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**Geographically-Focused IETF Activities  
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**Abstract**

The IETF has a variety of activities beyond those that are part of the standards process. IETF activities that aren't part of the standards process are still quite useful for the IETF mission. Some of these activities, such as IETF hackathons, tutorials, and mentoring, occur at in-person meetings. There has been and continues to be interest in having such activities located in different geographical areas.

The document defines how the IETF organizes our Geographically-Focused Activities. It is intended for eventual publication as a BCP but this is currently an initial strawman proposal based upon the existing variety of experience with the experimental activities in this space over the past several years.

**Status of This Memo**

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## **1. Introduction**

The IETF has a variety of activities beyond those that are part of the standards process [[RFC2026](#)]. IETF activities that aren't part of the standards process are still quite useful for the IETF mission. Some of these activities, such as IETF hackathons, tutorials, and mentoring, occur at in-person meetings. There has been and continues to be interest in having such activities located in different geographical areas. There is a wide variety of such activities that are supported by different motivations and objectives. The following list is illustrative - not restrictive.

1. IETF Days supported by the Internet Society
2. View-only of a Working Group Session with IETF introduction
3. RFCs We Love technical talks meeting
4. Open physical meetings with technical talks on topics of IETF interest
5. Remote Participation Hubs
6. Hackathons to build IETF awareness and encourage developers towards practical implementations of IETF standards
7. Panels, seminars and tutorials at academic events, NOG meetings, IXP meetings etc.
8. Open social informal meet-ups (over lunch, dinner, etc.)
9. IETF Newcomers presentations at NOG meetings and other technical gatherings
10. Introductory sessions about the IETF and participation at workshops.

Some of the motivations and objectives include: 1. increasing the awareness of the IETF's role in the Internet ecosystem, 2. providing feedback and exposure to potential new IETF work and providing mentoring and support to help authors bring that work into the IETF, 3. outreach to encourage new potential IETF participants, 4. increasing IETF diversity 5. increasing cross-area learning, 6. strengthening professional and social connections between IETFers, 7. providing feedback and discussion on early work & mentoring to newer IETFers, 8. reducing financial barriers to low-volume new participants and show advantages from face-to-face interactions, 9. reinforcing the importance of technical generalists and multi-



disciplinary leaders in fostering the sustainability, robustness, security, stability and development of the Internet, 10. raising the visibility of IETF participants to support greater impact and collaboration, 11. and connecting university researchers into the IETF community to better connect research to IETF work and broaden modern networking knowledge in developing regions.

These objectives can be summed up as increasing awareness of the IETF, doing outreach to encourage new IETF participation, and increase technical discussions and cross-learning to encourage faster and better technical output. These are objectives that are in the best interest of the IETF.

The IETF works well when motivated people self-organize and the IETF can provide support and minimal oversight. The IETF has an Education, Mentoring, and Outreach Directorate that provides oversight of outreach-related activities which are part of that Directorate's charter. The members of the directorate are selected by the IETF Chair.

The activities overseen by the Education, Mentoring, and Outreach Directorate are not part of the standards process. An internet-draft author may choose to use feedback learned during such a meeting set up by the Education, Mentoring, and Outreach Directorate exactly as an author may choose to use feedback from a private conversation.

The IETF Trust holds trademarks that are used by the IETF for our activities. This document discusses how outreach activities can be organized and managed to the extent required not to dilute the IETF's name and to protect its processes.

## **2. Terminology**

**Geographically-Focused IETF Activity:** An IETF related Activity that is centered in a specific geographic area. Examples include, but are not limited to, IETF Local Communities, Remote Awareness Hubs, IETF Awareness Events, and Remote Participation Hubs. Necessary attributes are being geographically-focused and open for participation.

**IETF Local Community:** A persistent geographically-focused local group of IETF participants and those interested in IETF work. An IETF Local Community may do a variety of different activities, including Remote Participation Hubs. The necessary attributes are persistence and a focus on technical discussions related to the IETF. The focus is on growing a local group of people participating in the IETF and strengthening the professional and social relationships between them to encourage collaboration.



**Remote Awareness Session:** An event which might focus on a speaker who might show a video from one or more IETF Working Group or Plenary sessions. There may be additional introductory presentations or other activities. Necessary attributes are focus on an event and viewing of a live or recorded IETF WG or Plenary session. The focus is on holding an event to raise awareness of what happens at an IETF meeting.

**IETF Awareness Activity:** An activity where "what the IETF is and does" is presented to raise awareness of the IETF. Content might include speakers presenting or leading discussions about the IETF, about IETF technical work or other technical work that might be related to IETF work. Necessary attributes are focus on an activity and on discussing the IETF.

**Remote Participation Hub:** An activity that is connected to a particular IETF Working Group or Plenary session such that interactive participation in the session at the IETF is possible. Necessary attributes are focus on a specific activity and the potential for interactive participation in the primary session. All attendees register as regular remote attendees to the particular session via a standard IETF tool such as MeetEcho.

**Outreach Coordinators:** The individuals responsible for coordinating and running a Geographically-Focused IETF Activity. These are recorded by the IETF Outreach lead and added to the outreach-coordinators mailing list.

**Local Coordinators:** For some awareness activities which are a single activity, those interested in organizing may serve as the Local Coordinators while an Outreach Coordinator, who helps with such events, may provide the IETF experience and support. The Local Coordinator might also be the speaker at an activity.

**Repeating Activity:** An activity may be sufficiently successful in a particular geography so that there is interest in having it repeat. This might be Remote Participation Hubs, Remote Awareness Sessions, or other activities. When there is a desire and expectation for a series of repeating activities, then it is useful to have Outreach Coordinators and manage the series similarly to an IETF Local Community.

### **3. Organization of Geographically-Focused IETF Activities**

These activities can be focused on a single activity, repeating activities or creating an IETF Local Community. It's desirable to have at least 2 Outreach Coordinators for a Geographically-Focused IETF Activity. The coordinators should be accepted by the Outreach





lead and added to the outreach-coordinators mailing list. The Outreach lead and recognized Outreach Coordinators form the Outreach Coordinators Group. This group will regularly share experience, plans, and advice. In extraordinary circumstances, the Outreach Coordinators Group may recommend that a local community or repeating activity be ended or that an Outreach Coordinator be removed from the list.

### **3.1.    IETF Local Communities**

An IETF Local Community is expected to be a persistent group with periodic activities. Each IETF Local Community must have at least 1 Outreach Coordinator. It is recommended that a Local Community have at least two Outreach Coordinators to share the work of defining the activities and schedule and organizing to make the activities happen.

### **3.2.    Repeating Activities**

If successful, it is likely that some one-time activities, such as a Remote Participation Hub, may become repeating. Such a stream of activities in a fixed geography should have at least one Coordinator who is part of the Outreach Coordinators Group. This will allow the Coordinator to share experiences and to easily get advice.

The Internet Society and other organizations periodically organize workshops across the world where one or more session is focused on the IETF and how to participate. If the organizer of such a series of repeating sessions in one geography wishes to connect more closely to the IETF for support and guidance, then an Outreach Coordinator may be accepted for that repeating activity. It may also be desirable to have one or more specific Outreach Coordinators to help with this type of session and the local organizers.

### **3.3.    Remote Participation Hubs**

A Coordinator may organize a physical location for individual participants to gather and participate individually in a remote session at the IETF. All the individual participants should be registered as remote attendees to that IETF session using the usual IETF remote participation tools, such as MeetEcho. Individuals will be subject to the normal policies that apply to remote participants at an IETF session. By having individual registration, an individual can also participate via instant message (e.g. jabber) and chose to be individually added into the remote microphone queue.



### **3.4.    One-Time Activities**

Some Geographically-Focused IETF Activities may be one-time activity. There still needs to be oversight and support for such activities. Ideally, at least one Coordinator will volunteer to provide support for such one-time activities. A Geographically-Focused IETF Activity in a particular geography that do not yet have an Outreach Coordinator identified fall under the One-Time Activity Coordinators, even if that activity has or is repeating. There may be a period where it isn't clear that the activity will continue to repeat and thus whether a persistent Outreach Coordinator is needed.

The One-Time Activity Coordinators should recognize a Local Coordinator for any activity that the none of the One-Time Activity Coordinators will be attending and running.

### **3.5.    Appointment, Term of Service, and Transitions for Coordinators**

In general, a Coordinator should be familiar with the IETF and preferably be or have been an active participant. For a new Local Community or a Repeating Activity, it is likely that there are good candidates for Coordinators. If not, that may be a sign that the health of the activity is in question and more support is needed.

It is not appropriate to assume that a Coordinator will serve for an infinite amount of time. At this time, it is not clear whether a fixed term would be useful. at a minimum, the Outreach Lead should verify interest to continue every two or three years. To ensure smooth transitions between Coordinators, the IETF Secretariat or Outreach Lead should have the ability to change ownership and administration of resources used by the Geographically-Focused IETF Activity or smoothly migrate to new resources.

### **3.6.    Support for Coordinators**

The Outreach Coordinators Group is one mechanism to provide support for Coordinators and allow them to learn from each others' experiences. Different geographies may find different ideas and structures work better. This also provides a way to bring up common administrative issues and concerns so that the Outreach Lead can facilitate resolving them.

## **4.    IETF Policies Applied to Geographically-Focused IETF Activities**

Geographically-Focused Activities are specifically NOT part of the IETF Standards Process. It is not necessary to either keep and preserve attendance nor to show the Note Well used at normal IETF Working Group meetings to remind attendees of their obligations under



the IETF's IPR policy. But, that said, under IETF rules, any IPR that makes it into an Internet Draft or RFC must be disclosed by whoever suggested adding the IPR when the Internet Draft is published, even if the suggestion was during one of the Geographically-Focused Activities.

It is recommended to request RSVPs for logistical reasons, to have a sign-up sheet for the associated mailing list, and optionally to request other participant information to understand and track how well an activity is doing compared to its objectives. These records do not become part of the records of the IETF.

In Geographically-Focused IETF Activities, there are likely to be participants new to the IETF for whom it would be useful to mention that the IETF does have an IPR policy and if ideas are included in an internet-draft, there are IPR disclosure requirements. A common slide or very short write-up may be helpful to create.

#### **4.1.    Open and Professional**

Since a purpose of the Geographically-Focused IETF Activities is outreach and since the IETF is open, it is expected that Geographically-Focused IETF Activities are open to all participants. Participants are expected to behave according to professional standards. [[RFC7154](#)] is a BCP defining guidelines for conduct in the IETF; [[RFC7776](#)] defines Anti-Harassment procedures and creates an Ombudsteam to handle issues. These documents can serve as references for Geographically-Focused IETF Activities.

#### **4.2.    Localization**

Since Geographically-Focused IETF Activities specifically happen in widely varying localities, there can be language and other location-specific considerations. While the IETF works only in English, there may be some types of events where using the local language is preferable. Mailing lists for a geographically-focused IETF Activity MAY primarily use a local language; it is expected that the Outreach Coordinator will help in handling questions in English sent to the mailing list. There may be other localization accommodations that are appropriate to consider.

#### **4.3.    Use of IETF Name and Logo**

Geographically-Focused IETF Activities may use the IETF logo and IETF name, with suitable oversight. Outreach Coordinators will be informed about the IETF Trust policies and basic acceptance and can ask questions on the associated mailing list. In general, not using



a misleading name and not modifying the IETF logo or name is sufficient, but specific approval by the IETF Trust is required.

#### **4.3.1.   Not Official IETF Activities**

Even though the IETF supports and encourages the organization of activities aimed to increase participation, when they're not official IETF activities, careful care of IETF name and logo usage should be taken. In order to obtain permission to use or display any IETF logo or name, you must first complete and send, to [iad@ietf.org](mailto:iad@ietf.org), the form: [http://trustee.ietf.org/docs/IETF\\_General\\_TM\\_License.pdf](http://trustee.ietf.org/docs/IETF_General_TM_License.pdf) [1] Please include a description of your activity, contact information, referrals inside the IETF community and any other information that can be used for approval. As a general guideline, as long as you're not using a misleading name for your activity (avoid using names that can be confused with official IETF activities) and you haven't modified any IETF Trust logo or name, you will receive a positive response.

IETF logo files can be found in the IETF site (<https://ietf.org/logo/> [2])

### **5.   Use of IETF Resources**

The IETF can provide resources such as mailing lists, wikis, and calendars. When a new resource is needed, the Outreach Lead is responsible for forwarding on an appropriate request to the Secretariat.

The following is a proposed structure for IETF mailing-lists to be used by the Geographically-Focused IETF Activities.

1. outreach-coordinators mailing list: This list has at least the Outreach Coordinators accepted by Directorate and interested Directorate members, but has an open archive.
2. ietf-hub-[geography]: For Repeating Events and IETF Local Communities, there is an associated mailing list. Another possible name is ietf-local-[geography]; currently there are ietf-hub-boston and ietf-hub-bangalore.
3. vmeet: for discussion of Geographically-Focused IETF Activities as well as virtual meetings, since that is where the conversation has been happening.
4. ietf-community-[large-geography]: To coordinate across the Local Communities and for other Geographically-Focused IETF Activities. A current example is ietf-community-india.





5. outreach-discuss: For discussion of outreach activities around the IETF Community.

It is useful to have a wiki that allows a persistent URI for sharing events, storing information about past events, and brainstorming/organizing new ones. With the proposed structure where all of the Geographically-Focused IETF Activities are related to Outreach, a wiki for outreach, that can then be self-organized, is needed. The top level of this wiki is currently at <https://trac.ietf.org/trac/edu/wiki/Outreach>; appropriate links and visibility will be needed and need to be periodically re-evaluated.

A well-publicized on-line calendar that at least Coordinators can add events to is needed. This will provide a single place to check when and where various activities are happening. Given that many IETFers travel for business, it also makes it easy for IETFers to discover if there is a local activity happening that is of interest. Events should also be announced to the ietf discussion list.

## **6. Social Media and Communications**

Most of the current IETF communications activities are coordinated and accomplished by ISOC staff. For Social media, industry media and other communication needs the Coordinator should contact [comms@ietf.org](mailto:comms@ietf.org) for appropriate messaging. Through ISOC's support, the activity will be better promoted and aligned with IETF expectations. There is an ongoing revision of IASA activities that can affect how future IETF communications are managed.

Once the basic requirements and a template for the communication are understood by Coordinators, it is expected that only unusual communications will need discussion. Sharing of the information is still desirable so that events can be better promoted. Coordinators will need to work on promoting the activities and reaching out to the relevant communities.

## **7. Feedback Loop: Metrics and Surveys**

The breadth of objectives and activities covered by Geographically-focused IETF activities makes it very hard to have a single set of metrics or appropriate surveys. Having geographically-focused IETF activities is an experiment. It is useful to know how the various activities are doing and what changes or tuning might be desirable. There is useful information to collect from Coordinators and from attendees.

Here is a list of possible questions for Coordinators.



1. What types of events are you holding? How frequently? What is the attendance?
2. What types of communication & outreach are you using? What seems effective?
3. What WGs and Areas are of interest?
4. How could the IETF make holding events easier?
5. What kinds of events are you interested in holding in the future?
6. Would mentors or remote speakers be helpful?
7. What objectives do you have for your events?
8. What is the mixture of folks attending in terms of IETF experience, affiliation, technical interests, and active participation?
9. What advice would you give other Coordinators?

Here is a list of possible questions for attendees. Some may be primarily useful in IETF awareness and others primarily in IETF Local Communities.:

1. What is your knowledge of and experience with the IETF before attending?
2. Did this event meet your expectations? Was it interesting or productive? Would you attend another similar event?
3. What types of events would be interesting? Technical discussions, social/informal discussion, remote hubs, hackathons, joint draft or RFC review and discussion, other?
4. How did you hear about the event?
5. Are you aware of the following ways to learn about future events and IETF-related activities?
6. What technical areas would you be interested in working on in the IETF?
7. Do you feel prepared to engage on IETF Working Group mailing lists and review drafts? What type of support would help?



8. Does your affiliation/day-job understand the benefits of participating in the IETF?
9. How might the IETF make participating easier?
10. What WG sessions have you attended?
11. What could be done better?
12. What IETF topics would inspire you to participate?

## **8. IANA Considerations**

This document has no impact on IANA registries.

## **9. Security Considerations**

The policies in this document provide support and oversight of geographically-focused IETF activities so that the IETF name and logo are not misrepresented. References for expected community conduct are given. These activities are not part of the standards process, which reduces the policies that need to apply.

## **10. Acknowledgements**

The authors would like to thank Alvaro Retana, Karen O'Donoghue, John Levine, Dave Crocker, and John Klensin for useful discussions.

## **11. References**

### **11.1. Normative References**

- [RFC7154] Moonesamy, S., Ed., "IETF Guidelines for Conduct", [BCP 54](#), [RFC 7154](#), DOI 10.17487/RFC7154, March 2014, <<https://www.rfc-editor.org/info/rfc7154>>.
- [RFC7776] Resnick, P. and A. Farrel, "IETF Anti-Harassment Procedures", [BCP 25](#), [RFC 7776](#), DOI 10.17487/RFC7776, March 2016, <<https://www.rfc-editor.org/info/rfc7776>>.
- [RFC8179] Bradner, S. and J. Contreras, "Intellectual Property Rights in IETF Technology", [BCP 79](#), [RFC 8179](#), DOI 10.17487/RFC8179, May 2017, <<https://www.rfc-editor.org/info/rfc8179>>.



### **11.2.   Informative References**

[RFC2026]   Bradner, S., "The Internet Standards Process -- Revision 3", [BCP 9](#), [RFC 2026](#), DOI 10.17487/RFC2026, October 1996, <<https://www.rfc-editor.org/info/rfc2026>>.

### **11.3.   URIs**

[1] [http://trustee.ietf.org/docs/IETF\\_General\\_TM\\_License.pdf](http://trustee.ietf.org/docs/IETF_General_TM_License.pdf)

[2] <https://ietf.org/logo/>

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