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RFC 8989
Additional Criteria for Nominating Committee Eligibility

Abstract

This document defines a process experiment under RFC 3933 that temporarily updates the criteria for qualifying volunteers to participate in the IETF Nominating Committee. It therefore also updates the criteria for qualifying signatories to a community recall petition. The purpose is to make the criteria more flexible in view of increasing remote participation in the IETF and a reduction in face-to-face meetings. The experiment is of fixed duration and will apply to one, or at most two, consecutive Nominating Committee cycles, starting in 2021. This document temporarily varies the rules in RFC 8713.

Status of This Memo

This document is not an Internet Standards Track specification; it is published for examination, experimental implementation, and evaluation.

This document defines an Experimental Protocol for the Internet community. This document is a product of the Internet Engineering Task Force (IETF). It represents the consensus of the IETF community. It has received public review and has been approved for publication by the Internet Engineering Steering Group (IESG). Not all documents approved by the IESG are candidates for any level of Internet Standard; see Section 2 of RFC 7841.

Information about the current status of this document, any errata, and how to provide feedback on it may be obtained at https://www.rfc-editor.org/info/rfc8989.

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Table of Contents

1. Introduction

According to [RFC8713], the IETF Nominating Committee (NomCom) is populated from a pool of volunteers with a specified record of attendance at IETF plenary meetings, which were assumed to be face-to-face meetings when that document was approved. In view of the cancellation of the IETF 107, 108, 109, and 110 face-to-face meetings; the risk of future cancellations; the probability of less-frequent face-to-face meetings in the future in support of sustainability; and a general increase in remote participation, this document defines a process experiment [RFC3933] of fixed duration (described in Section 2) to use modified and additional criteria to qualify volunteers.

During this experiment, the eligibility criteria for signing recall petitions -- which [RFC8713] defines to be the same as those for NomCom eligibility -- are consequently also modified as described in this document. This experiment has no other effect on the recall process.

2. Term and Evaluation of the Experiment

The cancellation of the in-person IETF 107 through 110 meetings means that the current criteria are in any case seriously perturbed for at least 2 years. The experiment therefore needs to start as soon as possible. However, the experiment did not apply to the selection of the 2020-2021 NomCom, which was performed according to [RFC8788].

The experiment will initially cover the IETF NomCom cycle that begins in 2021. As soon as the entire 2021-2022 NomCom is seated, the IESG must consult the 2021-2022 NomCom Chair and the 2020-2021 NomCom Chair (who will maintain NomCom confidentiality) and publish a report on the results of the experiment. Points to be considered are whether the experiment has produced a sufficiently large and diverse pool of individuals, whether enough of those individuals have volunteered to produce a representative NomCom with good knowledge of the IETF, and whether all the goals in Section 3 have been met. If possible, a comparison with results from the previous procedure (i.e., RFC 8713) should be made.

The IESG must then also begin a community discussion of whether to:

1. Amend [RFC8713] in time for the 2022-2023 NomCom cycle; or
2. Prolong the current experiment for a second and final year with additional clarifications specific to the 2022-2023 cycle; or
3. Run a different experiment for the next nominating cycle; or
4. Revert to [RFC8713].

The IESG will announce the results of the consensus determination of this discussion in good time for the 2022-2023 NomCom cycle to commence.

In the event of prolongation of this experiment for a second year, the IESG will repeat the consultation, report, and community discussion process accordingly, but this document lapses at the end of the 2022-2023 NomCom cycle.

3. Goals

The goals of the modified and additional criteria are as follows:

- Mitigate the issue of active remote (or, rarely, in-person) participants being disenfranchised in the NomCom and recall processes.
- Enable the selection of a 2021-2022 NomCom, and possibly a 2022-2023 NomCom, when it is impossible for anyone to have attended 3 out of the last 5 IETF meetings in person.
- Prepare for an era in which face-to-face plenary meetings are less frequent (thus extending the issue to many, perhaps a majority, of participants).
- Ensure that those eligible have enough current understanding of IETF practices and people to make informed decisions.

- Provide algorithmic criteria, so that the Secretariat can check them mechanically against available data.

4. Criteria

This experiment specifies several alternative paths to qualification, replacing the single criterion in Section 4.14 of [RFC8713]. Any one of the paths is sufficient, unless the person is otherwise disqualified under Section 4.15 of [RFC8713]:

Path 1: The person has registered for and attended 3 out of the last 5 IETF meetings. For meetings held entirely online, online registration and attendance count as attendance. For the 2021-2022 NomCom, the meetings concerned will be IETF 106, 107, 108, 109, and 110. Attendance is as determined by the record keeping of the Secretariat for in-person meetings and is based on being a registered person who logged in for at least one session of an online IETF meeting.

Path 2: The person has been a Working Group Chair or Secretary within the 3 years prior to the day the call for NomCom volunteers is sent to the community.

Path 3: The person has been a listed author or editor (on the front page) of at least two IETF Stream RFCs within the last 5 years prior to the day the call for NomCom volunteers is sent to the community. An Internet-Draft that has been approved by the IESG and is in the RFC Editor queue counts the same as a published RFC, with the relevant date being the date the draft was added to the RFC Editor queue. For avoidance of doubt, the 5-year timer extends back to the date 5 years before the date when the call for NomCom volunteers is sent to the community.

Notes:

- Path 1 corresponds approximately to [RFC8713], modified as per [RFC8788].
- Path 3 includes approved drafts, since some documents spend a long time in the RFC Editor's queue.
- Path 3 extends to 5 years because it commonly takes 3 or 4 years for new documents to be approved in the IETF Stream, so 3 years would be too short a sampling period.
- All the required data are available to the IETF Secretariat from meeting attendance records or the IETF Datatracker.

4.1. Clarifying Detail

Path 1 does not qualify people who register and attend face-to-face meetings remotely. That is, it does not qualify remote attendees at IETF 106, because that meeting took place prior to any question of cancelling meetings.

If the IESG prolongs this experiment for a second year, as allowed by Section 2, the IESG must also clarify how Path 1 applies to IETF 111, 112, and 113.

5. Omitted Criteria

During community discussions of this document, certain criteria were rejected as not truly indicating effective IETF participation or as being unlikely to significantly expand the volunteer pool. These included authorship of individual or Working-Group-adopted Internet-Drafts, sending email to IETF lists, reviewing drafts, acting as a BOF Chair, and acting in an external role for the IETF (liaisons, etc.).

One path -- service in the IESG or IAB within the last 5 years -- was found to have no benefit, since historical data show that such people always appear to be qualified by another path.

Since the criteria must be measurable by the Secretariat, no qualitative evaluation of an individual's contributions is considered.

6. IANA Considerations

This document has no IANA actions.

7. Security Considerations

This document should not affect the security of the Internet.

8. Normative References

[RFC3933] Klensin, J. and S. Dawkins, "A Model for IETF Process Experiments", BCP 93, RFC 3933, DOI 10.17487/RFC3933, November 2004, <https://www.rfc-editor.org/info/rfc3933>.

[RFC8713] Kucherawy, M., Ed., Hinden, R., Ed., and J. Livingood, Ed., "IAB, IESG, IETF Trust, and IETF LLC Selection, Confirmation, and Recall Process: Operation of the IETF Nominating and Recall Committees", BCP 10, RFC 8713, DOI 10.17487/RFC8713, February 2020, <https://www.rfc-editor.org/info/rfc8713>.

[RFC8788] Leiba, B., "Eligibility for the 2020-2021 Nominating Committee", BCP 10, RFC 8788, DOI 10.17487/RFC8788, May 2020, <https://www.rfc-editor.org/info/rfc8788>.

Appendix A. Available Data

An analysis of how some of the above criteria would affect the number of NomCom-qualified participants if applied in August 2020 has been performed. The results are presented below in Venn diagrams as Figures 1 through 4. Note that the numbers shown differ slightly from manual

counts due to database mismatches, and the results were not derived at the normal time of the year for NomCom formation. The lists of remote attendees for IETF 107 and 108 were used, although not yet available on the IETF web site.

A specific difficulty is that the databases involved inevitably contain a few inconsistencies, such as duplicate entries, differing versions of a person's name, and impersonal authors. (For example, "IAB" qualifies under Path 3, and one actual volunteer artificially appears not to qualify.) This underlines that automatically generated lists of eligible and qualified people will always require manual checking.

The first two diagrams illustrate how the new paths (2 and 3) affect eligibility numbers compared to the meeting participation path (1). Figure 1 gives the raw numbers, and Figure 2 removes those disqualified according to RFC 8713. The actual 2020 volunteer pool is shown too.

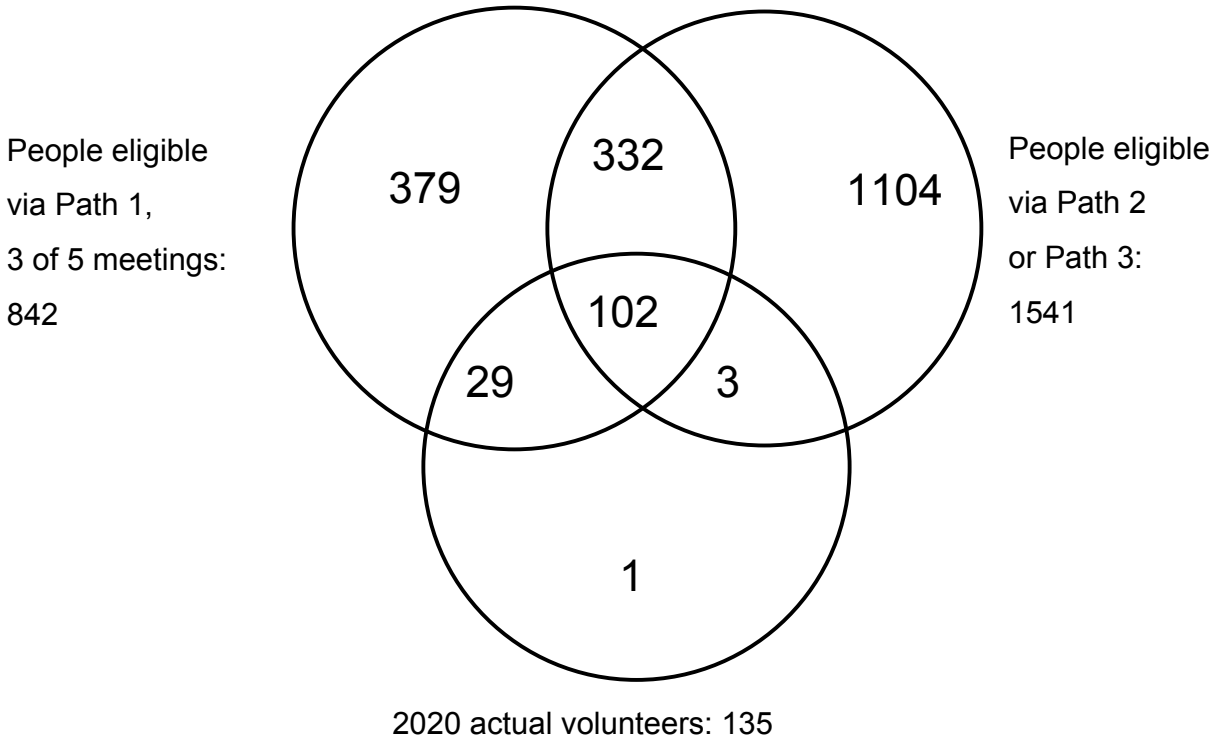

Figure 1: All Paths, before Disqualification

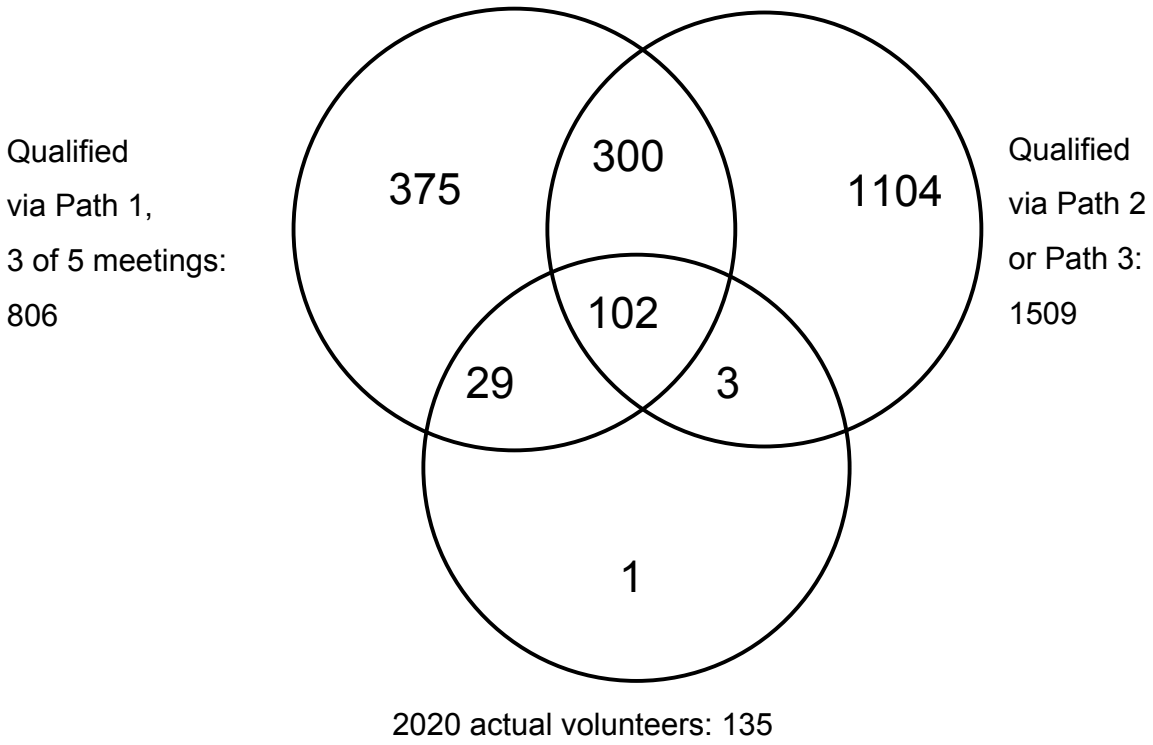

Figure 2: All Paths, after Disqualification

Figures 3 and 4 illustrate how the new paths (2 and 3) interact with each other, also before and after disqualifications. The discarded path via IESG and IAB service (Section 5) is also shown, as Path "I". The data clearly show that Path "I" has no practical value.

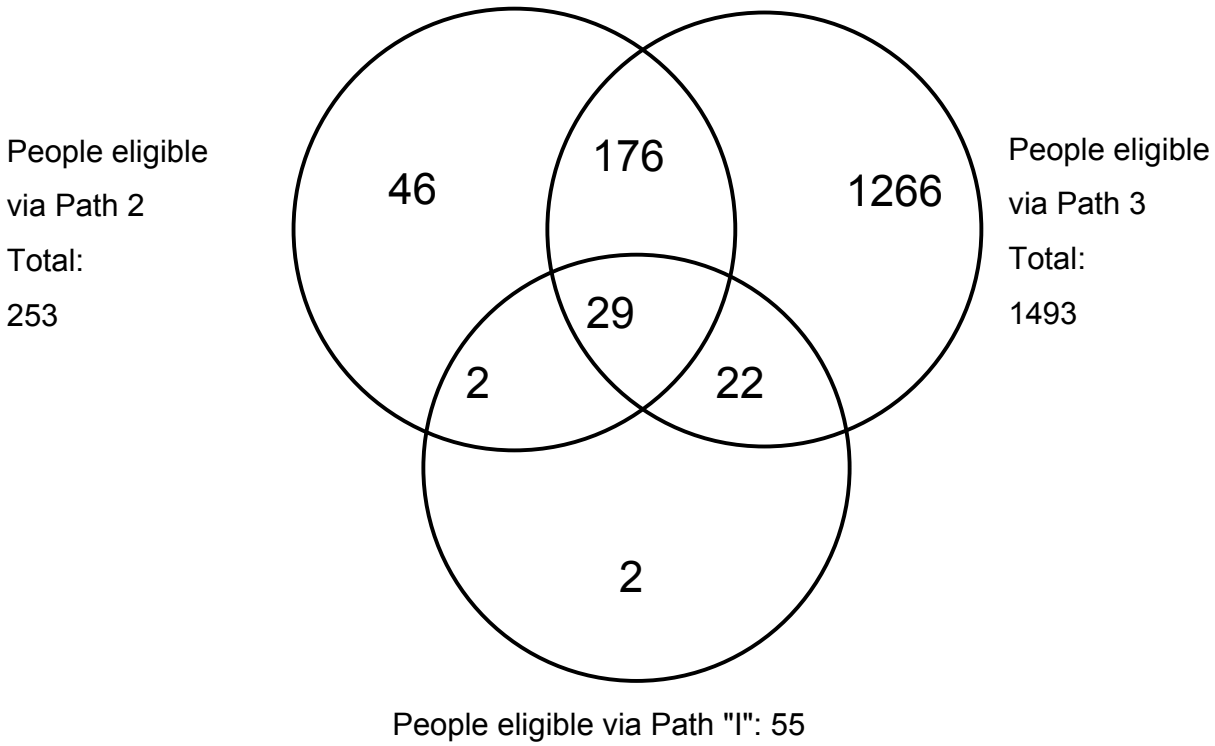

Figure 3: New Paths, before Disqualification

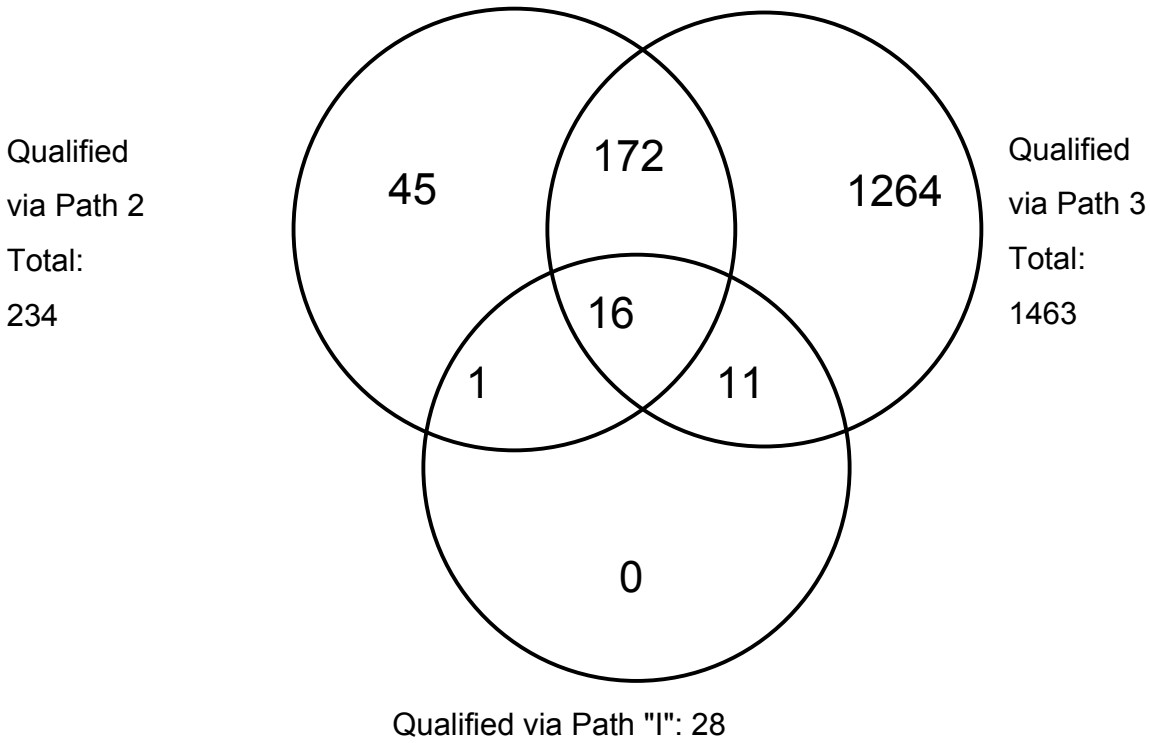

Figure 4: New Paths, after Disqualification

Acknowledgements

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The data analysis was mainly done by Robert Sparks. Carsten Bormann showed how to represent Venn diagrams in ASCII art.

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