



87

ANNUAL
GENERAL
MEETING



GAC Discussion on New gTLDs

Session 6

Agenda

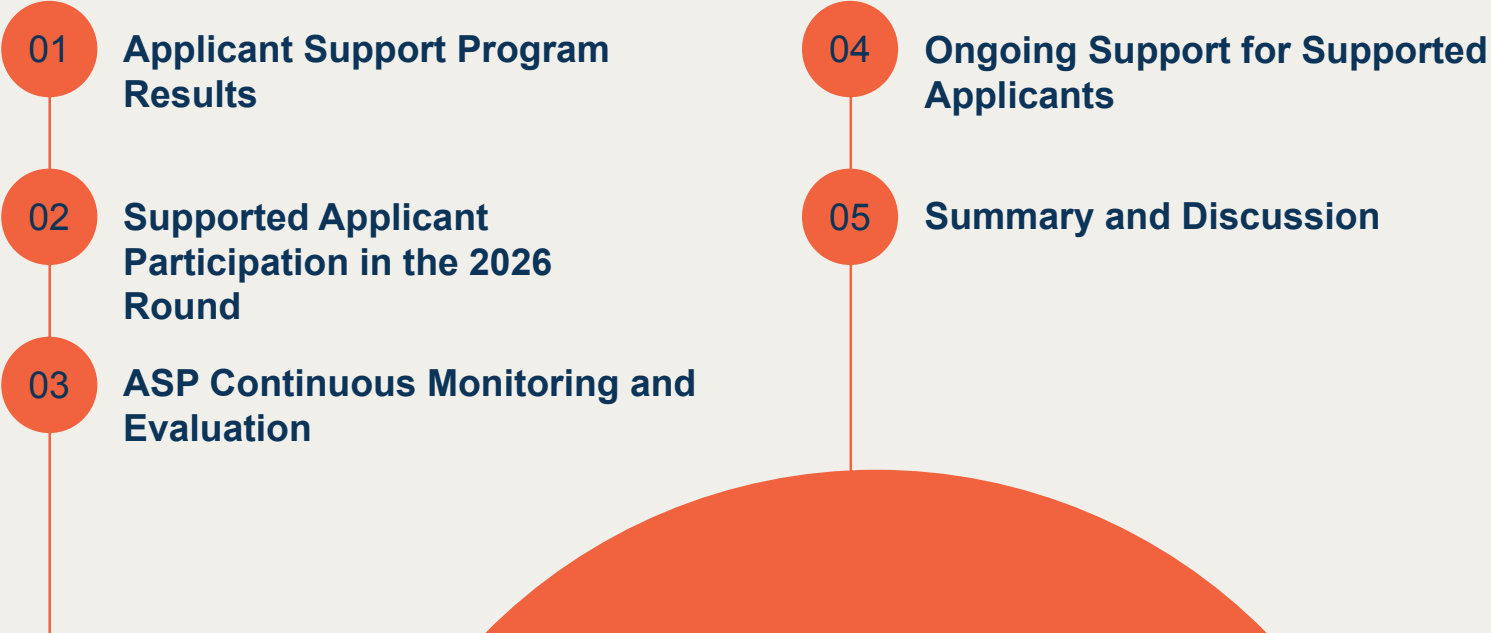
1. **Introduction** - Marco Hogewoning
2. **ICANN org update on Applicant Support Program**
(Kristy Buckley) - (25 minutes)
3. **GAC Discussion on ASP and Lessons Learned** -
Tracy Hackshaw (UPU), Thiago Dal-Toe (Colombia) -
(25 minutes)
4. **Q&A** - GAC Members (10 minutes)
5. **AOB**

New gTLD Program: 2026 Round

Applicant Support Program Status Update

Kristy Buckley - ICANN org

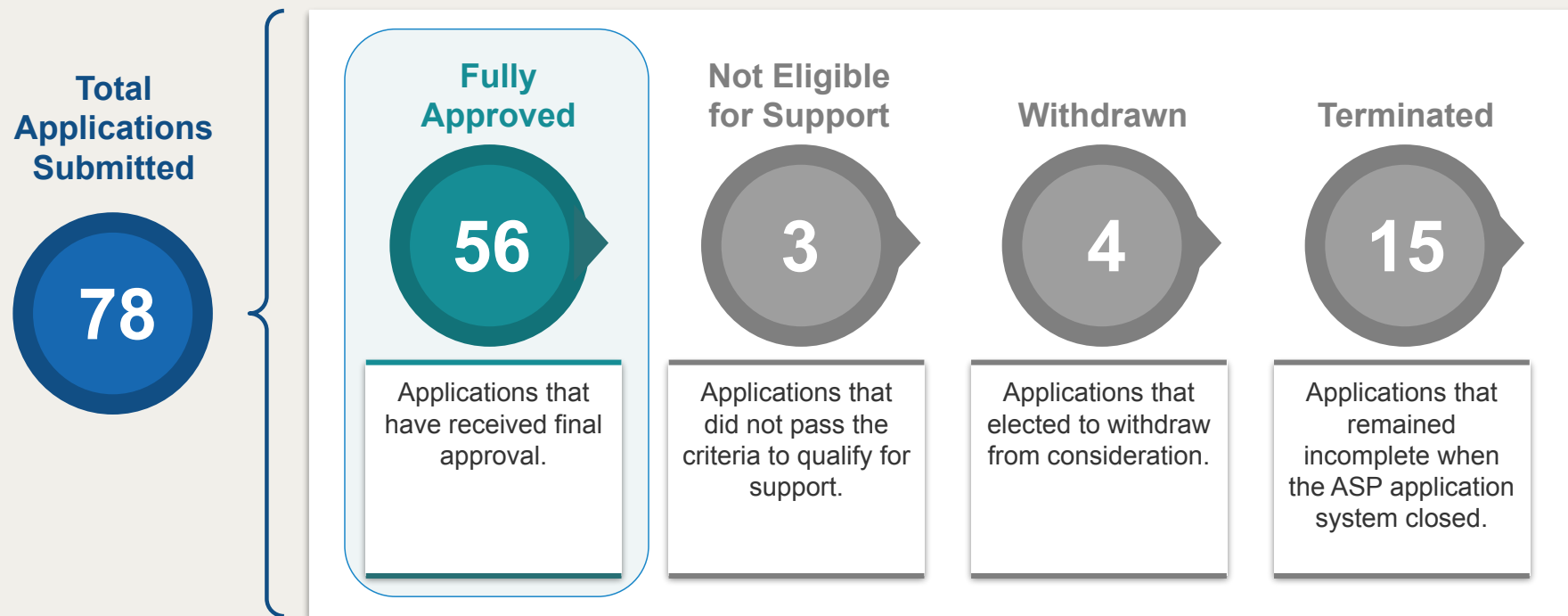
Agenda

- 
- The agenda is presented as two vertical timelines. The left timeline contains items 01, 02, and 03, while the right timeline contains items 04 and 05. Each item is preceded by a red circle containing its number. A large orange semi-circle is positioned at the bottom of the slide, centered under the right timeline.
- 01 **Applicant Support Program Results**
 - 02 **Supported Applicant Participation in the 2026 Round**
 - 03 **ASP Continuous Monitoring and Evaluation**
 - 04 **Ongoing Support for Supported Applicants**
 - 05 **Summary and Discussion**

01

Applicant Support Program Results

ASP Application Status (as of 12 August 2026)

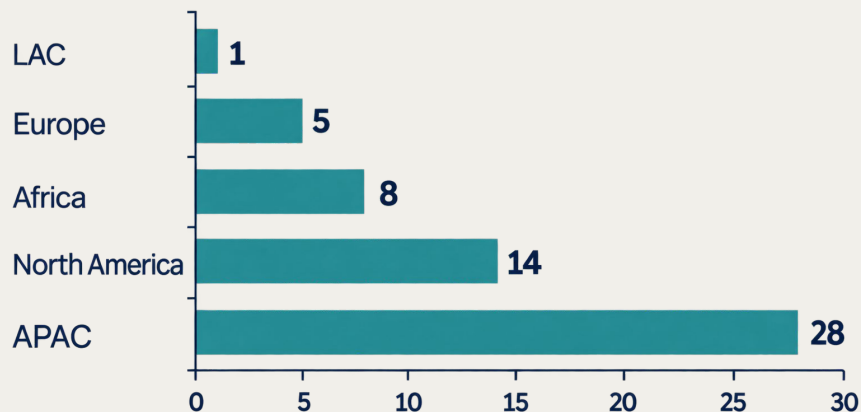


Note: A total of 99 applicants started the process but did not ultimately submit an application.

Supported Applicant Cohort

The 56 organizations that qualified for support span all five ICANN regions and four eligible entity types.

Regional Representation



Eligible Entity Type

25

Micro/small business
less-developed economy

24

Nonprofit, charity
or equivalent

6

Social impact / public
benefit micro/small

1

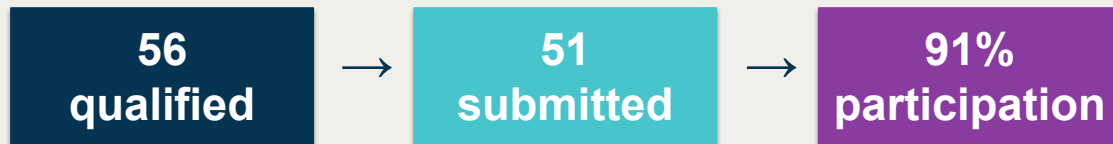
Indigenous / Tribal
organization

02

Supported Applicant Participation in the 2026 Round

From ASP Qualification to gTLD Application

Post-Reveal Day reporting can now compare the qualified supported applicant cohort with those that submitted a gTLD application.



By Region			
	Qualified	Applied	Change
Asia / Australia / Pacific	30	28	-2
North America	14	14	0
Africa	7	5	-2
Europe	4	3	-1
Latin America / Caribbean	1	1	0

By Eligible Entity Type			
	Qualified	Applied	Change
Micro/Small – Less-Developed Economy	25	22	-3
Nonprofit / Charity	24	22	-2
Social Impact / Public Benefit	6	6	0
Indigenous / Tribal	1	1	0

“Change” shows the difference between the qualified cohort and supported applicants that submitted a gTLD application.

Using APS for ASP

ICANN

APS Application Publication and Statistics**Visit**<https://newgtldprogram-aps.icann.org/applications>

Search By

Select...



Search

Type Keyword

Application Status

Select...



Applicant Region

Select...



TLD Type

Select...



Application Label

Select...



Processing Stage

Select...



Applicant Location

Select...



Application Type

Select...



Applicant Support

No Applicant Support

Requested Community Priority
Evaluation (CPE)

Clear

Search



From Qualification to gTLD Application: Participation Insights

Reveal Day data provides a new point of comparison between the 56 organizations that qualified for support and the 51 supported applicants that ultimately submitted a gTLD application.

WHAT WE KNOW

- 91% of qualified ASP applicants went on to submit a gTLD application.
- Qualifying for support did not necessarily result in gTLD application submission.
- Reveal Day provides a picture of changes in representation by region and eligible entity type.
- 32 supported applicants 63% are in contention.
 - 11 of those applicants have an eligible replacement string available.

WHAT WE ARE STILL LEARNING

- Why some qualified applicants' decision to not proceed.
- What factors are supported gTLD applicants facing as they progress.
- How findings can inform ongoing capacity development efforts.

ADDITIONAL INSIGHTS EXPECTED VIA CONTINUOUS MONITORING AND EVALUATION

Applicant feedback will help distinguish informed decisions not to proceed from challenges that may have affected participation.

03

ASP Continuous Monitoring and Evaluation

Background for Continuous Monitoring & Evaluation

The [GNSO Guidance Process](#) (GGP) established the basis for defining ASP success measures and the data needed to assess them.

POLICY BASIS

- The GGP for Applicant Support was tasked with articulating measures of success, including the data and metrics to be collected and analyzed.
- The [GGP Final Report](#) recommends quantitative measures and applicant feedback, including feedback from applicants that ultimately did not proceed.

Monitoring and evaluation continues throughout the applicant journey as additional outcomes and measures become available.

Tracking Progress Against GGP Measures

Some GGP measures can be assessed now; others become meaningful as supported applicants progress through the 2026 Round.

10

minimum supported
delegations
(GGP floor)

0.5%

of successfully delegated
gTLD applications

51

qualified applicants applied
for a gTLD

Post-Reveal Day Status

- The 51 supported applicants currently represent 3.2% of total gTLD applications
- This provides an early participation measure; the delegation indicator itself cannot be assessed until delegation outcomes are known.
- The **51 supported applicants** entering the New gTLD Program provide a meaningful foundation for assessing progress against the longer-term GGP delegation measure.

GGP Recommendation 5: no fewer than 10, or 0.5% of all successfully delegated gTLD applications, from supported applicants.

Background for Continuous Monitoring & Evaluation

The [GNSO Guidance Process](#) (GGP) established the basis for defining ASP success measures and the data needed to assess them.

EVALUATION APPROACH

- ICANN engaged an external evaluator/researcher and developed an evaluation framework aligned with the GGP recommendations.
- The work examines outreach and communications, the ASP application experience and system, financial and non-financial support, and supported applicants' progression through the New gTLD Program.

Monitoring and evaluation continues throughout the applicant journey as additional outcomes and measures become available.

Continuous Monitoring and Evaluation: Findings and Next Steps

Continuous monitoring and evaluation follows the ASP lifecycle—from awareness and outreach through supported applicant progression and longer-term outcomes.

Awareness, Outreach, Communication, and Engagement (AOCE) Survey

4.5/5

ASP website usefulness

4.2/5

information helped explain
eligibility / how to apply

51%

reported no engagement
barriers

35 responses
Jan–Apr 2026

What's Next

- **EXAMINE** supported applicant experience, preparedness, and use of ASP benefits and resources.
- **UNDERSTAND** factors influencing why some qualified supported applicants did not proceed to gTLD application submission.
- **TRACK** supported applicant progression and continue assessing outcomes against GGP indicators as additional measures become available.

04

Ongoing Support for Supported Applicants

ASP Financial Support Through the Applicant Journey

ASP financial benefits continue beyond the base application fee and can reduce costs at later stages of the applicant journey.

APPLICATION & EVALUATION

75% reduction in the base gTLD evaluation fee and eligible conditional evaluation fees:

- Community Priority Evaluation (CPE)
- Geographic Names Review
- Registry Commitments Evaluation (RCE)
- Applicable re-evaluations resulting from Application Change Requests

IF IN CONTENTION

ICANN Auction **bid credit of up to 35%** of the amount otherwise due on a winning bid.

- Maximum credit: USD 1.75 million per application
- Credit also applies to required auction deposits
- Bid credit phases down as the winning price increases

AFTER DELEGATION

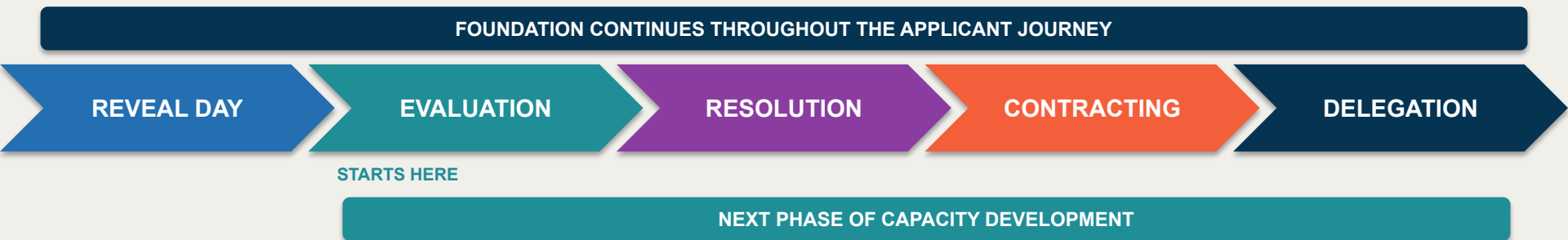
Reduced base Registry Operator fees:

- Year 1: **75%** reduction
- Year 2: **50%** reduction
- Year 3: **25%** reduction
- Year 4 onward: **standard fee**

Continued eligibility for ASP benefits is assessed as applicable throughout the applicant journey.

Capacity Development: Preparing Supported Applicants for What Comes Next

Capacity development builds on an existing foundation of resources that remains available throughout the applicant journey, while the next phase evolves alongside supported applicants as they progress.



Foundation Already in Place

- [Supported Applicant Toolkit](#) and [Applicant Readiness Pathway](#)
- [Discounted services offered voluntarily by successfully evaluated RSPs](#)
- [Pro bono providers and mentors](#)
- Dedicated applicant communications and general readiness resources

Next Phase

- **ANTICIPATE:** Leverage the Applicant Journey to proactively anticipate applicants' needs, including upcoming requirements, deadlines, and potential costs.
- **CONNECT:** Connect applicants with relevant ICANN and external resources at key points in their journey.
 - **Supported Applicant Capacity Development @ICANN88**
- **ADAPT:** Listen, learn, and adapt the readiness approach to create a holistic applicant experience.

05

Summary and Discussion

Key Takeaways

- 51 of the 56 supported applicants submitted a gTLD application, representing 91% of the supported applicant cohort.
- Capacity development is moving into its next phase, building on the existing foundation and aligning additional resources with upcoming applicant milestones.
- Continuous monitoring and evaluation is expanding from outreach and awareness to applicant experience, preparedness, use of ASP benefits/resources, and progression.
- The number of supported applicants entering the New gTLD Program provides a meaningful foundation for the longer-term GGP delegation measure. ICANN will continue to provide resources and capacity development to help applicants navigate the journey and make informed decisions.

Questions?

06

Appendix

ASP Bid Credits in ICANN New gTLD Auctions

Phased-out Bid Credit for Supported Applicants

Winning price (second-highest bid)	Bid credit applied	Cash equivalent of bid credit	Payment due by supported applicant
≤ USD 5M	35%	≤ USD 1.75M	≤ USD 3.25M
> USD 5M–7M	20%	> USD 1M–1.5M	USD 4M–5.5M
> USD 7M–9M	10%	> USD 0.7M–0.9M	USD 6.3M–8.1M
> USD 9M	0%	USD 0	> USD 9M

Key Considerations

- Up to 35%** Maximum percentage credit; capped at USD 1.75M per application.
- Winning price** Credit is applied to the amount otherwise due on the winning price, defined as the second-highest bid.
- Auction deposits** The bid credit also applies to any deposit required under the final auction rules.
- Above USD 5M** The credit phases down because USD 5M is the threshold indicating Financial Need to qualify for ASP support.

Examples

Winning price:
USD 900,000

35% credit → supported applicant pays USD 585,000

Winning price:
USD 6M

20% credit → supported applicant pays USD 4.8M

Final bid-credit procedures, including auction payment and deposit requirements, will be set out in the ICANN New gTLD Auction rules and procedures.

NEW gTLD PROGRAM: 2026 ROUND

gTLD

Thank You

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New gTLD Program: 2026 Round

Applicant Support Program: GAC Lessons Learned and Discussion

Tracy Hackshaw (UPU)

Thiago Dal-Toe (Colombia)

GAC Engagement on the ASP

The GAC has provided sustained input on the ASP, including through earlier SubPro-related work, GAC Advice, Issues of Importance, correspondence and Board engagement. Recurring themes have included financial support, outreach, geographic diversity, and non-financial assistance.

- **ICANN77 GAC Advice:** financial support and fee reductions; outreach, training and assistance; back-end service support.
- **ICANN79–80 GAC Advice:** global diversification, outreach strategy and reporting, funding, monitoring, and back-end support.
- **ICANN81–82 Issues of Importance:** ASP remained under GAC consideration as implementation progressed.
- **ICANN83–84 GAC/ALAC correspondence:** joint request for an urgent review of the ASP.
- **ICANN84 Issues of Importance:** ASP implementation and Next Round outreach; ex-post assessment of the Program.
- **ICANN85 Issues of Importance:** ASP funding, including preserving the ability to provide the maximum 85% base-fee reduction to all qualified applicants.
- **ICANN86 Issues of Importance:** Applicant Support Directory, connections to development finance, follow-up to ICANN77 Advice on Registry Operator fees, and possible future reassessment of support

Lessons from Increased Uptake and Remaining Barriers

- **Prior to Reveal Day:** Of 78 submitted ASP applications, 22 did not advance (15 terminated as incomplete, 4 withdrawn, 3 ineligible), leaving 56 approved.
- **Reveal Day Reality (7 Oct 2026):** Only 51 gTLD applications came from ASP candidates - it would appear that several (at least 5) fully vetted, approved applicants walked away at the final stage.
- **Potential "Last-Mile" Financial Barrier:** Maintaining the fee reduction at 75% (~\$56,750 balance) rather than the 85% maximum (~\$34,000 balance) appeared to remain a critical hurdle, especially for applicants in Least Developed Countries (LDCs).

Significant Geographic Imbalances

- **North America & Europe:** Captured 32% of approved ASP grants (18 of 56) and 84.8% of total gTLD applications (1,370 of 1,615).
- **Africa:** 7 approved ASP applications (3 terminated) and only 16 total gTLD applications (<1% globally)
- **LAC:** Only 1 approved ASP application and 11 total gTLD applications (0.7% globally).

Outreach, Capacity Building & Technical Assistance

- Need to assess the efficacy and effectiveness of the self-service toolkits and the *Applicant Support Directory* for entities lacking dedicated legal, financial, and technical teams.
- Despite GAC feedback, including Advice, since ICANN81, no operational mechanism was established to connect underserved applicants with Development Finance Institutions (DFIs) or micro-financing to cover the remaining 25% fee and operational capital.
- Need to assess how effectively the Registry Service Provider (RSP) pre-evaluation program paired with ASP candidates to prevent technical and contractual drop-offs.

Looking Ahead: Immediate Priorities & Future Rounds

- Looking forward to the results of ICANN org surveys with the 5+ approved non-applicants, 15 terminated applicants, and 99 unsubmitted initiators to pinpoint exact financial and procedural blockers.
- How to safeguard the 51 Submitted ASP Applications (Post-17 Nov 2026): Provide active pro-bono legal and technical support as the round enters the Community Input and Objections Period and String Contention, preventing post-Reveal Day attrition.
- Institutionalize Reforms for Future Rounds: Re-align outreach in LAC and Africa with regional strategic plans.
- Establish and concretize DFI financial matchmaking and tiered fee waivers (85%+ for LDCs) *prior* to application windows opening.

Key Questions for GAC Discussion

- How can the GAC assist ICANN org with ensuring the capture of empirical exit data from all or most of the approved and incomplete ASP applicants that failed to proceed?
- What immediate non-financial and technical safeguards are needed to help the 51 supported applications survive Objections, Contention, and Contracting?
- How should outreach, pro-bono coaching, and DFI financial matchmaking be restructured to address the severe underrepresentation applications from LAC (1 ASP) and Africa (7 ASP)?

Any Other Business

AOB

