALO to contribute to meetings, making them more relevant to the Indonesian Internet ecosystem. As there are few Indonesians in ICANN, I plan to help bridge that gap. I appreciate the space given to the APAC community and plan to attend APAC space meetings for coordination and networking.*

**TAMAS LEVAI:** *My next step is to get involved in the work of the local communities while finding ways of making technical contributions. In addition, I plan to engage my university students to participate in the NextGen program, and to attend ICANN seminars.*

**TIDJANI MAHAMAT ADOUM:** *After returning home, I plan to organize a technical meeting under the chairmanship of the director of IP and domain name of the Agency for the Development of Information and Communication Technology (ADETIC), in order to launch the framework for reflection on UA of domain names in Chad. We will work voluntarily for our country on these concepts through awareness campaigns.*

**TRACY JOHNSON:** *Engaging with ICANN deepened my understanding of DNS security, domain name policy, and UA. I plan to share this knowledge locally in New Zealand, foster connections, and continue learning through mailing lists. Grateful for the fellowship, I aim to attend future ICANN meetings, contribute to working groups, and support newcomers. ICANN's inclusive atmosphere is commendable, and I look forward to further involvement and sharing my experience.*

**VESMIRA HARUTYUNYAN:** *I will be happy to share with representatives of my community and our organization's members all the fascinating news and experiences I had at ICANN78. In a world that is constantly changing, engagement and dedication are becoming ever more crucial for organizational success and goal achievement.*



# Acknowledgement

The ICANN78 fellows express their deep gratitude to all of those who were involved before, during, and after ICANN78 for our Fellowship Program. We appreciate the invaluable opportunity to fully immerse ourselves in the ICANN ecosystem, receiving education and mentorship. Our sincere thanks extend to all those who meticulously organized each session, ICANN org members, and the Events and Travel teams.

The events tailored for the fellows were noteworthy, offering a unique chance to connect with ICANN Board members and the interim CEO, serving as genuine wellsprings of inspiration. Consensus Playbook and the Upstander training sessions are remarkable sessions. This fellowship experience positions us to deepen our involvement with ICANN by actively participating in working groups and enabling us to convey the significance of ICANN in Internet governance to our respective communities.

We reserve a special acknowledgment for our dedicated mentors: Shreedeeep Rayamajhi from At-Large, Abdulkarim Oloyede from RSSAC, Arinola Akinyemi from GNSO, Laxmi Prasad Yadav from GAC, and Jenifer Lopez from ccNSO. We sincerely appreciate their selfless commitment to mentoring us.

Congratulations to all fellows for their dynamic engagement in the program, fostering a collaborative learning environment for all participants.

Finally, our warm and heartfelt appreciation goes to Siranush Vardayan, ICANN Fellowship Program Manager, for her steadfast support, inspiration, and tireless efforts to ensure the program's successful completion.

And, as we learned,  
*“ONCE A FELLOW, ALWAYS A FELLOW!”*