



83

POLICY
FORUM



ICANN83 GAC Discussion on New gTLD Program Next Round

Monday, 09 June 2025
13:45 - 15:00 local time



83

POLICY
FORUM

Agenda

1. **Introduction** - Jorge Cancio (5 min.)
2. **Implementation Review Team** – (10 min.) Rida Tahir (Canada) and Lars Hoffmann (ICANN org)
3. **Applicant Support Program Update** (15 min.) Tracy Hackshaw (UPU)
 - a. GAC overview (Tracy Hackshaw)
 - b. Status of the ASP (Kristy Buckley, ICANN org)
 - c. Readiness (Kristy Buckley, ICANN org)
4. **Outreach and Engagement Activities** (15 min.)
 - a. Status of Activities (5 minutes) Bob Ochieng/Chris Mondini (ICANN org)
 - b. GAC Discussion/Questions (10 minutes)
5. **GAC Topics of Interest on New gTLDs** (30 min.) Jorge Cancio (Switzerland)
 - a. Applicant Guidebook Language Overview (15 minutes)
 - Community Input, Objections and Appeals (Elisa Busetto, ICANN org)
 - PICs/RVCs (Lars Hoffmann, ICANN org)
 - Contention and its Resolution (Lars Hoffmann, ICANN org)
 - b. GAC Discussion/Questions (15 minutes)
6. AOB

2. Implementation Review Team Update

Rida Tahir (Canada)

Lars Hoffmann (ICANN org)

Implementation Review Team (IRT) - Recent Updates

- The IRT commenced its work in May 2023 and is expected to draft the next Applicant Guidebook (AGB) in preparation for the next round of new gTLDs.
- GAC members appointed to the IRT:
 - ✓ Canada (Representative)
 - ✓ United Kingdom (Alternate)
- ICANN org presented an updated [Implementation Plan](#) in September 2024 for the Implementation Review Team's input
- The next milestone on the path to open the new gTLD application window is the completion of the AGB (now out for public comment)
- It is expected that the AGB will be published no later than December 2025 post Board approval
- With the assistance of the Implementation Review Team (IRT), ICANN org has been working through the input received and is making updates to the language as necessary.

Implementation Review Team (IRT) - Recent Updates

- ICANN org opened the final in a series of [Public Comment proceedings](#) that will seek input from the ICANN community on proposed language for the Applicant Guidebook (AGB) for the New gTLD Program: Next Round.
 - ✓ Opened 30 May 2025, Closing 23 July 2025
- Input on this final Public Comment is sought on the complete draft AGB in its entirety and should be focused on:
 - ✓ A review for inconsistencies across sections of the complete draft AGB
 - ✓ Any new issues or oversights that have not been discussed previously
- The proposed language has been developed in collaboration with the [Subsequent Procedures Implementation Review Team](#).
- GAC members have consistently provided input to draft AGB language submitted for public comment, and are currently reviewing this public comment proceeding to determine whether a GAC response is to be submitted.

02

**IRT and AGB
Update**

Implementation Review Team

Tasked with assisting ICANN org with the implementation of the SubPro Final Report outputs



First meeting on **16 May 2023**



123 members



139 full IRT meetings
32 sub-track meetings



4 sub-tracks

Draft Applicant Guidebook



41 Final Report topics & **300** outputs to implement

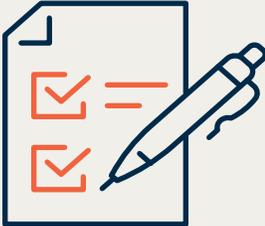


4 Public Comment proceedings on AGB sections



5 Board Resolutions

395 pages
7 modules



- 1. *The Applicant Journey*
- 2. *Application Submission*
- 3. *Community Input, Objections, and Appeals*
- 4. *Contention Set Resolution*
- 5. *Applicant Evaluation Procedures*
- 6. *String and Application Evaluation Procedures*
- 7. *General Information*

High-Level Timeline



3. Applicant Support Program Update

Tracy Hackshaw - UPU

Kristy Buckley - ICANN org

Recent Developments on ASP Matters

- On 29 July 2024, the Board shared its [ICANN80 Kigali Communiqué Scorecard](#) on Board Action noting the need for a Board-GAC Bylaws Consultation on GAC Advice item 1.a.i pertaining to the ASP evaluation process, and item 1.a.ii pertaining to the ASP evaluation panel.
- The GAC and ICANN Board held a Bylaws Mandated Consultation Call on ICANN80 GAC Advice on [16 September 2024](#).
- This Bylaws-mandated consultation was to discuss the Board’s concerns with implementing GAC Advice on the Applicant Support Program (ASP) in its 17 June 2024 [ICANN80 Kigali Communiqué](#).
- As denoted in ICANN Bylaws section 12.2(a)(x), the purpose of the consultation call was for the GAC and Board to “try, in good faith and in a timely and efficient manner, to find a mutually acceptable solution.”

Recent Developments on ASP Matters

- On 16 September 2024, the GAC and ICANN Board held a [Consultation Call on ICANN80 GAC Advice](#).
- During this meeting, the Board presented approaches to address the GAC's concerns with a first-come, first-served ASP evaluation process.

The proposed compromise for 1.a.i is:

- ✓ *The Board will direct ICANN org to share monthly reporting with the ICANN community on the geographic distribution of ASP applications received and qualified. The Board expects that monthly reporting will be available via the Program Statistics on the ASP website and via updates to the SubPro Implementation Review Team (IRT). The monthly reporting on geographic distribution can inform quarterly adjustments to the ASP Communications, Outreach & Engagement efforts.*
- ✓ *In addition, the Board will direct ICANN org to share results of geographic distribution with the IRT after 20 qualified ASP applicants to determine adjustments to Communications, Outreach & Engagement or if additional funding may be needed.*

Recent Developments on ASP Matters

- Following the Consultation Call, the GAC confirmed its support for the proposed path forward as discussed during the Board-GAC Consultation call, and shared a [letter](#) with the ICANN Board on 16 October 2024 outlining its understanding.
- In the letter, the GAC shared its support for remedial options shared by the Board as follows:
 - For Advice item 1.a.i (ASP Applicants) the GAC understands that:
 - ✓ The monthly reporting on geographic distribution can inform quarterly adjustments to the ASP Communications, Outreach & Engagement efforts.
 - ✓ The Board will direct ICANN org to share results of geographic distribution with the IRT after 20 qualified ASP applicants to:
 - Determine adjustments to Communications, Outreach & Engagement to target applications from developing countries and
 - Determine if additional funding may be needed.

Recent Developments on ASP Matters

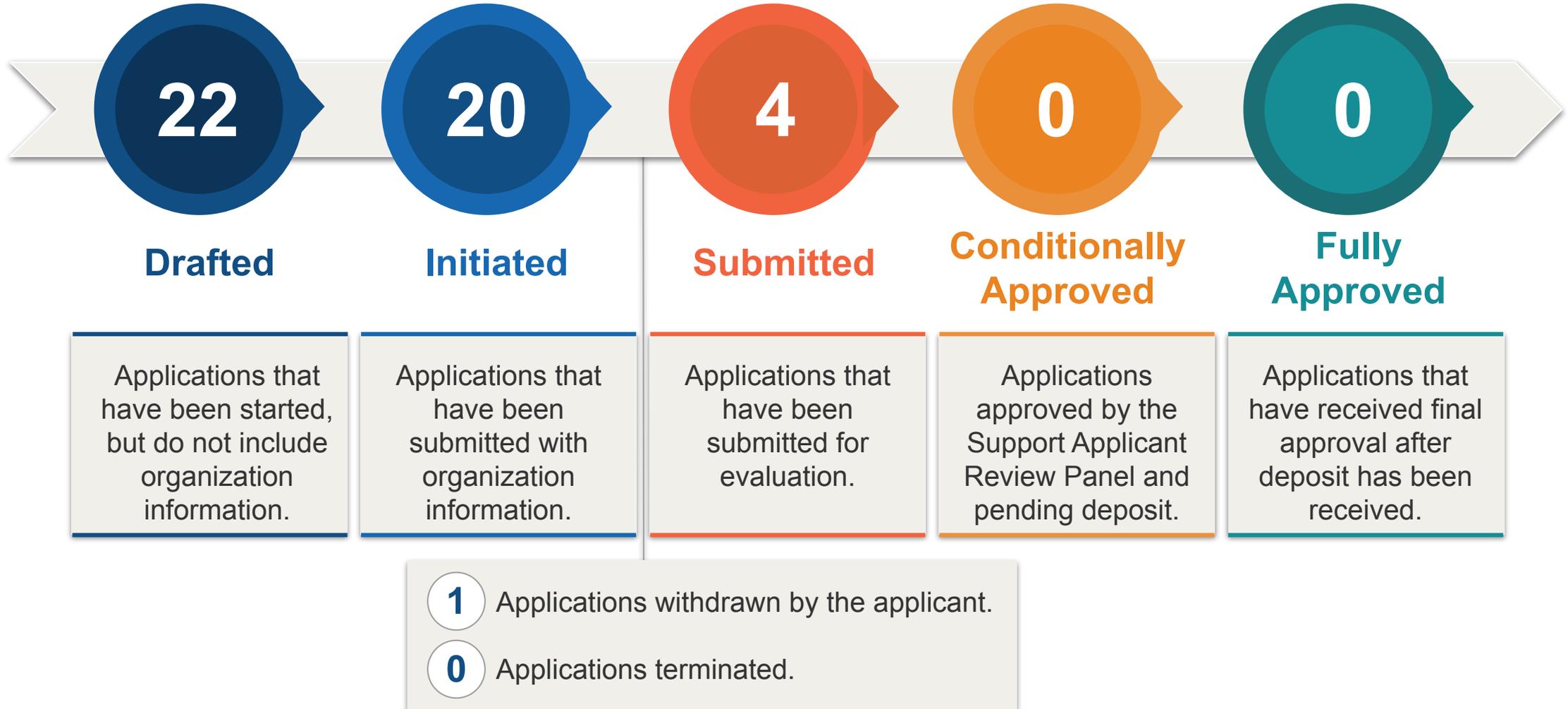
- Regarding advice item 1.a.ii (ASP Evaluation Process):
 - The GAC understands that the Request for Proposal (RFP) process to select an independent third-party evaluator is underway and that ICANN org will select a vendor with appropriate evaluation skills and diverse experience to conduct a fair and objective assessment of globally diverse ASP applicants, taking into consideration the GAC's expressed position on ensuring that the ASP facilitates global diversification of the new gTLD program.

- GAC Members would like to learn more about any observed obstacles for the Applicant Support Program since there appears to be little progress on application numbers. It might be useful to better understand why so many applications are on hold with action towards the requestor.

03

**Status of the
Applicant Support
Program**

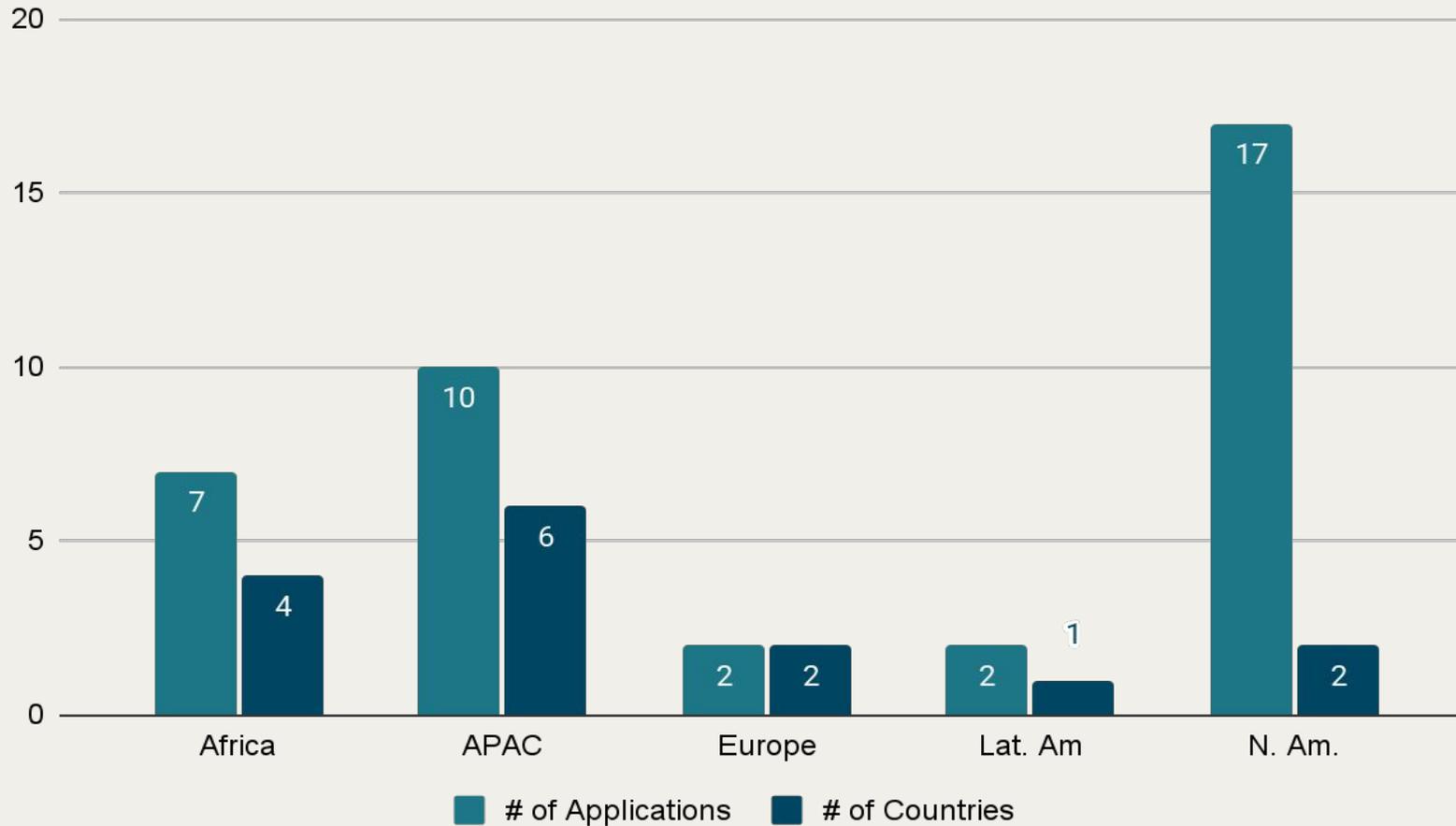
ASP Application Status*



Regional Breakdown and # of countries/territories per region*

* Status as of 3 June 2025

Applications with "pending" regional information not included



For reference: 2012 ASP Applications (Total: 3)

Application ID	Applied-for String	Applicant Name
1-1309-46695	.KIDS	DotKids Foundation Ltd
1-1873-71868	.IDN	Nameshop
1-2104-81541	.UMMAH	Ummah Digital Ltd

Link to ICANN region definition: <https://meetings.icann.org/en/regions>

Visit the [ASP Program Statistics](#) page for additional application metrics updated monthly on the 19th.

How is ASP planning to help applicants in the *pipeline?

Quick 5-question survey now open to ASP applicants

- **Objectives:**
 - Where are applicants challenged in the process?
 - How likely are they to submit an application?
 - Would they like the Applicant Counselor to contact them?

- **Next Steps:**
 - Assess identified challenges
 - Record an ASP applicant tutorial webinar
 - Publish Pro Bono Services and Mentor list as a resource
 - Communicate to reinforce resources readily available
 - Consultation with the ASP Applicant Counselor



ASP Activities Underway and Planned

The ASP and Next Round team continues to focus on:

- Creating awareness of the opportunity to apply to the ASP
- Supporting ASP applicants through the application process
- Preparing welcome package for qualified supported applicants

COMMUNICATIONS and EVENTS

- Survey now open to ASP Applicants in Application Pipeline
- Pro Bono & Mentor orientation, with ASP-IRT participation
- Publishing Pro Bono and Mentor List
- ASP Applicant recorded webinar scheduled

READINESS TOOLS and RESOURCES

- Developing Comprehensive Capacity Development Plan
- Developing Supported Applicant Onboarding and Learning Journey
- Identifying additional tools needed to support ASP Applicants in the pipeline

04

Readiness

Readiness...what is it and why does it matter?

Preparing all affected audiences for the Next Round–

Applicants

- How to create accessible information and make applicants aware of it?
- What information do applicants need to know, by when, with what content?

Organization & Internal teams

- What functions and roles are needed to support each phase of the Next Round?
- What training or support do staff need in these roles, by when; who will train them with what materials?

Community members

- What are the various roles and responsibilities of community groups in the Next Round?
- What information does the community need to effectively play those roles?

Vendors

- What does each evaluator need to know to provide consistent, high-quality services?
- What training do vendors need to have, by when, with what content?

Applicant Readiness Support

Readiness efforts prepare Applicants for each step in the applicant journey



Content is provided in simple, accessible formats which complement the Applicant Guide Book.

KEY TOPIC OVERVIEW

Provide **succinct briefs of AGB topics**, relevant policies, and procedures.

FAQs

Provide concise **easy-to-understand details** on AGB topics to reinforce concepts.

WEBINARS

Online sessions offered to increase **knowledge of the Applicant Journey and the Applicant Guidebook**.

TRAINING & PERFORMANCE Support

Focused on building knowledge and skill or the ability to perform a task (Ex: TAMs system use)

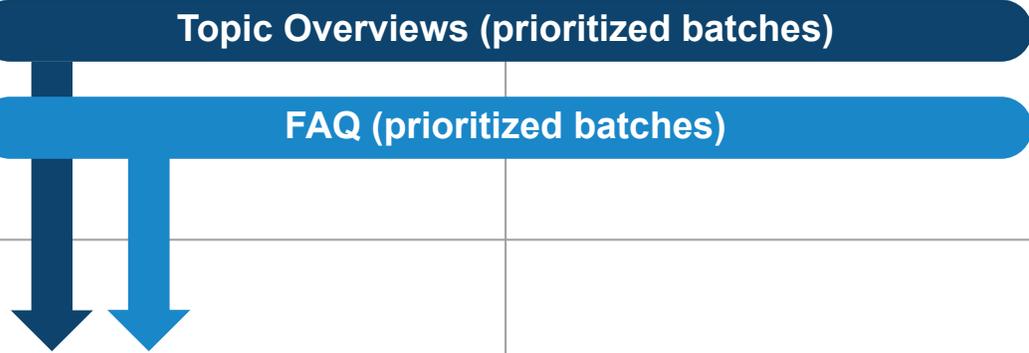
APPLICANT GUIDEBOOK

*****All content is considered draft form until the Applicant Guidebook is finalized and published in its entirety.*****

gTLD Program Timeline

- Topic Overviews
- FAQs
- Webinars
- Training & Performance Support

	Q3 2026	Q4 2026	Q1 2026	Q2-Q3 2026
Applicant Journey & Program Milestones	Prepare to Apply			Submit Application
		ASP ● Application Period Closes 	Final AGB and Base Registry Agreement published	● gTLD Application Period Opens
Applicants	Topic Overviews (prioritized batches)		Applicant Journey Webinars	
	FAQ (prioritized batches)		New Applicant Webinars	
			GAC Advice / GAC Early Warning Webinars	
			SPIRT Intro	
Community Members			System Training & Resources	



KEY TOPIC OVERVIEWS

Provide succinct briefs in plain language (where possible) of various AGB topics, relevant policies, and procedures, accessible on the New gTLD Program website [resource page](#)

Batch 1

published before ICANN83

- Community Input
- DNS Abuse
- GAC Member Early Warnings & Consensus Advice
- Geographic Names
- Objections and Appeals
- Replacement String and Replacement Period
- Trademark Protections

Batch 2

under development

- Applicant Evaluation
- Application Evaluation
- Application Types
- Community Priority Evaluation
- Evaluation Challenge
- Registry Commitments Evaluation
- String Evaluation
- String Contention and Resolution



** Printable format will be available for easy distribution. **

4. Outreach and Engagement Activities Update

Jorge Cancio (Switzerland)

Tracy Hackshaw (UPU)

Bob Ochieng (ICANN org)

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Status of Overall Outreach, Engagement, and Communications Activities

Engagement Events

- In calendar year 2024, we hosted/participated in a total of **204 events**.
- Since 01 Jan 2025, we have hosted/participated in a total of **196 events**.
 - ASP events (**61**)
 - RSP events (**16**)
 - General Outreach (**119**)
- So far this year, we have hosted **196 events** across all regions. Various locations:

Bahrain

Belgium

Brazil

Germany

India

Kenya

Morocco

Nigeria

Singapore

Sweden

Tanzania

USA

Vietnam

- To host or convene an event, or request an ICANN Org speaker, contact your regional GSE Vice President, or use this [Speaker Request Form](#).

Highlights of Recent Activities (April - May 2025)

- Next Round Breakfast Workshop: April (South Africa and Nigeria)
- India Web Summit 2025: 5 April (Delhi, India)
- Middle East DNS Forum 2025: 29-30 April (Manama, Bahrain)
- APAC DNS Forum and Contracted Parties Summit 2025: 5-9 May (Hanoi, Vietnam)
- Regional IGFs: 13-16 May (East Africa, West Africa)
- Lacnic 43: 5-9 May (São Paulo, Brazil)
- Next Round Breakfast Workshop: 26 May (Daresalam, Tanzania)
- 2025 INTA Annual Meeting: 17- 21 May (San Diego, United States)
- RIR Meetings (LACNIC and ARIN)
- Africa IGF: 29 - 30 May (Dar Es Salaam, Tanzania)

Upcoming Events and Activities (June - July 2025)

- Global IGF: 23-27 June (Norway): Will feature ASP Workshop.
- Transform Africa 2025: July 2025 (Kigali, Rwanda)
- Web Summit 2025: Lisbon, Portugal

May 2025 – Next Round Communications

Building Next Round Awareness

- Report: “[Understanding the gTLD Opportunity for Brands](#)” (20 May)
- Press release: [New Research Reveals Marketing Leaders See Strong Potential in gTLDs Despite Knowledge Gap](#) (20 May)

Recent Publications

- Announcements
 - [ICANN Webinar Will Introduce Complete Draft Applicant Guidebook](#) (15 May)
 - [Final Public Comment Period now open for AGB](#) (30 May)
- Blogs
 - [ICANN Materials Provide Prospective New gTLD Applicants Clarity on Key Topics](#) (21 May)
 - [Final Public Comment Period Open for Draft Applicant Guidebook](#) (30 May)
- Media Coverage
 - Interview: Theresa Swinehart’s Q&A in [TechRadar Pro](#)
 - Interview: Marika Konings in [World Trademark Review](#)

Additional Resources

Key Topic Overviews

- First batch of overview documents are available on the [AGB Resources page](#).
 - Topics include: community input, geographic names, GAC Early Warnings and Consensus Advice, objections and appeals, and trademark protections.

New gTLD Use Cases

- 28 [use cases](#) have been published on the Next Round site.
 - New additions include: .africa, .bar, .rest

New gTLD Program in YOUR Language

- Program created to translate Next Round outreach materials into non-ICANN languages based on community demand.
- More information is available on the [In YOUR Language Wiki page](#).

Next Round Website Statistics (Nov 2024 - May 2025)

Total Visitors

- Number of Visitors: 134,764
- Location of Visitors:
 - US: 53,119
 - UK: 25,447
 - Brazil: 21,362
 - Turkey: 11,453
 - India: 4,024

Most Popular Downloads

Top Downloads

- [RSP Handbook](#): 689
- [ASP Handbook \(EN\)](#): 397
- [Next Round Info Sheet \(EN\)](#): 235
- [Next Round Timeline \(EN\)](#): 1183
- [Microsoft Use Case \(EN\)](#): 124
- [RSP Eligibility \(EN\)](#): 103
- [BANK Use Case \(EN\)](#): 92

Top Downloads (translations)

- [ASP Deck \(ES\)](#): 35
- [Next Round Info Sheet \(ES\)](#): 36
- [ASP Info Sheet \(ES\)](#): 39

Ongoing Activities and Areas of Focus

For ASP: Engagement with economic development agencies, foundations, development banks

For General Next Round: Engagement with key communities, such as Investors, Entrepreneurs, Intellectual Property Groups, Cyber Security Professionals, Brand owners

For Readiness Efforts: Collaboration with Domain Name Sector Domain Name Association (non profit organization) resource directory <https://thedna.org/new-glds/> to help with business and operational questions

Engagement Content: Increasing focus on Applicant Guidebook / Applicant Journey

Please Join The Monthly IRT Meetings on Outreach!

Next IRT Outreach Meeting

12 June at 13:30-15:00 UTC in Prague (Terrace 2B)

Also accessible Online (via Zoom)

Recordings and Reports of IRT Meetings available via <https://newgtldprogram.icann.org/en/reports>

All GAC members receive ICS calendar invitations on the GAC mailing list, sent from NextRound_PolicyImplementation@icann.org

New! Monthly Snapshot -

A recap of Next Round activities and progress for ASP, RSP, Outreach, Engagement, and Communications



NEW gTLD PROGRAM: NEXT ROUND

Monthly Snapshot

A Recap of Updates and Statistics for Outreach, Engagement & Communications

April/May 2025

a. GAC discussion & Questions

5. Issues of Interest to GAC Members

Jorge Cancio (Switzerland)
Lars Hoffmann (ICANN org)

a. **Applicant Guidebook Language**

- Community Input, Objections and Appeals (Elisa Busetto)
- PICs/RVCs (Lars Hoffmann)
- Contention and its Resolution (Lars Hoffmann)

b. **GAC discussion**

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GAC Issues of Importance

Community Input, Objections, and Appeals

Providing Input to an Application [3]

- The **GAC** can issue **GAC Consensus Advice**
- **GAC members/governments** can
 - Issue **GAC Member Early Warnings**
 - Submit **application comments**
 - Submit **Singular/Plural Notifications**
 - File **objections** (and **appeals**)

Interested parties can start providing input on **String Confirmation Day** = when ICANN publishes all applications and the final strings are published

GAC Consensus Advice [3.3]

- Issued by the GAC according to ICANN's Bylaws to address applications that are identified to be problematic
- Must:
 - Clearly state that it is GAC Consensus Advice
 - Include a clearly articulated rationale
 - Be limited to the scope set out in the applicable Bylaws provisions
 - Elaborate on any interaction between ICANN's policies and various laws and international agreements or where they may affect public policy issues.
- Applicants may respond within 21 days of being notified
- If accepted by the ICANN Board, may prevent an application from proceeding, or from proceeding unless specific modifications are made

GAC Member Early Warnings [3.2]

- Issued by individual or groups of GAC members; consensus not required
- Provides the applicant with an indication that the application is seen as potentially sensitive or problematic
- Does not have a direct impact on the application but may signal the likelihood that the application could be the subject of GAC Consensus Advice or of an objection
- Must include a written explanation describing why the Early Warning was submitted and how the applicant may address the GAC member's concerns
- Applicants are encouraged to communicate with relevant GAC member(s)

ACF opens on String Confirmation Day and stays open for the duration of the Program
Comments submitted within **90 days after String Confirmation Day** and within **30 days of specific Application Change Requests** will be available to evaluators for consideration

Application Comments

[3.2]

- Mechanism for the public to bring relevant information and issues to the attention of ICANN, applicants, and evaluators regarding specific applications
- Do not have a direct impact on applications but may be taken into account by the relevant evaluators if submitted during the specified time frames
- Public* and posted on an ICANN-managed platform—the Application Comment Forum (ACF)
- Do not have costs associated
- Applicants may respond to comments

**unless they refer to confidential portions of an application*

Singular/Plural Notifications [3.4]

- Anybody can submit them
- Based on claim that an applied-for string is the singular or plural form of another applied-for string, a delegated TLD, a string being processed from a previous new gTLD round, or a blocked name
- Must include evidence
- Do not have costs associated
- If a match is found, the relevant string(s) may be placed in a contention set or the application prevented from proceeding

Objections and Appeals (1) [3.5]

- Filed by parties with standing on specific grounds
- Administered by external Dispute Resolution Service Providers
- Have costs associated
- An Independent Objector may file Limited Public Interest Objections given certain conditions
- If the objector prevails, the relevant string(s) may be placed in a contention set, or the application prevented from proceeding or may only proceed with specific modifications
- The expert determination can be appealed

Note:

*Funding from ICANN is available to individual national governments in the amount of **USD 50,000** for objections and appeals (filing fees and advance payments of costs) with the guarantee that a minimum of one objection and appeal per government will be fully funded by ICANN where requested*

Objections and Appeals (2)

Claim	Party with standing
String Confusion Objections	
<p>The applied-for primary gTLD string, its allocatable variant label, or its blocked variant label is confusingly similar visually, aurally, or in meaning to an existing TLD and/or another applied-for primary gTLD string and/or any of its allocatable or blocked variant strings</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● An existing gTLD operator ● An existing ccTLD operator or a Significantly Interested Party in the respective country or territory ● A gTLD applicant in this application round
Legal Rights Objections	
<p>An applied-for gTLD string and/or one or more applied-for allocatable variant string(s) infringes their existing legal rights</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● A rights holder ● An IGO

Objections and Appeals (3)

Claim	Party with standing
Limited Public Interest Objections	
The applied-for gTLD string and/or one or more applied-for allocatable variant string(s) is contrary to generally accepted legal norms of morality and public order that are recognized under principles of international law	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Anyone
Community Objections	
There is well-substantiated opposition to an applied-for gTLD string and/or one or more applied-for allocatable variant string(s) from a significant portion of the community which the string may be explicitly or implicitly targeting	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Established institutions associated with clearly delineated communities

**Public Interest Commitments,
Registry Voluntary
Commitments,
Community Registration
Policies [6.8]**

Different Registry Agreement Commitment Types

Mandatory Public Interest Commitments	Safeguard Public Interest Commitments	Registry Voluntary Commitments	Community Registration Policies
Uniform commitments to protect registrants and Internet users broadly	Standardized commitments to promote public interests in high-risk gTLDs	Customized commitments to overcome third-party concerns (e.g., GAC Advice, objection) or provide additional safeguards	Customized conditions upon Community-based gTLD registrants concerning eligibility, naming selection, etc.
All gTLDs must have	gTLDs classified in four risk-based groups must have	Any gTLD applicant has the option to propose	All Community-based gTLDs must have
Automatically included in each RA, Specification 11	All applicants to answer questions subject to Safeguard Assessment; applicable Safeguard PICs to be included in applicable RA, Spec 11	Any applicant to submit RVC subject to Registry Commitments Evaluation (RCE); approved ones to be included in applicable RA, Spec 11	All Community-based gTLD applicants to submit Comm Reg Policies subject to RCE; approved ones to be included in applicable RA, Spec 12 (and be considered for scoring in CPE)

Registry Commitments Evaluation [6.8.3.2]

What It Is

- Conditional evaluation to review proposed RVCs and Comm Reg Policies and ensure they are **enforceable under the ICANN Bylaws** and **can be included in RA** as contractual obligations

When It Occurs

- Typically conducted during **Application Evaluation** before contracting, but may happen earlier if an RVC or Community Registration Policy is on the **critical path** for the application to proceed
- Initiated after the **fixed, one-time payment** for RCE is received
- Estimated to take **2-3 months** to complete, absent exceptional circumstances

How It Works

- Must meet **five criteria** to be approved – in particular, anything that **restricts content** in the applied-for gTLD string will be rejected
- Evaluation will **NOT** determine whether proposed commitments addressed **third-party concerns**
- ICANN and applicant may **negotiate** to reach agreement on proposed contractual language

RVC to Overcome GAC Consensus Advice [6.8.3.2.3]

Why It Is Special

- Not purely “voluntary” – condition necessary for application to proceed
- Must be approved by ICANN via Registry Commitments Evaluation (RCE)
- Once approved, cannot be materially changed or removed prior to contract execution absent extraordinary circumstances

When It Occurs

- GAC advises the Board and the Board accepts the Advice – an application cannot proceed without an RVC approved by ICANN
- Two Scenarios: 1) Existing RVC submitted in initial application; 2) New or amended RVC submitted as Application Change Request

How It Works

- ICANN reviews and approves the RVC through RCE
- Both original and negotiated versions of RVCs published for comment period for public review
- Final determination rests with the Board – to determine whether GAC concern must be addressed and whether the RVC suffices

Contention and its Resolution

Contention [4]

- Contention occurs when **one or more applied-for strings** are **identical, similar to,** or a **variant of another string** applied for by a different applicant
- Strings in contention form a **contention set**, which can be identified at various stages of the application process, e.g.:
 - Identical strings on Reveal Day
 - Notified as **singular/plural versions** of the same word in the same language
 - Found **confusingly similar** by an expert panel

No Private Resolution [4.2.3]

- The ICANN Board has **prohibited all forms of private resolution of contention sets** in the Next Round, including private auctions and post-application joint ventures.
- Applicants for strings in the same contention set are **strictly prohibited from communicating directly or indirectly with other applicants in that same contention set**, as well as sharing any information about their applications for contested strings with other applicants. The AGB details the timing and duration of this prohibition, including the limited exceptions.
- ICANN may **take action against applicants for violation of the rules** prohibiting private resolution of contention strings. Examples of potential actions and penalties are described in the AGB, including disqualification from the next and future New gTLD Program rounds.

Replacement Strings [4.1]

- As part of their applications, all applicants can now **designate a “Replacement String” alongside their original choice of string** to avoid contention before the list of applied-for strings is finalized
- Applicants will be given **14 days** following Reveal Day - the **“Replacement Period”** - to notify ICANN if they elect to replace their original string with their Replacement String, so long as it is **not identical to the applied-for string or Replacement String of another applicant**
- Applicants who opt for their Replacement String will be **unable to revert to their original string** and **may still be placed in contention at a later stage** of the application process

Brand String Change [4.3]

- Applicants in contention for Brand TLDs can also change their string to avoid contention resolution procedures by submitting a **Brand String Change Request** in the **30 days** following:
 - The formation of contention sets after String Similarity Evaluation, or
 - The publication of a String Confusion Objection Expert Determination, or
 - Appellate Expert Determination involving the application subject to the Brand String Change Request.
- Certain **requirements** need to be met for a Brand String Change to be accepted
- If the new string passes string evaluation, the application will be subject to an additional period for:
 - Objections
 - Application comments
 - Singular/plural notifications

Community Priority Evaluation [4.4]

- CPE is an independent analysis conducted by a third-party panel, which determines whether a community-based application fulfills the CPE criteria and should receive priority in the contention set
- Applicants designating their applications as community-based are required to respond to a set of questions in the application form to provide relevant information about their community which will be used in CPE if they elect to participate
- A community applicant can but is not required to participate in CPE
- Applicants are evaluated against four main criteria: (1) Community Establishment, (2) Nexus between proposed string and community, (3) Registration Policies, (4) Community Endorsement
- An applicant who is successful in a CPE evaluation will get priority in the contention set and come out as the prevailing applicant
- If there are multiple successful CPE applicants for the same string, they will go to an ICANN New gTLD Auction

New gTLD Auction [4.6]

- The New gTLD Auction will resolve contention sets that were not eliminated earlier in the application process or resolved by CPE
- Auctions will be scheduled on a rolling basis and conducted using the “**ascending-clock, second-price**” auction method, as was the case in the 2012 round of the new gTLD Program
- A detailed set of auction rules and procedures, based on those published for the 2012 Round, and an auction schedule will be developed by ICANN in consultation with the auction provider and made **available no later than 60 days** before the first auction
- To increase their chances of winning at auction, applicants receiving Applicant Support as part of the Applicant Support Program (ASP) will receive **a maximum bid credit of 35% up to a monetary value of USD 1.75 million per application**. The maximum bid credit will be reduced in a phased approach once the winning auction price (second highest price) exceeds USD 5 million

NEW gTLD PROGRAM: NEXT ROUND

07 Q&A

NEW gTLD PROGRAM: NEXT ROUND

gTLD

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