

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 28 and 28 inclusive.

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

Whilst the idea has an obvious superficial appeal, on closer reflection I oppose it.

Nominet is meant to run as a not-for-profit organisation - in other words aiming to break even. I disagree in principle with the idea that - given its monopoly status in respect of .uk domains - it should continue to run at a profit and that those profits should be used to set up a charitable trust.

Firstly, the management should be looking into how to reduce the level of profits that are being made. It is inappropriate to simply accept this as the status quo for a monopoly supplier in a growing market.

In respect of the current surplus, the people who have paid for Nominet to run at a profit - the registrants - did not pay their registration fees on the understanding that they were also paying to fund a privately managed charity, over which they will have no control.

It is to the registrants that I believe the money should be repaid (there is nothing in the Articles that prevents that) - or alternatively who should be asked which of an extended list of existing charities they wish their part of the surplus to go to.

There is no need to create a new charity - with all of the costs and admin overheads that entails - when (if the money is to be given away) it can be given away direct at the behest of the people whose money it is - the registrants.

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

My first choice would be to repay it to the registrants. Article 19A speaks only of a 75% majority if the aim is to alter "membership subscriptions or registration fees". I propose that these remain unchanged - but that any surplus is repaid pro-rata to each registrant in respect of each registration. Then the registration process will be run on a break even basis.

If the consensus is to give the money to charity, why create a new charity with the decision making power in the hands of individuals not elected by the registrants. Instead, let's ask each registrant which out of a list of say 30 or so suitable charities they wish their part of any surplus to go to. Let the registrants decide who their money goes to - Nominet would then merely act as an administrator giving the money away each year in the proportions dictated by the registrants.

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

As I said above, create a balanced list of reputable charities and let the registrants decide whether and to whom they wish to donate their money.

4. What other comments do you have?

If there is to be a Nominet Trust, then it should consist of elected trustees chosen on a "one member-one vote" basis by the members - with trustees sitting for a term of 3 years, and also not standing for more than two terms.

5. Please give us your contact details

Name

Jim Davies

Company Name

Bell Denning

Email address