Charter

of the

Australian Internet Governance Forum - auIGF

1. Introduction and Preliminaries

1.1. This draft Charter sets out the purpose and operating framework of the **Australian Internet Governance Forum** or the auIGF.

1.2. The auIGF is Australia's premier Internet Governance event, at the heart of Australia's Internet community, and nurtured and driven by a truly multi-stakeholder community and group of institutional supporters. The event aims to be a must-do event for all those engaged in Internet governance and Internet-related public policy matters.

1.3. For the auIGF, "Internet governance" incorporates both the narrow technical responsibilities of the operation and development of the Internet and the broader public policy-related matters that shape the Internet and are shaped by it. As such, a wide array of issues are of interest to the auIGF and its participants.

1.4. The auIGF is a national Internet Governance Forum. It exists to foster connections between community participants from diverse stakeholder groups, regions, population groups, professions and trades, and intellectual traditions. It is a forum for **discussion, consensus- and norm-shaping**. It is not generally a forum where decisions are made about matters.

1.5. The auIGF will operate to high standards of transparency and accountability, demonstrated by the appropriate sharing of information and openness to community participation and critique.

1.6.   The purpose of the Charter is to provide a transparent structure for the event and its associated processes so that the community can operate the event effectively and that people and organisations can both register their support and hold those involved to account for delivering what the Charter says.

1.7.   The auIGF is not an entity, and this Charter does not form one in any legal sense. It has no owners, members, legal personality, or financial capacity. Any actions that require legal personhood require an agreed organisation or individual to provide them, under the aegis of the Operations Committee established in this Charter.

2.   Values for the auIGF

2.1.   Inclusive: the auIGF seeks to operate in an inclusive manner that all participants in the Australian Internet community can access and have their points of view respected and heard.

2.2.   Future-focused: The auIGF seeks to foster dialogue that is about shaping the internet's development and the evolution of technology as well as the public policy matters involved.

2.3.   Community driven: The auIGF shapes its program in response to suggestions from the broader community (alongside its analysis of the important issues facing internet governance within Australia, regionally and globally) and is governed and led by community participants.

3.   Working methods

3.1.   At a high level, the auIGF is an event where broad-based participation and a culture of respect and inclusion lead to a vibrant exchange of views and insights between participants.

3.2.   The auIGF community produces the event through the governance structures set out in section 4 of this Charter.

3.3.   The auIGF from 2024 is experimenting with methods of developing outputs on topics of interest that can attract a rough community consensus, with such consensus (or the lack of it) being tested at sessions during the annual event or adjacent to it.

3.4.   The Stakeholder Groups that orient the auIGF are:

   3.4.1.   Technical community
   3.4.2.   User community
   3.4.3.   Business community

3.4.4. Government

3.4.5. Academia

3.4.6. Civil Society

3.4.7. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities

3.5. The auIGF is convened by a group of organisations and individuals and is resourced by financial and in-kind contributions, both from those organisations & individuals and by sponsors.

3.6. Secretariat support for the auIGF and for its event is provided by an organisation or individual as agreed from time to time by the Steering Committee. The au Domain Administration Ltd (auDA) provides the initial secretariat.

4. Establishment

4.1. The convening organisations and individuals have come together to offer their support in that role, committed to supporting and nurturing the auIGF and its development. At the time of promulgating this draft charter for community feedback, the convening organisations and individuals are as follows:

Organisations

- Asia Pacific Network Information Centre, APNIC
- auDA
- Australian Government Department of Infrastructure, Transport, Regional Development, Communications and the Arts
- GoDaddy
- Identity Digital Australia
- Internet Association of Australia
- Internet Australia

Individuals

- Cheryl Langdon-Orr
- Caroline Greenway
- Christopher Hawker
- George Pongas
- Holly Raiche
- Keith Besgrove
- Terry Sweetser

4.2. Anyone interested in signing on in support of the auIGF can ask for this to be done with the Secretariat, and an updated version of this document will be discussed at the 2024 edition of the auIGF.

4.3.   The convening organisations and individuals have no particular responsibility or rights with respect to this Charter or the auIGF. Their statement of support for it applies at the time it was launched.

5.   Governance

5.1.   The primary **governance bodies** of the auIGF are the **Operations Committee (OC)** and the **Multistakeholder Steering Committee (MSSC)**.

5.2.   The purpose of the **Operations Committee (OC)** is to:

5.2.1.   Give effect to this Charter.

5.2.2.   Deliver an annual Australian Internet Governance Forum as a hybrid event with a primary physical location.

5.2.3.   Propose an organisation or individual to operate as the Secretariat to the Multistakeholder Steering Committee from time to time (appointment of Secretariat only valid once agreed by the MSSC), and be the lead interface for the Secretariat with the auIGF.

5.2.4.   Maintain appropriate records of financial and operational decisions and ensure these are made available to the public through the auIGF website.

5.2.5.   Secure adequate financial and other resources to allow for the work of the auIGF, including the annual event.

5.2.6.   Propose to the MSSC an annual Budget for agreement.

5.2.7.   Propose the date and venue for the annual event for MSSC agreement.

5.2.8.   Oversee the operation of any Fellowship program that is part of the auIGF.

5.3.   The decisional membership of the Operations Committee, which can operate by majority decision if required, is as follows:

5.3.1.   Four representatives of the Multistakeholder Steering Committee, appointed by and who must be members of the MSSC and who must cover at least three of the Stakeholder Groups.

5.3.2.   One representative of the Secretariat, appointed by the Secretariat.

5.4.   The purpose of the **Multistakeholder Steering Committee (MSSC)** is to:

5.4.1.   Develop the focus of each auIGF event.

5.4.2.   Develop the program of each auIGF event, which must be based in part on an open submissions process where community members can share proposals for topics or sessions.

5.4.3.   Instigate the development of a draft output/s that could be proposed for community consensus discussion at an auIGF annual event.

5.4.4.   Solicit and organise speakers and sessions for each auIGF event.

5.4.5.   Build and develop the community of participants in the auIGF, including attendance, on a truly multistakeholder and inclusive basis.

5.4.6.   Set the direction and criteria for any Fellowship program that is part of auIGF.

5.4.7.   Debate and agree an annual Budget and Plan proposed by the OC.

5.4.8.   Decide on the date and venue of the annual event based on the proposal from the OC.

5.4.9.   Decide on the Secretariat on the recommendation of the OC.

5.5.   The decisional membership of the Multistakeholder Steering Committee, which operates by rough consensus, is as follows:

5.5.1.   Up to three representatives from each of the Stakeholder Groups that are defined in section 3.4 (i.e., twenty-one people).

5.5.2.   One representative of the Secretariat.

5.5.3.   An independent Chair, appointed by a decision of no fewer than two-thirds of those members of the MSSC, present at the time of the decision. The Independent Chair may be from any stakeholder group or none.

5.6.   The MSSC can establish committees or working groups as required to conduct its work.

5.7.   At the founding, the members of the MSSC will emerge from the membership of the NetThing Steering Committee, and it will be generally expected to operate by consensus.

5.8.   This Charter will be discussed with the community at the 2024 edition of the Australian IGF.

5.9.   After feedback on this Charter is taken on board and community views on how to appoint MSSC members in future have been discussed, the Charter will be updated to reflect this.

6.   Operating structure

6.1.   Role of secretariat: the Secretariat is tasked with the following responsibilities:

6.1.1.   Supporting the work of the MSSC and OC including scheduling and convening meetings, recording minutes and decisions, and actioning them where no other action-responsible person is identified.

6.1.2.   Operationalise the event management required to execute the auIGF event, either in house, through commissioning relevant external event management expertise, or through collaboration with other organisations on an in-kind basis.

6.1.3.   Maintain the knowledge infrastructure of the auIGF including a public-facing website, email lists, document repositories, community program submission tools, and (where relevant) remote participation tools.

6.1.4.   Support processes involved with any draft output documents and their community creation processes (e.g. calls for input, working groups, etc).

6.1.5.   Implement any Fellowship processes agreed by the MSSC/OC.

6.1.6.   Any ancillary tasks that are within the broad boundaries of the above responsibilities.

6.2.   Financial management: the Secretariat (or another organisation by decision of the OC) performs the financial management of auIGF, as it has the legal personality required to do so. As part of that, it must:

6.2.1.   Manage the funds of the auIGF responsibly and professionally.

6.2.2.   Only disburse funds on the decision of the OC.

6.2.3.   Provide monthly or quarterly financial reports showing all incoming and outgoing funds, the balance of accounts and any existing future financial commitments.

6.2.4.   Make payments for various expenses as required.

6.2.5.   Receive payments from sponsors and other donors.

6.2.6.   Meet any compliance obligations created by Australian law.

6.2.7.   Operate within the Budget agreed by the MSSC (proposed to it by the OC).

6.2.8.   Commit passing on all funds to a successor organisation should the OC decide to change the organisation involved.

6.3.   Transparency and accountability

6.3.1.   Records of the proceedings of the MSSC and OC will be published on the website alongside an annual report (including an annual financial report).

6.3.2.   Contact details will be maintained on the website and public inquiries responded to.

6.3.3.   Meetings of the MSSC will be open to observers who indicate their interest in attending.

7.   Changes to this Charter

7.1.   Changes to this Charter can be proposed by any MSSC or OC member, or any auIGF stakeholder be they an organisation or an individual.

7.2.   Change proposals will be collated during the period between auIGF events, and a close date for proposals announced in the run-up to such an event.

7.3.   The MSSC will be responsible for a session at the auIGF to consider and seek consensus for any changes.

7.4.   Where consensus emerges, updates to the Charter will be incorporated into it.