Internet Society
Board of Trustees Meeting 163 - Day 2
27 March 2022
Transcript

>> TED HARDIE: Welcome, everybody, to day two of the Internet Society Board of Trustees Meeting 163. We’re going to start today’s meeting by my asking whether there are any declarations of conflict of interest for today’s topics.

Okay. Hearing none, I think we’re good to go then with the agenda as was previously discussed, which will start with Andrew’s report as President and CEO. Andrew, over to you.

>> ANDREW SULLIVAN: Hello, everyone. And I think Kevin is going to put the slides up.

>> TED HARDIE: You’re a bit soft, I think, Andrew, if you could try and up your gain.

>> ANDREW SULLIVAN: How’s that? All right. Great. Sorry about that. So, thank you, everyone. These slides circulated. I think probably you noticed that there’s a lot of text in them. This is an effort to try to include a number of stories that were left out. A previous version, we reported just on the numbers and people suggested that perhaps more color was necessary, so this is an attempt to provide you with that color. But I’m not going to read all of this text or so on. So, I’m sure that you can do that yourself.

Obviously, at any time, you should interrupt me as we go through.

The overall message in this report is about the way the Internet Society has proceeded in two ways. First of all, that there’s been significant improvement in our ability to capture our – to capture our goals and the results of those goals so that we’ve got, you know, a regular pattern of making commitments in the action plan and then, you know, reporting back to the community so that people can see, hey, we did these things or we did not or whatever. And that’s – you know, that’s one thing that I think is a positive trend. The staff have been working on that over the last several years and it’s one of the things that we see here.
The second piece of this is the extent to which all of these efforts revolve around collaboration with the community and with our wider set of participants within the work that we do.

The Internet Society is tiny on the scale of the – of the problems that face the Internet. We have to – we have to collaborate with lots and lots of other people. It’s the only way that we’re ever going to achieve any of this.

And so, I think that that is a – a thing that you can see throughout this and I’ll be highlighting it as we go along, but it’s one of the things that I wanted to draw to your attention as one of the themes.

So, next slide please, Kevin. And next, please.

So, as you know, we organize our work into a couple of different areas and the first of them are projects, specific projects that we undertake in order to achieve particular ends, and those are arranged into two broad areas, one having to do with the growth of the Internet, making the Internet bigger, and the second one is ensuring that the Internet is strong and healthy and so on.

So, the first of these we’re going to talk about the growing the Internet area.

I think as I mentioned already, there’s lots and lots of evidence here, of very, very strong, positive move within the community. We have lots and lots of partner organizations, lots and lots of engagements throughout the year, and plenty of training and you know, opportunities for people to gain technical knowledge and so forth. And that’s all part of – part of the goals that we’ve set for ourselves.

Next, please.

The first of these areas, the first of the projects is a community networks project. And sometimes people wonder about community networks because they say well, you know, these are very, very small and so on. But the critical thing about community networks is that they are designed around the problems that the communities who are affected have. So, this is really not just about building networks and ensuring connectivity but making sure the people have the tools in their hands to be able to do these things themselves, and that’s been a very big part of what we work on with community networks.
And so, you can see there’s a lot of training and so forth that is part of the – part of the effort here.

Next, please, Kevin.

And the result of this is quite positive. We have a large number of – of these that were achieved. We aimed for ten. We did thirty-three. So, there’s, you know, obviously we exceeded the goals there. But all of these goals, next slide, please, all of these goals were achieved and I think that this is a, you know, a valuable thing for us to recognize, hey, we’ve actually exceeded our goals, so of course what this means is that in the following year, we challenge people to set their goals a little higher because you know, if you exceed your goals, then we say oh, well, we could do more. So, we’ve been trying to do that.

Next, please, Kevin.

Another important item that I want to draw to your attention here is that it’s not just – it’s not just community networks that we’re dealing with here but we’re also working with other partner organizations in other – you know, we have a number of new memoranda of understanding and so forth that go – that go forward as a result of this. So, that’s another piece of this that what we’re really trying to do is inspire a movement around the world so that people start picking these things up and say, oh yes, this is a good alternative model for communication around the world.

Next, please, Kevin.

The next area that we worked on is this infrastructure and community development and there are really two parts to this. One has to do with – with infrastructure, and you’re familiar with this primarily in the guise of Internet exchange points, but those kinds of – that kind of high level infrastructure that is a supporting part of making the Internet work.

The other part of it is the community development, making sure that the network operations communities around the world are capable of administering this kind of infrastructure so that it is not infrastructure that somebody is bringing in and dropping on people and then they have to, you know, scramble to keep it in good operational condition. So, those are the two components of this. This doesn’t have a perfect analog in the current 2022 action plan because we broke these into two parts
in order to be able to see them a little bit more clearly, but they are together in this one.

Next, please, Kevin.

Again, goals here were - were well achieved. There were a number of - a number of these that were exceeded. Sometimes quite dramatically. You can see there, for instance, the number of partnerships was very much exceeded. And I think that this is a positive development within the organization, that we continue to develop these relationships with other organizations.

Next, please.

One of the things that I’m especially pleased about here is the training. We spent a lot of money, you know, and really significant investment in training efforts over the last couple of years in order to develop our capacity there. And what you can see here is you know, we figured, oh, maybe five hundred people will take this network operations training and it, you know, demand was completely overwhelmed. In fact, we couldn’t keep up with the demand. So, this was - this was sort of a capacity limitation. We couldn’t go any further. But this is, you know, very, very heartening, from my point of view, because it tells us, oh, we decided to invest in that. Yeah, there is real demand for it. And it shows that, you know, we can provide the kind of support that the community needs in order to develop - in order to develop this capacity.

Next, please, Kevin.

The last area in - in this set of projects is the measuring of the Internet. You will recall that at the beginning of the year, we discovered that we named the measurement tool something incorrect, so we renamed it so that is the Pulse platform that you have heard so much about recently.

And this ability was sort of slow to take off initially because of course, it was a capacity that we had to develop. And we don’t have the measurement probes necessary to do this. So, we’ve had to develop it alongside partner organizations and get the measurements from other people. But it has become a clearinghouse that has been really quite effective for – for other organizations.

Ted, I see your hand.
TED HARDIE: Just wanted to ask a quick question on the – on the data you’re collecting for Internet shutdowns. Obviously, as you note here, it’s a frequent topic. How – how easy has it been to tie that into the impact reports? Is there kind of a standard way of doing that now or is that something that you’re looking to develop?

ANDREW SULLIVAN: I think we’re looking to develop it still. One of the things that has been interesting is that we’ve had a little bit of a challenge in defining exactly what these things are. One problem that we’ve had is that people, you know, often ask, well, is it an outage or not? And the problem with answering that question is that the Internet, you know, given the way it works, it’s not really a binary answer. And so, what we have – what we’ve had so far is an effort to say, oh, not only is this an outage, it’s a declared outage. Like, it’s an intentional thing that a government has done.

What we’ve discovered in the last, you know, few months is that, well, the way we define this is not completely intuitive for people, so we may actually have to adjust some of the meaning and so on. Nevertheless, I mean, this is part of the storytelling that we’re trying to – you know, we’re trying to get better at as an organization. And I think that what you see is that the blog posts, for instance, around – around measurement have driven a lot of traffic towards us. We’ve ended up with a lot of people interested in what we have to say about this topic because we’re able to show, using the data, why – why the shutdowns are having the effect that they are, why the various activities of various people are having the effects that they are, and what it means for people who are, you know, inside a cone that has been shut down in some way.

So, that’s been the way we’ve been working on it.

TED HARDIE: So, I suspect there also might be some different audiences here that might be interested in slightly different language. I had a conversation last week with Brian Trammell at the IETF and one of the things that he’s looked at for this is weighted reachability impairment as a method.

And so, reachability impairment as a percentage is sort of useless because there are lots of places that you don’t actually ever send any traffic and the fact that you can’t reach them has relatively little impact.
The weighted reachability impairment that he was working on looks particularly at your – your pre-event traffic flows and says how many of these traffic flows are impaired by this activity. And so, the definition of when you get to impairment is like pretty much anything over 15% begins to look like it can’t possibly be accidental, right? That level of impairment is action. And then you go all the way to none of it is available which means you’ve been – you yourself have been cut off.

So, I think for the MANRS community and the people that we talk to who have a fair amount of routing experience or organizational experience with it, that kind of weighted metric is relatively easy for them to understand and to consider putting into their own reporting, et cetera.

But for the general public, it’s a little bit too inside baseball. And I really commend you for the blog posts that have been there. I think they’ve been very useful. I think there is still a little bit of a storytelling challenge as you were saying before, of how do you take this and say, you know, 15% of what you used to be able to do is now cut off, 20% is, you know. These are the walls closing in and the story about the walls closing in is a little bit harder to tell than the lights going off. But it’s still really important and I encourage you to continue working on it.

>> ANDREW SULLIVAN: Well, one of the things that’s interesting, actually, Kevin, if you go to the next slide, one of the things that’s been interesting is the way in which people have responded to these requests. So, you can see here, for instance, you know, we were sort of hoping, oh, maybe we get like three people who are willing to contribute some data to us and so on. And instead, we got seventeen.

So, what we’re seeing is that there is a lot of interest in figuring out how to collaborate and tell these stories. And so, I like the – this information about – about Brian and I’ll point the team at it because you know, that may be – that may be another way to slice this kind of information.

One other thing about this is that we’ve had some additional focus areas as well. So, we’ve been trying to – you know, a lot of people are concentrating on outages, so that is the thing that people have been paying a lot of attention to, but actually, we’ve been trying to develop more than one kind of – more than one kind of story here because all of these things give you an overall picture of what’s going on, right?
So, we’ve talked about, for instance, resilience. There’s been some measurements of resilience and we’ve developed a model for that. We’ve got this year, so this is prospective rather than retrospective, but this year we’ve also just engaged or just begun to engage with an economist to help do some of the analysis that we want to do with respect to that because I think, you know, the economic dimension of this is really, really important and it’s one of the areas where we have been a little bit weak so we’re trying to improve that.

We also did some work on trying to measure what centralization meant. So, you know, what kind of paths do you have or you know, what - like, to - to expand on what you were saying, you know, about reachability, if you only had really five paths prior to any kind of interruption, then, you know, it's pretty easy to get to 15% of that thing not working. And I think that that’s one of the - one of the critical things we need to understand. You know, to what extent is the Internet really, you know, being driven towards just a few operators?

This is a thing, you know, that we hear a lot, for instance, from Geoff Huston, who says, you know, everybody is only going to like Google and Netflix and a few other things. And if that’s really true, then, you know, our story about how the Internet enables people is - has its own problems, right, because what that tells us is that there’s a certain amount of erosion that is happening to the very idea of the Internet.

And under those circumstances, it’s not surprising that people think, oh, well, we can just do this shutdown because we only have to negotiate with these five other companies. And that is a public policy issue that we see over and over again.

I have often thought that, you know, the arguments that we hear right now are very reminiscent of - of some of the early days of the commercialization of the Internet where it seemed a lot of the time, people wanted to do - you know, they wanted to centralize the communication paths on the Internet and they discovered that there were too many companies to do it. And so, the regulatory things that people were proposing in say 1997 were not possible to them because there were just too many actors.

Well, if you can get the actor number down to you know, five or six, you really can get them into a room and you know, give
them a good talking to and that presents an opportunity for those who want to enclose the Internet in various ways.

So, that’s another – another area that we’re trying to analyze through this platform. It’s not just outages but you know, all of these different dimensions that contribute to fragility of the Internet.

>> TED HARDIE: So, I think that’s going to be very interesting work and especially if we keep scaling the number of data partners up as things go.

I will say that I think that there’s more than one way to think about centralization and one of them is definitely topographical centralization to the extent to which people are going to a small number of destinations which are easy to – to cut. A different centralization topic is node ownership, right? So, how many people do you have to get in a room to find all the CDN nodes in a particular network? And maybe they’re at distinct paths, even if they’re anycast distinct. But the ownership level is different.

One of the interesting things though about the regulatory response that we’re seeing both initially from GDPR and now from some of the European data governance and sovereignty issues that have been raised, data sovereignty issues that have been raised, data sovereignty issues that have been raised is essentially speaking, there is no bar to new entrants and so you know, the normal theoretical response to these five people who were hauled into a room and told what for is it gives an opportunity for the sixth and seventh because they’re not being hauled into the room unless the regulatory burden is so high that becoming the sixth or seventh carries with it a very high cost.

And I think there’s a big regulatory impact there of an unintended consequence. When they are putting forward these regulations, they’re inadvertently creating barriers to new entrants by making the bars to managing the relationship with the government a serious cost.

So, I think that’s something that everybody has an intuition about this. It would be lovely if you had actual data. So, if that’s something that data came out of this, I think that would be a very big service to the community.
>> ANDREW SULLIVAN: Yes, that is totally the goal. So, that’s one of the things that we’re - we’re looking at figuring out. Okay, well, how do you measure that?

Next slide, please, Kevin.

So, the other area of projects that we - we build are about strengthening the Internet - next slide, please.

So, you know, it’s no good to have a big but weak Internet. We want one that is resilient and strong and continues to work properly.

It has been a very, very good year on this - in this area. We have really, I think, achieved very much what we set out to do despite the fact that there were a couple of measurements that we missed on. The overall pattern here is really, I think, very, very strong. Next slide, please.

In particular, this Internet Way of Networking project gives us a framework in which the organization’s goals can be understood. And what we’ve seen is a number of people have - have picked up on this. So, we’ve got new tools. We don’t just have the, you know, the critical properties. We have these enablers that allow us to understand, okay, well, what are the things that you actually need in order to have, you know, a really, really healthy Internet? And we’ve got a mechanism by which we can analyze attacks on that, whether they’re attacks on purpose that is somebody actually trying to take the Internet down, or accidental efforts, that is somebody decides, oh, this would be a good idea, and then discovers that what they’ve done is something that is quite bad for the Internet itself.

Both of these things are parts of the analysis that we want to do. We talk about these as the Internet Impact Assessments and the reason we talk that way is because it’s like environmental assessments, right? When you build a road or an airport or decide to build a dam or whatever, you have to do an analysis to see, okay, what is this actually going to do? Not just, oh, well, we want a dam there. Then you start to discover, oh, but it kills all the fish and it destroys, you know, a watershed and so forth, and that suddenly becomes, you know, part of your calculation as to whether this is a good thing or not.

We don’t try to tell you, you know, try to tell policymakers what their policy goal ought to be. What we try to do is provide
a mechanism by which people can analyze this and say, oh, what is this – what is this policy actually going to do? Next slide, please, Kevin.

So, that’s been a positive effect and we’ve had some people pick this up. As you can see in particular, again, training has been a big – a big focus last year and we see that twice – more than twice as many people as was – as were expected decided to take this course and to understand how to apply these tools and so forth. Next, please.

Encryption has been a big focus. I think you will, you know, all have noticed that we talk a great deal about encryption, and this is because it’s a fundamental thing necessary to keep the Internet healthy. You know, we understand the policy reasons why people find encryption to be frightening or dangerous or various, you know, kinds of things, but we have been pushing very, very hard to make sure that people understand what the consequences of that stance are. And we’ve had a lot of very positive effects through our coalition with a number of other – a number of other members.

As you can see, we’ve got 256 members now in that coalition. We had an enormous number of people participate in Global Encryption Day. Next please, Kevin.

So, that was the, you know, one of the really, really big results. So, we’ve had, you know, very positive results in encryption advocacy and so forth but we really, really saw a lot of people participate in Global Encryption Day and there was a huge response to that. So, it was a positive development.

Richard?

>> RICHARD BARNES: Thanks, yeah. So, yeah. Super glad to see this positive result on Global Encryption Day. I was wondering if you could comment on kind of what the plans are going forward with this. Is this intended to be a recurring thing annually or are there any lessons learned from this year that we would feed into changes for future events?

>> ANDREW SULLIVAN: Well, it was a pretty big effort. And so, I don’t know if we’re going to make it an annual event just because it – it was – it was a lot of work. We did manage to, you know, attract a lot of attention through it, and I think that under the current circumstances, we should continue to expect these kinds of advocacy efforts because you know, the
story, despite the fact that we’ve had, you know, a lot of good news, we’ve had a lot of attention to this, we’ve had a lot of partners come along and so on, the legislative news is not great. I mean, it’s going the wrong direction.

And so, we still have a lot of work to do there and I think that that’s, you know, that’s something that we’re going to continue. At the same time, we’ve had chapters pick this up and really run with it. And like, a really great – there was a great example in Belgium where the law was, you know, the proposed legislation was terrible and the chapter said hey, we need some help on this. You know, we did some quick advocacy there. And the law was withdrawn. The legislation was withdrawn and it was rewritten to try to address the issues that were, like, really fundamentally an attack on the Internet.

So, as long as we continue to have those kinds of successes, I think what you’ll see are these efforts. But I don’t know that we’ve got another plan for Global Encryption Day this year. I think the answer was no. But I – I think the coalition is still making up its mind about this and it’s possible that there will be one. Ted?

>> TED HARDIE: I think you just answered. I was going to ask whether there was anybody else in the coalition who might take over this year so that it wasn’t the Internet Society doing it every year, but it sounds like you’re still discussing it. Thanks.

>> ANDREW SULLIVAN: Yeah. So, the coalition is – I mean, it was a coalition activity, right? It was not just the Internet Society, although we were part – we were obviously participants in it. And that’s part of the difficulty. When you’re doing these kinds of things in coalition, right, you’ve got to get everybody to be willing to lift at the same time and if everybody is willing to lift at the same time, then you can do the event.

But it was a big deal. It wasn’t just a big deal for us. It was a big deal for all of the participants. Part of that of course is because we, you know, intended to like reach a million people and we got four. Well, you know, when you scale that way, it turns out like, oh, we’ve got to hurry. But we, you know, we were able to get some sponsorship for that. We got a bunch of – a bunch of advert sponsorship that was very, very helpful in reaching all of those people. So, it was a really good – really
good event and we’ll see whether – we’ll see whether it’s repeated this year.

Next please, Kevin.

MANRS is another area where I think, you know, we’re continuing to build on prior success. And the interesting thing about MANRS is that it started as a slow burn, right. This was something that built very, very slowly. The early efforts, people were sort of skeptical as to whether this would work. But by building the community and developing it, what we found is people have come on board. We have now got key vendors who are involved. We have – we continue to have people participate in this – next slide, please, Kevin – in some of the training and development and so on.

We do see the – the increase in route origin authorizations. It’s continuing to rise. It’s – it’s really very, very heartening because what we’re seeing is that people are starting to use this. And there is a kind of tipping point, right, after which you get to some point and when – instead of it being oh well, 10% of them are rising and so on, we get to the point where the numbers are high enough that people just start to depend on that – on that mechanism. And at that point, we’ll actually have achieved a great deal of what it is that we’re aiming to do.

Next slide, please, Kevin.

>> RICHARD BARNES: Sorry. Andrew, just one quick question on that last slide. On the percentages in the first row, where it says Q4 20 and 21, are those kind of percentage of the routing tables for statistics? It’s kind of where we are after all of these increases?

>> ANDREW SULLIVAN: Yeah, so this is – this is the rise. Yeah.

>> RICHARD BARNES: Cool. Thanks.

>> ANDREW SULLIVAN: Yeah, the – the goals are typically rate of change goals, right. But yeah, these are straightforward measures as well.

So, there was one area where we were not able to meet the objective in here, and I want to – I want to, you know, highlight this because this is a valuable lesson that the
organization, I will say, hates having missed targets like this. But I think it’s very valuable to have targets that you miss because it tells you, you know, oh, here’s a place that we’re a little weaker or whatever.

So, what happened here was we wanted, you know, part of the goal was a conformance improvement. So, people come into the MANRS project and we want to say, oh, well, you know, this is what you were like at the beginning. Here is what you were like at the end. And what we are hoping was that gradually we would see improvement so that people were coming in, they were actually more prepared than they used to be. That was the – that was the idea.

It turned out that the ways we were measuring this wouldn’t work and we had a theory about how it was going to work and so on and it just turned out that the observatory itself didn’t have the support that we needed.

Okay, well, great. Now we know that and we can fix it and so we’ve got a theory about how we’re going to fix it for next year. But this is – this is a goal that we missed.

Next slide, please.

The community, however, is ready to go, and I think that this is also a very heartening thing. So, you will remember that one of the ideas here is that you know, maybe the community doesn’t really want this to be an Internet Society thing where the Internet Society is constantly pushing, but rather that the routing communities come together and they say to themselves, oh, actually, this is something that we want.

And you know, ideally, that’s what you get. You get a community that operates this way and not every, you know, not every network operator wants to be a member of the Internet Society or so on. I would like them to be but not everyone wants to be.

So – so, the MANRS community has attempted to build for themselves an organization and they’ve got a community charter that has now been approved. They’ve had an election so they’ve got a steering committee and so forth. The steering committee is now driving this. And I think that’s an entirely positive development. It really should not be, you know, the sort of thing where you have to keep – keep injecting energy into the
system to keep it running. What you want is a certain momentum that keeps it going. And we’re seeing that development.

Next slide, please.

Now, the – the other items that we had in the action plan are not so much projects, specific things that we’re attempting to achieve, but rather we’re trying to empower people to – to deliver the things that they want to deliver. And that’s the rest of the work that the Internet Society has been doing. So, this is all about community and you know, capacity development and all of those kinds of things. And so, that’s the rest of this report. Next, please.

This is a, you know, an eye chart full of all kinds of highlights because this is a big – a big area. Instead of quite concrete, individually separable things, you know, this is really a lot of the community action that we take and that makes – that makes this text heavy, but I’m sure you can all read it.

Next, please.

The first sort of subcategory within this is this supporting – the support of community participation. Next, please, Kevin.

And here, you know, this breaks down into a few different areas. The first is individual membership. One of the things that we’ve noticed in the discussion from the Governance Reform (Working) Group is that there are a number of people who are dissatisfied with the way that individual membership is handled at the Internet Society, which is weird because of course, individual membership is kind of like, you know, half of the – half of the way we function, the Organizational Membership. But anybody who is a member of any chapter has to be a member of the Internet Society as well. So, you would think that we would – we would have a solid, you know, a solid program for individual membership.

It’s been a little bit weak and so we decided, hey, we need to do something about that. And so, that’s what this has been about.

I’ve received a lot of feedback about, you know, regular membership communications that have been going out and so forth. That has been improved. People have responded positively to – to that member newsletter which was relaunched. And we did get a number of donations this year that we haven’t had historically.
That’s still an area where we need to, you know, we need to improve, but you know, starting from very, very low numbers, it’s easy to make big, double digit percentage improvements very quickly. But it’s nevertheless a really positive development.

Next slide, please, Kevin.

So, you can see here, there was this goal to increase the number of individual members who are participating. We did a little bit better than we were expecting but the baseline was this 5,000 because we were trying to understand, okay, what’s the baseline, and then we’ll be able to measure in the future.

So, this is the beginning of a set of actions that we’re going to take to try to improve the individual member experience at the Internet Society.

Next, please.

There was an additional effort which is not so much focused on individual members but rather on chapters. So, chapters are a very important part of the Internet Society. It’s an area that has made the Internet Society quite a bit more effective because we are, you know, in some sense, the Internet Society is built the way the Internet is, right, that the whole Society comes together and there are these chapters and they focus on the – on the issues that are most important for those, you know, in that particular locality or whatever. And so, this is an area where we’ve – where we’ve spent some focus. And there’s been, you know, some difficulty in – in communications across that boundary. So, this is one of the areas that we wanted to – we wanted to improve.

Next slide, please, Kevin.

So, we had a – a goal of achieving people in the – in the projects that we’re having and you know, what – what kind of training that they needed and so on, the sort of training in particular to support the mission. We had lots and we had a good participation in those trainings, you can see.

The other thing that we were trying to do was see if, you know, this caused follow on activity. And there, we’re not doing as well. So, whereas we did lots of training about – about things that we were working on, there were lots of people who participated in that training but there wasn’t so much pickup.
And we think this is attributable to a couple of reasons. First of all, because chapter leaders do not change over every year, this was, in this case, somewhat redundant. Some of the training, they had already taken the year before. So, they weren’t so much inspired to pick it up.

We think that COVID has had a big effect on this. Chapters can’t get together. They can’t get things done. They’re having a hard time – they’re having a hard time getting people to act because they’re under a lot of pressure and stress due to COVID and so on.

So, we’re going to continue to look at that and try to figure out what we can do in order to make this, you know, a more positive development for chapters.

Ted?

>> TED HARDIE: On the – on the COVID question, obviously everybody is a bit exhausted with the situation and the ability to create cohesion is definitely an issue. Is there any way we can do any outreach to the chapters though and see if there are things they can identify to us as ways that would help them counter that in general? I mean, are there facilities that we can provide that would help them counter that? And have they communicated any of them to you or to the staff and what were those?

>> ANDREW SULLIVAN: I know the staff are working on that, on answers to those kinds of things and trying to understand, okay, well, what else can we do to support you? The – the answer sometimes comes back as well, you need to give us more money but you know, we don’t always understand exactly what that is. Like, what’s it going to do? How is it going to help? And so on. And I think that that’s been one of the challenges. We don’t have a clear path for that.

One of the things that is most challenging is that the – the chapter leadership and the members of chapters don’t always see eye to eye about this. And so, that can be a problem too, that we get different answers depending on whom we ask. And I think that that – there is still some kind of tension in this that I don’t exactly understand, but the chapter staff are working hard on this to try to understand it.

So, I don’t have a – I don’t have a crisp answer for you right now but we’re going to keep working on it.
Luis?

>> LUIS MARTINEZ: Thanks, Andrew. The - one of the things that I have been asked a lot is, okay, we want to have a local impact from the - from the training, but we don’t know how, yes. It seems that people are lacking of ideas of how to make a local impact, yes, and we are expecting this local impact. Maybe we need to provide more tools to people to develop, maybe a seminar or maybe a short course for leaders, how to bring this training into positive action, yes.

The other thing I have heard a lot is what about developing virtual training for members, yes? The people find the - that great idea to - to disseminate amongst the members but they don’t know - they really do not understand how and the means to do that.

So, some people are suggesting to use virtual platforms to (Inaudible) project, yes. So, those are two things that I have heard.

>> ANDREW SULLIVAN: And just a question is - are - was some of that broken for other people or is that network on my side? Okay. All right. I understood, nevertheless.

So, when I talk a little bit later about the training and learning efforts, you will see that some of that is in fact in training right now. And we’ve had, you know, positive effects both in the training and e-learning efforts and also in the fellowship area.

So, I think we’re - I think we’re responding to exactly those requests and we’re attempting to – to answer that demand. But I don’t know – I don’t know whether it will help with this issue in particular.

>> LUIS MARTINEZ: Yeah, maybe we need to think about train the trainers programs.

>> ANDREW SULLIVAN: Yes.

>> LUIS MARTINEZ: Yeah. Thank you, Andrew.

>> ANDREW SULLIVAN: Next slide, please, Kevin.
Now, you will remember that special interest groups have been something of a challenge for – for the Internet Society. The reason that this has been a challenge is a structural one. So, whereas it was easy for – or comparatively easy for chapters to set up their operations and be a distinct entity from the Internet Society and then, you know, be sort of affiliated with us, special interest groups aren’t in a place. And there was always a challenge to figure out how to operate these things. And this was a constant thorn having to do with funding of these – of these special interest groups and so on.

So, over the last couple of years, we’ve spent some time trying to figure out how to improve the special interest groups. We came up with a mechanism that was designed with the community and we started – we started the transition of this in 2021. You will see this continue to – to roll out throughout this year.

But what we have – what we’ve had and you all offered your congratulations yesterday, the five topics of special interest groups this year, Internet for Education, Online Safety, Internet of Things, Affordable Internet Access, and Cybersecurity. And then these are accompanied with three standing groups that are sort of thematic issues that cover areas of work of the Internet Society. So, these are of course on Accessibility, on Youth, and on Gender.

So, we’ve had successful elections in this area. We will continue to develop this program throughout the year.

Next slide, please, Kevin.

Oh, Muhammad?

>> MUHAMMAD SHABBIR: Yes. Thank you, Andrew. This is really a great effort indeed. One thing that probably you and your team might want to work upon is that there was some issues with the election process. So, by the next time the election for the standing groups and special interest groups comes, I hope that there will be more defined laws and regulations in terms of how the elections are conducted and what are the qualifications and disqualifications requirements and how those requirements are implemented.

>> ANDREW SULLIVAN: So, we did investigate the – the elections process. It – it followed the process that we had at the time. There was some unpleasant interaction between this and the difficulty that we had with MemberNova at the end of the
So, that was one way in which there was a snag but apart from that, the election appeared to be entirely regular. I am aware that it’s possible that some of the groups had reservations about the qualifications of some of the - of some of the people who were offered and I think that that is something that the - both the SIGs and the standing groups need to address in their qualification rules because that’s something that we don’t want to impose on the community. We want the community to, you know, to develop those things itself. And so, that is something that I think, you know, some of the groups may need to - may need to address.

>> MUHAMMAD SHABBIR: Yeah, exactly, and this is what I am suggesting, that I am not saying that the rules should be imposed. Rather, what I am suggesting is some sort of a working group from within the SIGs and the SDS leadership and members to - to review and finalize the election process and the other rules. Of course, there will be bylaws and other stuff as well. So, this should be a community driven effort supported by the organization.

>> ANDREW SULLIVAN: Yes.

>> MUHAMMAD SHABBIR: And it should be - it should be structured on the same kind of the working group that actually came up with the idea of standing groups and special interest groups.

>> ANDREW SULLIVAN: That was a sort of committee that was intended to address the issue of special interest groups in general. I think I would be leary of that group imposing things on any of the particular groups. I would really much prefer to see that if a particular group wants to have, you know, various qualifications for its leadership, that that group, you know, sort of come up with that proposal. But yes, we will of course support any such effort in order to make sure that it is, you know, within the bylaws and within all of the rules and so on. That is - without question, we have staff who are there to support the community in achieving, you know, their aims. That is what we have the professional staff for.

>> MUHAMMAD SHABBIR: Great. Thank you, Andrew.
LUIS MARTINEZ: Yes, without video, maybe that’s the problem with my connection. The – one of the things I am really surprised is the number of members that joined the special interest groups, especially the Cybersecurity. They claim that they are nearly 5,000 members which is really impressive stats as compared with the individual members growth. So, that is something that I think we really need to keep an eye on it, yes, and support that because maybe that’s a new route to increase the number of the membership, yes.

And the other, as Muhammad was saying, well, I think we need to polish the election process but it’s understandable because it was the first time we used this model. So, kudos to this. Thank you.

>> ANDREW SULLIVAN: Thank you. Next slide, please, Kevin. So, I want to point out that once again, this was achieved, that we got the – that we got the structure in place. Next slide, please.

The measurements are primarily going to be driven by this baseline. So, you know, in future years, we’re going to depend on this baseline as the basis on which future measurement will be seen, so that’s why this fundamental point that we achieve this baseline number.

There is – and I should note that we do this SIG consultation every second year, so this will not be an annual event. There is a challenge in this that we have, you know, room really for five SIGs. There were two hundred, more than two hundred proposed special interest groups. This is a big gap and it tells us that the community is interested in a wide variety of topics and wants some focus on it and there’s, you know, there’s just sort of capacity problems in the staff to, you know, to grow this to a very large number.

So, we’re maybe going to have to have a discussion in the future about how we’re going to – how we’re going to respond to these kinds of requests, because there are a lot of requests and the – the topics are wide and varied and it will be difficult to satisfy all of the demand. So, we’re going to need to think about, you know, how do we want this – this sort of program to develop, because I think that that’s – that will become a challenge in the future if people keep finding that, you know, the things that they want to work on within the Internet Society are things that we can’t support. This will tend to drive members away and of course, that’s the opposite of what we want.
Next slide, please, Kevin.

Another piece of what we’ve been trying to do here is - is to improve basically the software that we use. Next slide, please.

So, we have, you know, collaborative software that we provide to the community in order to support them and so on. We have - we have been doing a lot of consultation around this and this is particularly consultation with respect to MemberNova and whether it supports people in what they need.

We’ve had – we’ve had very positive response to this and we’ve been trying to figure out, okay, how – how are we going to develop our collaboration platform so that people get the kind of support that they need. We’ve had positive support – positive responses. We have selected some vendors and so on. But what we did not do is get the implementation plan done.

The reason we didn’t was because we found oh, well, you know, some of the consultation wasn’t as fully developed as we wanted so we’re going to spend some more time on that.

You will recall that when we launched MemberNova, it was very deadline driven and some of those deadlines happened and you know, we were like, oh, you’ve got to meet the date, and so the date became the driver and there were a number of people who were dissatisfied with the result.

So, we’re taking the time to try to do this as consultatively as possible and what that means of course is that implementation plans tend to get pushed back a little bit just because we need to, you know, ensure that everybody has been consulted.

Ted, I see your hand.

>> TED HARDIE: Just a quick question. When we see this percentage of the community consulted that approves of the approach, I assume that this was done before the breach, right?

>> ANDREW SULLIVAN: There have been - there have been consultations after the breach as well.

>> TED HARDIE: And this held up despite the breach?

>> ANDREW SULLIVAN: Yes. In part because the consultations have brought people inside the - inside the discussion.
I do want to, since we’re in a public session here, I just want to be clear that it was not a breach, and this is an important terminological distinction that we need to - we need to ensure.

So, we did not in fact have a breach though we had a data incident.

>> TED HARDIE: Thank you for the correction.

>> ANDREW SULLIVAN: It is - we are - we have done a lot of careful analysis of that and are quite sure that the specific term is not one that we - we meet, and therefore, certain obligations have not - have not fallen from it.

>> TED HARDIE: Thanks again for the correction.

>> ANDREW SULLIVAN: We - look. The goal of - part of the reason that the implementation plans got shifted and so on was because we had to respond to those things and we wanted to talk to people more about it. And we’ve continued to have these conversations in order to make sure that what we deliver is something that is satisfying to people and, you know, that they understand what the risks are.

There will be probably further follow-on conversations about this and I am certainly prepared to discuss that in depth, although maybe not in a public session because the terms have not been - have not been arrived at yet.

All right. Next slide, please, Kevin.

You will recall that there was a big effort around content last year and one of the things that you may or may not have noticed is that we now have a style guide at the Internet Society and every now and then, I say, oh, this doesn’t follow the style guide, and that’s why you’re hearing that because we didn’t used to have one at all and now we do.

But there’s been a more general effort to try to - try to prepare a kind of content pipeline so that we understand what the publication path is through the organization. We publish a lot of stuff. Not all of that stuff has been consolidated in the way that we would like. What we’ve seen over the last - over 2021 was primarily infrastructure behind the scenes, putting in place the - putting in place the sort of support that is
necessary in order to deliver high-quality content reliably and consistently because we did have a consistency problem and I think that we have largely addressed that and – and that is why this summary looks pretty good.

Next slide, please, Kevin.

So, you will see, we had a bunch of measurement about audience satisfaction and so on. We had a baseline there. We’re going to continue to measure that baseline. The basic idea is to measure not just satisfaction but really to measure effectiveness and engagement because those are really what we have been trying to do.

We’ve also found, you know, the Internet Society is now thirty years old. There’s a lot of stuff on the website that is there because it’s there, because it, like, happened, you know, twenty years ago. And some of those things are not – are no longer linked to us strategically.

So, the goal here was to – was to make sure that at least 50% of the stuff that is on our website is somehow linked to our current strategy. You know, there’s going to be stuff that is there because it’s, you know, like legal obligations and so on and it’s not clear that that’s going to be linked to our strategy as such. It’s maybe an obligation. So, the idea was like, at least 50% of the web content.

So, there was this enormous effort to go through every single webpage that the Internet Society has, and you can imagine, after thirty years, there’s a lot of them. It’s been astonishing to learn some of the things that we have kicking around.

About 25% of the content on the site was archived. So, it went off into our archives in some places and it’s now, you know, you can get to it. It’s not gone. You notice that the website got a pretty significant redesign in terms of navigation and so on. And that was to try to drive things according to the sort of engagement that is appropriate in the current website.

So, this is something that you know, it’s all behind the scenes and people don’t notice this kind of stuff, but I really want to emphasize the amount of work that went into this because it was a really tremendous effort.

Next slide, please.
The other area that we’ve focused on a great deal over the last little while has to do with building expertise and capacity. There is a big demand from our community to, you know, get training and so on, and this is one – this is something that we can offer and we can offer it effectively. And I think there is a very positive story to tell about this. Next slide, please.

So, we’ve had a lot of improvements. We’ve had a bunch of courses developed. We offer the courses in multiple languages. Some things we have offered beyond our – our usual portfolio of languages. So, our standard is everything is available in English and Spanish and French, but there are some things that we target at other communities, right? So, there are some things that have been translated into Arabic, for instance, because that is where the community really wants it.

We’ve had 9,000 learners, a little over 9,000, enrolled in these courses. We have some revenue generation opportunities because we’ve got people that we’re working with who are willing to sponsor this effort. We always believed that this was something that could, you know, could become self-sustaining. We’re not all the way there yet but you know, we’re developing it.

Transformation of courses is really, really a big lift. It’s a big deal to design these things. It takes a lot of – a lot of effort and we’re doing this on a sort of shoestring budget because we’ve got a small number of staff who have to be engaged. That’s the business plan that was presented to you all when we started this. We’re continuing to act on it. But it does mean that, you know, it’s a constraint on our capacity.

Next, please.

So, you’ll see here, we had an aim of putting up about thirty opportunities. We did eighty, a little over eighty. We intended to reach 10,000 people. We got to 9,000. There was a delay in the launch of the software which meant that we missed basically a quarter. So, I think this was on track. It was just really software schedules that drove this.

We’ve been – you know, we expect very high satisfaction and perceived value and we’re achieving that, I think. And we do have partners who are willing to figure out with us, okay, how do we make this a sustainable – a sustainable thing? So, this is not just like oh, another money pit that the Internet Society has to keep dumping money into but, you know, if this is really
valuable, presumably people will pay for it. And what we find is that, you know, we are getting partners who are willing to back us up.

Next, please.

We also wanted to prepare future Internet advocates. So, you’ve heard me talk about this. This is dear to my heart, the development of the fellowships programs. And so, last year we had the early career fellowship and the youth ambassador program. The mid-year fellowship launched only this year so we don’t have things to report about that. But we have very, very positive feedback about the first year of the early career fellowship. It’s been really, really good. We’ve been surprised at the fundraising that we were able to do around this program. We expected this was not going to be easy to raise funds around and it turned out actually we had quite a bit more success than we expected.

Next slide, please.

So, this has been really very – you know, everything has been achieved. It’s been really, really great. I have to say, the enthusiasm – I went and spoke to the early career fellows at the end of their program. It was all done online and so on and you know, we expected that people were going to be tired and worn out and so on. Some of them were doing this in the middle of the night for them because it was, you know, some of it was synchronous and so on.

And the – the goal here of course was to, you know, really build more advocates for the Internet, to make sure that people are enthusiastic about the Internet and the opportunities that it brings and can carry that forward in their career. And it was a very happy day from my point of view. We were very successful in getting people who were really enthusiastic, who really are going to bring their energy, you know, in delivering our message to the world. So, that – that makes me feel just really hopeful about the future.

Next slide, please.

We also, of course, continue to invest in – in high-quality, you know, cutting edge knowledge. Next slide, please.

And so, we wanted to make sure that NDSS continues to be a high-quality conference. This is sort of the best example that
we have of, you know, a conference that we put together that approximately breaks even. It wasn’t perfect this year but it historically has been very, very good, but also that it remains a really high-quality conference so that if we’re going to do this kind of thing, that it needs to be among its leaders. It’s – we wanted to make sure that it remained in the top five. It’s actually risen in - in its ranking.

We have got, you know, collaboration between a research community and the open standards community so you know, our traditional support of the open standards community continues to go hand in hand with research. And we continue to work on this.

NDSS has been moved a little bit this year because we’re going to do a hybrid event. It’s coming up. But you know, all signs are - are good that NDSS remains a high-quality conference. Next slide, please.

We also need to pay for all of this. And that is - that has been one of the challenges. You’ve all heard me talk about the public support test and how - how anxious it makes me.

At the same time, the story here is much better than you would think given my anxiety about the public support test. Next slide, please.

And the next one, please.

So, the interesting thing about this is that despite the fact that we missed on the public support test this year, we didn’t do as well as we intended, we had very, very good result with - with funding. So, we actually beat our revenue target by a not insignificant amount of money. We have new sources, more new sources than we anticipated. We have, you know, a large number of memoranda of understanding that we’re collaborating with other people and so on.

So, the trend is right. The real issue is that we - we didn’t correctly describe this to the people who needed to do the work so that they understood precisely how to achieve these goals while still making the income, you know, part of public support as opposed to some other kind of thing.

And so, that is a refinement that we’re going to have to do for the next year but the results are actually positive despite all of that and I think that it’s - it’s worth celebrating this and keeping in mind that people are looking at the Internet
Society and saying, oh, yeah, yeah, they’re doing good work, and we want to continue to support that. And that makes me hopeful that, you know, we can actually achieve this, you know, public support goals that we have more easily than many people have thought.

And you know, this comes down - I’ll get to you in just a second, Richard - this comes down to the theory of operation of this that we’ve always had which was if we build high-quality programs, if we do the stuff that people want, the public support will come because that’s what a charity is, right? You do good stuff and then people want to give you money to do it.

So, I think - I think we have actually the core that we need to achieve this and I think actually the financial results here tell us that. It’s just that now we’ve got to figure out how to make sure that they tell us that in revenue that turns out to be public support.

So, Richard, please.

>> RICHARD BARNES: Yeah. Thanks, Andrew. I agree, these are really promising numbers and I really support the work that’s going on here.

Just wanted to confirm I understand what you’re saying here, that it sounds like, you know, the actual mix of dollars coming in in terms of PIR versus non-PIR is you know, the - the fraction of non-PIR revenue in dollar terms is improving. We’re getting this increased diversity, increased number of dollars. It's just that the way we can count that in terms of the specific types of, you know, categories of revenue that the IRS bins as public support or not. Like, we need to get those dollars aligned to the right bins in order for the public support question to improve.

>> ANDREW SULLIVAN: Yes, that’s exactly right. The - you know, what we have to be careful about, for instance, when we do this with partners, is that we, you know, don’t present it as a quid pro quo or that kind of thing. And I think some of the ways that we approached people last year were like, you know, kind of sponsorship sort of arrangements.

And sponsorship is essentially like, you give us this thing and you get this benefit. And what we needed to do was instead, approach it slightly differently.
Sae is all over this and has been helping people understand how to structure those kinds of things.

I - I will admit that I think part of the reason we had these challenges last year was because of course we had a terrible loss in the finance department.

Ted?

>> TED HARDIE: Since Sae is all over this, this is no doubt something you guys have already considered, but just to mention it, one of the things that I had seen successful in the past, especially around training, is the kind of buy one for yourself and give one away approach, that in a lot of cases, when folks do have some disposal or discretionary money, they are willing to say, I am getting this benefit but I also want the public to get this benefit and so I’ll do a buy one, get one.

And I believe, if I understand correctly, where the buy one is definitely program revenue and therefore potentially not public support, the give one away is even though it’s the same training and the same money, because somebody gave it to give to somebody else, it’s in a different bin.

So, we might want to look at those as a mechanism of encouraging the community to kind of - to raise each other up in ways that also make sure that the way the money flows is appropriate to us.

>> ANDREW SULLIVAN: Excellent. Thank you.

So, this was, I believe, my last slide. So, unless there are any other questions, I will stop talking and we can proceed to the next part of the meeting.

>> TED HARDIE: Luis?

>> LUIS MARTINEZ: Yes. Thanks, Andrew. Excellent report as always. The less text will be very helpful but it’s your style and we respect it.

The - the issue that concerns me is about diversity. I don’t see any address to all of the diversity things that have been running around us in you said in the Internet Reform Group, but also membership talks usual about - usually about diversity. So, I think in the future, we need to address diversity issues in how we’re handling that. If not, we are not getting answers to
many of these questions or when the people express their concerns about diversity in the Internet Society, especially on the board.

>> TED HARDIE: Let me ask you kind of a clarifying question before we turn to Andrew. And it’s like, can you be a little bit more specific of what in a presentation like this you would like to see addressed? Are you wanting to see a diversity of say, the people being trained? Are you wanting to see a diversity in the geographic reach of some of the programs? If you could describe in a little bit more detail what this report could contain that would satisfy this concern, I think it would be very useful.

>> LUIS MARTINEZ: Yeah, I think we should add maybe geography, not for going into gender or specifics, maybe geography is the right - the right number. Seeing it in a graphical way that we are diverse as a - as a professional society, right? Because if we go into like how many Hispanic people, how many Asian, how many Caucasian, then we are going to get into a lot of problems. But if we address geography, maybe it's the right approach.

So, in resume - or in summary, the - I think we should add one simple slide showing how diverse is the Internet Society and how this diversity has changed over time.

>> TED HARDIE: So, Andrew, do you want to answer that before we go to Muhammad?

>> ANDREW SULLIVAN: Well, so, I can certainly provide you with - with the numbers. There is in fact a counter on the website that tells you something about the diversity of the organization and the places that people come from.

There - there is actually a legal challenge in providing too much of the information about where people are coming from in the learning pool and so on because there - there is - when you start to break down the numbers, the next thing that starts to happen is people ask for quotas. And you know, we’re - we’re not comfortable with the idea that we’re going to require, you know, people from various particular regions be part of this.

We have had programs that were structured like that in the past and - and two results came of it. One was that we sometimes found that a given region didn’t have the necessary - didn’t have the necessary pool to deliver the people who would participate in the program.
So, there was a good example of this which was the travel fellowships to the IETF. This was broken down by - by geography. And what we found was that there were some of those participants who were basically taking a vacation. They would go to where the IETF meeting was and they would not show up for the entire week. And then they would get on the plane on the way home.

And because it was quota-driven, it caused – it caused this problem. Like, we couldn’t just refuse if it was - if there was no evidence that somebody was going to participate for real. So, that was a – that was a structural problem in that program that I think is something we want to be very careful about.

So, I take your point that it is – it would be valuable to break down community participation by geographic region and we can look at how that – how that would work for this report. But I am also conscious of some of the potential incentives that that might create and it’s something that I think we want to think about very, very carefully before we start making that the only lens through which we look at this.

There is one other thing that I will say about it and that is another complaint about some of the geographic things we have done in the past came from people who said, okay, but this doesn’t capture actually the income diversity that is part of what it is we’re trying to address here.

And – and that also created a bunch of tensions because of course we can’t very well ask people what their income is when they’re applying to – when they’re applying to programs that we’re offering.

>> LUIS MARTINEZ: Yeah, I’m thinking something that I will express it in this way. Sort of the celebration of how diverse the Internet Society is, rather than data for – triggering a number of complaints and requests.

>> TED HARDIE: Muhammad?

>> MUHAMMAD SHABBIR: Yes, thank you, Andrew. The presentation was well covered despite the amount of text and I for one would appreciate more text instead of graphs because that, for one, for me, is easier to comprehend and understand. And it takes less time, not that the tables and graphs are not understood, but it takes less time as compared to the other ones. So, that’s the other side of the story.
Two points, actually. One is that we have seen the inclusion efforts by the organization and the staff. A lot of good work has been done and I must commend the staff that have been willing to include individual members as well as chapters into the discussion and processes of the Internet Society.

But what I am a little concerned about is the participation of Organization Members. We have seen an advice from the Organization Members but so far my interaction with the Organization Members at the roundtables, and I sometimes feel a little bit - I’ll use the word very cautiously - disappointed because in the - in the seven of the roundtables that have been held so far, I think I attended about four or five of them, and there were hardly people more than twenty attending one roundtable at a time.

So, this number shows - either it’s the time it could be - due to a number of reasons. And it’s not just participation in a roundtable cannot be said or cannot be an indicator of organizations participating in the Internet Society processes, but still, if the organization is organizing this kind of roundtables and this low number of participation from the Organization Members for whom these kinds of roundtables are being organized is a little bit of a concern for me as a board member.

So, I hope there would be some new strategies by the staff, some change of times, or some other strategies to communicate the message in a better way. Or to setup roundtable topics in a way that the Organization Members take more interest in and participate in.

Do you want to answer this too before I come to the second point?

>> ANDREW SULLIVAN: Sure. So, there’s no question actually that we have a - a weakness in our Organization Membership arrangements. And it’s one that has been remarked upon before. It’s not exactly news. It’s something that we’ve been working on.

I think that the involvement - the recommendation from the OMAC to try to figure out how to engage the Organization Members themselves is a positive one and it’s - it’s a positive sign because I’m not actually convinced that some of the OMACs that we’ve had in the past would have asked for that.
So, despite the fact that, you know, like, I’m not exactly sure how we’re going to address this problem, I’m pleased that it looks like the Organization Members are in fact asking – asking for that kind of engagement. So, that’s a positive development. But we’ve got to respond to it.

And my theory about Organization Members has long been that if we provide the kinds of stuff that are attractive to Organization Members, that we will develop – we will become more attractive to such organizations.

That is, for instance, part of the reason for this year’s Action Plan containing the amicus effort. That is there primarily because it makes – you know, it’s the kind of thing that is probably actually not that attractive for individual members. It’s probably something that, you know, most of them, I mean, maybe some would be interested, but most I think would be much less interested.

But institutionally, you know, corporations might be interested in that and other organizations might be interested in that. And so, there are efforts afoot to try to deal with that.

But this is a longstanding issue of decline. It’s not something that has developed overnight. And it therefore is going to require a lot of – a lot of groundwork in order to make sure that we’re attracting the kinds of Organization Members.

So, I take your point. I agree with you that there is some weakness there. As you’ll know, Ted and I agreed yesterday that we would approach the OMAC chairs to try to figure out what else it is that we need to do to engage with them. So, we will do that and I certainly believe that there is an opportunity to engage with our org members more generally.

>> MUHAMMAD SHABBIR: Yes, thank you. The second point relates to the point that Luis raised earlier of diversity. My stance on this has been that – whether it would be good to include more diversity into the organization and show the records and results as well.

But we – we also need to define the diversity. What’s the Internet Society’s definition of diversity? And I’m not sure if we – we have one. There was an effort at the governance group to have or the (Governance) committee that I said – I think to have
the definition, but I’m not sure that we still have one for the organization.

While we have, I want to bring this on the record, that while we define diversity for the Internet Society, it should not just be a method of what boxes we need to check in terms of diversity. It is the Internet Society and the Society needs to define the diversity in terms of Internet, how the access or the lack of it impacts people. And in my – one of the research – that is a caution that I would say that this was based on the diversity in Pakistan, I recently wrote a paper for the education – Pakistan Coalition for Education – where we certainly discussed the lack of diversity and all that stuff. But one of the intriguing findings in that research that came out was that people with disabilities, they felt that these lockdowns, particularly the students with disabilities, they felt that these lockdowns and the educational institutional response to it, despite there were a number of tools that were being used were inaccessible for screen readers and other stuff, but these lockdowns were a kind of blessing for them because it was easier for them to participate in the classroom and other activities, educational related activities as compared to when these classes were happening in a physical environment.

So, that brought me to a point that we need to define diversity in terms of not just that we are checking boxes but we should also take care instead of – that how the Internet is being reached to the people, where people are lacking it more, and while we discuss this as well, we also need to discuss that how the access or the lack of it since people in developed countries like America and Britain, they still are combatting with the issues of inaccessibility of certain databases and certain other resources as well.

So, this is my submission.

Now, you may respond or you may take it as a comment. Thank you.

>> ANDREW SULLIVAN: Well, I appreciate the comment. I do want to make a distinction both in this conversation and in what Luis had to say before. There are three – at least three, I’ll say, ways that we can talk about diversity here. I want to distinguish among them because some of them are things that I can’t do anything about. Like, it’s something you have to do something about.
If the issue - and this is one that has come up in the discussion on the Governance Reform Working Group, that that is really about the governance of the organization and the source of - of trustees and so on. And you know, I submit to you that I am not in the position to make that change. That is something that you all have to do because I can’t do it.

If there is a concern about diversity of the staff, which I have also heard, we in fact have a program going on right now to try to address some diversity, equity, and inclusion issues. There’s an RFP that’s out and we’re waiting for responses from - from possible consultants to help us in that area.

It’s challenging at the Internet Society because usually these things are taken within a national context or maybe sometimes a cultural context and we have, you know, a very, very broad cross section of the world. So, it can be a little bit challenging and that’s part of the difficulty that we had the last time we engaged with this.

And then finally, there is the issue of the diversity of members. I’ll just paste in the chat here - I should have sent it to everyone. Try that again. Here we are.

There - there’s a URL there. It’s a map, so I don’t know how useful it will be to you, Muhammad, but this is - is a world map that shows where the active chapters are and so on. We have a lot of chapters and they’re in a lot of different countries and this is, you know, the fundamental thing that we, you know, we try to do. We try to develop - we try to develop chapters in lots of places because that provides sort of automatically a basis on which we have at least geographic diversity.

But I think that, you know, the point is well taken that geographic diversity is not the only - the only dimension in which we want to ensure that this diversity is expressed. And I think it is difficult for us to get the information in other - in other dimensions because, you know, some of those things are questions that, you know, under various national legislation, are not really things we’re allowed to ask about. And I think that that is a - that’s a restriction that I think we have to - we have to be prepared for.

>> TED HARDIE: So, thank you both for the comments on this topic. I think given the time, I would like to move on, and in particular, I would like to suggest a small agenda change since Hans Peter has joined us already. I would like to bring forward
his report on the GWG, the Governance Reform Working Group, and have that discussion now, and then we can turn to Sae’s report and the PIR report which both need executive session before bringing back to the open to observers session.

So, Muhammad, I see your hand is still up. Is that from before or did you need to make an intervention now?

Okay.

So, I see Hans Peter has now joined us as a panelist. Hans Peter, welcome, and if you could give us just your sense of how things are going and where we need to go from here, that would be useful.

>> HANS PETER DITTLER: Hello and good afternoon from Germany. Good morning or good evening wherever you are situated. Nice to see you again and I’m sorry that I’m the only one from the, yeah, reform group who is joining this time because George is not available. And yeah.

I’ll try to be rather brief, mostly because there is not much to report. There was no real big progress made. George wanted to introduce a scribe or a secretary which didn’t resolve or didn’t come through and everybody was waiting for something to crystalize around it because the idea was out of the 120-something ideas which were recorded and written down, there should be a distilled, small group of three or perhaps four or five and sent again to the group and the one or two which were considered really useful then brought forward to the proposed meetings you have proposed, Ted, last time.

So, this written part never succeeded and I think George tried to find somebody to write up those things a little bit more consistent and didn’t have luck to really find people who, in this body of the Government Reform Group, who really have enough time and energy to write such a thing down and defend it against the voices of the rest.

So, yeah. It’s – I’m sorry not having more to present but I talked to George a few weeks ago and he was preparing things for this meeting and I relied on his preparation but sorry, nothing came to the table until now.

>> TED HARDIE: And we certainly understand George’s situation between his wife’s illness and his own. It’s been quite a challenging time for him.
I guess my question, and this is as an individual, not as chair, is if we were going to pull critical items from the list, we only have a few months now before the annual general meeting, so a few months for this board to act rather than to make a recommendation to the next board. And since this - this board in essence got a recommendation from the previous board to try and accelerate this to act, I kind of would hate to do it again. Are there, let’s say, even two items you think are critical enough that if we announced a public forum to handle them, that we would be satisfying some element of the reform discussion that has taken place today? Or is there even one that you feel like has kind of bubbled to the top?

>> HANS PETER DITTLER: I think there were clearly at least two which came to the top or which were on the top of the discussion list. One is diversity, and I just joined the meeting ten minutes, fifteen minutes ago, and I think you were already on top of this discussion. I believe, because it’s the Governance Reform Group, it should be number one to find out ways how either the governance of ISOC at all or at least of the board should be adapted to be more diversity friendly or diversity requiring or whatever the solution could be. That’s more or less clearly the number one on the discussion list.

Without seeing any real proposed solutions, it was just mentioned so often, and reopened again on other discussion lists, that I believe it would be - or it would be correct to put this our number one.

Number two would be, in my impression, that’s a little bit more fussy, but number two would be involvement of membership into decisions. Again, this is not something which is ready for a solution. It’s more - it’s a broad range from people trying to be consulted more or being more included in the early process, even if there are many offerings already, but to take up on those offerings is very slow and as one of your board members just mentioned on another list, on the candidates discussion list I believe it’s called, it’s amazing how many people are calling for more involvement and how few are really involving themselves if something comes to a real discussion or to a real task. So, there is a big difference in what they request and what is really delivered.

But I still have the feeling that this should be the number two on the list of urgent things.
The next two or three which could be picked from the list are more minor, more small things which could be discussed further.

>> TED HARDIE: Okay. So, it sounds like, if I’m hearing correctly, if we were to schedule public forums, the first of those forums would probably be around board diversity because that’s the governance question, the diversity question that has to come to this level. And the next would be around consultation and structures of consultation.

I think that – I think you’re quite right. I haven’t, in my readings, seen anything that would count as a proposal there, but we would probably be able to at least listen to the community about what their desiderata are and then come back by saying, you know, okay, here’s what we heard were the specific desired types of consultation and therefore this is what we think the next steps would be. I don’t think those would immediately turn into next steps for setting up the specific structures because I think that would take some more time, but it sounds like those would be reasonable public fora to announce, at least if I heard you correctly.

>> HANS PETER DITTLER: Yes.

>> TED HARDIE: Is there discussion from the trustees about this as a potential plan?

>> MUHAMMAD SHABBIR: Just a quick question for Peter. Is it something, the two topics, diversity and the decision-making, is this – are these two points your own assessment or has there been any discussion between you and George on these two topics?

>> HANS PETER DITTLER: I had a short discussion with George about these and both were mentioned but we should perhaps ask again, George, if he is still of this opinion, because it is already several weeks ago.

>> MUHAMMAD SHABBIR: Thank you.

>> TED HARDIE: So, I’ll note that there has been essentially no traffic on the list in the past three weeks, so.

>> HANS PETER DITTLER: I don’t know about any private communications done by George but officially there was nothing different.
MUHAMMAD SHABBIR: I don’t know of any too, so we are on the same boat. Thanks for the clarification anyways, Peter.

TED HARDIE: Any other comments?

Okay. Thank you very much, Hans Peter, for taking the time to join us today. I think we’ll have a short discussion on this in the upcoming executive session. And then we’ll have the ongoing fun of trying to schedule something, especially in a situation like this where it’s probably going to be important for us to have more than one session to account for geographic diversity. It's going to be somewhat challenging. But I think that that’s probably our next step.

HANS PETER DITTLER: Sounds okay for me and yeah, thank you and thank you for being so fast.

TED HARDIE: Okay. I think with that, we’re ready to move to executive session because the next thing that would have been in this slot had we not brought Hans Peter forward is the CFO’s report which is in executive session.

So, I think what we’re going to try and do is just bring all of the executive session pieces together, Kevin, if you would do that, and then you flash up here when we return. If you’ll just add those together into the - into the counter when setting it up, I would appreciate it.

HANS PETER DITTLER: So, okay. So, have a good meeting and I will drop out and goodbye.

TED HARDIE: Thank you, Hans Peter.

Okay. Thanks, everybody, for rejoining us for the open to observers session here at the Internet Society Board of Trustees meeting. There are two items on the agenda at this point, the first of which is the 2022 funding for the Network Startup Resource Center.

You should see the proposed resolution before you and you should have received the memorandum of understanding.

Are there any questions from the board about the MOU?

Okay. Seeing no questions, the resolution reads as follows. Approve the 2022 funding for the Network Startup Resource Center, whereas the Network Startup Resource Center is a
nonprofit center operated at the University of Oregon that helps develop national and regional Internet infrastructure for collaborative research, education, and international partnerships, and whereas both the Internet Society and the NSRC share a vision of an open, globally-connected, secure, and trustworthy Internet for everyone, and whereas ISOC and the NSRC have signed a memorandum of understanding to provide ISOC grant funding to the University of Oregon Foundation to support the NSRC for a three-year period which began in 2021.

Be it resolved, that pursuant to the terms of the MOU, the ISOC Board of Trustees authorizes a gift to the NSRC in the amount of $600,000 to be made in 2022.

And further resolved that any officer or trustee of ISOC is authorized for and on behalf of ISOC to do all such acts reasonably required in connection with the foregoing resolution, including the authority to execute and deliver documents on behalf of ISOC.

Any questions about the resolution?

Seeing no questions, may I ask for a motion?

So, I saw Laura and Brian.

All those in favor, please signify by raising your hand either on screen or in the tool.

Okay. There being no one left to express opposition, we’ll call that approved unanimously.

So, our next issue is one that I brought after a message from the IETF Chair which references a set of issues that have come up related to the role of the IAB as it relates to the RFC editor function.

As you may be aware, the IAB has been reviewing the future development of the RFC editor function through a program. That is coming to the end of its work and it’s in the process of publishing its output documents. One of those documents is a short update to the IAB charter. It’s contained in draft-carpenrer-rfc editor-iab-charter.

Because it is part of the IAB charter, it will actually be published by the IETF as a best common practice or BCP, with a note that it has been approved by the IAB. And they are asking
whether we would also give our ascent at this time. This is because the IAB is also constituted as an advisory committee of our board and because in this particular case, the consequence of approving this update to the charter is approving a new appeals chain related to the IAB.

In the document which the IAB charter now refers and delegates its authority over the RFC editor, that now creates a body called the RSAB which may appeal to the IAB. As you are all no doubt aware, appeals related to the functioning of the IETF and the IAB, when they may relate – specifically when they relate to process issues, may come to the ISOC Board of Trustees. And therefore, our ascent to this change makes it clear that we were okay – this particular board was okay with this change for anybody who may consider a later appeal.

Are there any questions about this particular issue?

Okay. I will then go through the resolution. Can we put it on the screen?

The proposed resolution is approve an update to the Charter of the Internet Architecture Board whereas the Internet Architecture Board is constituted, in part, as a consultative committee of the Internet Society Board of Trustees and whereas the IAB Board – whereas the IAB has constituted the RFC Editor Future Development Program in order to foster discussion and consensus on potential changes to the RFC Editor model and whereas the results of that program's deliberation include an update to the Charter of the IAB and an update to the appeals procedures relevant to the IAB and whereas the ISOC Board of Trustees has reviewed this update, resolved that the ISOC Board approves of the update to the Charter of the IAB contained in draft-carpenter-rfcFed-iab-charter.

I’ll note that there is one small typo here where it says IAB Board here and I propose that we simply strike the board. It would be redundant since it is the Internet Architecture Board.

Given that amendment, is there any discussion of the resolution?

Okay. May I ask someone to move the motion?

I saw – I saw Brian and Laura. Please signify ascent by raising your hand either in the tool or in the video.
Okay. Laura, I think you did raise your hand but then dropped it. You do ascent, is that correct?


>> TED HARDIE: Okay. Sorry. You never know where you are in the line of things for me to read it. So, I think that is unanimous consent. Is that correct? Any abstaining or voting against?

Okay. That brings us to the end of the published agenda. Is there any other business for the good of the order?

Seeing none, let me thank everybody again for their attendance and attention today and look forward to seeing you again soon. We’re adjourned.

>> LUIS MARTINEZ: Thank you. Have a nice day, night, or evening. Bye bye.

>> SPEAKER: Bye all.

>> SPEAKER: Yes, thank you.

>> SPEAKER: Bye.