
ICANN80 | PF – GAC Discussion: New gTLD Program Next Round
Monday, June 10, 2024 – 10:45 to 12:15 KGL

UNIDENTIFIED FEMALE: Hello, and welcome to the ICANN80 GAC session on Next Round of New gTLDs on Monday, 10 June, at 8:45 UTC. Please note that this session is being recorded and is governed by the ICANN Expected Standards of Behavior.

During this session, questions or comments submitted in the chat will be read aloud if put in the proper form. Remember to state your name and the language you will be speaking in case you will be speaking a language other than English. Speak clearly and at a reasonable pace to allow for accurate interpretation and please make sure to mute all other devices when you're speaking. You may access all the available features of this session in the Zoom toolbar. With that, I will leave the floor over to Nigel Hickson, GAC vice chair and topic lead. Nigel, over to you. Thank you.

NIGEL HICKSON: Good morning. I hope you've all had a coffee. I hope you're ready for this session, which we think is quite important on the GAC agenda. The New gTLD Program is going to be with us soon and it's certainly a very important milestone for ICANN. It's something the GAC takes very seriously indeed. So we're glad we're at this session. I'm sorry we've started a few minutes late. Especially to our colleagues online, thank you very much for joining. Perhaps the coffee is too good in Rwanda and that's why we started too late.

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Let's get on with this discussion. As I said, it's on the new gTLD round. This is the agenda. We'll come to this as we go through. A bit of an introduction. GAC discussion on Applicant Support. Implementation Review Team are going to be here. My colleague, Rida, who serves on that, is going to give us an update. Then we're certainly going to have time at the end for discussion and questions.

So please start thinking of questions on this new gTLD round. Anything you would like to ask. Nothing is beyond bounds, so to speak. I mean, try and be polite, but do ask questions. We have a lot of expertise in the room. Let's get on with it if we can. I ought to, before I start, thank our ICANN colleagues, ICANN Org. Really, so generous with their time to come along and help us with these sessions. We're very grateful indeed.

Let's get started. Perhaps the next slide. What I'd like to start with is the GAC involvement in the whole of the top-level domain process. For those of you in the GAC back in 2011—I'm also looking particularly at filling the front row here. But I know some of you were involved in that process. Certainly, what some of us got from that process is the GAC weren't sufficiently involved in the new gTLD round back in 2012, which is slightly confusing because we're calling this the new gTLD round. It's like rewriting history. But back in 2012 and before that, of course, there was a significant policy development process that went on in launching around in March 2012. This time around, from the onset, the Government Advisory Committee has been totally involved in the whole process. And we're so grateful for so many GAC members that have involved themselves in the processes, the original policy development process, a massive and a mammoth operation that

resulted in hundreds of recommendations. The Implementation Review Team, which has to go through every single one of those recommendations and craft them in a way where the rules and processes can be put in the Applicant Guidebook. Public Comment Proceedings, of course, cross-community small teams to look at specific issues that have come up. And of course, drafting teams as well. This is a substantial effort for ICANN Org. It's a substantial effort for the community as a whole. And we're very grateful to everyone.

I'll just mention what we formed here, which is under the GAC leadership of Nico sitting in our esteemed chair. The GAC leadership thought it would be a good idea to bring some expertise together on this. Various individual GAC members, including Jorge Cancio from Switzerland have been doing so much work in this on the past and still will do, of course. What we've formed, we've formed a small GAC team focusing on generic top-level domain. A call for volunteers was opened and multiple volunteers were identified. If we can go to the next slide, we can briefly look at that.

This new gTLDs GAC topic lead team. It's a bit of a mouthful, isn't it? I'm sure there should be an acronym that we could use, but then someone told me ICANN has more acronyms than any other organization in the world. Perhaps we don't want another acronym. But this is just a topic lead team. We've got no powers. We're not going to make any decisions on the GAC's behalf. It's just a coordination effort where we'll try and bring together those individuals that are doing a lot of work in this area and try and coordinate our activities so we don't miss important community discussions on the New gTLD Program and we give our coordinated input where we can. I'm just

coordinating it, really, no more than that. Rida here, as I've said, is our representative on the Implementation Review Team, which is very important. I help a bit on that. Ros KennyBirch on our right here, and Tracy Hackshaw, the little introduction to many of us, they'll be working on Applicant Support along with a number of other GAC representatives. We're very, very pleased and thankful on that. Ken Tseng from Chinese-Taipei, who is a great supporter of our efforts. Thanks very much there. Thiago, of course. Any team wouldn't be the same without Thiago. Everyone knows Thiago. Why don't you stand up, Thiago? Thiago is, of course, on the GAC leadership team as well, and we're very grateful. Laureen, I don't know if Laureen is in the room. Is Laureen in the room? Well, I can say nice things about her. She would be embarrassed, of course, if I said nice things about her. But Laureen is simply brilliant. She works for the U.S. She has been a chair of the Public Safety Working Group for a number of years. Her advice on public safety issues such as on DNS abuse and on other issues has been outstanding. We're very grateful that she's agreed to be a member of our team. Next slide.

We also, of course, have a GAC gTLD Small Team, which is actually quite large. We're very good in the GAC. We come up with all the right words. And the small team is, if you like, a wider team of those individuals that are interested in a whole range of new gTLD issues. And there's a working group here and a mailing list, etc. And if you want to join the small team to keep them updated on what's happening in the new gTLDs round, then please join that by letting our esteemed GAC Support Team know. Okay, next slide.

So, here we are. That's all I'll say. As I said, we'll have a chance after these two presentations, one on the Applicant Support Program and one on the Implementation Review Team to ask questions. So please take note of what's going on. The New gTLD Program, for those that are new to the GAC, and I know we've got many new to the GAC here today, and of course, we've got our esteemed high-level representatives, the application round is due to start in the first quarter of March 2026. Back in March 2012, the last full application round, there were 1752, he says—and he might have got that wrong, but it seems to be embedded on my memory—applications for new gTLDs. Of course, some of those fell away, and we don't have that many in the root of the Internet now. But it was a substantial piece of work. It will be a substantial piece of work next year as well in terms of putting everything together. And without further ado, let me turn the floor over to Ros.

ROS KENNYBIRCH:

Thank you so much, Nigel, and thank you so much to colleagues. It's great to see so many in the room today. I'll be presenting on the Applicant Support Program. If we could go to the first slide. Perfect. I'd just like to set the scene in the first instance of what is the Applicant Support Program or the ASP's intention. Well, the ASP is intended to make applying for a new gTLD or operating a registry more accessible to applicants who would be otherwise unable to due to financial and resource constraints. That who would be otherwise unable to is key and has driven the GAC's efforts in this area. For example, some entities could benefit through this program, but they may still be able to apply through the open new gTLD round.

In that vein, we've therefore discussed as a GAC who could most benefit from this program. Therefore, targets in underserved regions have been a core focus of the GAC. These areas don't receive the same amount of outreach or have the same know-how of ICANN's work compared to other areas of the world. In particular, the GAC has emphasized that outreach and promotion of the ASP in particular needs to focus on underserved regions in a global context and according to the GAC's definition of underserved regions, encouraging ICANN to reach out to areas that maybe it doesn't have the strongest links with or maybe are a bit harder to reach than through regular engagement programs. As such, we see this program as a chance for ICANN to be innovative and ambitious, showcasing its global mission by going to new places and promoting the very real economic and social benefits that operating a new gTLD can bring.

Now, I'll focus a bit more on what the GAC has specifically advised in regards to this program and where the status of these points is. The GAC made six key points in its ICANN79 advice, building off of previous advice and communiqué text introduced over the past year. One piece of advice that we issued is to ensure that the ASP focuses on facilitating global diversification of the New gTLD Application Program. Bearing in mind historical community calls for a remedial round. This is a core objective we will use to measure the ASP's success when the program is delivered. Two was to publish a comprehensive ASP communications and outreach strategy, an associated Implementation Plan for review and comment by the community with itemized costs, detailed scope, and clear metrics of success identified. We are still awaiting delivery on this. The Outreach

Plan on the new gTLDs published by ICANN is a high-level outline at two pages. So we're still awaiting further detail on itemized costs, detailed scope, and clear metrics of success. Next slide, please.

Thirdly, we requested an assessment of the appropriate budget to support the program and the associated communications and outreach strategy. We are still awaiting delivery of this. This was expected to be published in May. And unfortunately, the GAC does not have a plan to scrutinize here at ICANN80, though perhaps we will see further detail in ICANN's presentation.

Four was to develop a holistic approach to the ASP. Again, I am very thankful to our ICANN staff colleagues for presenting later today where we may hear some more clarity on the revised Recommendation 17.2 from the May Board Workshop. The GAC has also asked for consideration to be given to substantially reducing or eliminating ongoing ICANN registry fees for successful applicants for at least five years and consider for the flexibility thereafter according to applicant needs. This was also dependent on the outcome of the May Board Workshop in regards to the outcome of revised Recommendation 17.2. Again, we'll look forward to hearing further detail in this regard.

Finally, we asked ICANN to explore the potential of leveraging a platform to which new gTLDs supported through the ASP could move to eventually operate their own backend services, recalling ICANN77 GAC advice. This is something that we as GAC need to look to respond to. The Board has asked some very useful questions in this regard, and we could use this meeting as an opportunity to undertake a dialogue on how we might approach this topic. As you can see, I've listed off quite a number of points that the GAC has made there but I thought it

would be useful to recap those here in order to focus our discussion and questions with ICANN Org today. Next slide, please.

Now that I've covered those thematic points and given a recap of the GAC's views, I'd like to just highlight a bit more about the participation that a number of members across the GAC have been doing. One is that GAC participation continues in the ASP sub track. We have commented on another draft version of the ASP handbook emphasizing all of those points that I've mentioned previously. A new version of the handbook, I believe, is expected to be published this week.

I think just finally, to say a huge thank you to the colleagues that I've worked with through the GAC's Applicant Support Program Small Team. You've made an incredible contribution to shaping the GAC's priorities and objectives for this program. Thank you very much. I hope that serves as a useful recap. I'll now turn over to my colleague, Tracy Hackshaw, to offer some brief comments. Then I look forward to hearing ICANN Org's presentation on the Applicant Support Program, where we'll hopefully get some clarity on some of the points mentioned here. Thank you.

TRACY HACKSHAW:

Thanks, Ros. I'll be very brief. I just wanted to say we're making appeal to all GAC members interested in this process to join our small team and to work with us in terms of getting the points across that you want to get, especially from your countries, that may not be aware of what's happening. Join the team so you can be more aware. Be aware as well that, as Ros said, the focus of this program, from the GAC's perspective, as underserved regions. So if you're an underserved

region, meaning a region that is not well served by the DNS industry, there are not many registrars or no registrars, not many registries or there are no registries, of which there are many in the world today. Please do reach out, join and contribute, because this is a real opportunity for you as the GAC, as a country, to have your DNS industry expanded. There's funding available, as we indicated. And if there's an opportunity to get that done, we want to encourage everybody to be aware, to get aware, and to assist ICANN in ensuring that happens. Take a look at the communication plan, take a look at the handbook, and ensure it's in the language that you wish it to be in. Make those comments as you need to make them. Get really involved. Let's make sure the GAC is fully involved this time. They won't make the mistakes of 2012, and we ensure that in 2026, this program is highly successful, and we have many applicants from underserved regions. Thank you.

NIGEL HICKSON:

Thank you so much, Tracy and Ros. As you can see, this is a substantial piece of work. It's very, very important, I think. I want to just echo the words of Ros at the beginning. We have strived so hard for inclusion. One of the words that was echoed around the room yesterday by so many of our distinguished ministers and heads of government, inclusion is just so important. It's so important that this new gTLD round is seen as a global initiative and that, where possible, as many applicants from diverse regions, backgrounds are able to apply for a new generic top-level domain. That's why we think it's so important that this work continues alongside the work that ICANN has done on international domain names and on allowing variants to be applied for

at the second level. These are crucial steps for having a truly multilingual and diverse domain name space. Without further ado, let me turn over to our esteemed colleagues. Kristy, I think, you are next. Thank you.

KRISTY BUCKLEY:

Thank you very much. Greetings, everyone. We want to extend our appreciation for inviting us here today to present to the GAC about aspects of the Applicant Support Program. I am Kristy Buckley and I serve as the lead for the Applicant Support Program, otherwise known as ASP. I'm joined here on the panel by a couple of colleagues, Bob Ochieng and Sally Newell Cohen, who will also speak to the Outreach and Engagement Plan. The first topic that we will cover is the Funding Plan. As requested by the GAC, we'll be presenting on these two topics. Recognizing that we have 45 minutes, I believe, to cover both of those topics, we kindly suggest that we hold questions and comments and I'll pause briefly after the Funding Plan to see if there are any questions on that topic. We hope to also take questions and comments at the end.

The first topic—sorry, next slide please—is the ASP Funding Plan. Next slide. I'll first cover a little bit of background context for this topic. You may recall the SubPro Final Report included a policy recommendation that ICANN Org must develop a Funding Plan for Applicant Support. Implementation guidance on this recommendation said that ICANN Org should evaluate whether it can provide funds as it did in the 2012 round or whether additional funding is needed for Applicant Support. As you may have observed in ICANN79, and I believe some in this room were part of that community, the community raised concerns over the

previous funding amounts of two million. This was shared in the Operational Design Assessment for SubPro and in the Implementation Plan. Next slide.

We'll talk a little bit about the current budget estimates for Applicant Support. These were previously shared with the IRT at a higher level. Those of you that follow the ASP IRT sub track may recall seeing the total budget range between 10 and 16 million. Here on this slide, we differentiate between the fixed costs of implementing the Applicant Support Program and the variable costs that have a couple of dependencies. So the first is the final cost of the gTLD application fee and the evaluation fees associated with that. And the second dependency is the total volume of applicants that apply for and qualify for support. We'll talk a little bit more about that in the budget assumptions. Next slide.

We're assuming and have budgeted for the Applicant Support Program to receive and evaluate up to 200 applications or about 10% of gTLD applications. The financial assistance provides reduced based gTLD application fee and reduced evaluation fees on a percentage basis. So if we provide a minimum of 75% fee reduction, we can support up to 45 applicants. If we provide up to the maximum of 85, we can support up to 40 applicants. I'll unpack this last assumption number three a bit more in the next slides.

Here we share some background on the assumption of 40 to 45 applicants qualifying for support. You may recall the GNSO Guidance Process or GGP for ASP articulated success as no less than 10 or 0.5% of successfully delegated gTLD applicants should be supported. The GGP also called for Org to set a minimum meaningful level of fee

reduction and that the fee reduction should be spread equally across all qualified supported applicants. Following public comment on the draft ASP handbook a couple of months ago, the minimum level of support was raised from 50% to 75% to reflect the comments that we heard from the community that 50% was too low. Next slide.

As indicated in the SubPro ODA and the Implementation Plan, the percentage fee reduction in both of those documents was also at a range of 75% to 85%. This reflects on a percentage basis the level of support provided in 2012. We note here that the SubPro Final Report did not call for changes to that level of support. Next slide.

As noted, the GGP for ASP set a minimum of 10 supported applicants. So our budget assumptions have estimated for four times this amount to account for the risk that some supported applicants may not get all the way through to delegation. Because remember, the GGP guidance was not just the total number of supported applicants, but that those supported applicants make it all the way through the evaluation and into delegation. The final percentage of support will of course depend on the gTLD application fee and the number of applicants that qualify for support. We've included a couple of support scenarios on the next slide.

Here you can see, and I mentioned this earlier, but it's a little bit helpful here visually. So if we're looking at 75% fee reduction, then the number of supported applicants we can support there is 45. And as shared just in the IRT session earlier today, the program team presented a range for the gTLD application fee between 208 and 293,000, noting that this doesn't yet include potential charges for variants and CAP2. I will note here that the range is flexible. We want

to provide a minimum level of meaningful support to applicants that qualify. And if we have budget remaining towards the end of the evaluation period, we may be able to provide 80% fee reduction or 83% fee reduction or up to the maximum of 85% fee reduction. The point is we will give as much support as we can afford within the budget allocated and that all supported applicants will receive the same equal level of support.

This concludes our presentation on the ASP Funding Plan. Before we move to Outreach and Engagement, I'll just pause here to see if there are any questions or comments so far. Again, we should have time at the end for questions as well. Yes?

T. SANTHOSH:

Good morning. This is T. Santhosh from India. Based on this presentation, it was mentioned that the level of fee reduction, if it is 75% or the number of supported applicants is 45 and if it is 85%, it is 40. What will be the distribution of this 40? And what are the metrics which are being considered for this 40 or 45? Thank you.

KRISTY BUCKLEY:

Thank you for the question. Could you just clarify what you mean by distribution?

T. SANTHOSH:

Say these 45 requests is coming from a particular region. So are you distributing region-wise or a specific region?

KRISTY BUCKLEY:

Thank you. Excellent. Thank you for clarifying. We do not have a policy basis upon which to prioritize or have any sort of metrics in terms of the number of supported applicants per region. So there is no metric

there in terms of the number per region, although I will note that the GNSO guidance process for ASP did provide guidance and implementation, guidance that says that, obviously, we are looking for geographic diversity as much as possible. I know that that is something that the GAC has also advised previously as well. I think this is where the Outreach and Engagement Plan is really critical so that we are sure that we are raising awareness about the program to those regions that we are looking to seek ASP applicants from, which is everywhere but the GGP advised specifically to target underserved regions.

NIGEL HICKSON:

Thank you very much. We have some other questions. If I may just hold the cue. I think there are about three interventions to have. Because I am conscious that we ought to go through the whole of the presentation on this before we have some more generic questions. But I think we have a few—let us take the questions we have. First of all, from Nigel Cassidy. Sorry, Nigel Cassimire. Sorry, Nigel.

NIGEL CASSIMIRE:

Thank you very much, Nigel. Nigel Cassimere from the CTU, Caribbean Telecoms Union. Just to clarify, please. In terms of the numbers we see here for estimated number of supported applicants, if you could compare that with the number of applicants that we saw in the last round, are we doing better or worse? I just want to get a sense of that. Thank you.

KRISTY BUCKLEY:

In the 2012 round, we received three applications for support, and one of those qualified for support. So in this coming round, we are

budgeting for receiving up to 200 applications for support, and up to 45 of those qualifying for support. So it's a pretty significant increase in terms of the budget assumptions for ASP in the next round. Does that answer your question?

NIGEL CASSIMIRE: Yes. Thank you.

NIGEL HICKSON: Thank you. And on to [Feng] from China.

UNIDENTIFIED MALE: Thank you. [Inaudible] from China. I hope this slide could be shared perhaps after the session for further review and study by the GAC members. I found it very useful. About the Applicant Support Program, regarding the handbook, I think it's a very good effort. I would like to thank those who have been putting efforts into the drafting of this handbook. I have a question and suggestion regarding this handbook. My question is whether this handbook will be available in other languages? Well, the English version being finalized in the future. Perhaps my suggestion is at a certain timing or occasion, ICANN and its region offices can organize some activities online or offline to raise awareness of this handbook because it's a very useful document. Thank you.

KRISTY BUCKLEY: Thank you very much for the question and the comment. Just first on the slides, yes. I'm happy to share these on the page website. We shared them with the GAC staff, so those should be available to you.

In terms of the handbook, the plan is for it to be available in the UN six languages. So yes, indeed, we are working on translation of the handbook. In addition—and I’m just looking to Sally here—the slide deck for the Applicant Support Program will also be available in the UN six languages. And you’ll also note on the new gTLD website, there’s an ASP section of that, but the whole website is also available in the UN six languages.

With regard to the suggestion, I’m happy to share the slides and information we have about the Applicant Support Program as well as the handbook via virtual and in-person events. And we would very much appreciate GAC input on where you would suggest that there are opportunities for doing so.

The other thing I’ll mention—and I know Sally and Bob may speak about this in a moment as well—is that we are preparing slides and materials for the community to help with raising awareness and doing engagement on the Applicant Support Program. So again, this is an opportunity for the GAC and we look for your help with spreading the word about this. Thank you.

NIGEL HICKSON:

Thank you very much. And I’ll take two brief interventions. Let’s take them together, and then you can perhaps answer those questions. First, Jorge from the Swiss government.

JORGE CANCIO:

Thank you, Nigel. Jorge Cancio, Swiss government for the record. Thanks very much for the explanations. Perhaps a short question. How did you arrive to the number of 40 to 45? So is it an estimation? Have you done some surveying? Or how did you get there? And on the

budgetary limit for the non-fixed costs, is it a hard ceiling? Or if, for instance, you would have 60 or 70 applications qualifying, what would you do? Thank you.

NIGEL HICKSON: Thank you. Can we have the next question as well? Thank you. Thiago?

THIAGO DAL TOE: Thank you so much, Nigel. Thiago Dal Toe, government of Colombia. I wanted to build on the question from my colleague from Switzerland. If we have more applicants more than 45, for example, how will they be decided? Is it on a first come, first serve base, or are you going to be dividing among different regions? Also a little bit more explanation if you could give me on the 3.5 million, the fixed cost. What does that entail in those fixed costs? Thank you.

KRISTY BUCKLEY: Thank you very much for those questions. Hopefully, I caught them all. In terms of the number of 40 to 45, this is largely based upon the GGP guidance that the minimum should be 10. But if we think about the minimum as 10, we note in the GGP guidance that they ask for ICANN Org to strive well beyond that 10. We also note that this is supported applicants that are making it all the way through to delegation. So we wanted to assume several times that amount. And that's what we've done here, up to four times that amount.

In terms of more applicants qualifying for support, what we have proposed in the draft ASP handbook is that once we reach the maximum of 45, we may need to pause, offering additional levels of support to other applicants that might qualify, just so that we don't go over the available budget. Now, that said, we are also asking

applicants that do qualify for support to submit a deposit of 2500 US dollars and to let us know if they ever change their mind and they don't intend to apply for a gTLD because they are taking a spot that could be available to others that might qualify. So that deposit is intended to demonstrate commitment and real interest in applying for gTLD. And we also ask that they advise us of any changes to their plans so that we're able to make those spots available to others.

With regard to the 3.5 fixed cost—maybe we can just go back to that slide. It's the Budget slide. I don't know which. For me, it's slide number seven, but I'll just speak to it while we're looking for the Budget slide. The fixed costs include developing the program, performing communication and outreach, and creating application system. So the application system to apply for ASP will be an online system. We are currently designing and building that now and also for the website. So those are the fixed costs of just setting up the program. And the variable costs are dependent on the total number of applicants that apply for support and the total number that qualify for support, as well as the final gTLD base application fee and the other subsequent evaluation fees. Does that help answer your question? Yeah? Okay.

NIGEL HICKSON:

Thank you. Thank you very much indeed. So I think the way we will we'll do this, because I'm conscious there'll be other questions, if you could go through the next part of the presentation. Then we'll have a few more questions there. And before we have a few more questions, I'll ask our colleagues, Ros and Tracy, if they want to say a few brief

words in response. If you could go through the next slides. Thank you very much.

BOB OCHIENG:

Thank you very much, Kristy, for that presentation. I recognize we have 15 minutes or thereabout left. So we might need to pretty much hurry up this next session. My name is Bob Ochieng and I lead the engagement and outreach component for the program. So we shall take you very briefly through what we have prepared and the plan we have put in place to ensure we achieve the intention of Recommendation 13.2 in the Final Report, which really aims to create awareness with as many potential applicants as possible, and those that are giving them sufficient time to indeed apply.

So the engagement plan that we put in place recognizes that capacity development, communications and engagement with a focus on global inclusivity will be key to fostering diversity of participation in the next round. Obviously, this is a very collaborative effort within the Org, and that is the reason we have our Comms colleague. I'm happy that Sally could join us in this session to really highlight the component that Comms will be supporting us with around Engagement. Obviously, we also work very closely with Global Stakeholder Engagement Group to really ensure that as far as possible, we do reach every potential applicant that needs to hear this message. So with that, I want to hand it over to Sally to take us on the next few slides before I come in. Welcome, Sally.

SALLY NEWELL COHEN:

Thank you, Bob. My name is Sally Newell Cohen and head of the Global Communications and Language Services Team for ICANN. What I

wanted to share with you, if we can go to the next slide, please, is the overall structure of the campaign or the outreach and engagement, and there are five phases. There's early awareness, community level awareness, strategic engagement, application readiness, and post assessment.

In the early awareness campaign, which actually began in March of 2023, we have been taking an approach of focusing on many of the countries that will be interested in the next round in the Applicant Support Program. We focused the campaign on Universal Acceptance and Internationalized Domain Names as a way to start to reach out to those areas. We have targeted—I just wanted to give you a short list. We selected about 10 countries that we have been doing this campaign. We call them mini campaigns to their three-month long cycles, where we have public relations, the GSE team goes out and does on the ground outreach, and we create awareness. And those countries that we've started in were Trinidad and Tobago, South Africa, the UAE, Saudi Arabia, Brazil, India, and China. So those campaigns are still ongoing. The intention was just to start to create that awareness.

The next phase is at community level awareness. And that's what we're really embarking on now. We're finalizing materials now and expect to have them in June. And this is where we'll begin a more grassroots campaign. What that means is for our GSE team to be going out to the community and sharing information particularly about the Applicant Support Program. We will have materials available for the community to use as well. But the real focus here is to start to introduce the ASP and talk about the next round at the same time. But

the real focus is the Applicant Support Program. We'll be continuing that specifically through October. Then from October of 2024 on, this is when we do a much more global campaign. So what we will include the underserved regions as well as the more broad community of potential applicants. From there, then we just continue the campaign in ensuring that first there's awareness and then there's readiness. So just start to communicate when the guide is ready, the Applicant Support Guide, and then of course the guide for the next round. And that's the umbrella, if you will, of the campaign. If we could go to the next slide, please.

This is important. We believe, as the GAC does, I know, and other parts of the community, that this is an opportunity for us to work together to create this awareness. Because there's specific activities that we will be doing from the staff side, but there's also so many opportunities for the different community groups to go out and do the same. So our objective is to provide materials. If we could go to the next slide, please.

We will have a variety of materials available. There's already a website that's available. We'll be developing case studies that will also help, particularly for people that may want to participate in the Applicant Support Program to get a sense of what are the benefits, what is the opportunity. So it's focused on the entity that might apply, as opposed to what it means to ICANN free to apply. We will have webinars, training modules, and other engagement materials that will make available on the website. So we'll have PowerPoint presentations and handouts that you can give and other material graphics and a style

guide that you'll be able to use in the community as well to go out and create awareness. Bob, back to you.

BOB OCHIENG:

Thank you, Sally. And just to reemphasize the fact that this material will be in at least the seven languages. So if you're worried about whether that content will be languages other than English, it is important that we'll ensure that those languages are covered. Importantly, if you look at the next slide, the overarching program goals of the report is three-fold: foster diversity, competition, utility of the DNS. But to really buttress that from engagement and outreach perspective, we want to aim to promote inclusive participation across the globe, and in the process, facilitate engagement, highlight the value of gTLDs, but also work very collaboratively, especially and including with the industry players and the value chain cross stakeholder groups from government to play us in the ecosystem currently. So that collaboration will be important. Because take a typical applicant today. If running technical system is not my core business, then I need to know who can do that. Who are the RSPs in the ecosystem? So that kind of collaboration and ensuring that applicants get this information is important for the success of this engagement. Next slide, please.

In terms of what engagement or how we want to go about this, look at it in two parts. Sally has already mentioned beginning May—and of course, this is just the broader grassroots campaign really to underscore and underline the next round, which is opening 2026. And within it, stress and focus on the sub programs that are coming up way earlier, ASP and RSP, which is going live in November thereabout or Q4

of this year. And then follow up that in October. Of course, the Final Report highlights six months campaign before the opening. We actually want to do it 18 months ahead. So beginning October, the plan is to embark on a global formal campaign really aggressively, leveraging our GSE network to retake this message across different audiences.

The next slide gives you an idea of key milestones that we are following, that are also guiding our focus areas. Obviously, because ASP and RSP is coming way ahead in Q4 of this year, it means that these are the focus areas. But even as we engage around ASP and RSP, we shall be underscoring the fact that they are part and parcel of the program. We have ASP and RSP because of the next round. So the next round is the overall house where the rest of these programs are premised, and therefore, that is part and parcel of the messaging as we go along. Next slide, please.

In terms of who are our audiences from a very high level, you could think of, of course, registrars because these are people that already in the industry, obviously would want to apply for a TLD because they already understand the business, they are players currently. But over and above that, you have civil society, you have entrepreneurs and you have brands. All these are specific categories that we are working with our GSE colleagues to focus depending on regions, countries, so that we have a very detailed listing of who are registrars in, say, Middle East or in Africa that are potential applicants. I know this is the detail that you'd want to see. We're in the process of consolidating that information so that you are sure that we are approaching and talking to the right potential applicant. And as soon as that consultation list is

ready, we'll be happy to show you that. But over and above that, we also do plan to publish quarterly reports to indicate where and who we have been engaging to from July this year going forward. So you shall be able to see, as we go along every quarter, what we are doing in engagement front. And you could actually tell us if that is meeting your expectations from where you sit. But this is very much in plan. You should be seeing that as we go along. Next slide, please. I know Sally wants to talk about this.

SALLY NEWELL COHEN:

Thank you. With all of these diverse audiences, it's also important that we create tailored messaging for each, and particularly for the Applicant Support Program, because we're trying to help educate and create awareness of the opportunities. So we'll have a lot of different messaging. But most importantly, our objective is to highlight the importance of why a new gTLD would be useful. And certainly useful in promoting digital inclusivity, preserving cultural diversity, of being able to showcase how operating a .brand TLD can enhance and extend brand identity. So we'll be creating those types of messaging to help also to create a sense of security, and to emphasize the sense of control that one has in security benefits of operating your own TLD. Then, of course, the built-in safeguards we have. Because for people that are new to this concept, we have to help them understand that there's ways to protect your IP, right? And so those are some of the different types of messaging. We are working with the subset of the IRT to also get their feedback on messaging as we develop it and work together to make sure that we're really covering the bases and

providing the information and awareness and education that people will need. Then if we could go to the next slide, please.

The other piece of it is the KPIs. At least we look at it from the communication side of it, and then the engagement side. And from the communication side, what we're going to be looking at is because our mechanisms are going to be using traditional media, social media event participation, and really on the ground work, but where we can measure our efforts is through media outreach, the metrics that we get from that, how many impressions, how many outlets picked up the message. For social media, it's going to be tracking engagement—likes, clicks, forwards, things like that. So we'll be able to track that. We're also looking at how do we measure any opportunities where we're speaking or we're at least attending events, and we could do that by starting to track contacts and be able to track without all the personal identifiable information, what the result was of that engagement. So those are the KPIs for Comms. Bob, would you like to go over the Engagement?

BOB OCHIENG:

Yes, from an engagement perspective, the next slide. So you have three levels here. You have ASP, you have RSP, and of course you have the overall round. Obviously, some of this is out of our hands in terms of how many eventually do apply the end of the day, regardless of the kind of information and engagement that has gone into it. But of course, for us, it will still be an important data point, whatever the numbers are. You will notice that this is the number of applications received. That is when you look at both ASP/RSP and the next round. We have no control on how many of them eventually become

successful, but it will be an indication on to what extent this engagement reached or made a difference along the way. Of course, we are very keen on the diversity of those applications across those three levels. And more internally, we want to be able to tell, for example, how many service or pro bono service providers are we able to enlist, and these are important data points that will help us even make decisions or inform future engagements for future rounds. So this is the kind of indexes that are guiding our engagement. And we do hope that this will give us the right feedback as we design even for future engagements. With that, we are on top of the hour, I want to stop it there and give it back to the chair. Thank you.

NIGEL HICKSON:

Thank you so much, my friend. You do an excellent job. Thank you. And thank you, Kristy, for participating in this. So let me just briefly turn it over to Ros just to give a couple of reflections and perhaps ask a question. And then we'll take a couple of questions from the floor. Then I'm keen to go on to the work of the IRT. Then we'll still have a chance perhaps for a few general questions after that because we don't want to go to lunch. Ros?

ROSALIND KENNYBIRCH:

Thank you. And thank you again to ICANN Org staff for coming here to present today. We very much appreciate the time. I was taking notes during some of the presentations, and it struck me in regards to the outreach strategy first, that there are finite resources. I noted the point about engagement taking place with underserved regions, but also with the broader community. Now, on the Applicant Support Program, I think it would be important in the context of finite resources to be

focused on underserved regions. A lot of engagement. ICANN's doing a great job on promoting the next round of new gTLD applications with the broader community. So, specifically on the ASP, resources should be prioritized and dedicated to engagement with underserved regions the focus of the program. And in this regard, on the ground engagement is key. We welcome the opportunity for ICANN to engage through webinars, but I would just like to make that point about engagement in other methods as well, particularly in areas with less stable digital connectivity on the ground engagement can make a real difference.

I also wanted to note that it would be good to see a bit more detail in line with some of the questions raised on the floor of the budget assumptions underpinning the 45 or 40 application target, noting that the variable cost range is between about 6 million to 13, 14 million. So it would be good to see a breakdown of what is driving this.

In conclusion, ICANN has a global mission as I opened up my comments with, and as we've discussed in the GAC, the ASP is an opportunity to be innovative and ambitious. It's a really positive program, ICANN staff have done so much to put work into this program for which we are very grateful. And this is a key opportunity to really demonstrate the strength of ICANN's mission in that regard. I'll save the rest of my comments or questions for now to go to the floor. I've seen lots of hands up. So I'll pause there. Thank you.

NIGEL HICKSON:

Thank you so much. We'll give Krista a chance to perhaps come back on a couple of points at the end, but I'm very conscious of time. So we have two questions in the floor. Karel, I think you were first.

KAREL DOUGLAS:

Thank you Nigel, but actually, Marco was first so I'll be kind enough and defer to him, if it's okay. Okay, I'll go ahead. Karel Douglas, Trinidad and Tobago. Firstly, thank you so much for the excellent presentations. I see there's a lot of hard work being done. I have a very brief question concerning procedure. There was a question and the answer was that if the applicants were oversubscribed, so in other words, if there were more applicants than there were allowance for it, then other applicants will be told, unfortunately, that there is no opportunity. So it seems, firstly, that this is a first come, first serve. So if you didn't apply by a certain date, you would not be able to benefit. So that's the first question if that is the case. And if so, the persons who were selected, what is the criteria? I'm assuming there's a criteria. The criteria would obviously need to balance several interests because let's say you had 10 applicants from one country, are those 10 persons going to be allowed when maybe somebody who came late from another country where he is the only applicant? Would that person not be allowed the opportunity when you would see that it's already skewed? So a couple of questions as to the criteria to me came out when it was said that persons would need a certain specific time to apply by. So I hope I asked it was clear. If not, I'll be happy to restate. Thank you very much.

NIGEL HICKSON:

Thank you. I'm going to take three more very brief questions that our distinguished ICANN staff can come back, and then in five minutes time, I want to move on to the IRT. So, Marco first. Thank you.

MARCO:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Then I'll be very brief. Of course, thank you for your efforts, your team, and of course for the ICANN staff. So maybe two questions, I'll try to keep it short. But on the notion of outreach, and of course, I'm happy to see the thinking here, but bit of a concern is encouraging you to also think out of the box. I think this effort should be aimed at expanding the ecosystem, and then somehow a bit of a feeling that we keep sort of communicating inside our bubble, and then happy to hear how the team thinks do to step outside of our usual ecosystem, and then try to encourage newcomers.

Second part of that question is—and we've highlighted that before—is the need to not only look at application support fees, and I know that that's a huge part. And I know that the program is more broader and budgets are not unlimited. But I would really encourage the team looking at this to also consider more attention to diversification of the technical system and the technical backend systems. And in particular, I was drawn to recent discussions about the fees concerning the evaluation of registry backend providers, and I think that's an important point to take note of if we try to encourage people from underdeveloped regions to provide technical services in this field. Thank you.

NIGEL HICKSON:

Thank you, Marco. I'll take two further questions from Ashwin.

ASHWIN RANGAN:

Thank you, Nigel. It's not actually a question. This is just a short note, because I found that the presentation about the Applicant Support Program handbook and so on is very interesting. Now, as you might be

aware, in some countries, including Indonesia, we are preparing the generic second level domain of .id. So, the program you are using for the gTLD can be used as a reference. So what I propose is that the presentation and so on can be shared as soon as possible to us. Because, personally, I myself will use it also for the generic second level domain for .id. Thank you.

NIGEL HICKSON:

Thank you, Ashwin. I think you make a very important point. It's a lot of information there. Rodney, did you just want to quickly ask a question? Thank you, Rodney. Thanks for being here as well.

RODNEY TAYLOR:

Yes. Rodney Taylor, CTU. Thank you very much for the comprehensive presentation. For the Outreach Program, I just wanted clarification—and forgive me if I missed it—but can you say what specific budget allocation is for the outreach versus the support? And also with respect to underserved regions or developing countries where this is likely to be more needed, is there a specific cargo or allocation specifically for underserved regions versus developed countries? Thank you.

NIGEL HICKSON:

Thank you. Thank you for those questions. I'm going to briefly let Kristy respond. Thank you very much.

KRISTY BUCKLEY:

Thank you so much for those additional questions. So I'll take the first pass that speaking to some of those, and then I'll see if there's anything you'd like to add. With regard to the first question around the evaluation period and this notion of first come, first serve. We do have

selection criteria and indicators. These are in the draft ASP handbook. We also presented to the GAC a couple of weeks ago on a webinar a briefing of the draft ASP handbook. And in that webinar, it gives an overview of the criteria and indicators that will be used to evaluate ASP applications. So perhaps we can share the link to that recording and also the presentation there in case that's helpful.

I do want to note that the ASP evaluation period is expected to be opened for up to 12 months, and this is to provide as big of a window as possible to prospective ASP applicants to apply within that period. So this coincides with the Communications, Outreach and Engagement, that as more people become aware of the program, they will have an opportunity over those 12 months to apply.

In terms of the geographic distribution of ASP applications, the SubPro Final Report indicates that the ASP should be open to applicants from all countries and regions, and not geographically restricted. So that is the basis upon which we have designed the program. I did note earlier, though, that the GNSO guidance process for ASP did provide a recommendation that the communications outreach and awareness raising for the Applicant Support Program should target applicants from underserved regions, nonprofits, charitable organizations, community organizations, and social enterprises, not to the exclusion of anyone else, but with limited resources and time, that's what they advised.

Let's see. With regard to the registry service provider fee, I note that I do not have my colleagues from RSP on this. But we know that this is a topic for the Board and GAC discussion later today. So hopefully, it will

be discussed then. And then Sally or Bob, is there anything else you wanted to speak to? Yes?

SALLY NEWELL COHEN:

Thank you. The point that Marco was asking about are how do we step out of the bubble and how do we be innovative? I think that's a key point. We have a long period of time where we can conduct engagement and outreach before the application window opens. And our objective is to start with this grassroots campaign that I mentioned to you, which is really on the ground and people we know. But then the intention is very much to go beyond that. In fact, we're retaining a public relations firm that's going to help us with media relations to get us out there. But we're also going to be looking at opportunities to get out and speak at events that we wouldn't normally be at and be in places that we wouldn't normally be in. It's a little more challenging because it is the underserved areas where we know less about the activities. But this is where I think that the IRT and the GAC's input into the IRT will be very helpful for us to know where you think we should be as well and where we should be creating interest. So that is definitely a part of the plan for us to do that.

Let's see. Another question was about the budget. Is there an allocation difference between underserved and the rest of the potential audiences that we'd be trying to appeal to? We haven't designated a difference between where those go. But there is one budget for the entire program. There is an outreach and engagement budget. That's earmarked as a part of the overall budget. However, we will probably not provide the level of detail of what are we spending for PR, for example? What are we spending for social media? And the

reason for that is because we'll be working with vendors to do that. That gives them a competitive edge and say, "Well, we know that this is the maximum for your budget. So I'm going to bid high because I know what you have." So we'll give you an overall number, but it won't be broken down in deep detail.

NIGEL HICKSON:

Thank you. Thank you so much. Clearly, this is the subject with enormous importance. And this isn't going to be the last time. I hope we can discuss this this week. But I want to go on to the IRT because that's very important. Then perhaps right at the end, I might make a couple of suggestions. Rida, do you want to start? Thank you so much. By the way, thank you very much. Please stay in the room if you've got time. But I want to thank you for your time.

KRISTY BUCKLEY:

We want to thank you all for inviting us here today to speak about the Applicant Support Program, and we welcome future opportunities to do so. Thank you.

RIDA TAHIR:

Thank you so much, Nigel. As we can see from the great dialogue that's taking place today, clearly new gTLDs is a very important and big priority for ICANN, for the GAC, and also something that I personally had been following quite closely since joining the GAC about four years ago. So you can see behind me very comprehensive slide that GAC support staff has so kindly put together. But looking around, and I think hearing from Nico this morning in the plenary as well, there's 13 new delegates and a range of new participants in the

room with us today, including high level representatives. So I'll just take a moment to step back and frame what the IRT is.

The Implementation Review Team essentially is designed to help ICANN Org implement the policy recommendations from the SubPro Final Report that came out in 2021. And the main output of the IRT is the Applicant Guidebook. So as you can imagine, there's no next round if there's no guidebook for the next round. Therefore, it's a very critical component of the next application procedure.

The IRT commenced its work in May 2023. So we're about a year in now. There's two participants from the GAC on the IRT, myself as the appointed GAC representative, and Nigel is the alternate. We engage in these meetings that have over 98 members. They're very comprehensive, detailed, and several sessions a month or so that cover a range of topics. There's over 100 of them from Final Report, and alongside a Cross-Community Working Group. So it's a very collaborative atmosphere that the IRT is taking place in. Could I get the next slide, please?

A little more update on what the structure of the IRT is. Really, the work is designed to take place over about two years with the Applicant Guidebook being the final deliverable. There's been about 46 meetings to date in this time. Since ICANN79 in the last two months, there's been nine meetings additionally, and four sub track meetings. Because the work is so dense and the number of policy topics has a great range, there's sub tracks that have taken place as well that meet on their own. I think one of them is actually for the Applicant Support Program handbook, and so on. And there's a wiki page that I invite

everybody to visit to get more detail on the on the substantive process is taking place in this round.

One major milestone that we've achieved since the IRT has begun is that the first tranche of topics was released for Public Comment in February. The Public Comment period has now been concluded. We received 10 public comments from across the ICANN community. Their job was to review the draft sections of the Applicant Guidebook that we put together and really make sure that it aligns with the recommendations from the Final Report. Because, as I said, the IRT is just designed to make sure that the drafted language is in alignment with the policy recommendations, and it's not really to propose anything new at this stage. Next slide, please.

Diving in a little bit deeper for the coverage that we've achieved since the last ICANN meeting, four topics were covered substantively. Communications, closed generics, IDNs and dispute resolution procedures after delegation. Today, this morning, actually, I attended another meeting where we were talking about application fees. So there's a lot of work going on that I'm very happy to have Lars and Marika from ICANN Org here to talk you through a little bit more detail. So over to colleagues. Thank you.

NIGEL HICKSON:

Just a second, if I may. Thank you so much. I thank Rida before, but this is a substantial piece of work. And this is the real, if you like, bread and butter of what we do in the GAC. As we go forward—and this won't be the only topic that we'll be discussing this week—really do consider involving yourself in some of this work. I know that many of you do

already because this is where the GAC really can make a difference.
Over to Lars.

LARS HOFFMANN:

Thank you so much, Nigel. Thank you, Rida. Hi, everyone. Thank you for having me. Once more, I'm going to talk a little bit about the IRT. And Marika, the project owner and lead, is here as well for any questions that may come up. I know that we're waiting for lunch. I certainly am. I'm going to run through these a little bit more quickly than usual. The deck is available. So I took a quick look, I'm going to focus what I think the most important slides are, and we'll see where we get. Dan, if you can go five slides forward, please. Thanks.

That's the overall timeline for the Applicant Guidebook. We kind of marked it along those Public Comment periods. We have completed one earlier this year, there's two further planned this year. And then a final Public Comment in May next year. As a reminder, those first three Public Comments are essentially separate sections of the IRT. You'll see the topics in a moment. Then in May 25, everything will go out together once more for public comment. But essentially, what goes out in May 25 for public comment will be already been out for public comment once before as part of those three prior ones. Dan, if you can go one, two, three, four, five slides down.

So there was a Public Comment that is closed. There's the previous slide, you can see that on the deck if you want to take a look. And obviously, it's on the ICANN website, including a staff report. These are the topics that we're discussing in the current period. Those six on the top row have a little tick because we have discussed them with the IRT and that kind of deemed ready for public comment. We are currently

discussing the other four topics here, application assessed in rounds, application queuing, objections, and IDNs. And in fact, number 15, application fees should move up on that as well. As of two hours ago or three hours ago, we discussed the fees this morning with the IRT, and Marika and Xavier shared those numbers, and the slides for that are also available. Then for the remainder of the period, we're looking at Terms and Conditions and application reviews. I will qualify this a little bit. The application reviews topic may come a little bit later. But I think the other six topics will likely be ready for public comment in September as previewed. The next slide, please, Dan. Thank you so much.

And then here you see the following topics that are then being put forward for the third Public Comment later this year, likely at the end of Q3. I won't go through all of these. But maybe the important ones here is the limited change in appeals process. Topic 35, auctions. So that includes private resolution of contention sets. Obviously, there's GAC advice on that topic. It will be discussed at that time as well. Then some other topics, including community applications in October this year, as well as Registry Voluntary Commitments.

I've just been told to go slower. I apologize. I'm just trying to push us to lunch. I'll pause here for a moment to allow everybody to catch up. Just a quick caveat on those topics, we try to plan ahead as much as we can. So this is our best estimate at the moment. There's a whole team working on these topics. Our methodology is that we look at the Org, add those topics and recommendations from the Final Report, and then bring it to the IRT, essentially, a draft text where we then assess whether that text meets the wording and the intent of the

application of the recommendations. So that process is a long process internally to make sure that those that have knowledge of these topics contribute appropriately. And so sometimes the timeline here shifts, but essentially, October 24 is our self-imposed deadline by which we want to bring the last round of topics to the IRT. If I can have two more slides, please, Dan? Thank you. One more, please. Thanks.

So we picked these out. Some of these are topics of high interest based on past contributions and discussions from the GAC. Geographic Names. The proposed applicant language here is finalized. And by finalized, we should say they're finalized for the final Public Comment in May. So this is not set in stone. But we will not be discussing with the IRT this topic until after it has gone out with the whole Applicant Guidebook for Public Comment in May next year. It has been part of the Public Comment period that just passed earlier this year.

The same is true for the reserved and blocked names. The topic of GAC advice and GAC early warning and how that pertains in relation to the next round is a topic that has been discussed with the IRT. It has completed the discussion with the IRT. And so this will go out for public comment in the next period. Most likely that will start late August, early September.

Then finally, on the private resolution contention sets, as I said earlier, GAC advice is out there since Washington. I just wanted to make everybody aware, there was a blog posted by Tripti, our chair of the Board, that laid out some of the thinking that the Board has around this issue. And also the report of the experts that we engaged, NERA, who provided some very helpful input to that discussion. Those are

available. Obviously, clicking on the slides is not really possible. But if you just go to the ICANN blog site, you will see that blog from Tripti and all the information. And then just the next slide and the one after that, please, Dan. The last one, I promise.

Just the highlight—not highlights, but the meeting sessions for the IRT here in Kigali. The first one you missed, you'll have to catch up on the recording. If you're interested, as I said, Marika and Xavier presented on the application fees. We did not get to the predictability framework that you see, there's a second topic. And then we have another two sessions on Wednesday where we will be looking at the Applicant Support bid credit and multiplier. So I'm sure that was of interest to the GAC. Then also look at a different topic, which is the background screening and how that applies to applicants in the next round.

On Thursday, it's blank at the moment, but what I can say is that we will talk about the predictability. Because we didn't get to that today, we will catch up on some more of the questions around the fees that we also didn't quite get to today. And then likely have a short discussion on application queuing as well on the first day. That's the agenda here for ICANN80. Busy times for everyone.

And that was said more than five minutes. I'm sorry, Nigel, but as quick as I could. Thank you.

NIGEL HICKSON:

Lars, Marika, thank you so much for that. And thanks for all you do. That was very comprehensive and very useful indeed.

We've got four minutes in my clock, which is always slow. So first of all, I'm going to go over to Rida, and then I'll take a couple of questions from the floor.

RIDA TAHIR: Thank you so much. And thank you, Lars, for the comprehensive update. I know we're a little short on time today. But I just wanted to invite GAC members to reach out anytime throughout this week or otherwise to me serving as the liaison. That's the role as well as to bridge that communication between the work that's going on at the IRT and the topics of interest in the GAC room. So really feel free to connect and engage with me at any point. Nigel, I'll volunteer you for that as well. Thank you.

NIGEL HICKSON: Thank you very much indeed. I know we're short on time, but you had good breakfasts, lunches. Yeah. Anyone? I know Russell had a question. But does anyone else have a question from the floor? I see. Yes. Go ahead. Sorry.

RUSSELL: Thank you, Chair Nigel. Thank you, my colleagues in the Application Support Program. I missed the opportunity to ask our colleagues who are here previously, but I think it's more of a comment than it is a question about the fixed cost and the variable cost for the Application Support. What would be a reasonable estimate to make it equitable that a percentage of the fixed cost would be variable cost? So that makes it more equitable. I think that's just the thought that came to me. Well, this was going through. Secondly, there'll be other support apart from financial support that applicants may need, and I think that could be covered well. Thank you.

NIGEL HICKSON: Thank you, Rosalind. Yeah, we might be able to take those up at a later stage or give you some further feedback on that. Some other questions from the room either to Lars or anything on the gTLD program? You've got two minutes. Marika?

MARIKA KONINGS: Thanks, Nigel. On the second question, I think Kristy can definitely provide more details. But the R&D plans for nonfinancial support for supported applicants. I think someone noted the Board consider that recommendation during its meeting this weekend. So we expect to have the official vote on that very soon. But work has already been underway on that. So again, I think Kristy can provide further details on that.

On the fixed versus variable, I'm not exactly sure where are you getting at, but happy to take that offline and better understand what the suggestion is.

NIGEL HICKSON: Thank you very much. Any other points from the floor? No? Well, look, I won't keep you any longer then. I just want to thank everyone. This has been, I think, an incredibly useful discussion. Thanks to our colleagues on Applicant Support and on the IRT process. Clearly, the GAC has discussed Applicant Support perhaps in the last two to three meetings. Our colleagues in the small group have been doing excellent work on this. But from what we've heard this morning and from the reaction, what we've heard this morning, not just on fixed and variable costs, but engagement strategies. I sense there might be an eagerness for the GAC to discuss this again this week and consider what might be appropriate to put in our communiqué, so we perhaps might find a

small opportunity to do that, depending on your wishes. But yeah, I think that's all I need to say. Thank you to everyone for setting up this session, and to ICANN Org for supporting us. We're only two minutes late, which I don't think is bad. Thank you.

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