Meeting Minutes of the 2024 Annual General Assembly meeting of the Internet Society Switzerland Chapter

Wednesday, May 15, 2024
18:30 - 20:30
Hybrid
AKAD Mittelland, Aarbergstr. 46, Biel/Bienne

Agenda: https://www.isoc.ch/events/general-assembly-2024/
Slides: ISOC-CH GA 2024
Activity report: ISOC.ch Activity Report 2024

Welcome, explanation of the voting procedures, election of vote counters

Gideon Chonia volunteers to count votes. Voting is recorded by counting the votes in the room. There is no online attendance so proxies are not counted. There are 13 participants, all in person.

The Minutes are taken by Berna Alp & Stephane Coillet-Matillon

Approval the General Assembly 2024 minutes

The meeting minutes are approved:
12 in favor
0 against
1 abstained

Activity report and financial statement 2024

Panos presents the activity report. Please refer to the activity report to learn more about the details.

Panos then gives the floor to Loïc, ISOC CH' Treasurer, who presents his Profits & Losses report. A small loss is incurred due to the cost of onboarding our new accountant.

There are no questions and **the report and financial statement are approved (13/0/0)**

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2024 Budget

No major changes compared to last year. The budget, strictly for ISOC CH activities. The budget for NGI0 has not been finalized as the contract signing has been delayed due to administrative issues beyond ISOC CH's control.

Q: Why is ISOC's admin funding at CHF 2'800.- and not the maximum amount of 3'000.-?
A: Since we did not fully utilize last year's funds, ISOC has accordingly adjusted their funding allocation.

Q: Do the board members have "Director's Liability Insurance?" This question arises as the number of in-person events increases, making it prudent to consider such insurance to provide coverage for board members.
A: This item will be added to the agenda for discussion at one of the upcoming board meetings.

Q: Are accounting fees included in the budget proposal?
A: Yes.

Q: We have a significant amount of cash on hand. Is it invested in something low-risk, like a basic savings account, and not in stocks?
A: No, our treasurer will investigate whether the rates are favorable enough to consider making a switch.

A discussion was held regarding the Swiss IGF budget line item. Swiss IGF request for funding came too late, which led to a reduced funding on our part. Markus Kummer informed us that ISOC CH was not closely involved in organizing the IGF, reflecting their limited inclusion of us in their process. He also questioned how closely the Swiss Chapter wishes to align with the Swiss IGF, noting that if ISOC CH provides funding, it should also have a role in shaping the agenda. The GV agrees to contribute with Spende to the IGF 2024 with 1000CHF, instead of 3500 CHF.

The budget is approved (13/0/0)

Board release, Board and Oversight committee elections
The Board is released (13/0/0)

The current board all run for re-election. There was a call for candidates but nobody stepped forward.

Chair: Panayotis Antoniadis

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Vice-Chair: [Marianthe Stavridou](#)
Secretary: [Berna Alp](#)
Treasurer: [Loïc Modoux](#)
Organizational Member: [Stéphane Coillet-Matillon](#)

The Board is re-elected (12/0/1)

Q: Are our accountant professionals, or are they members? Is the oversight committee likewise outsourced to an audit firm?
A: Accounting entries are currently managed by the treasurer (Loïc) and reviewed by the elected OC, but this may change as larger funding comes in from NGI0.

NGI0 accounting and oversight: Prompted by a question regarding the outsourcing of NGI0 auditing, Berna expresses her preference for having the NGI0 project accounting audited by an external body. This approach would not only alleviate the burden on the oversight committee's volunteers but also ensure independence from the accounting firm handling the actual work."

Current oversight committee:
Olivier Crepin- Leblond
Alexander Suter
Michael Hausding (deputy)

The Oversight committee is re-apppointed (11/0/2)

Special Topics: NGI0 Commons Fund (32')

Panos provides an overview of the NGI0 Commons Fund, which adopts a hands-off, "pay for code" approach, offering grants ranging from 5,000 to 50,000 EUR. Michiel Leenaars manages the fund and has successfully secured new funding of 21.6 million EUR for the next three years, focusing on free software. There is also a smaller, similar initiative known as NGI Commons.

Q: Can organizations outside of the EU apply and get funding?
A: Yes, if they use a EU-based fiscal sponsor. The whole process is very flexible.

Panos outlines the role of the ISOC CH Chapter and mentioned that he will develop an implementation plan, as the chapter will be managing various application and technology dossiers. While there is a possibility that ISOC headquarters may have reservations about us associating our name with non-ISOC activities, we are committed to adhering to ISOC values. It will be intriguing to see their response.

Questions and concerns were raised about transparency in hiring and the dual roles of being both a Board Member and Project Manager for the NGI0 Project. Panos was advised to consult with ISOC FR, as they have experience managing similar projects with additional funding alongside ISOC activities.

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Since Panos will be compensated for his work related to NGI0, he'll have to declare the Conflict of Interest and step out from Board decisions that might concern the NGI0 project.

Q: If we commit to spending more than we receive and something goes wrong, will ISOC CH or the Board be held responsible?
A: Funding is disbursed through SERI in three phases: initially, 50% is provided upfront, followed by 30% after a mid-point review, and the remaining 20% is released upon completion of all deliverables and a final evaluation of the project. The only risk is if we spend the funds earmarked for overhead and do not receive the last installment. Panos will take a conservative approach in order not to overspend and exceed the funds for salary payments.

Funding actually comes upfront (50%), with 30% after half-point check in, and the rest (20%) being counted as overhead. Keeping the overhead "intact" makes it really safe to avoid touching to existing funds, and we will try to take additional measures to minimize risks as much as possible.

Q: Have you conducted a risk assessment? Will the ISOC CH chapter be held liable for any overspending of NGI0 project funds and for using the chapter's resources to cover these liabilities?
A: Panos inquires whether any participants could provide referrals for conducting the risk assessment.

Panos requests that participants vote on whether they are comfortable in principle with him overseeing the initial setup of the infrastructure and other related tasks for the NGI0 Project.

Panos is charged with the task. **(13/0/0)**

Beyond the Net

Matthias presents his project and will apply this year. He will submit his proposal to the Board for their review to facilitate an informed decision regarding his application. The proposal must be submitted through a chapter officer.

Memberships

Panos remarks that the management of membership lists is complex, with discrepancies arising from whether individuals register directly with ISOC CH or through ISOC central. Panos has initiated an effort to clean up these lists. There are differing opinions among participants on whether the effort required to manage membership dues is justified. Alex Sutter adds printing and emailing invoices are not time-consuming tasks. An email will be sent to current members to confirm their membership and prompt payment of their dues. Those who do not respond affirmatively will be reclassified as newsletter recipients.

Relationships with other organizations (30')

This part of the discussion relates to Bernie Hoeneisen's proposal to terminate ISOC CH's membership in the Digitale Gesellschaft. The main criticisms are governance issues, silencing of criticism, and what is described as a generally toxic environment.

Bernie outlines the reasons for considering the termination of our membership, summarized as follows:

1. Platform Position Paper: Concerns about the manner in which the platform position paper was crafted and its insensitivity to the serious conflicts with core fundamental rights, as highlighted by several members, including ISOC-CH. Reference: [ISOC-CH Disassociation Statement](https://www.isoc.ch/disassociation-from-digiges-platform-statement/).

2. Public statements made by DigiGes on behalf of its members without their full consultation or agreement, which could pose a reputational risk to its members.

3. Communication Style: The inflammatory and unchecked communication style used by DigiGes.

4. Member Treatment: The unusual and sometimes derogatory treatment of DigiGes members who hold dissenting views.

Bernie requests a consultative vote to assess participants' opinions on terminating our membership.

The motion is approved (11/0/2)

End of General Assembly

Panos, as the re-elected chair, closes the meeting and invites everyone for drinks and food.

The meeting is adjourned at 20:34.