
GAC Capacity Development Session on the New gTLD Program Next Round - Applicant Guidebook

Session 2

Session Objective

As per each ICANN public meeting, the GAC devotes time on its schedule to capacity development matters. For ICANN83, the session will focus on the Applicant Guidebook for the New Generic Top-Level Domains Program Next Round.

Background

GAC capacity development sessions are built to provide an opportunity for GAC members to learn the basics or increase their knowledge on aspects of the ICANN multistakeholder model, its structure, and operations. It is also an opportunity for GAC attendees to become acquainted with different ICANN community groups in order to facilitate future dialogue, and to share experiences and best practices to enhance GAC internal collaboration on various ICANN matters.

Recently, capacity development sessions have been embedded in the GAC schedule for ICANN public meetings as a regular activity of the GAC, and are no longer scheduled to take place on the margins of ICANN meetings.

Current Status and Recent Developments

Capacity development activities play an important part in the work of GAC Under-Served Regions Working Group for the committee.

In light of the high engagement demonstrated by members, the USRWG and the GAC Leadership continue exploring new modalities to enhance capacity development initiatives intersessionally and during ICANN meetings.

For 2025 and until the next round application launch in April 2026, capacity development activities of the GAC will focus on topics related to the New gTLD Program Next Round. The objective is to raise the GAC's awareness on topics and processes to help GAC delegates prepare for the next round.

Initiated in Seattle, two capacity development sessions focused on the next round of new gTLDs, with the aim for GAC members to:

1. Understand what the geoTLD group does, considering the leading up to the Next Round
2. Empower GAC members to use the [Next Round Champions Toolkit](#) effectively

- **ICANN83 GAC Capacity Development Session (CDS)**

The ICANN83 capacity development session will focus on the Applicant Guidebook, how it will be used, the logistics and timing of next steps in preparation for the next round, and a walkthrough of how an Applicant will apply for a new gTLD, including the challenges that may be encountered.

Subsequently, the ICANN83 GAC plenary session on the next round of new gTLDs, will include an update on the Applicant Guidebook status and specifically on priority topics of interest to GAC members. GAC members will discuss materials in preparation for the next round of new gTLDs building on the GAC Capacity Development Session on new gTLDs, including GAC Early Warnings and GAC Advice, PICs/RVCs, GeoTLDs, and Contention Sets.

To best prepare for both sessions in Prague, GAC members are encouraged to join the [ICANN webinar on the complete draft Applicant Guidebook \(3 June\)](#), to familiarize themselves with some of the content of the Applicant Guidebook, on which the ICANN83 capacity development and plenary sessions will expand on.

Key Reference Documents

- [ICANN82 GAC Capacity Development Sessions on New gTLD Program Next Round](#)
- [ICANN83 GAC briefing on New gTLD Program Next Round](#)
- [ICANN webinar to introduce the complete draft Applicant Guidebook](#) (3 June 2025)
- [GAC Under-Served Regions Working Group](#)

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