

auDA Events and Community Activities Strategy

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.auDA
.AU DOMAIN ADMINISTRATION LTD

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Summary

.au Domain Administration Ltd (auDA) is the administrator and industry self-regulatory policy body for the .au country code Top Level Domain (.au ccTLD), one of the most trusted and secure domains in the world.

With the Internet becoming increasingly critical to the economic and social activities for Australian businesses and internet users, auDA has an important role in providing solid foundations in the policy framework and infrastructure for the .au namespace.

The purpose of this strategy is to allow auDA to expand its stakeholder network by engaging with key audiences to ensure that the organisation is representative of the Australian internet community.

auDA Associate Membership launched on 15 April 2019 as part of its response to the Review of the .au Domain Administration in 2018 (the Review). This new membership structure incorporates exclusive member benefits and is free for anyone to join with a connection to Australia.

The Review further required that auDA “publish conclusions from its review of community activities and publish an implementation plan on future community activities” (recommendation 20).

A satisfied, engaged and active membership base and stakeholder network will provide further stability for the .au namespace and auDA, and to ensure that .au continues to be a safe, fair and secure digital landscape for all Australian internet users.

Objectives of this Strategy

1. Publish conclusions from auDA’s review of community activities
2. Diversify and increase auDA’s Associate Membership
3. Build awareness of and support for auDA’s role in key sectors of the Australian internet community
4. Increase engagement in auDA stakeholder-focused consultation activities

Key audiences

The .au namespace is relevant to a diverse set of stakeholders, all of who have varied expectations on its administration and management. auDA’s key audiences include:

- auDA members
- Australian internet users and the broader public
- Businesses, related to the DNS industry
- Government agencies
- International, enabling bodies e.g ICANN, APTLD

Review of Community Activities

Table 5 of the Review outlines three initiatives which auDA previously administered and which the review described as community activities, namely:

- The Australian Internet Governance Forum (auIGF)
- Australia and New Zealand Internet Awards (ANZIAs)
- auDA Foundation

A requirement of the Review under recommendation 20 was that auDA “publish conclusions from its review of community activities and publish an implementation plan on future community activities”.

The most recent (last) auIGF was held in Melbourne on the 11th and 12th of October, 2016. An internal review of the 2016 auIGF concluded:

- the event was poorly attended with only 97 delegates in total attending the 2-day event, against 132 registrations;
- online participation was poor with the only 21 online participants registering for the keynote presentations;
- the cost associated with holding the event including venue hire, hospitality, speaker travel, director travel, participant travel (including many subsidised auDA member attendees), logistics and staff costs exceeded \$300,000 resulting in a per-capita investment per attendee exceeding \$3,000;
- preparation for the event required the equivalent of two auDA staff full time for three months preceding the event;
- there were little, if any, tangible outcomes from the event and no process for any policy or other decisions to be further considered in auDA’s policy review process or other forums resulting in meaningful change to .au and Australia’s internet community. This was a significant deficiency with the auIGF as there was no emphasis on process to measure impact or success;
- the Internet Governance Forum-type event was already well served with annual regional (Asia-Pacific Internet Governance Forum) and global Internet Governance Forums;
- the Australian technology sector had become so saturated with events, conferences, awards and symposiums that the auIGF did not provide a sufficient point of difference to justify the event’s ongoing sustainability, and;
- there was little if any participation from the internet and technology industry and the capacity to obtain co-funding, sponsorship and participation was limited due to the saturation of other, more modern and responsive events.

Overall it was concluded that while originally well-intentioned, the auIGF had become a niche event with limited broad reach and involvement. The costs associated to maintain the

event, combined with its poor and diminishing participation and lack of co-sponsors and organisers, resulted in the event's discontinuance.

Similarly the ANZIAS, while hosted on alternative years by auDA and InternetNZ, was equally expensive to organise and host, and did not provide any point of difference to other awards programs in technology related sectors. It must be noted that InternetNZ did not oppose the discontinuation of the ANZIA's and has not initiated a separate awards program.

The auDA Foundation has been reconstituted with a new Board and interim Chair, and is continuing to review its governance, structure and grants program. It is anticipated that further announcements will be made in Q3/4 2019.

As an alternative to the auGF and ANZIA's, auDA has actively sponsored, participated in and assisted in organising the following events:

- 2017 and 2018 AIIA iAwards
- 2019 PIVOT Summit
- 2019 Edge of Web Conference
- 2019 Australian Web Industry Awards

As outlined in this Strategy, auDA will accept proposals and applications from community and industry associations in regards to sponsoring and/or jointly organising events consistent with auDA's activities and Terms of Endorsement.

Event sponsorship and partnership

A curated selection of relevant events is a key way auDA can increase awareness of its role and drive uptake of membership from across Australia.

A sponsorship/partnership approach allows auDA to achieve its membership and engagement objectives without duplicating or competing with existing events while requiring significantly less resources than hosting national events.

auDA's approach to sponsorships and partnerships will be to work with a variety of events around Australia, targeted at different stakeholder segments.

Successful execution of sponsorships will involve auDA proactively engaging with event organisers to ensure our sponsorships opportunities are maximised through timely delivery of commitments and utilisation of our existing media channels.

auDA will assess the effectiveness of these sponsorships and partnerships against its objectives and determine whether these are suitable for auDA to be involved for the following year. These performance reviews will ensure auDA continues to maximise its involvement in supporting the Australian internet community.

Current sponsorships and partnerships

auDA currently sponsors a range of events and initiatives:

iAwards - the annual National Program Sponsor for the event hosted by Australian Information Industry Association (AIIA) that recognises excellence on innovative projects in the digital landscape.

Pivot Summit - supporting partner for a two-day event in Geelong for regional start-ups, entrepreneurs and small businesses.

AWIA Awards and Edge of the Web Conference - gold sponsor supporting the event held in Gold Coast for business owners and key decision makers in the Australian web design and search industries.

CommsDay Summit - prize donation for the event hosted in Sydney by Telco Together Foundation that attracts telco professionals.

Australian Security Summit – AuSec2019 - sponsorship for the event held in Canberra that attracts information security professionals in the academic, government and public sector.

Other proposed events

ACOMM Awards - the awards ceremony held in Sydney supports excellence and innovation in Australia's communications ecosystem.

ACS Annual Conference - the annual conference held in Canberra provides branding and exhibition opportunities in the ICT industry.

AISA Australian Cyber Conference - the annual conference held in Melbourne provides the latest information on cyber security issues in the community.

Regular Associate Member networking events

auDA hosts regular events for Associate Members to attend providing them with the opportunity to hear with guest speakers presenting on a range of topics that are relevant to the Australia digital landscape and chance to network with likeminded peers.

These events help reinforce the perception that auDA provides useful/essential resources on a regular basis, as well as provide opportunity for face-to-face interaction. They also are free to auDA members only, with others paying a small fee to attend, so are a solid example of the value of auDA membership.

The hosts of these events can be from within the auDA membership itself (providing further opportunity for members to expand their reach), auDA team and affiliates, partners and special guests purposely engaged for a particular topic.

These events will assist in keeping members informed on the latest industry developments and provide engagement for policy and direction in the .au namespace

auDA's first Associate Member event was held in Melbourne in April 2019 and has a range of events planned over the next 12 months in other Australian cities. These events will be communicated to auDA's Associate Members and published in auDA's quarterly newsletters.

Internet Community Event Grants

auDA recognises that there are many events outside of those that we've identified but which align with our aims of enabling Australia's digital economy.

To this end auDA has developed an event grant programme aimed at supporting relevant digital industry events, both emerging and established, with financial assistance.

It is proposed that applicants will be able to receive up to \$10,000 per event. Any amount greater than this will be at the sole discretion of auDA management.

To apply for a grant, organisers will need to submit a written application for their event outlining the event's activities, objectives and how the auDA contribution will be used.

How to apply

Initial expressions of interest can be lodged using the General Advisory Standing Committee submission form:

- [General Advisory Standing Committee submission form](#)

In response, applicants will be sent an application form to be completed and emailed back for assessment.

Application Assessment

Generally, applications will be assessed on a case by case basis by the auDA's General Advisory Standing Committee (GASC) who will then recommend to auDA management whether to support the event. auDA management reserve the right to assess applications unilaterally, based on the same application criteria as per below.

Successful applicants will be required to adhere to a number of conditions in accepting the grant and will provide a report to the GASC on its outcomes.

auDA will present a quarterly performance report to the Board on its involvement and reach in its efforts to improve brand awareness and engagement with its key stakeholders.

Objective	Metrics
Diversify and increase Associate Membership	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Associate Member growth • Membership applications analytics: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ industry ○ location ○ source • joinauda.org.au website traffic
Build awareness of and support for auDA's role in key sectors of the Australian internet community	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Membership applications analytics: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ industry ○ location ○ source • joinauda.org.au website traffic • Member event attendance • Sponsored events and activities reach
Increase engagement in auDA stakeholder-focused consultation activities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Member event attendance • Engagement in policy consultation activities/auDA committees/member processes

Application process

auDA will accept applications from suitable community and industry associations at any stage, commencing 1 July 2019. An application should be addressed to the "General Advisory Standing Committee" (GASC) and include:

- The organisation's details (name, address, contact, ABN etc)
- The amount being sought and an outline of the event
- An overview of how the event aligns with auDA's objectives as per above and how the organisation will measure impact
- A statement of any other co-funding or sponsorship being sought or committed.

auDA's Membership and Marketing Officer can assist an organisation complete their application if required. Following auDA management's initial assessment, the GASC will meet and assess the application and a decision will be provided in writing. All applications and grants awarded, unless commercial-in-confidence or requested otherwise, will be published on the auDA website.