

1 May 2008



## IGF Internet Bill of Rights (IBR) Dynamic Coalition

### Organizational Structure & Process

This document describes how the Internet Governance Forum (IGF) Internet Bill of Rights (IBR) Dynamic Coalition works as an organization with the principles of transparency, inclusion and efficiency. Much of its framework is based upon the World Wide Web consortium's operating procedures as well as those of the United Nations Centre for Trade Facilitation and Electronic Business.

#### **Steering Committee**

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IGF IBR steering committee is responsible for:

- Ensuring representation from each stakeholder group in IBR work;
- Managing relationship with IGF Secretariat, such as for technical resources;
- Managing web site, mail lists and other general logistical items;
- Resolving disputes at the working group level;
- Final approval of formal IBR publications and work, such as from working groups;
- Ensuring fairness and transparency in IBR process and quality in IBR work.

Steering Committee: Nomination, Elections, Chairs, Term Length & Vacancies

IBR will elect a steering committee, at least two of which will serve for one year and at least two of which will serve for two years. This election will be based on nominations from the IBR membership and will follow the election process outlined below. Nominees will select which term length they prefer.

Future elections will be held every year at an annual IBR meeting based on nominations from the general membership and following the election process outlined below. This annual election and staggered terms ensures continuity. Future steering committee terms will be two years in length.

The steering committee must be comprised of at least one member from each relevant stakeholder group: government, civil society, business, and academia. The steering committee can be no less than five members and no more than fifteen. Steering committee members can serve multiple terms.

The steering committee should also strive for global representation and gender balance.

**Nominations:**

Nominees must have demonstrated an interest in the activities of IBR and publicly commit to fulfilling required duties. Nominations will be accepted from all members in good standing. A call for nominations from the steering committee will be made at least one month prior to the annual IBR meeting. Nominee statements can be published on the IBR web site.

**Elections:**

IBR members, including those on the current interim steering committee, are permitted one vote. There shall be no voting by proxy.

**Vacancies:**

Any vacancy on the steering committee, whether by reason of death, resignation, removal, or otherwise, shall be filled by the remaining members of the steering committee, even though less than a quorum. The steering committee may also decide to fill that vacancy with their choice of nominee. That person will remain on the steering committee for the duration of the original term. Resignation must be given by written notice, including email, to the steering committee.

**Quorum:**

A majority of the members of the steering committee shall constitute a quorum at any meeting of the steering committee. The act of the majority of the voting power present at any meeting at which a quorum is present shall be considered the act of the steering committee.

**Removal:**

Any steering committee member may be removed with cause by a majority vote of the steering committee.

**Chair:**

The steering committee will have a chair, elected from within the steering committee, whose responsibilities include:

- managing steering committee meetings in an impartial and productive manner;
- defining agenda for steering committee meetings & ensuring input from general IBR membership;
- publishing meeting minutes to IBR membership;
- preventing against any particular interest group from having an undue influence or an unfair advantage in IBR work;
- monitoring any Working Groups to help achieve a timely and useful work product;
- ensuring effective communication between any Working Groups and the steering committee; and
- maintaining IBR membership list.

Other steering committee officer positions may be created as needed by consensus of the steering committee.

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## **General Membership**

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We strive for multi-stakeholder composition with global representation. For IGF IBR, this means participation from civil society, government, academia, and the private sector. Substantive work will be done by the IGF IBR membership.

Members are those entities who publicly declare support for IBR's general statements and the IBR mission statement at [http://www.internet-bill-of-rights.org/en/stmt\\_20080226.php](http://www.internet-bill-of-rights.org/en/stmt_20080226.php). Members will be listed on the IBR web site.

Steering committee members are also considered general members and can hold working group chair positions if required.

Individuals can participate as members. The determination of whether a participant is an individual or representative of an entity (such as a government or business) is whether or not they own any intellectual property they might create in the cause of IBR work. If a participant owns his/her intellectual property, he/she participates in IBR as an individual. If a participant does not own his/her intellectual property, that person is participating as a representative of an entity (see Voting).

A member in good standing means:

- stated public support for IBR mission statement;
- attending IBR meetings or useful, supportive participation in email lists;
- being familiar with the relevant documents of the Working Group, including minutes of past meetings; and
- active work within the coalition to achieve the coalition's stated mission.
- Members not in good standing cannot vote.

It is the responsibility of the chair of the steering committee to maintain the membership list, with resolution from the steering committee if there is any conflict.

## **Process**

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The steering committee has some quality control over the IBR content and process, but divergent viewpoints on topics of study and solutions to the proposed problems in the IBR mission statement are welcomed. Should IBR members not be able to reach a rough consensus on these matters, our goal will be to provide clarity around the argument, the divergence and its origins (who has different views and why) so that more informed research and decisions can be made.

IBR work will be done in working groups, which will be self-formed. Requirements for starting a working group are:

- Proposed by two members in good standing;
- Must have a chair who's responsible for the work, communications and schedule;
- Participation from at least two stakeholder groups;
- Proposed scope, deliverables and timeline; and
- Must work by same procedures as IBR overall.

Working groups self-select chairs. Chairs do not need to be approved by the steering committee.

Working group meeting announcements must be given with 2 weeks advance notice. Working group agenda must be made available with 1 week advance notice. Working group minutes must be published within 1 week afterwards.

Working group documents must be approved either by consensus within the working group or with documented dissent. They can become formal IBR documents after a review period by the membership at large and approval from the steering committee. The steering committee will determine and publish the review period for each document, with the goal of ensuring wide input and discussion but timely resolution.

The membership and steering committee's approval criteria for working group documents and activities are:

- relevant to IBR goals;
- includes viewpoints of all stakeholders;
- must list all supporters and all opponents;
- consideration of developing economies and U.N. objectives;
- clear and thorough; and
- if there are dissenting opinions on a particular work item, the main document and the dissensions must be clear, well documented and supported, and serve to illuminate and educate the position. Both/all opinions must also include a list of supporters.

### **Consensus and Voting**

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The following applies to working groups as well as the steering committee.

To promote quality work, the IBR process requires chairs of the steering committee and working groups to consider all legitimate views and objections that are raised and work to resolve them.

IBR activities strive for consensus among participants. Consensus is when a substantial number of working group participants support a decision or action, such as to embark on a particular set of work items or to send a document to the steering committee for approval and publication, and nobody registers a formal objection. Individuals in the set may abstain. Abstention is either an explicit expression of no opinion or simply silence. Abstentions must be recorded and a reason for the abstention documented in meeting minutes.

In some cases, even after careful consideration of all points of view, a group might find itself unable to reach consensus. The chair may record a decision where there is consistent dissent so that the group may make progress (for example, to produce a deliverable in a timely manner). To do this, a working group or the steering committee can conduct a vote to resolve the issue after the chair has determined that all available means of reaching consensus through discussion and compromise have failed, and that a vote is necessary to break a deadlock. In this case, the chair must record in the minutes of the meeting or in an archived email message:

- an explanation of the issue being voted on and a summary of the differing opinions;
- the decision to conduct a vote to resolve the issue;

- the outcome of the vote, and who voted for what so that all votes can be publicly reviewed; and
- any formal objections.

Formal objections can be given in writing in a timeline determined by the chair and publicly recorded. They must also provide enough detail, including who supports the objection and why, such that the issue and objection can be clearly understood by anyone with limited familiarity with the issue, such as the general public.

Again, our goal is to provide clarity around any arguments, the divergences and their origins so that more informed research and decisions can be made. The purpose of the formal objection is to ensure that IBR work can progress along with documentation of any differing opinions, which are valuable.

### **Voting**

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In order to vote to resolve a substantive issue or in a steering committee election, a member must be in good standing. Each organization and individual has only one vote, even when the organization is represented by several participants in the group. Individual participants have one vote. A negative vote is not a formal objection. Vetoes are not permitted. Votes are resolved by simple majority of members in good standing present at the meeting or, if done via an email discussion, by a simple majority of the total members of the group in question (e.g. working group or steering committee). Due to this, abstentions count as “no” votes. Members must have been a member in good standing for 90 days before being eligible to cast a vote.

### **Communications**

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IBR communications will be done largely through email lists and the web site, although teleconference calls and in-person meetings can be held from time to time. IBR email lists are for members, although public announce lists can be created, and meeting minutes, votes, publications and other documentation will be publicly available.

### **Meetings**

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IBR members will formally meet at least once per year during IGF for the annual meeting. Other formal meetings can be determined by the steering committee with 14 days notice given to IBR members.

### **Contribution & Dissemination Policy**

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Contributions to the IGF IBR and discussions within the IGF IBR are not confidential.

Following the Intellectual Property policy of the United Nations Centre for Trade Facilitation and Electronic Business as well as that of the World Wide Web Consortium, members agree to waive their rights to assert or enforce any essential intellectual property rights that might be included in IBR work.

IBR publications are available under Creative Commons Attribution Share Alike copyright licenses.

## **Accountability**

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Our accountability to IGF and our members will be through:

- Open web-based archives, documents, mail lists, and transparent and democratic processes;
- Progress reports sent to the IGF Secretariat and posted on the web site semi-annually;
- Representation on the agendas of yearly IGF meetings. This can occur through workshops or other mechanisms to be determined as the IGF proceedings are better established; and
- Reports to the yearly IGF per IGF guidelines.

### Amendments to this Process

This process can be amended by the steering committee. Suggestions for amendments can come from any member in good standing. All suggestions for amendment must be discussed by the steering committee in a timely manner and the results of the discussion published on the public IBR web site.