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Digital Economy Steering Group Work Program for the Implementation of the APEC Internet and Digital Economy Roadmap (Endorsed)

Purpose: Information
Submitted by: DESG Chair



**Concluding Senior Officials' Meeting
13 November 2020**

Digital Economy Steering Group (DESG)
**Work Program for the Implementation of the APEC Internet and Digital
Economy Roadmap (AIDER)**

Introduction

The DESG aims to facilitate the development of the internet and digital economy, including e-commerce and digital trade. As the inheritor of the deliverables of the Ad Hoc Steering Group on the Internet Economy (AHSGIE), the DESG will advise Senior Officials on a comprehensive and regular basis on implementation of the APEC Internet and Digital Economy Roadmap (AIDER or “Roadmap”), giving full recognition to the Roadmap’s broad scope. In addition, the DESG shall preserve the functions of the former Electronic Commerce Steering Group (ECSG) and continue to report to the Committee on Trade and Investment (CTI) on matters of the ECSG’s existing work program on e-commerce and trade-related digital economy issues.

In 2017, APEC Leaders pledged to work together to realize the potential of the internet and digital economy and welcomed the adoption of the AIDER. The AIDER is a framework that provides guidance on key areas and actions to facilitate technological and policy exchanges among member economies and to promote innovative, inclusive and sustainable growth, as well as to bridge the digital divide in the APEC region. It lays out 11 Key Focus Areas (KFA) of work.

This work program has been developed in response to DESG’s commitment under the 2018 APEC Action Agenda for the Digital Economy to prepare a work program on future implementation of the AIDER.

1. Proposed Priorities for the Implementation of AIDER

In view of the task that has been delegated to DESG, the 11 Key Focus Areas (KFAs) of the AIDER have been translated into “Priority Areas” that need to be addressed in order to achieve each KFA in Table 1. The column entitled “Suggested Initiatives/Projects & Their Lead Fora to Accomplish Priority Areas” is for the relevant APEC fora and sub-fora to identify initiatives (or projects) that would address the “Priority Areas” and when completed will achieve the attainment of the relevant KFA. This work program will guide DESG’s work implementing the AIDER from 2020 to 2025.

Table 1

Key Focus Areas	Priority Areas	Suggested Initiatives/Projects & Their Lead Fora to Accomplish Priority Areas	Possible fora for collaboration¹
1. Development of digital infrastructure	<ul style="list-style-type: none">a. Identify digital, including non-telecoms, infrastructure gapsb. Enable initiatives that would facilitate investment to advance digital infrastructurec. Explore the development of ICT infrastructure to facilitate the digitalization of economies		TELWG, SCE
2. Promotion of Interoperability	<ul style="list-style-type: none">a. Discuss systems or solutions that would enable cross-sectoral digital collaborations (e.g. platform independent e-payment)b. Study on system or design interoperability for emerging tech (e.g. IoT, 5G)		SCSC, TPTWG, TELWG,
3. Achievement of universal broadband access	<ul style="list-style-type: none">a. Promote affordable, accessible and high-quality digital connectivity, including in rural areas		TELWG

¹ TELWG has expressed interest to engage DESG in cross-fora collaboration using its proposal “APEC TEL initiative on Global Challenges and Cooperation Utilizing ICT” as a basis for such collaboration.

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4. Development of holistic government policy frameworks for the Internet and Digital Economy	<p>a. Digital initiatives or strategies that involve Whole-of-Government, the multi-stakeholders, and/or by government agencies that do not typically work with each other (e.g. Finance and eGov)</p> <p>b. Sharing of initiatives that will aid society to better access technology and be an active player in the digital economy</p> <p>c. Developing and sharing policies, information, best practices and recommendation on inclusive policy framework for the internet and digital economy for all include Micro, Small and Medium-sized Enterprises (MSMEs), women, children, people with disabilities and underrepresented member of society</p> <p>d. Developing government policy framework or recommendation and sharing of information, policies, experiences and best</p>		CTI, EC, SCE, SCSC

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	<p>practice on internet and digital economy in various areas such as agriculture, fisheries, manufacturing, competition, manpower, and so on, taking into account inclusivity to leave no one behind</p> <p>e. Foster a free, open, fair, non-discriminatory, transparent and predictable trade and investment environment</p> <p>f. As we emerge from the COVID-19 crisis, identify opportunities to lock in the progress made and accelerate the digitization of industries by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Supporting businesses to go digital and reducing red tape for businesses to operate. - Strengthening collaboration with key partners (including industry, academia, across APEC community) to accelerate progress. - Ensuring resilience of businesses, including 		

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	against cyber risks, as well as for our broader digital economy		
5. Promoting coherence and cooperation of regulatory approaches affecting the Internet and Digital Economy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Promote discussions on interoperability of technology initiatives, including new and emerging ones, so as to support businesses' digitalization b. Identify and promote the use of globally relevant standards that could be adopted to assure businesses of continuity and reliability when conducting business c. Promote international regulatory coherence for new business models d. Promote stronger cross-border cooperation and sharing of best practices efforts-on online consumer protection 		EC, GOS, TELWG
6. Promoting innovation and adoption of enabling	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Share information, policies and initiatives to promote greater adoption of emerging 		PPSTI, TELWG, SCE, HWG

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technologies and services	<p>technologies by businesses, individuals, governments and society to embrace digital transformation</p> <p>b. Hold discussions on policies to encourage and facilitate innovation through digital means and adoption of emerging technologies, including in MSMEs and non-traditionally digital businesses</p> <p>c. Identify new technological trends, e.g. AI, 5G, blockchain and their applications in relation to the AIDER</p> <p>d. Share information and policies that enable traditional businesses to utilize digital platforms as part of their business resilience or continuity plan</p> <p>e. Developing an ecosystem that supports MSMEs, including those in the creative industry, to take advantage of the digital economy,</p>		

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	<p>including through discussion on policies and initiatives</p> <p>f. Global collaboration of MSMEs through digital platforms</p> <p>g. Promote the use of digital technologies to prevent and control global pandemics</p> <p>h. Promote policies that facilitate research and development as well as investment in innovative digital technologies</p> <p>i. Exchange best practice approaches to regulatory cooperation which supports the Digital Economy, including regulatory sandboxes</p> <p>j. Promote socioeconomic inclusion & expansion of economic opportunities through better digital connectivity and access to technology for all</p>		

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	k. Facilitate application of digital technologies to achieve SDG objectives and to improve digitalization efficiencies in trade activities of APEC economies		
7. Enhancing trust and security in the use of ICTs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Enable a seamless digital market through regulatory cooperation and collective efforts to build trust in existing and emerging digital technologies b. Cybersecurity considerations in non-traditionally digital businesses – including those leveraging Internet platform c. Exchange of updates and encourage adherence to cybersecurity norm d. Progress update on existing digital security guidance, including the Framework for Securing the Digital Economy e. Share practices, regulations and standards on ICT security and promote stronger cooperation and collaboration on cybersecurity 		TELWG

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	<p>through exchange of best practices</p> <p>f. Promote consumer protection in digital trade/e-commerce</p> <p>g. Establish environment for safe use of personal data for participation in the digital economy</p>		
8. Facilitating the free flow of information and data for the development of the Internet and Digital Economy, while respecting applicable domestic laws and regulations	<p>a. Encourage discussion towards wider implementation and adoption of APEC CBPR by interested economies and companies</p> <p>b. Explore international collaborations and promote interoperability, including between APEC CBPR and other regional mechanisms</p> <p>c. Raising business' awareness on the protection of personal data, and enhancing privacy protections</p> <p>d. Securing privacy and promoting the flow and utilization of data</p>		CTI

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9. Improvement of baseline Internet and Digital Economy measurements	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Further discussion on approaches to measure the impact and success of digital economy, including considerations for a measurement system that would be interoperable globally or regionally b. Promote the update of statistical systems in response to a rapidly evolving digital era and encourage comparability, considering the availability of metrics in all APEC economies c. Promote a comprehensive, high-quality data infrastructure and collection tools for measuring the use and impacts of digital technologies d. Harness the potential of big data for developing indicators to measure digital economy e. Set priorities for internationally comparable measurement through greater global cooperation 		EC, PPSTI

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> f. Monitor the development of APEC region's digital economy through developing APEC-wide indicator g. Identify and share initiatives and best practices to improve measurement of the digital economy to develop a stronger evidence base for policy analysis and making 		
10. Enhancing inclusiveness of Internet and Digital Economy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Development of human resource and digital skills to support the growth of the digital economy, digital transformation and digital entrepreneurship b. Facilitate and encourage innovations in the field of Digital Literacy to empower individuals and businesses to find, create and share information, while enjoying greater online wellbeing and e-safety c. Encourage the growth of women-owned MSMEs by developing tools on business management, 		PPWE, SMEWG, TELWG, HRDWG, FMP, SCE

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	<p>soft-skill development, marketing strategies, also production and marketing guidelines through digital media</p> <p>d. Encourage greater participation in the digital economy by women, MSMEs, and underrepresented members of society, including people living in rural areas and people with disabilities</p> <p>e. Better inclusion of disadvantaged groups to leverage the Internet and Digital Economy to improve their living standards and unleash their potential through effective use of ICTs.</p>		
11. Facilitation of E-commerce and advancing cooperation on Digital Trade	<p>a. Promote transparency in e-commerce regulations, including those that apply to cross-border business transactions</p> <p>b. Strengthen cooperation and share experiences on promoting e-commerce/digital trade and their related services in the region</p>		CTI, GOS, MAG

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> c. Increase the growth and participation of MSMEs to the region by promoting cross-border e-commerce d. To implement APEC Cross-border e-commerce facilitation Framework e. Promote transparency through exchanges of information, initiatives, and best practices that facilitates the development of e-Commerce regulations f. Develop an ecosystem that enables MSMEs, including those in the creative industry, to take advantage of e-commerce and the digital economy 		
All KFAs	a. Strengthen APEC's digital agenda and strategy, including electronic commerce and related services, with fresh perspectives and innovative means to navigate the new economic realities brought about by COVID-19 ²		CTI, EC, SMEWG, HWG, TELWG, SCCP,

² Statement on COVID-19 by APEC Ministers Responsible for Trade (https://www.apec.org/Meeting-Papers/Sectoral-Ministerial-Meetings/Trade/2020_trade)

Apart from APEC fora and sub-fora listed above, DESG may invite other international fora, stakeholders including representatives from the private sector and industry (providers and users), civil society, academia, and technical community to participate in and actively contribute to the meetings, as appropriate. Non-member participation should adhere to the required procedure pursuant to the APEC Guidelines on Managing Cooperation with Non-Members.

2. Monitoring and Review of the Work Program

Implementation of the AIDER will be reported on a regular basis through Table 1 of the Work Program by relevant APEC fora and sub-fora, including the DESG. Based on the progress of implementation reported through Table 1, this work program shall be reviewed by the DESG one year after its endorsement, and subsequently on an annual basis.