

Nominet Foundation

The idea of a Nominet Foundation was floated in 2005 and we are now proposing to create a Nominet Foundation as a charity and company limited by guarantee, with a first year donation of £5m.
Please read the full details of the proposal on Nominet's web site.
This survey contains four questions.

This document contains respondents between 16 and 16 inclusive.

1. What do you think about the proposal for a Nominet Foundation?

In general terms the principle of a foundation as an annex to Nominet is sound. However it is important that the operations and management of any foundation is an entirely independent operation to that of Nominet or we could end up in a situation where Nominet rather than the foundation managers rule the roost

2. What are your views on the types of potential beneficiaries and are there any you would like added to this list?

At this stage the actual beneficiaries are almost irrelevant, accepting the generally agreed disbursement of any funds should be used to further UK networking and if this generally agreed principle is acceptable to the members then that is all that is required. Once funds become available the management of the fund (foundation) will have the members mandate to work from and to establish if applicants are within the criteria

3. What projects or organisations are you aware of that could benefit from a grant from the Nominet Foundation?

Many and varied, again at this stage the answer to this is irrelevant, as soon as the funds become available the foundation will be inundated with requests for sponsorship and those who end up managing the foundation will have to decide who gets the funding on an applicant by applicant basis

4. What other comments do you have?

The concept of a foundation is in my view entirely sound and the function of a foundation should help maintain the "not for profit" status and financial stability of Nominet itself, however we must ensure that the management of the foundation is completely independent of the Nominet board and management or a possible conflict of interest may occur

Nominet management will decide on any available funding and the foundation management should decide on how that funding is distributed. Perhaps a "voluntary" board of "governors" should be appointed to run the foundation, with a proviso that existing Nominet board and staff would not be eligible, the paperwork for such an enterprise would be quite minimal with most of the time being taken up evaluating requests for funding

One final suggestion, back in the 1960s my company "borrowed" £250k from the UK government for research and development purposes, we had to present our case and a committee selected by the government decided on the merits and potential success of the projects put before them

The principle of this investment (loan) was that if the development became a financial success we agreed to repay the (interest free) loan. If on the other hand the project failed then the loan was cancelled out without any recrimination. In our case the project became a reality and a financial success which enabled us to repay the government loan over a number of (agreed) years, the end result of that initial investment from a foundation type revenue source, has enable our company to continue to maintain an economically viable business for over 40 years and it may well be worth considering a similar strategy – where the foundation has made a donation for R&D it may be sensible to include some kind of repayment article should that development become a financial success

5. Please give us your contact details

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