



84

ANNUAL
GENERAL
MEETING



GAC Discussion on New gTLDs (1 of 2)

Session 5

25 October 2025

Agenda

1. **Applicant Support Program** Kristy Buckley - ICANN org, and GAC Topic Leads: 30 minutes
 - a. Overview of status of ASP by ICANN org
 - b. GAC Discussion/Questions
2. **GeoTLD Presentation/Discussion** (30 minutes) Nacho Amadoz, GeoTLD Group Chair (.cat), and Ronald Schwärzler, GeoTLD Group Treasurer (.wien, .koeln/.cologne): 30 minutes
 - a. The role of the Geographic Name Panel and the Geographic Names Review fee described in the draft AGB
 - b. GeoTLD outreach activities and engagement with the GAC;
 - c. Capacity building related to geoTLDs

Applicant Support Program

Kristy Buckley - ICANN org
Tracy Hackshaw - UPU

Applicant Support Program

Introduction and Recent Developments - Tracy Hackshaw

- Since ICANN83, the GAC has continued to follow the ASP closely and engaged with the Board (via the Board Clarifying Call on the ICANN83 Communiqué and BGIG Meeting), and ALAC.
- The GAC and At-Large submitted a letter to the ICANN Board (15 August 2025) requesting an expedited review of the Applicant Support Program (ASP) in light of its critical role in ensuring equitable participation in the Next Round of New gTLDs.
- The two committees shared concerns about the program's current trajectory, particularly given the limited time remaining in the application window and the low representation from underserved regions.
- On October 6th, ICANN [announced](#) that it had extended the submission deadline for the ASP to allow more time for applicants to complete the application process.
- Entities that enter information in the system by 19 November 2025 will now have until 19 December 2025 to submit a complete application.

Applicant Support Program Update

New gTLD Program: Next Round Applicant Support Program

The purpose of the ASP is...

To make the next round accessible to applicants **who want to apply for a new gTLD**, but would be otherwise unable due to financial and resource constraints.

Applying for a gTLD is complex - as applicants are **applying to operate an Internet registry business** that supports the DNS.

ASP Applicants can expect to...

Undergo a rigorous evaluation process assessing eligible entity status, financial need, financial viability, and public responsibility due diligence.

Supported Applicants will benefit from...

Financial support with reduced gTLD application and evaluation fees, along with non-financial support, training and resources to help guide their journey.

Audience Segmentation and Strategic Focus

Prospective Applicants

Increase global awareness of the Applicant Support Program among potential applicants.

- Expand reach via targeted events, communications, and collaboration with the ICANN Community.
- Enhance prospective applicant touchpoints and seek experiential feedback.

Applicants in the Pipeline

Facilitate engagement in the Applicant Support Program to enable effective ASP application submissions.

- Actively support applicant movement through the pipeline.
- Address perceived challenges to applying with resources and support mechanisms.

Supported Applicants

Support the applicant journey to enable gTLD application submission and delegation.

- Onboard and guide supported applicants through the gTLD application lifecycle.
- Connect supported applicants with appropriate resources, support, and networks.

Support for ASP Applicants in the Pipeline

OBJECTIVES*

Actively support applicant movement through the pipeline with consistent correspondence and data-capture.

Address potential challenges with existing and additional resources and support mechanisms.

ACTIVITIES

- **Active pipeline management** with Aging Report to assess where applicants are in the application process
- **Twice-monthly email cadence** to help applicants move through the pipeline
- **Weekly Office Hours** to answer questions live and post recordings to website

- **Pipeline survey** sent to pipeline applicants in twice-monthly emails
- **Pro Bono Professionals** highlighted and encouraged in twice-monthly emails
- **Webinars** highlighting Pro Bono support and **Weekly Office Hours**

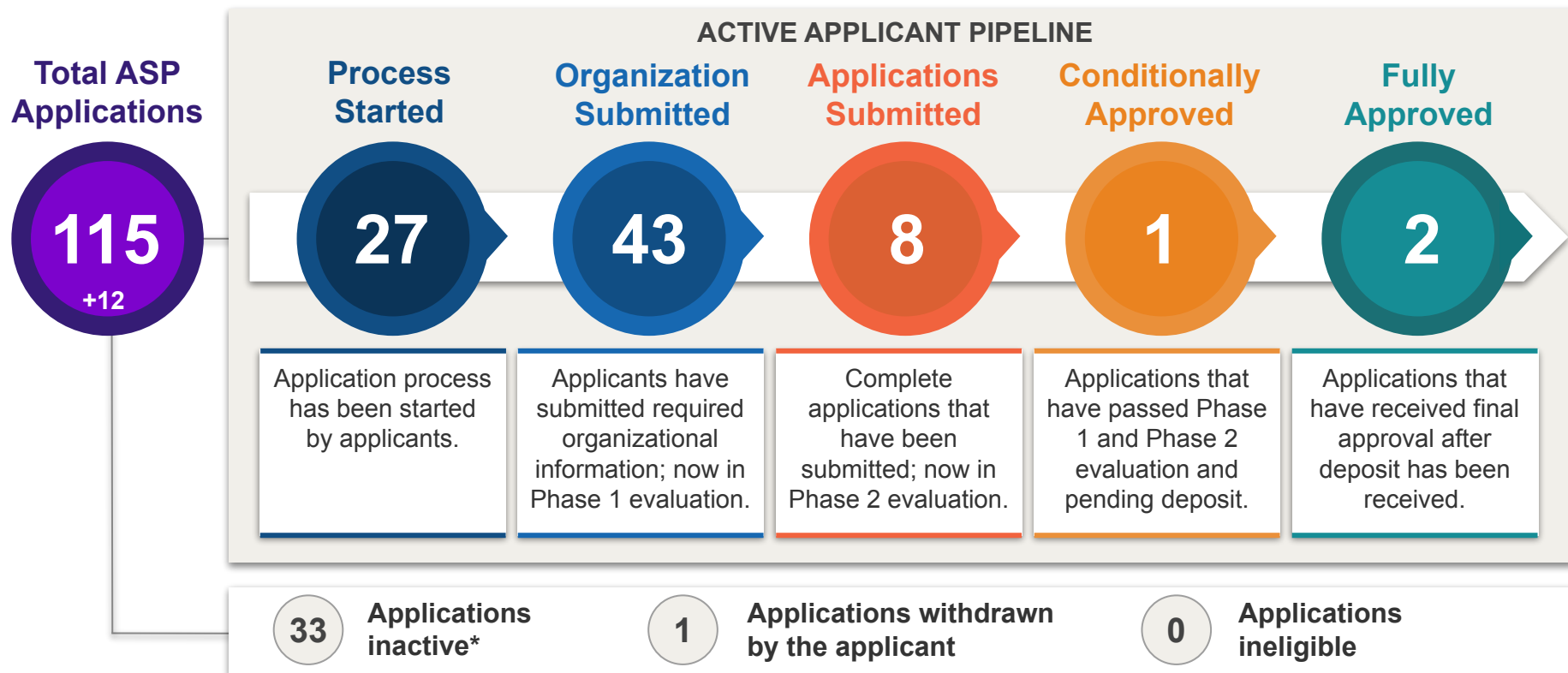
PROGRESS

- Application aging data has provided a **more accurate view of active applicants** so we can customize our communications.
- Ability to **track email engagement including opens and clicks** will help assess interest and potential blockers.

- Four responses to Pipeline survey to-date, providing insight into **where ICANN can offer additional help**.
- Five responses to Pro Bono Survey providing insight into **applicant needs**.
- Increased **page views and downloads**.

*Objectives support [GNSO Guidance Process \(GGP\) for Applicant Support Guidance Recommendation](#) #2 and #4.

ASP Application Status (19 October 2025)



*ASP applications with more than 90 days of inactivity are designated as "inactive".

ASP Regional Activity Update (19 October 2025)

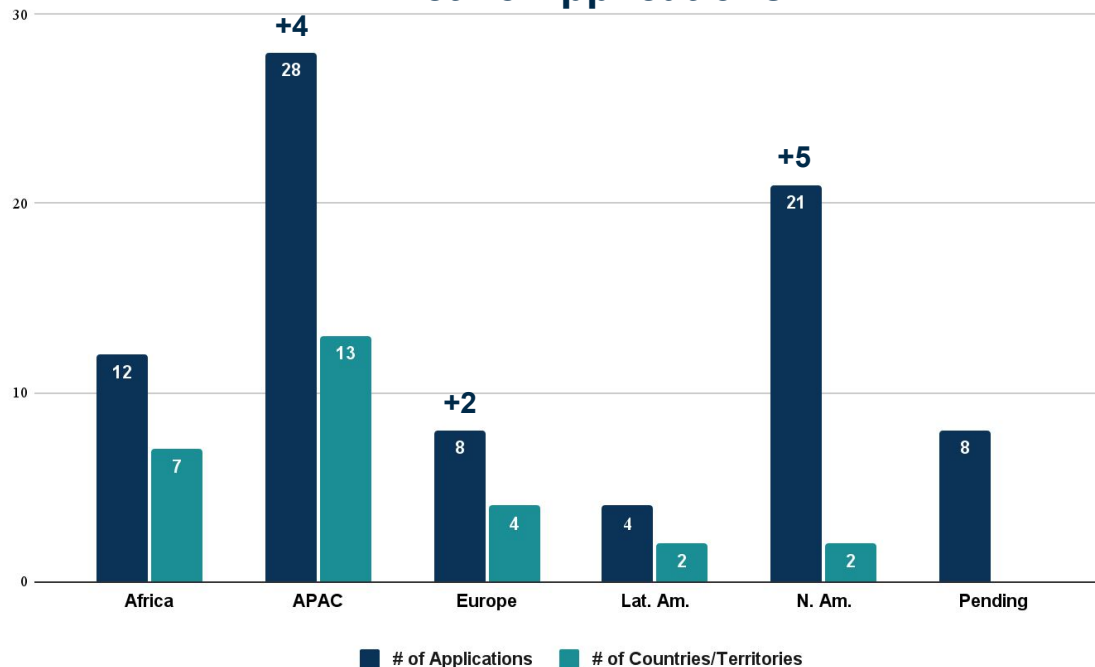
BY THE NUMBERS

81 TOTAL ACTIVE APPLICANTS IN PIPELINE

5 REGIONS

28 COUNTRIES/TERRITORIES

Active Applications



Applications with “pending” region have not yet submitted geographic organizational information.

GeoTLD

Presentation/Discussion

Nacho Amadoz, GeoTLD Group Chair (.cat), and Ronald
Schwärzler, GeoTLD Group Treasurer (.wien, .koeln/.cologne)

GeoTLD Group Update



ICANN 84 GAC Discussion on New
gTLD Program Next Round
Dublin, 25 October 2025

Topics for discussion

1. Introduction
2. Next Round AGB: Geographic Name Panel & Geographic Names Review
3. GeoTLD updates and capacity building
4. GeoTLD engagement with the GAC

1. Introduction



What is a GeoTLD ?

Our definition: ‘top-level domain that is based on a geographic name, geographic identifier, or geographic origin with the purpose of serving the respective geographic region’. This includes top-level domains identifying a city, region, language or culture.

The **GeoTLD Group** represent the interests of top-level domains (TLDs) identifying a city, region, language or culture. Our members and observers include government entities, companies and associations. The mission of the GeoTLD Group is to promote and connect those engaged in the advocacy, promotion, governance, and development of geoTLDs within their communities and to all their stakeholders.

Our vision is that geoTLDs are shaping tomorrow’s Internet and creating digital identities for places and communities. The GeoTLD Group represents all geographic top-level domains and stands as their rallying point. The group strives to develop geoTLDs’ potential for the benefit of their cities, regions, cultures and languages.

Our effective Members

Afnic for “City of Paris” (.paris)

Ajuntament de Barcelona (.barcelona)

Asociacion Puntogal (.gal)

Association www.bzh (.bzh)

City of Amsterdam (.amsterdam)

City of Stockholm (.stockholm)

DNS Belgium vzw (.brussels/.vlaanderen)

domainworx Service & Management GmbH
(.wien/.koeln/.cologne)

Dotlocal (.frl)

Dot London Domains Ltd (.london)

DOTSCOT REGISTRY (.scot)

DOTZON GmbH (.berlin , .hamburg)

FUNDACIÓ PUNTCAT (.cat)

GoDaddy Registry
(.bayern/.boston/.melbourne/.miami/.nrw/.nyc/.
sydney)

MADRID DIGITAL Madrid Regional
Government (.madrid)

Point Quebec, Inc. (.quebec)

Punkt Tirol GmbH (.tirol)

Puntueus Fundazioa (.eus)

Sparkling (.alsace)

ZA Central Registry
(.africa/.capetown/.joburg/.durban)



geoTLD.group
promoting local digital identities

Our Observers

DENIC Services GmbH & Co.KG

DNS Africa

CORE Association

Office Federal de la Communication OFCOM (.swiss)

SIDN

TLD-Box Registry Dienstleistungen GmbH

GeoTLD Group members operate

.africa .alsace .amsterdam .barcelona .bayern .berlin .boston .brussels .bzh .capetown .cat
.cologne .durban .eus .frl .gal .hamburg .joburg .koeln .london .madrid .melbourne .miami
.nrw .nyc .paris .quebec .scot .stockholm .swiss .sydney .tirol .vlaanderen .wien



2. Next Round AGB: Geographic Name Panel & Geographic Names Review

Issue

The Review Procedure for Geographic Names and described role of the Geographic Names Panel are similar to the procedure and role described in the 2012 AGB. However, the Draft AGB introduces an estimated fee of 18,000 to 25,000 USD for the Geographic Names Review.

The stated amounts for the conditional fee to verify, where required, the documentation for geographic name strings, are disproportionately high relative to the task, especially considering that the draft AGB suggests simple and straightforward verification methods, such as ICANN asking relevant diplomatic authorities or GAC members to confirm.

6.5.2 Geographic Names Requiring Government or Public Authority Documentation

Certain types of applied-for strings, including their allocatable variant strings, are considered Geographic Names and must be accompanied by documentation of support or non-objection from the relevant governments or public authorities. These types are:

1. Strings that represent, in any language, the capital city name of any country or territory listed in the ISO 3166-1 standard.
2. City names where the applicant declares that it intends to use the gTLD for purposes associated with the city name.

City names can present challenges because they may also be generic terms or brand names, and they are often not unique. Unlike other types of Geographic Names, city names do not have established lists for objective references during evaluation. Thus, city names are not universally protected. However, the process does provide a means for cities and applicants to work together where desired.

A city name application will be subject to the Geographic Names requirements (that is, will require documentation of support or non-objection from the relevant governments or public authorities) if:

- a) It is clear from applicant statements within the application that the applicant will use the TLD primarily for purposes associated with the city name.

ICANN definition of a geographic name (draft AGB)



b) The applied-for string is a city name as listed on official city documents.¹⁷⁷

3. Strings that are exact matches of sub-national place names, such as counties, provinces, or states, listed in the ISO 3166-2 standard.
4. Strings listed as UNESCO regions¹⁷⁸ or appearing on the Geographic Regions section of the “Standard country or area codes for statistical use (M49)”.¹⁷⁹

Translations of regions included on the list mentioned above will be limited to the languages specified on that list. Region names that do not conform to the framework of DNS permissible characters will be converted into DNS labels that contain only letters, digits and hyphens as noted in the Root Zone Label Generation Rules (RZ-LGR).¹⁸⁰

For strings on these lists, documentation of support/non-objection will be required from at least 60% of the respective national governments in the region, with no more than one written objection to the application from relevant governments in the region or public authorities associated with the continent or the region.

When the 60% rule is applied and regions are common to both lists, the regional composition contained in the “Standard country or area codes for statistical use (M49)” takes precedence.

An applied-for gTLD string that falls into any of the types 1 through 4 listed above is considered to represent a Geographic Name. In cases of uncertainty, it is advisable for the applicant to consult with relevant governments and public authorities to enlist their support or non-objection prior to submission of the application. This proactive approach can help prevent possible objections and clarify any ambiguities concerning the string and applicable requirements.

Strings that include but do not exactly match a Geographic Name as defined in this section will not be considered Geographic Names. Therefore, they will not require documentation of government support or non-objection during the evaluation process.

For each application, the Geographic Names Panel will determine which governments or public authorities are relevant based on the inputs of the applicant, governments,

and its own research and analysis. If there is more than one relevant government or public authority for the applied-for gTLD string, the applicant must provide documentation of support or non-objection from all the relevant governments or public authorities. It is anticipated that this may apply to the case of a sub-national place name.

6.5.3.2 Geographic Names Review

A Geographic Names Panel (GNP) will determine whether each applied-for gTLD string represents a Geographic Name, and verify the relevance and authenticity of the supporting documentation where necessary.

The GNP will review all applications received, not only those where the applicant has noted its applied-for gTLD string as a Geographic Name. For any application where the GNP determines that the applied-for gTLD string is a country or territory name (as defined in this module), the application will not pass the Geographic Names Review and will be denied. No additional reviews will be available.

For any application where the GNP determines that the applied-for gTLD string is not a Geographic Name requiring government support or non-objection (as described in this module), the application will pass the Geographic Names Review with no additional steps required.

For any application where the GNP determines that the applied-for gTLD string is a Geographic Name requiring government support or non-objection, the GNP will confirm that the applicant has provided the required documentation from the relevant governments or public authorities, and that the communication from the government or public authority is legitimate and contains the required content. ICANN may confirm the authenticity of the communication by consulting with the relevant diplomatic authorities or members of ICANN's Governmental Advisory Committee for the government or public authority concerned on the competent authority and appropriate point of contact within their administration for communications.

The GNP may communicate with the signing entity of the letter to confirm their intent and their understanding of the terms on which the support or non-objection for an application is given.

Geographic Names Review (draft AGB)



Table 2-2: Conditional Evaluations and Fees

Conditional Evaluation	Fees
Geographic Names Review *	This fee is payable to cover the cost of the panel's review of the application (currently estimated between \$18,000 USD – \$25,000 USD). ICANN anticipates that a 'does not exceed' fee will be included before the Guidebook is finalized, which will be informed by an RFI that is in the process of being carried out.

GeoTLD Group public comment

we urge ICANN to review relevant sections and in the final version of the Applicant Guidebook:

1. Confirm a baseline scenario for the Geographic Names Review covered by the general application fee (as was the case in 2012), including a detailed list of required documentation that would allow a Geographic Name application to pass the review without additional cost.
2. Further detail and elaborate on possible verification methods for assessing the relevance and validity of submitted documentation that are simple, straightforward and incur neglectable costs.
3. Clearly identify exceptional cases, if any, where an additional fee may be justifiable, along with detailed cost estimates for such scenarios.

3. GeoTLD Updates



NIS-2 implementation

RRA Amendment for NIS-2

Art.28 Database of domain name registration data

1. ..., Member States shall require TLD name registries and entities providing domain name registration services to collect and maintain accurate and complete domain name registration data
6. ... shall **not result in a duplication of collecting domain name registration data**. To that end, Member States shall require TLD name registries and entities providing domain name registration services to cooperate with each other

RRA Amendment

To avoid the duplication of data, the Parties agree that ...

... the data collection obligations set forth in NIS2 Article 28 (1) to (5) or corresponding national transpositions implementing the same **shall be performed by Registrar**, to the extent that such collection obligations apply to Registrar.

This provision does not relieve Registry of any data collection obligations that may apply independently to Registry.

Art.28 Database of domain name registration data

5. Member States shall require the TLD name registries and the entities providing domain name registration services to provide access to specific domain name registration data **upon lawful and duly substantiated requests by legitimate access seekers**, in accordance with Union data protection law.

Member States shall require the TLD name registries and the entities providing domain name registration services to reply without undue delay and in any event within 72 hours of receipt of any requests for access.

RRA Amendment

Each Party shall respond to lawful requests for access to registration data that it receives, in accordance with Article 28(5) of the NIS2 and national law implementations of NIS2.

If a request for registration information is received from relevant local authorities and deemed to be lawful, the answering party will use reasonable best efforts to inform the other party at around the same time the answer to the requestor is sent, including listing the data elements submitted to the requestor.

Scope of the RRA Amendment

- geoTLD
- EU based
- thick Registry
relevant data available to registry over EPP according to
ICANN Registration Data Policy (effective Aug.2025)

3. GeoTLD Updates (cont.)



SEO Research

GeoTLD SEO research (ICANN Grant)

UA

GeoTLD Universal Acceptance Local Initiative

4. GeoTLD Engagement with the GAC



Questions

How can the GeoTLD Group assist the GAC ?

What kind of updates are useful ?

Thank you for your attention



GeoTLD Group

<https://geotld.group/>

contact@geotld.group
