               IETF Plenary Meeting Venue Selection Process
          draft-ietf-mtgvenue-iaoc-venue-selection-process-03

Abstract

   The IAOC has responsibility for arranging IETF plenary meeting Venue
   selection and operation. This document details the IETF's Meeting
   Venue Selection Process from the perspective of its goals, criteria
   and thought processes. It points to additional process documents on
   the IAOC Web Site that go into further detail and are subject to
   change with experience.

Table of Contents

1. Introduction

   The IAOC has responsibility for arranging IETF plenary meeting venue
   selection and operation. This document describes the IETF Meeting
   Venue Selection Process from the perspective of goals, criteria and
   thought processes. It describes the objectives and principles behind
   the Venue selection process. It also discusses the actual selection
   process to one level of detail, and points to working documents used
   in execution.

1.1. Background

   Following IETF 94 and at IETF 95 there was a discussion on the IETF
   list of the selection process and criteria for IETF meetings. In
   response to that discussion, the IAOC and the IAOC Meetings Committee
   took it upon themselves to more publicly document its process and
   refine it, based on community input.

1.2. *** Post-Seoul Revisions ***

   Comments on this post-Seoul version:

   o Many items from the Sullivan draft have been included.

   o A number of criteria had confusing wording and have been revised.
      The confusion was about the difference between a process that must
      be followed, versus a decision based on that process. Following
      the process is Mandatory. The details of the decision, however,
      are not pre-determined.

   o Extensive reformulation of the document layout.

   EDITOR'S DISCLAIMER: This attempts to reflect the work of the
      Seould mtgvenue discussions but is certain to have missed and/or
      misinterpreted quite a bit. Some changes were the result of off-
      list discussions; they seem to resolve specific issues but of
      course the final decision rests with the working group... Please
      post explicit text change requests to the list. /Dave

1.3. Requirements Language

Requirements called out in this document are identified by the degree
of requirement. The labels that are used are:

Mandatory:
   If this requirement cannot be met, a location under consideration
   is unacceptable. We walk away.

Important:
   Does not qualify as Mandatory, but is still highly significant;
   can possibly be traded off against other Important considerations.

Desired:
   We would very much like to meet this requirement, but the failure
   to meet it will not disqualify a Venue.

2. Venue Selection Objectives

2.1. Core Values

The IETF has some core values that pervade the selection process.
The values are not limited to the following, but at minimum include
them.

Why do we meet?
   We meet to pursue the IETF's mission [RFC3935], partly by
   advancing the development of Internet-Drafts and RFCs. We also
   seek to facilitate attendee participation in multiple topics and
   to enable cross-pollination of ideas and technologies.

Inclusiveness:
   We would like to facilitate the onsite or remote participation of
   anyone who wants to be involved.

   Every country has limits on who it will permit within its borders.
   However the IETF seeks to:

   1. Minimize situations in which onerous entry regulations prevent
       participants from attending meetings, or failing that to
       distribute meeting locations such that onerous entry
       regulations are not always experienced by the same attendees;
       and

   2. Avoid meeting in countries with laws that effectively exclude
       people on the basis of race, religion, gender, sexual
       orientation, national origin, or gender identity.

Where do we meet?
   We meet in different locations globally, in order to spread the
   difficulty and cost of travel among active participants, balancing
   travel time and expense across the regions in which IETF
   participants are based.

Internet Access:
   As an organization, we write specifications for the Internet, and
   we use it heavily. Meeting attendees need unfiltered access to
   the general Internet and our corporate networks, which are usually
   reached using encrypted VPNs from the meeting Venue and hotels,
   including overflow hotels. We also need open network access
   available at high enough data rates, at the meeting Facility, to
   support our work, including the support of remote participation.
   [MeetingNet]

Focus:
   We meet to have focused technical discussions. These are not
   limited to scheduled breakout sessions, although of course those
   are important. They also happen over meals or drinks -- including
   a specific type of non-session that we call a "Bar BOF" -- or in
   side meetings. Environments that are noisy or distracting prevent
   that or reduce its effectiveness, and are therefore less desirable
   as a meeting Venue.

Economics:
   Meeting attendees participate as individuals. While many are
   underwritten by employers or sponsors, many are self-funded. In
   order to reduce participation costs and travel effort, we
   therefore seek locations that provide convenient budget
   alternatives for food and lodging, and which minimize travel
   segments from major airports to the Venue. Within reason, budget
   should not be a barrier to accommodation.

2.2. Venue Selection Non-Objectives

   IETF meeting Venues are not selected or declined with the explicit
   purposes of:

Politics:
   Endorsing or condemning particular countries, political paradigms,
   laws, regulations, or policies.

Maximal attendance:
   Because the IETF garners a significant portion of its revenue from
   IETF meeting fees, there is considerable incentive for decision-
   makers to prefer a Venue that will attract more attendees. It is
   important to resist this temptation: a larger meeting in which key

contributors could not make it is not a better meeting; neither is one with a lot of "tourists".

Tourism:
   Variety in site-seeing experiences.

3. Venue Selection Criteria

A number of criteria are considered during the site selection process. The list following is not sorted in any particular order, but includes the committee's major considerations.

The selection of a Venue always requires trade-offs. There are no perfect venues. For example, a site might not have a single hotel that can accommodate a significant number of the attendees of a typical IETF. That doesn't disqualify it, but it might reduce its desirability in the presence of an alternative that does.

Many of the evaluation criteria are subjective. This might even be the case for criteria labeled as "Mandatory". For this reason, the IAOC and Meetings Committee will specifically review, and affirm to their satisfaction, that all "Mandatory" labeled criteria are satisfied by a particular Venue, as part of the process defined below in Section 5.

Three terms describe the places for which the IETF contracts services:

Venue:
   This is an umbrella term for the city, meeting resources and guest room resources.

Facility:
   These contain meeting rooms and associated resources, and possibly also contain hotel rooms.

IETF Hotels:
   One or more hotels, in close proximity to the Facility, where the primary IETF guest room allocations are negotiated and IETF SSIDs are in use.

3.1. Venue City Criteria

These concern basic aspects of a candidate city:

Criteria	Required
Travel to the Venue is acceptable based on cost, time, and burden for participants traveling from multiple regions. It is anticipated that the burden borne will be generally shared over the course of multiple years.	"Mandatory"
The Venue is assessed as favorable for obtaining a host and sponsors. That is, the Meeting is in a location and at a price that it is possible and probable to find a host and sponsors.	"Mandatory"
It is possible to enter into a multi-event contract with the Venue to optimize meeting and attendee benefits, i.e., reduce administrative costs and reduce direct attendee costs, will be considered a positive factor. Such a contract can be considered after at least one IETF meeting has been held at the Venue.	"Desired"
Travel barriers to entry, e.g., visa requirements that can limit participation, are acceptable to the IETF community.	"Mandatory"
Economic, safety, and health risks associated with this Venue are acceptable to the IETF community.	"Mandatory"
Available travel issue assessments -- such as <https ://travel.state.gov/content/passports/en/country.htm l> -- have been pointed out the IETF community. [[Editor's Note: This mostly concerns assessing the problems getting visa's and making the assessment 3 years in advance. What can we do that is meaningful? Also, are there better citations to include? /d]]	"Mandatory"

3.2. Basic Venue Criteria

The IETF operates as an international organisational and adjusts to local requirements. Facilities selected for IETF Meetings conform with local health, safety and accessibility laws and regulations. A useful discussion of related considerations in evaluating this criterion is at: <http://www.sigaccess.org/welcome-to-sigaccess/resources/accessible-conference-guide/>

Editor's Note: In the spirit of the 'international' focus, we need
   a comprehensive document that is similar to the one cited, but
   without a national focus. The current reference is US-specific.
   /d

In addition:

+--+-------------+
| Criteria | Required |
+--+-------------+
The Facility is adequate in size and layout to	"Mandatory"
accommodate the meeting and foster participant	
interaction.	
+--+-------------+
The cost of guest rooms, meeting space, meeting	"Mandatory"
food and beverage is affordable, within the norms	
of business travel.	
+--+-------------+
| The economics of the Venue allow the meeting to be | "Mandatory" |
| net cash positive. | |
+--+-------------+
The Facility permits holding an IETF meeting under	"Desired"
"One Roof". That is, qualified meeting space and	
guest rooms are available in the same facility.	
+--+-------------+
| The Facility permits easy wheelchair access. | "Mandatory" |
+--+-------------+
| The Facility is accessible by people with | "Important" |
| disabilities. | |
+--+-------------+

3.3. **Technical Services and Operations Criteria**

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   +-------------------------------------------------+------------+
   | Criteria                                        | Required   |
   +-------------------------------------------------+------------+
   | The Facility's support technologies and services -- | "Mandatory" |
   | network, audio-video, etc. -- are sufficient for    |            |
   | the anticipated activities at the meeting, or the   |            |
   | Venue is willing to add such infrastructure or      |            |
   | these support technologies and services might be    |            |
   | provided by a third party, all at no -- or at an    |            |
   | acceptable -- cost to the IETF.                     |            |
   +-------------------------------------------------+------------+
   | The Facility directly provides, or permits and  | "Mandatory" |
   | facilitates, the delivery of a high performance,|            |
   | robust, unfiltered and unmodified IETF Network. |            |
   +-------------------------------------------------+------------+
   | The IETF Hotel(s) directly provide, or else permit | "Mandatory" |
   | and facilitate, the delivery of a high performance, |          |
   | robust, unfiltered and unmodified Internet service  |          |
   | for the public areas and guest rooms; this service  |          |
   | is typically included in the cost of the room.      |          |
   +-------------------------------------------------+------------+
   | The overflow hotels provide reasonable, reliable, | "Desired" |
   | unfiltered Internet service for the public areas  |           |
   | and guest rooms; this service is included in the  |           |
   | cost of the room.                                 |           |
   +-------------------------------------------------+------------+
```

3.4. Lodging Criteria

Criteria	Required
The IETF Hotel(s) are within close proximity to each other and the Venue.	"Mandatory"
The guest rooms at the IETF Hotel(s) are sufficient in number to house 1/3 or more of projected meeting attendees.	"Mandatory"
Overflow Hotels can be placed under contract, within convenient travel time of the Venue and at a variety of guest room rates.	"Mandatory"
The Venue environs include budget hotels within convenient travel time, cost, and effort.	"Mandatory"
The IETF Hotel(s) permit easy wheelchair access.	"Mandatory"
The IETF Hotel(s) are accessible by people with disabilities.	"Important"
The IETF Hotel should have a social space that serves as a lounge, conducive to planned and accidental meetings and chatting, as well as working online. This is often an open bar, restaurant, or seating area, preferably on the ground/entrance floor, but can also be a meeting room, arranged to facilitate communal interaction among attendees.	"Desired"

3.5. Food and Beverage Criteria

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+-------------------------------------------------------+-------------+
| Criteria                                              | Required    |
+-------------------------------------------------------+-------------+
| The Venue environs, which includes both onsite, as    | "Mandatory" |
| well as areas within a reasonable walking distance    |             |
| or conveniently accessible by a short taxi, bus, or   |             |
| subway ride, have convenient and inexpensive          |             |
| choices for meals that can accommodate a wide range   |             |
| of dietary requirements.                              |             |
+-------------------------------------------------------+-------------+
| The Venue environs include grocery shopping that      | "Important" |
| will accommodate a wide range of dietary              |             |
| requirements, within a reasonable walking distance,   |             |
| or conveniently accessible by a short taxi, bus, or   |             |
| subway ride.                                          |             |
+-------------------------------------------------------+-------------+
| A range of attendee's health-related and religion-    | "Mandatory" |
| related dietary requirements can be satisfied with    |             |
| robust and flexible onsite service or through         |             |
| access to an adequate grocery.                        |             |
+-------------------------------------------------------+-------------+
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4. Venue Selection Roles

The formal structure of IETF administrative support functions is documented in BCP 101 [RFC4071], [RFC4371], [RFC7691]. The reader is expected to be familiar with the entities and roles defined by that document, in particular for the IASA, ISOC, IAOC and IAD. This section covers the meeting selection related roles of these and other parties that participate in the process. Note that roles beyond meeting selection, e.g., actually running and reporting on meetings, are outside the scope of this document.

4.1. The IETF Community

While perhaps obvious, it is important to note that IETF meetings serve all those who contribute to the work of the IETF. This includes those who attend meetings, from newcomer to frequent attendee, to those who participate remotely, as well as those who do not attend but contribute to new RFCs. Potential new contributors are also considered in the process.

IETF consensus, with respect to this meeting Venue selection process is judged via standard IETF process and not by any other means, e.g., surveys. Surveys are used to gather information related to meeting venues, but not to measure consensus or to be reported as consensus.

4.2. **IESG and IETF Chair**

   The Internet Engineering Steering Group (IESG) comprises the IETF
   Area Directors and the IETF Chair. Along with the IAB, the IESG is
   responsible for the management of the IETF, and is the standards
   approval board for the IETF, as described in BCP9 [RFC2026]. This
   means that the IESG sets high level policies related to, among other
   things, meeting venues. The IETF Chair, among other things, relays
   these IESG-determined policies to the IAOC. The IETF Chair is also a
   member of the IAOC.

4.3. **The Internet Society**

   With respect to IETF meetings, the Internet Society (ISOC):

   o Executes all Venue contracts on behalf of the IETF at the request
      of the IAOC

   o Solicits meeting sponsorships

   o Collects all meeting-related revenues, including registration
      fees, sponsorships, hotel commissions, and other miscellaneous
      revenues

   ISOC also provides accounting services, such as invoicing and monthly
   financial statements.

4.4. **IETF Administrative Oversight Committee**

   The IETF Administrative Oversight Committee (IAOC) has the
   responsibility to oversee and select IETF meeting venues. It
   instructs the IAD to work with the Internet Society to write the
   relevant contracts. It approves the IETF meetings calendar.

4.5. **IETF Administrative Support Activity**

   The IETF Administrative Support Activity (IASA) supports the meeting
   selection process. This includes identifying, qualifying and
   reporting on potential meeting sites, as well as supporting meeting
   Venue contract negotiation. The IETF Secretariat is part of the IASA
   under the management of the IAD.

4.6. **IETF Administrative Director**

   The IETF Administrative Director (IAD) coordinates and supports the
   activities of the IETF Secretariat, the IAOC Meetings Committee and
   the IAOC to ensure the timely execution of the meeting process. This
   includes participating in the IAOC Meeting Subcommittee and ensuring

its efforts are documented, leading Venue contract negotiation, and
coordinating contract execution with ISOC. The meetings budget is
managed by the IAD.

4.7. IAOC Meeting Committee

The fundamental purpose of the Meetings Committee is to participate
in the Venue selection process, and to formulate recommendations to
the IAOC regarding meeting sites. It also tracks the meetings
sponsorship program, recommends extraordinary meeting-related
expenses, and recommends the IETF meetings calendar to the IAOC. The
charter of the committee is at: <https://iaoc.ietf.org/
committees.html#meetings>.

Membership in the Meetings Committee is at the discretion of the
IAOC; it includes an IAOC appointed chair, the IETF Administrative
Director (IAD), IAOC members, representatives from the Secretariat,
and interested members of the community.

5. Venue Selection Steps

The following is a guideline sequence for identifying and contracting
a Venue.

5.1. Identification

Four years out, a process identifies cities that might be candidates
for meetings:

a. The IAOC selects regions and dates for meetings.

b. A list of target cities per region is provided to the
    Secretariat, with host preferences, if known.

c. Potential venues in preferred cities are identified and receive
    preliminary investigation, including reviews of Official Advisory
    Sources, consultation with specialty travel services, frequent
    travelers and local contacts to identify possible barriers to
    holding a successful meeting in the target cities.

d. Investigated cities and findings are provided by the Secretariat
    to the Meetings Committee for further review. Meetings Committee
    makes a recommendation to the IAOC of investigated/target cities
    to consider further as well as issues identified and the results
    of research conducted.

5.2. **Consultation**

   Preliminary question:

   a.   The IAOC asks the community whether there are any barriers to
        holding a successful meeting in any of the target cities.
        Community responses are reviewed and concerns investigated.

   b.   On a public web page, the IAOC lists all candidate cities, when
        community input was solicited, and a summarization of the review
        results.

   c.   The IAOC then provides a list of vetted cities to the Meetings
        Committee to pursue as potential meeting locations.

5.3. **Qualification**

   Visit:

   a.   Secretariat assesses "vetted" target cities to determine
        availability and conformance to criteria.

   b.   Meetings Committee approves potential cities for site
        qualification visit.

   c.   Site qualification visits are arranged by Secretariat and
        preliminary negotiations are undertaken with selected potential
        sites.

   d.   Site qualification visit is conducted using the checklist from
        <https://iaoc.ietf.org/meetings-committee/venue-selection.html>;
        the site visit team prepares a site report and discusses it with
        the Meetings Committee.

5.4. **Negotiation**

   2.75 - 3 years out, initiate contract negotiations:

   a.   The Meetings Committee reviews the Venue options based on Venue
        selection criteria and recommends a Venue to the IAOC. Only
        options that meet all Mandatory labeled criteria might be
        recommended.

   b.   IAOC selects a Venue for contracting as well as a back-up
        contracting Venue, if available.

   c. Secretariat negotiates with selected Venue. IAD reviews contract
       and requests IAOC and ISOC approval of contract and authority for
       Secretariat to execute contract on ISOC's behalf.

   d. Contracts are executed.

5.5. Final Check

   ~3 Months prior to the Meeting, the site is checked for continued
   availability and conformance to expectations.

   a. Secretariat reviews current status of the contracted meeting
       location to confirm there is no change in the location status and
       to identify possible new barriers to holding a successful meeting
       in the contracted city and provides findings to the IAOC.

   b. IAOC considers the information provided and evaluates the risk -
       if significant risk is identified, the Contingency Planning Flow
       Chart (<https://iaoc.ietf.org/meetings-committee/venue-
       selection.html>) is followed, if current risk is not significant,
       the situation is monitored through the meeting to ensure there is
       no significant change.

6. Text carried forward

   This document is being reorganized along an outline proposed by
   Alissa Cooper. In preceding sections, her comment is made explicit.
   That is intended to be removed when the reorganization is complete.
   Text in this section is left over and will potentially be moved to
   preceding sections.

6.1. Venue Selection Process

   The process of selecting a Venue is described below and is based on
   <https://iaoc.ietf.org/venue-selection.html>.

6.1.1. Venue Selection Principles

   heading paragraph moved to Section 2.

   Who are we? We are computer scientists, engineers, network
      operators, academics, and other interested parties sharing the
      goal of making the Internet work better. At this time, the vast
      majority of attendees come from North America, Western and Central
      Europe, and Eastern Asia. We also have participants from other
      regions.

   Why do we meet? Moved to Section 2.

Where do we meet? moved to Section 2.1

Inclusiveness: Moved to Section 2.1.

Internet Access: Moved to Section 2.1.

Focus: Moved to Section 2.1.

Economics: Moved to Section 2.1.

Political considerations: moved to Section 2.2 and reworded per
   Alissa's suggested text.

6.1.2. Venue Selection Objectives

Venues for meetings are selected to advance the objectives of the
IETF, which are discussed in <https://www.ietf.org/about/
mission.html>. The IAOC's supporting objectives include:

o Advancing standards development

o Facilitating participation by active contributors

o Sharing the travel pain; balancing travel time and expense across
   the regions from where IETF participants are based.

o Encouraging new contributors

o Generating funds to support IETF operations in support of
   standards development, including the Secretariat, IASA, and the
   RFC Editor.

There is an explicit intent to rotate meeting locations equally among
several places in accordance with IETF policy. However, a consistent
balance is sometimes difficult to achieve. The IAOC has an objective
of setting the Regions 4 years in advance, meeting in Europe, North
America, and Asia, with a possibility of occasionally meeting outside
those regions. This policy, known as the 1-1-1* model, is set by the
IESG, <https://iaoc.ietf.org/minutes/2010-11-10-iaoc-minutes.txt>,
and is further discussed in [I-D.krishnan-ietf-meeting-policy]. The
reason for the multi-year timeframe is maximization of opportunities;
the smaller the time available to qualify and contract a conference
Venue, the more stress imposed on the qualification process, and the
greater the risk of not finding a suitable Venue or paying more for
it.

There is no formal policy regarding rotation of regions, the time of
year for a meeting in a specific region, or whether a meeting in a

non-targeted region replaces a visit to one of the regions during
that year.

The IETF chair drives selection of "*" locations, i.e., venues
outside the usual regions, and requires community input. These
selections usually arise from evidence of growing interest and
participation in the new region. Expressions of interest from
possible hosts also factor into the meeting site selection process,
for any meeting.

Increased participation in the IETF from those other regions,
electronically or in person, could result in basic changes to the
overall pattern, and we encourage those who would like for that to
occur to encourage participation from those regions.

6.1.3. Venue Selection Criteria

Heading text moved to Section 3.

6.1.3.1. Venue City Considerations

o Consideration will be given to whether it makes sense to enter
   into a multi-event contract with the Venue to optimize meeting and
   attendee benefits, i.e., reduce administrative costs and reduce
   direct attendee costs. [Would be nice]

6.1.3.2. Basic Venue Criteria

o moved to Section 3.2

o The Facility and Hotels can be put under contract. The subsequent
   failure to put a selected Venue under contract will result in a
   re-evaluation of the venues and selection for the meeting.
   [Mandatory]

6.1.4. Venue Selection Phases

6.1.5. Experience Notes

a. The foregoing process works with reasonable certainty in North
    America and Europe.

b. Experience to date for Asia and Latin America is that contracts
    take longer and often will not be executed more than two years in
    advance of the meeting. While the IETF will have the first
    option for the dates, for reasons not completely understood
    contracts won't be executed.

6.2. Transparency

BCP 101 requires transparency in IASA process and contracts, and
thereby of the meetings committee. BCP 101 also states that the IAOC
approves what information is to remain confidential. Therefore any
information produced by the meetings committee or related to meetings
that individuals believe is confidential, e.g., venue contracts, must
be confirmed to be confidential by the IAOC.

7. IANA Considerations

This memo asks the IANA for no new parameters.

8. Security Considerations

This note proposes no protocols, and therefore no new protocol
insecurities.

9. Privacy Considerations

This note reveals no personally identifying information apart from
its authorship.

10. Acknowledgements

This document was originally assembled and edited by Fred Baker.
Additional commentary came from Jari Arkko, Scott Bradner, and Alissa
Cooper. It was discussed on mtgvenue@ietf.org.

11. References

11.1. Normative References

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[RFC4371]   Carpenter, B., Ed. and L. Lynch, Ed., "BCP 101 Update for
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11.2. Informative References

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[RFC3935]   Alvestrand, H., "A Mission Statement for the IETF",
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Appendix A. Change Log

2016-01-12: Initial version

2016-01-21: Update to reflect https://iaoc.ietf.org/documents/
   VenueSelectionCriteriaJan2016.pdf and
   https://iaoc.ietf.org/documents/VenueSelectionProcess11Jan16.pdf,
   accessed from https://iaoc.ietf.org/private/privatemeetings.html.

2016-02-23: Reorganize and capture IAOC Meetings Committee
   discussions.

2016-03-03: Final from Design Team.

2016-03-17: First update incorporating mtgvenue@ietf.org comments

2016-05-20 Updated in accordance with editing by Laura Nugent, Dave
   Crocker, Lou Berger, Fred Baker, and others.

posting as working group draft August 2, 2016

Reorganized per Alissa Cooper outline Work in progress. In
   addition, contributors were re-organized to be authors.

   2016-10-28 Editor changeover. Further alignment with guidance by
      Alissa Cooper, Andrew Sullivan and the mtgvenue working group.
      Many various changes.

   2016-11-16 Extensive editorial, format and polishing pass. A few
      substance changes, including food section.

   2016-11-30 Additions based on working group meeting and off-list
      discussions; more editorial and format hacking.

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