

GAC Task Force on the GAC Secretariat

Annex I:

Criteria which should preferably be met by institutions proposed for the GAC secretariat

Adopted by the GAC in Toronto on 17 October 2012.

Neutrality and Independence:

(1) Neutrality:

the institution should not have a political agenda of its own which could be in conflict with the main functions of the GAC, i.e. providing governmental advice to ICANN and offering an open platform of debate on policy issues within its membership

(2) Independence (from ICANN, single GAC members, sponsors, or other stakeholder from within or outside the ICANN community):

the institution should not be linked to ICANN, neither through personal nor financial relations, there should be a clear separation from the donors (except as necessary for the administrative arrangements related to donor country funding), e.g. through the establishment of a trust fund or a similar structure

Transparency and accountability in financial matters:

(3) commitment to refrain from cross-subsidizing funds for the GAC Secretariat to support other activities the organization may be involved in:

this should be shown through transparent financial accounting related to the funding used for the GAC secretariat work

(4) demonstration of other sources of income for activities not related to the GAC secretariat function:

this to avoid an undue reliance on the donor country funds for the institution as a whole;

Linguistic and geographic diversity:

(5) a demonstrated ability to support multilingual staff in diverse locations (e.g. technical and administrative support);

Experience and availability:

(6) experience in managing outside funds and hosting staff for specific purposes:

this would be outlined in a service level agreement between the host organization and the GAC (via the Chair/Vice Chairs);

(7) experience in matters related to Internet Governance, multistakeholder structures, and with public authorities;

(8) availability and readiness to be operational in a short timeframe;

Comments on the comments received by GAC members before the Toronto meeting:

The feedback received until 30 August 2012 from GAC members on the draft criteria sent out on 20 July to the whole GAC had been generally positive. No proposed criteria had fundamentally been challenged by any GAC member.

There had been convergence in the comments that some criteria were fundamental and should be mandatory for candidates whereas others were more of a “softer” nature and would give candidates just a higher (or lower) rank in the selection process. Based on the feedback, the GACSEC task force proposed to group the criteria around categories like the following :

1. neutrality and independence;
2. Transparency and accountability, in particular in financial matters
3. Linguistic and geographic diversity
4. Experience and availability

(Noting that fulfilling the criteria 1 and 2 is quite mandatory whereas fulfilling the criteria 3 and 4 would give candidates a higher rank in the selection process.)

There had been proposals to broaden the notion of independence from not just ICANN and single GAC members to also other stakeholders which the task force thought were useful and therefore merged the two former criteria related to independence into one broader criteria. As a consequence there are now 8 instead of 9 criteria (compared to the previous version).

Futhermore, there had been comments about the criteria that requires experience in the field of Internet governance stating that a difference should be made between the experience of a proposed organisation as a whole and the staff hired to actually work as GAC secretariat. In these comments, it was seen more important that the staff actually working as secretariat has experience in IG matters than the organisation as a whole.