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ANNUAL
GENERAL
MEETING



GAC Capacity Development (1 of 2) GAC Readiness for the 2026 Round

17 October 2026 | 10:30-12:00 WITA / 02:30-04:00 UTC

ICANN87 GAC Capacity Development Session 1 (90 mins)

1. Welcome and Introduction (10 mins)

Amina Ramallan, GAC CDWG Co-Chair

2. 2026 Round status update (60 mins)

Marika Konings, Justin Ho, George Sarkisyan, Eduardo Alvarez

3. Q&A/Discussion (10 mins)

4. AOB/Closing (10 mins)

Amina Ramallan

Presenters

Marika Konings

VP, New gTLD Program Lead

George Sarkisyan

New gTLD Program, Stage Lead

Justin Ho

New gTLD Program, Stage Lead, GAP Deputy

Eduardo Alvarez

Director, Technical Services Operations

Readiness Content Disclaimer

The authoritative source for all information about New gTLD Program: 2026 Round rules, evaluations, restrictions, processes, and systems is the English version of the [New gTLD Program: 2026 Round Applicant Guidebook](#). All New gTLD Program: 2026 Round readiness and training content is supplementary to the Applicant Guidebook, and has been developed to provide a high-level summary of key topic areas of interest to prospective applicants and the broader ICANN community. In case of discrepancy, the Applicant Guidebook prevails.



NEW gTLD PROGRAM: 2026 ROUND

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Welcome

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New gTLD Program Overview

What Are Generic Top-Level Domains (gTLDs)?

Top-level
domain

www.icann.org

Generic
top-level
domains

.futbol

.paris

.عرب

.コム

Arabic

Japanese

i A **string** of characters after the last dot in a domain name

gTLDs which use one or more non-**ASCII** characters (“Internationalized Domain Names (IDNs)”) **i**

i **String**– combination of characters that comprise a top-level domain

i **ASCII**– American Standard Code of Information Interchange

New gTLD Program: 2026 Round

What is the 2026 Round?

An ICANN community-driven initiative that enables the continued **expansion of the Domain Name System** by allowing eligible parties to **apply for generic top-level domains (gTLDs)**.

Who was eligible to apply?

Legal entities including businesses, organizations, and institutions as well as governmental, nongovernmental, and intergovernmental entities.

When were applications submitted?

Applications were submitted between 30 April and 12 August 2026.

How much did it cost to apply?

The gTLD evaluation fee is **USD 227,000** + conditional fees, where applicable.

How many applications are proceeding?

1,615 applications are proceeding.

2026 Round Application Types

Applicants have different requirements and processing steps depending on the type of application or string they applied for.

Application Type Determines:

gTLD Application Questions

- Prioritization order for processing
- Conditional evaluations & fees
- Contention Resolution options
- Contract requirements

 **Financial Profile** (ex: Government vs. Top 30 Exchange listed) also impacts application questions

General Applications

.generic

A general gTLD application does not fall into one of the specialized categories and is subject to a standard set of defined requirements.

Specialized Application Types

.Brand

.nike

Community

.eco

Geographic Name

.paris

Reserved Name

.redcross

Variant

شبكة (gTLD)
شبكة (variant)

Internationalized Domain Name (IDN)

.例子 (.example)

Different gTLD Application Types

Understanding the different application types to help inform the GAC's internal processes. [Key Topic Overview: TLD Application Types](#)

General

One that does not fall into one of the specialized application categories and is subject to a standard set of defined requirements.

- Applications for specialized gTLDs have specific requirements based on the application, string, or applicant type.

Internationalized Domain Names (IDNs) and Variant Strings

Help support linguistic and script diversity on the global Internet.

- IDN gTLDs include one or more non-ASCII characters.
- Variant strings may be considered the “same” as another gTLD string based on specific script rules.
- An applicant can apply for a new primary IDN along with one or more of its allocatable variant strings.
- An applicant can apply for variant strings of an existing gTLD only if it is the same legal entity as the registry operator for the existing gTLD.

Different gTLD Application Types

Understanding the different application types to help inform the GAC's internal processes. [Key Topic Overview: TLD Application Types](#)

Geographic Names

- For gTLDs that represent specific geographic places such as cities or regions.
- These applications must meet specific criteria and require additional documentation including government support or endorsement to proceed through the evaluation process.

Reserved Names

- For strings - or names - that have been set aside on ICANN's Reserved Name list (e.g., names of intergovernmental organizations).
- Only eligible entities may apply for these strings by meeting specific qualifications.

.Brand TLDs

- Intended for trademark holders that wish to apply for domains that match registered marks.
- These top-level domains are typically designed for exclusive use by the brand owner and their trademark licensees and are subject to Brand Eligibility Evaluation for trademark-based applications.

Community gTLDs

- For gTLDs intended to serve clearly delineated communities that share identities, interests, or have other common denominators.
- These applications must follow criteria for the Registry Commitments Evaluation (RCE) and have the option to participate in the Community Priority Evaluation (CPE) process to resolve contention.

03

The Applicant Journey

*Dates subject to change



30 APR 2026
2026 Round Opens:
TAMS is open for application
submissions



7 OCT 2026
Reveal Day: ICANN publishes the list of all
applications that have passed the administrative check.



17 NOV 2026
String Confirmation Day: ICANN publishes
the list of applications and initial contention sets.
String Evaluation begins: String evaluations begin.



2027
Prioritization Draw: A priority
number is assigned to each application.

APR AUG OCT NOV DEC JAN 2027

30 APR - 12 AUG 2026 (104 days)
**Application Submission
Period:** Applicants submit
applications via TAMS.

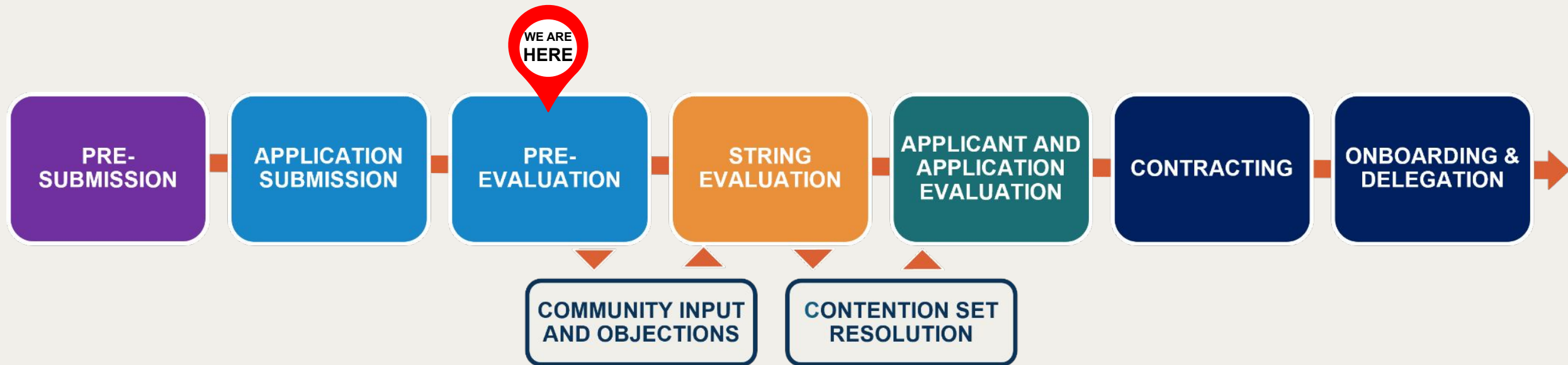
8-21 OCT 2026* (14 days)
String Replacement Period:
Applicants may replace their original
string with their replacement string.

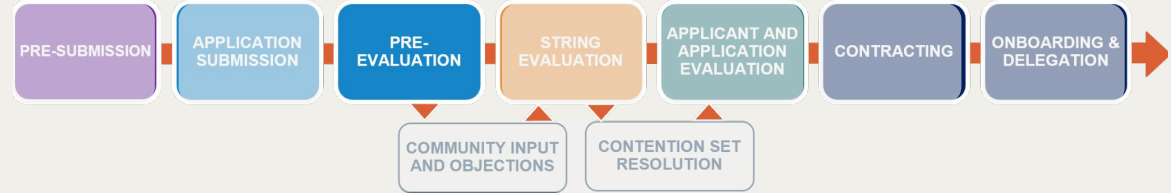
17 NOV - 17 DEC 2026* (30 days)
Singular/Plural Notifications: The general public, including GAC Members and Observers,
may submit singular/plural notifications.

17 NOV 2026 - 16 MAR 2027* (104 days + ICANN office closure from 19 Dec 2026-4 Jan 2026)
Application Comment Period: The general public, including GAC Members and Observers,
may submit comments via the Application Comment Forum (ACF), which may be taken into
account by evaluators.
GAC Member Early Warnings: GAC Members and Observers may submit Early Warnings.
Objections Filing Period: Parties with standing may file objections. GAC Members and
Observers may have standing.

GAC Consensus Advice can be issued at any time
throughout the application process.

Applicant Journey

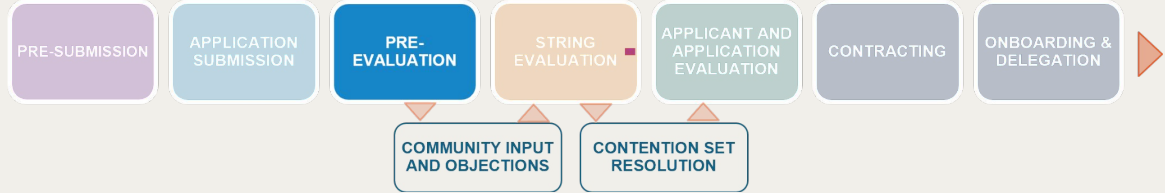




Pre-Evaluation Stage Milestones

ICANN is processing the submitted applications through Pre-Evaluation and the String Replacement Period in preparation for String Confirmation Day.

Step 1	Step 2	Step 3	Step 4	Step 5
Administrative Check Date: Complete Purpose Payments and administrative completeness are verified, initial contention sets are identified. Outcome Applications passing check proceed to Reveal Day.	Reveal Day Date: 7 OCT Purpose Public application information is published. Outcome Applicants and public see applied-for strings, initial contention sets, and other public application information.	Replacement Period Date: 8-21 OCT Purpose Applicants may choose to replace their application with pre-submitted Replacement String application. Outcome Application potentially avoids contention.	String Confirmation Day Date: 17 NOV Purpose Final applied-for strings and applications are published. Initial list of contention sets is updated. Outcome Community Input Period and String Evaluation begins.	Prioritization Draw Date: 2027 Purpose Optional random draw assigns Priority Number for application processing. Outcome Establishes processing order.



Replacement Period



Purpose

- During application submission, all applicants could designate a “**Replacement String**” alongside their original choice of string to help avoid contention with other applied-for strings.



Process and Timing

- During the **Replacement Period** an applicant with an eligible replacement string has the opportunity to select their replacement string or original applied-for-string.
- The Replacement period is open for **14 days following Reveal Day**.
- If an applicant submits the Replacement String Attestation in TAMS, that selection is permanent and irreversible. Under no circumstances can applicants change their selection.
- If an applicant does not submit their **Replacement String Attestation** within the replacement period, the applicant will proceed with their original applied-for string.



Eligibility

- The replacement string created during the application window must meet **all application rules and requirements**.
- Replacement strings **must not be identical to, or a variant of the applied-for string of another applicant**, or an existing gTLD string.

APPLICANTS

- Do:** If eligible, use the **Replacement String Attestation** task in TAMS to make your selection. [See Applicant Journey: Pre-Evaluation](#)
- Know:** selecting a Replacement string does not guarantee the application avoids contention.

What's Next?

COMMUNITY INPUT

17 November 2026 - 16 March 2027

The ICANN community and interested members of the public have an opportunity to provide input on new gTLD applications after String Confirmation Day. Mechanisms include:

Application Comments: 104 days following String Confirmation Day.

GAC Member Early Warnings: 104 days following String Confirmation Day.

Singular/Plural Notifications: 30 days following String Confirmation Day.

Objections: Filing window opens on String Confirmation Day.

****MORE INFO IN THE NEXT SESSION!****

String Confirmation Day opens multiple processing tracks in parallel.

STRING EVALUATION

Expected Length: 180 Days

String Evaluation consists of five separate assessments focusing on the evaluation of the applied-for strings and their allocatable variant strings.

String Similarity Evaluation: Review applied-for strings and variants for similarity according to criteria defined in AGB.

Geographic Names Identification: Identifies strings that are considered Geographic Names as per criteria defined in AGB.

Safeguard Assessment: Determines whether a string requires specific Safeguard Public Interest Commitments for issues such as consumer protection, sensitive strings, or regulated markets.

Name Collision Initial Assessment: Evaluate potential DNS name-collision risk.

Singular Plural Notifications Evaluation: Determines if the applied-for string represents the singular or plural form of the same word in the same language as another applied-for string, existing gTLD, Blocked Name, or a string being processed from a previous new gTLD round.

NEW gTLD PROGRAM: 2026 ROUND



Poll Time!

How many applications are proceeding?

- a. 1,893,402
- b. 2
- c. 1,615
- d. 1,654

Which evaluation is the first one to kick off after String Confirmation Day?

- a. String Evaluation
- b. Acronym Comprehension Evaluation (ACE)
- c. Temporary Delegation
- d. None, all evaluations were performed before submission

04

Application Publication and Statistics

Publicly Available Information

ENTITY INFORMATION

- Legal business name, doing business as name, legal entity form, jurisdiction
- Existing registry operator, ICANN accredited registrar, or an Affiliate of either
- Stock symbol, business phone, email address, physical address
- Direct Parent Company and Ultimate Parent Company
- Names of directors, officers, partners, material shareholders, individuals with executive responsibility, and person or entity with ultimate control
- Additional information or supporting materials provided by the applying entity

FINANCIAL / OPERATIONAL

Financial evaluation has four profiles. Each profile has evaluation criteria specifically selected to determine if an applicant has, and is expected to have, the financial resources to fund the registry's start-up and long-term operation.

Public information includes:

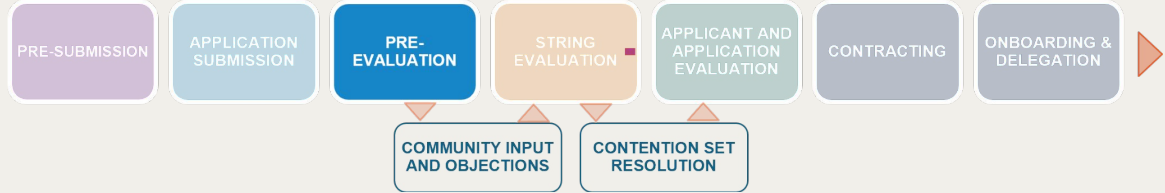
- Standard Profile and Top 25 Profile: self-certification
- Government Profile and Registry Operator Profiles: self certification and operational planning

Operational information published includes self certification of Security and Policy planning, and DNS Abuse measures.

APPLICATION INFORMATION

- All applications include applied for string name, scripts variants, string type
- Community gTLDs, Geographic Name gTLDs, Reserved Names, and .Brand TLDs require additional questions and documentation to support those types of applications
- Safeguard Public Interest Commitments (PICs) and Registry Voluntary Commitments

See [Appendix 1](#) in the 2026 Round Applicant Guidebook for a full list of application questions.



Application Publication and Statistics Website

OVERVIEW

Public portions of applications are published to a searchable database on the [Application Publication and Statistics \(APS\)](#) website.

The site can be used to:

- **Navigate to** information on Statistics, Applications, Contention Sets, and Objections and Appeals pages.
- **Search and filter** information by applicant, application, applied-for string, application type, or other parameters.
- **View** application question responses, application documents.
- **Download** reports on all applications, individual applications, or contention sets.

Links and Resources: [APS User Guide](#)

APPLICANTS

- **Do:** Review information to determine whether the application is in a preliminary contention set.
- **Know:** Options to avoid contention depend on whether a replacement string has been applied for, and the application type.

THE COMMUNITY

- **Do:** Review applied-for-strings to determine if an application causes concern to the stakeholder group you are a part of.
- **Know:** Your community input and objection options determine the best way to share comments or concerns.

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Poll Time!

What does APS stand for?

- a. Application Publication System
- b. Application Publication and Statistics
- c. Applicant Program Support
- d. This is still being discussed internally

Who can access public application information on APS?

- a. Only today's presenters, except for Marika
- b. Only government authorities, provided they have a warrant
- c. Anybody, without having to log in
- d. Anybody, provided they have an ICANN account

A graphic consisting of two overlapping speech bubbles. The front bubble is dark blue and contains the text "Q&A" in white. The back bubble is purple and is partially obscured by the blue one. The entire graphic is centered on the slide.

Q&A

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gTLD

Thank You

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