

Q4 2024 Report

# The Latest in New gTLDs

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# Letter From the Editor

## All Isn't Quiet on New Year's Day

As the year 2024 wraps up, we sit perched on the step of a brand-new year, 2025. You know what that means: two holidays that bridge the last day of the year into the first day of the next — New Year's Eve and New Year's Day!

From my own perspective, I'll comment on some American traditions and weave in our stories from this report (all the while humming U2's "New Year's Day"<sup>1</sup> to myself).

### **New Year's Eve: Parties... Lots and Lots of Parties**

Who doesn't love a good New Year's Eve party? Champagne, party hats, hors d'oeuvres, games, the whole nine yards.

The first article is our RSP Spotlight, which this quarter centers on CIRA, SIDN, and Hello Registry — enough folks to have an actual party of their own. Read more to see what's happening in their corner of the RSP world!

### **New Year's Eve: Cover Charges... Who Pays Full Price?**

Our second article is in our New gTLDs 101 series and focuses on ICANN's Applicant Support Program (ASP).

Having lived in large cities at different points in my life, if you don't have any good invites to the parties above, you might try your hand at going out to bars or clubs instead, which often will double or triple their cover charge (a fee to pay to get into the establishment) for the night. Read more to see about how successful applicants to the ASP may get a healthy discount on ICANN's cover charge... er, application fee for a new gTLD.

### **New Year's Day: American Football... All Day and Into the Night**

While New Year's Day is often about family (and potentially snacks and naps), in the U.S.A., it can often be about American football. College football has bowl games and playoff games

throughout the day, where our favorite university sportsmen knock each other down for glory. And one of the many things American football has is a lot of rules.

ICANN loves rules, too, so check out our third article, Policy Corner, to learn about some of the policy developments of the ICANN81 meeting and how those could affect the ICANN New gTLD Program in 2025 and 2026.

After that, we'll finish with the 2025 ICANN Meeting schedule.

With that, I lift my glass as we say goodbye to 2024 and welcome in a sure-to-be exciting and busy 2025! Happy New Year and health and happiness to all!

Best regards,  
Chris Niemi  
Manager, Strategic Initiatives, Markmonitor

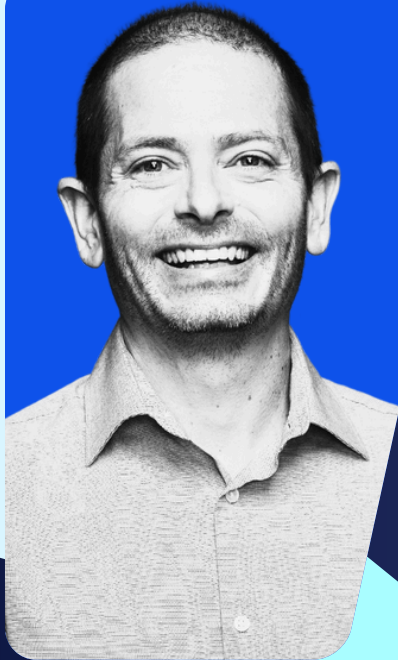
1. [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jeYCyCaK\\_5k](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jeYCyCaK_5k)



# Registry Service Providers: In the Spotlight

The domain industry has a number of members who perform different functions in respect to Top-Level Domains (TLDs). One of these important parties is the Registry Service Provider (RSP), also sometimes known as the BackEnd Registry Operator (BERO). In our RSP Spotlight series we'll introduce you to some of these key industry players over the coming quarters.

In today's spotlight:  **cira**



**Adam** Eisner

Vice President, .CA  
and Registry Services  
CIRA



**Chris** Niemi

Manager, Strategic Initiatives  
Markmonitor

## RSP Definition

In the RSP Handbook,<sup>1</sup> a ‘Main RSP’ is defined as:

A Main RSP is responsible for the registrations of domain names and the reporting functions associated with domain registration. A Main RSP will operate a domain registration database, conduct data escrow and reporting operations regarding those registrations, operate Extensible Provisioning Protocol (EPP) and Registration Data Access Protocol (RDAP) services, and conduct other functions as required by ROs through their agreements with ICANN.<sup>2</sup>

*[Editor’s Note: For our purposes, we are referring to RSPs in this ‘main RSP’ context only; there are other RSP types: DNSSEC, DNS, and Proxy — but those are outside of the initial scope of this series — unless you tell us otherwise.]*

So, with the definition in hand, let’s get a real-life example of an RSP and what it does.

## Interview with Adam Eisner

**Chris Niemi (CN): Hi Adam, thank you for speaking with me. What is your role and how long have you been in the domain industry?**

**Adam Eisner (AE):** Thanks for having me! I’ve spent most of my career in the domain name industry, including over 15 years at Tucows. In my current role at CIRA, I oversee the growth of the .CA ccTLD in Canada, as well as the development and promotion of our Hello Registry back-end platform, which CIRA now co-develops with SIDN (our ccTLD

registry counterparts in the Netherlands). This platform not only powers .CA, but also a growing community of forward-thinking TLDs.

**CN: How long has CIRA been active in the domain industry?**

**AE:** CIRA has been championing the .CA domain since the tech industry was fretting about Y2K — for nearly 25 years. While we started by championing the .CA domain for Canadians, we now also offer registry services and a range of cybersecurity services to help protect Canadians online and lead a variety of initiatives through our *Net Good* program that aims to make the internet better for all Canadians.

**CN: CIRA has been involved with running both country code Top-Level Domains (ccTLDs) as well as gTLDs. Can you describe how that experience has helped your service offering evolve over time?**

**AE:** The experience of running one of the world’s largest ccTLDs, and then onboarding both ccTLDs and gTLDs to our platform, has allowed us to serve almost every type of registry, registrar and registrant. It also means we are committed to continuous improvement of our platform, as the needs of our clients around the globe shift constantly in response to the way the market is moving. Perhaps one of the best parts of serving a global community of ccTLDs and gTLDs is that features built for one TLD can benefit the entire community. Our .CA experience and our approach to business also means we’re always willing to lend a hand, share expertise, or discuss industry trends with our TLD partners.

**◆ CN: I see that you recently launched a new name for the registry platform that you've developed with SIDN. Can you tell our readers what that is?**

**⊞ AE:** CIRA and SIDN have so many similarities as large ccTLDs and global TLD operators. When SIDN was exploring the best way forward for the next generation of their registry platform, they ultimately chose to partner with us to help build and develop it. I believe we are stronger working together, bringing development capacity and expertise from both sides of the ocean.

For this next generation of our platform, we wanted a fresh, unique name, that was easy to pronounce and unveiled *Hello Registry* at ICANN81. This new brand name reflects our goal to build a collaborative online community, as we believe every community starts with “hello.”

**◆ CN: Now that we know a bit about CIRA's history, what does a BERO/RSP actually do?**

**⊞ AE:** A BERO/RSP enables registries to focus their efforts on the business aspects of a registry. We take care of the back-end technology, of keeping data secure, of ICANN requirements like reporting, escrow deposits, and more – because this is where our expertise and experience is. It would be a heavy lift and learning curve for every registry to build their own back-end platform – it makes sense to outsource these operations to a BERO/RSP, since they do this day in and day out.

**◆ CN: Why is a BERO/RSP important to a TLD applicant or to a registry operator?**

**⊞ AE:** Choosing the right BERO/RSP is an important decision. You want someone who aligns with your values and who will guide you through a smooth launch of your TLD and help you out with any questions along the way. You want to be able to trust them for both for their technical expertise and business acumen. Every TLD only gets one chance to launch! It's important to partner with a company with experience launching and operating a successful TLD.

**◆ CN: Before we wrap this up, is there anything else you'd like to share with our readers?**

**⊞ AE:** Having worked in the industry since well before the previous round of new TLDs, I'm excited to see the next round (finally) approaching. It will be interesting to see how it all plays out and what new brands and communities will contribute to a more diverse and evolving global internet.

And if any readers are attending any upcoming domain industry events, be sure to stop by and say, “Hello!”

**◆ CN: Fantastic! Thanks, Adam, for joining our RSP Spotlight. We appreciate you catching our readers up on CIRA, SIDN, Hello Registry, and the crossover of ccTLDs and new gTLDs in the RSP space!**

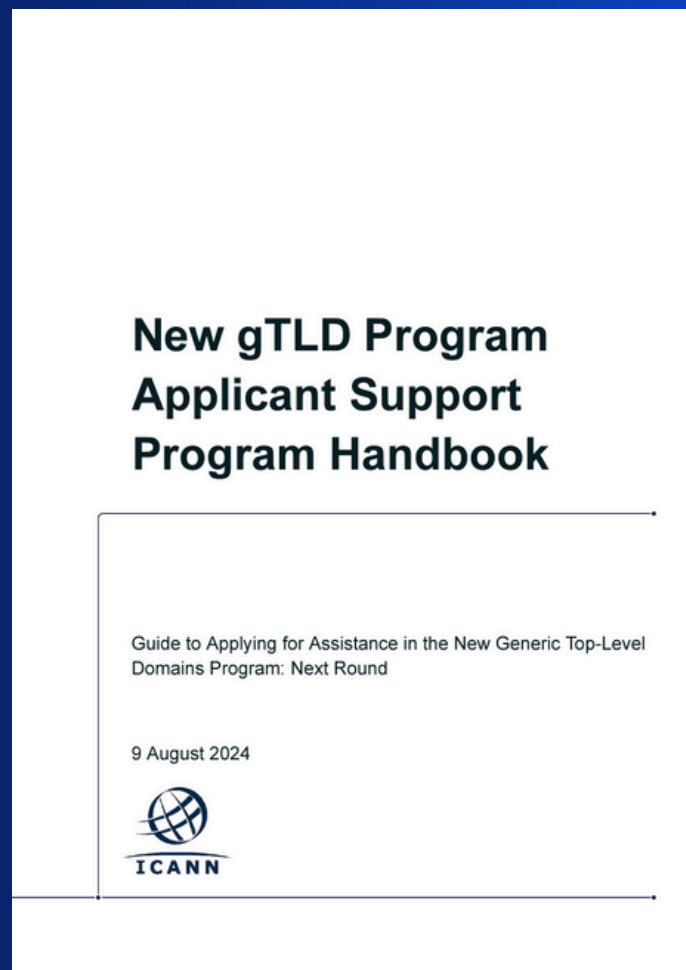
1. [newgtldprogram.icann.org/en/application-rounds/round2/rsp/handbook](https://newgtldprogram.icann.org/en/application-rounds/round2/rsp/handbook)
2. [newgtldprogram.icann.org/sites/default/files/documents/rsp-handbook-03jun24-en.pdf; Section 1.3.1, p.7](https://newgtldprogram.icann.org/sites/default/files/documents/rsp-handbook-03jun24-en.pdf; Section 1.3.1, p.7)

# New gTLDs 101:

## Applicant Support Program

The Internet Corporation for Assigned Names and Numbers (ICANN) ecosystem and community have a wealth of associated acronyms and terminology.

In our New gTLDs 101 series we review some of these key terms to get you caught up on their meaning and how they affect the New gTLD Space.



Screenshot of the New gTLD Program Applicant Support Handbook

## Moral Support: The Updated Applicant Support Program in the Next Round

As part of ICANN's 2012 New gTLD Program, an initiative called the 'Applicant Support Program' was created:

ICANN seeks to increase global diversity and representation across regions within the new gTLD Program. The new gTLD Program has the potential to increase competition and choice in the domain name market, and it is important to ICANN community members to ensure that efforts are made to minimize any competitive disadvantage for those in developing economies. The Applicant Support Program is an initiative developed in addition to the New gTLD Program and it seeks to serve the global public interest by ensuring worldwide accessibility to, and competition within, the new gTLD Program.<sup>1</sup>

## ASP Applicants Could Take Part in This Program in Three Different Ways<sup>2</sup>:

**/1** Access to pro bono services for startup gTLD registries

**/2** Financial assistance (reduced evaluation fees)

**/3** The Applicant Support Fund (access to a \$2,000,000 USD ICANN fund for needy applicants)

## Applications Submitted with Financial Requests<sup>3</sup> in the 2012 First Round Application Window

### Application #1-1309-46695

.KIDS for the applicant DotKids Foundation Ltd

### Application #1-1873-71868

.IDN for the applicant Nameshop

### Application #1-2104-81541

.UMMAH for the applicant Ummah Digital Ltd

Of these, only the .KIDS application met the criteria to receive financial assistance and successfully completed the application and evaluation processes, signing the Registry Agreement on 13 August 2021<sup>4</sup> and delegating on 4 April 2022.<sup>5</sup>

Per the 2012 application rules, the other two applications that did not meet the financial assistance threshold criteria were excluded from further participation in the 2012 round of the New gTLD Program and awarded refunds of their submitted application fees.<sup>6</sup>

Given that 1,930 applications<sup>7</sup> were submitted in the 2012 round, with only three submitting requests to utilize the Applicant Support Program and only one successful in receiving assistance, the program was not received as a success.

With that said, in the ensuing policy development since 2012 and implementation

of said policy, the Applicant Support Program has been expanded and turned into a standalone program that is now independent of the application process.

## How Can Applicants Take Part in the Applicant Support Program in the Next Round?

Supported ASP Applicants can now take part in this program via financial and non-financial assistance in the following different ways<sup>8</sup>:

1. An ASP capacity development program
2. Access to pro bono professional service providers that have agreed to volunteer their services.
3. Resources and information for potential applicants to better understand the New gTLD Program, what it means to operate a gTLD, and how to participate in ICANN's multistakeholder community.
4. Access to an Applicant Counselor to help answer questions about the gTLD application process and provide guidance on where to find available resources.
5. A 75-85% reduction in New gTLD Program evaluation fees.
6. A bid credit applied to supported applicants participating in contention resolution procedures established in the Applicant Guidebook, which could occur if two or more applications are placed in contention sets. Further detail around this will be included in the final New gTLD Program: Next Round Applicant Guidebook.
7. Reduced base Registry Operator fees, should the supported applicant prevail in the gTLD program evaluation and proceed to contracting and delegation.

The final *ASP Handbook*<sup>9</sup> provides a guide to applying for support, including detailed information on ASP application deadlines, criteria, processes, and evaluation of the program.

*[Editor's Note: Please note that the notes below are selected from 60+ pages of materials and are being used to illustrate the overall program; for full details, please see the documents as listed on the ICANN Applicant Support Program webpage.<sup>10</sup>]*

ASP Applicants will need to meet one or more of the following designations<sup>11</sup>:

- Nonprofit, Charity, or Equivalent
- Intergovernmental Organizations (IGOs)
- Indigenous/Tribal Peoples' Organizations
- Social Impact or Public Benefit Micro- or Small-Sized Business
- Micro- or Small-Sized Business from a Less-Developed Economy

Applying to the ASP is a very rigorous process that requires background screening; submission of documentation including, but not limited to, narratives, funding plans, financial documents, government documents and/or certificates, and proof of designation (above); and submission of a \$2,500 USD deposit if found to be qualified for support; among other steps.



A quick caveat on restrictions<sup>12</sup>:

/1

ASP applicants are not permitted to re-apply or re-submit an application to the ASP.

/2

Qualified supported ASP applicants will receive a 75-85% reduction on gTLD evaluation fees relating to one gTLD application only.

/3

Supported applicant entities that apply to the New gTLD Program will be restricted to one gTLD application submission.

/4

If a supported applicant applies for a new gTLD string that is counter to public responsibility, their support may be withdrawn.

/5

All gTLD applicant strings may be subject to the objection types in the final New gTLD Program: Next Round Applicant Guidebook.

/6

Supported applicants that progress to delegation will be restricted from assigning the Registry Agreement or from any Change of Control for a period of three years (with a small number of exceptions).

Please note that *qualifying for support via the ASP does not equate to qualifying for a gTLD*. Qualified supported applicants must

also apply for a gTLD in April 2026, when the Next Round is expected to open.<sup>13</sup>

The ASP application submission period began on 19 November 2024 and will close on 19 November 2025.<sup>14</sup>

## What Might This Information Mean for You?

A couple of things:

- Depending on the specifics of the company you are considering applying under, you may be eligible to apply for the Applicant Support Program. If you genuinely believe that to be the case, you will want to immediately dive into the ASP Handbook and related materials and see if you can make an ASP application, and then a gTLD application, work.
- If you are not able to meet the ASP requirements or are uninterested in taking part in the program, please be aware that other parties may utilize the ASP, which could potentially have impacts on other applications, for instance, in a contention set as an ASP applicant may use the bid credit. (Please note that the mechanics of the bid credit are still being worked out by the SubPro IRT per the implementation of SubPro Final Report Topic 35 (p. 173-182).<sup>15</sup>)

## Final Thoughts on the Applicant Support Program

With these changes in the ASP from 2012 to the present, hopefully, more organizations will be able to take advantage of the program and use it to help make the broader global internet community more diverse in

the gTLD space. We'll continue to watch what happens with the ASP in 2025 as we move toward a potential application window in 2026 and let you know if anything changes.

Just like that, we've learned about another term in our New gTLDs 101 series, this time the Applicant Support Program (ASP). Join us next time to learn more information about the domain industry, and don't hesitate to reach out and let us know if there is an abbreviation, acronym, or initialism you'd like to learn about!

1. [newgtlds.icann.org/en/applicants/candidate-support](https://newgtlds.icann.org/en/applicants/candidate-support)
2. [Ibid.](#)
3. [newgtlds.icann.org/sites/default/files/sarp-results-20mar13-en.pdf](https://newgtlds.icann.org/sites/default/files/sarp-results-20mar13-en.pdf)
4. [icann.org/en/registry-agreements/details/kids](https://icann.org/en/registry-agreements/details/kids)
5. [newgtlds.icann.org/en/program-status/delegated-strings](https://newgtlds.icann.org/en/program-status/delegated-strings)
6. [newgtlds.icann.org/sites/default/files/sarp-results-20mar13-en.pdf](https://newgtlds.icann.org/sites/default/files/sarp-results-20mar13-en.pdf)
7. [gtdresult.icann.org/application-result/applicationstatus](https://gtdresult.icann.org/application-result/applicationstatus)
8. [newgtldprogram.icann.org/en/application-rounds/round2/asp](https://newgtldprogram.icann.org/en/application-rounds/round2/asp)
9. [newgtldprogram.icann.org/sites/default/files/documents/next-round-asp-handbook-09aug24-en.pdf](https://newgtldprogram.icann.org/sites/default/files/documents/next-round-asp-handbook-09aug24-en.pdf)
10. [newgtldprogram.icann.org/en/application-rounds/round2/asp](https://newgtldprogram.icann.org/en/application-rounds/round2/asp)
11. [icann.org/en/system/files/files/asp-applicant-quick-start-guide-05nov24-en.pdf](https://icann.org/en/system/files/files/asp-applicant-quick-start-guide-05nov24-en.pdf)
12. [newgtldprogram.icann.org/sites/default/files/documents/next-round-asp-handbook-09aug24-en.pdf](https://newgtldprogram.icann.org/sites/default/files/documents/next-round-asp-handbook-09aug24-en.pdf), p.40
13. [Ibid.](#)
14. [newgtldprogram.icann.org/en/application-rounds/round2/asp](https://newgtldprogram.icann.org/en/application-rounds/round2/asp)
15. [gns0.icann.org/sites/default/files/file/field-file-attach/final-report-newgtld-subsequent-procedures-pdp-02feb21-en.pdf](https://gns0.icann.org/sites/default/files/file/field-file-attach/final-report-newgtld-subsequent-procedures-pdp-02feb21-en.pdf)

Date	Description
<b>19 November 2024</b>	The ASP application submission period begins.
<b>Expected to close 19 November 2025</b>	The application submission period for ASP closes; no additional ASP applications will be accepted for this round. ICANN org retains the option to modify the ASP application submission period and will communicate the change accordingly.
<b>Expected to open April 2026</b>	The New gTLD Program: Next Round application submission period opens.

Screenshot of the New gTLD Program Applicant Support Handbook Timeline

# Policy Corner:

## The Cat is Out of the Bag at ICANN81

Istanbul, Türkiye, is known for its cats,<sup>1</sup> and the Annual General Meeting was no different, with felines everywhere in sight, even inside the conference facility. With that said, ICANN81 was a big meeting for policy activities that will affect ICANN's New gTLD Program going forward, so let's review a few of the recent outcomes that happened and see whether some of these issues still have 'nine lives.'

## Contention Sets

The ICANN Board continued to act in relation to the resolution of contention sets of applications in the Next Round. One of the approved resolutions of the 14 November 2024 Regular meeting of the ICANN Board<sup>2</sup> was:

...the Board directs the Interim President and CEO, or her designee(s), to prohibit all forms of private resolution of contention sets in the Next Round, including prohibiting the formation of joint ventures among applicants after the submission of their applications. The Board finds that that allowing joint ventures, as previously approved in SubPro Recommendation 20.6, is no longer in the best interests of the ICANN community or ICANN, as per Bylaws Annex A, Section 9(a); and by this action the Board confirms that it is no longer directing the Interim President and CEO to implement Recommendation 20.6 as directed in Board resolution 2023.03.16.04. The rationale of this resolution includes the Board Statement for why this recommendation is not in the best interests of the ICANN community or ICANN org. The Board directs the Interim President and CEO, or her designee(s), to submit the Board Statement to the GNSO Council and coordinate with the GNSO Council a time to discuss the Board Statement.

As noted in our blog post of September 30,<sup>3</sup> this was the final act to provide closure on an issue that had been discussed for years. So, with no more private auctions and no

possibility of creating potential joint ventures, ICANN has Auctions of Last Resort (the “same auction methodology (ascending clock second price) that was used during the 2012 round of the new gTLD Program)”<sup>4</sup> as the remaining method of breaking contention aside from a successful Community Priority Evaluation. That said, ICANN still wants to allow applicants an additional means of potentially breaking contention, and the Subsequent Procedures Implementation Review Team (SubPro IRT for short) has been working on the idea of the “replacement string.”<sup>5</sup>

As shown in the Proposed AGB Language\_String Contention Procedures\_v02\_2024-11-08<sup>6</sup> document:

To potentially reduce the instances of string contention an applicant may designate a replacement string alongside their original choice of string.

Designating a replacement string may provide applicants with the option to avoid contention with at least one other identical applied-for string before the list of applied-for strings is finalized (see 4.3.3). Applicants can avoid contention in such cases by replacing their original applied-for string with their designated replacement string, subject to the conditions and criteria detailed in this section. Applicants should note that choosing to replace their original applied-for string does not preclude their replacement string from being placed in contention at a later stage of the application process (see X for more information).

Following the publication of the complete list of new gTLD applications on Reveal Day (see section X), subject to certain conditions defined below, applicants will be given [14 days]-the 'Replacement Period' -to notify ICANN of their intention to replace their original applied-for string with their replacement string. Applications in which the original string is replaced will then proceed through the remaining stages of the gTLD application process on the basis of the replacement string, which will from that point on be treated as the applicant's original applied-for string. Applicants who opt for their replacement string will be unable to revert to their original string at any stage during the program.

Applicants must be aware that they will be prevented from using their replacement string in cases where a designated replacement string is identical to another replacement string or original applied-for string, as this would increase the risk of creating new or adding to existing instances of contention.

*[Editor's Note: the wording above is still in draft form as of this writing and is being used to illustrate the overall concept; see the document for additional details, but be aware that the final version of the wording may end up being different. This draft status applies to the 'string change' section below as well.]*

Similarly, the SubPro IRT is also working on another 'string change' concept for .Brand TLDs as outlined in the *Proposed AGB Language\_Brand String Change\_v02\_2024-11-08 document*.<sup>7</sup>

Brand TLD applicants that meet the eligibility requirements detailed in section 4.5.2 will have 30 days to submit a Brand TLD String Change Request to ICANN once their primary applied-for string enters a contention set or is found to be confusingly similar to an existing TLD, a Blocked Name or a Reserved Name, following:

- The publication of contention sets after String Similarity Evaluation, or
- The publication of a String Confusion Objection Expert Determination.

While this appears to be a creative way to minimize contention, it may add some additional complexity to the program, as a community member commented during the third SubPro IRT session.<sup>8</sup>

### What Might This Information Mean for You?

Be aware that in the case of contention with another application for the same TLD string:

- Creating a joint venture with the other applicant(s) will not be allowed.
- Private Auctions will not be allowed as a means of breaking contention.
- If your application includes a 'replacement string' you may be able to utilize it should your 'original string' application be in contention.
- If your .Brand 'original string' application is in contention you may be able to submit a Brand TLD String Change Request to move your application to an alternate TLD.

## Singular / Plural

Another approved resolution of the 14 November 2024 Regular meeting of the ICANN Board<sup>9</sup> was in reference to the 'Singular / Plural' concepts:

Specifically, the Board is adopting supplemental recommendations 24.3:

"The GNSO Council recommends prohibiting the delegation of singulars and plurals of the same word in the same language in order to reduce the risk of end user confusion. This prohibition applies in two distinct situations 1) where an applied-for gTLD string is a singular or plural of an existing gTLD or those Blocked Names on Annex A and 2) where an applied-for gTLD string is a singular or plural of another applied-for gTLD string:

If ICANN org is informed by reference to a dictionary, and verifies by reference to a dictionary, that an application for a string that is the singular or plural version of the same word in the same language during the same application window, of an existing gTLD or Blocked Name has been submitted, such application will not be permitted to proceed. ICANN org will treat all other applications for the same strings in the same manner.

If ICANN org is informed by reference to a dictionary, and verifies by reference to a dictionary, that there is an application for the singular version of a word and an application for a plural version of the same word in the

same word in the same language during the same application window, the relevant applications will be placed in a contention set. ICANN org will treat all other applications for the same strings in the same manner."

For the avoidance of doubt, adopting Supplemental Recommendation 24.3 means that applied-for strings representing singular and plural versions of the same word in the same language could be delegated if ICANN does not receive any notifications to put them into contention and if the respective strings otherwise pass all applicable evaluation and review processes. Equally, an applied-for string representing singular and plural versions of the same word in the same language of an already-delegated string or blocked name could be delegated if ICANN does not receive any notifications to put them into contention and if the respective strings otherwise pass all applicable evaluation and review processes.

This has been another issue that has been discussed for some time; for now, this has clarified the ICANN Board's take on the various scenarios described above.

### What Does This Mean for You?

Understand that in the case of your application being the singular version of a plural version of a word in the same language (or vice versa), there may be some challenges, such as your application being put into a contention set or your application not being allowed to proceed. Great care will need to be taken in analyzing your potential

application string(s) up front against existing TLDs as well as potential well-known trademarks or brands that may match or be slight variations of your brand/string that may also apply.

## Internationalized Domain Names

During the GNSO Council meeting<sup>10</sup> at ICANN81 the Council voted on the following two issues<sup>11</sup> and:

1. Accepted the Expedited Policy Development Process on Internationalized Domain Names (EPDP-IDNs) Phase 2 Final Report
2. Approved the Initiation of the Policy Development Process for Latin Script Diacritics

Taking action on #1 was important as the IDN EPDP Phase 2 Final Report is on the critical path of steps in *The New gTLD Program: Next Round Implementation Report*<sup>12</sup> required to launch the Next Round. The Report will now go to the ICANN Board for consideration.

Regarding #2, this is the next follow-up action on the “.quebec issue” or “diacritics issue” we discussed in our Markmonitor Q4 2023 Quarterly Report<sup>13</sup> (see that report for more history on the situation).

### How Might This Impact You?

The new draft Registry Agreement for the Next Round of New gTLDs, which all Registry Operators will need to sign, includes wording around IDN variants and related subjects that were included in the IDN EPDP Phase 2 Final Report — see these ICANN sessions for additional details:

- <https://icann81.sched.com/event/1p297/gds-subpro-irt-work-session-1-of-5>
- <https://icann81.sched.com/event/1p2D4/progress-on-idn-related-projects-for-the-new-gtld-program-next-round>

IDNs can be very complicated, so if you are considering applying for a gTLD in the Next Round, you will want to review all the related rules and documents closely to ensure that your gTLD will function correctly and meet ICANN Compliance requirements.

## Closed Generics

While the concept of ‘closed generics’ wasn’t directly referred to in the bulk of the sessions at ICANN81, the functional ‘prohibition’ of these types of strings discussed earlier in the year in our Markmonitor Q1 2024 Quarterly Report<sup>14</sup> is still relevant and should be considered when considering what potential gTLD string for which one might apply.

### What Does This Mean for You?

As with the other issues above, when reviewing and considering what gTLDs that a company may apply for, all of the following should be taken into account:

- Is the string potentially a Closed Generic?
- Is the string potentially a singular or plural version of an existing TLD?
- Is the string an IDN?
- Should I consider including a ‘replacement string’ in my application?

This can be a delicate and nuanced process that should be worked out in 2025 so an applicant can be ready to move once the application opens in April 2026 (per the

current estimate). Proceed with care in the planning stages to have the best outcome down the road.

## Markmonitor is Here to Guide You

Markmonitor is happy to discuss these issues to assist you in beginning the initial review process and determine what challenges a potential string may have in the application process. Please reach out to your Domain Portfolio Advisor or one of our industry experts for more information.

1. [goturkiye.com/all-you-need-to-know-about-istanbuls-friendly-cats](https://goturkiye.com/all-you-need-to-know-about-istanbuls-friendly-cats)
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5. [community.icann.org/download/attachments/315490346/EXT\\_String%20Contention%20Procedures\\_2024-11-08.pdf?version=1&modificationDate=1731074315000&api=v2](https://community.icann.org/download/attachments/315490346/EXT_String%20Contention%20Procedures_2024-11-08.pdf?version=1&modificationDate=1731074315000&api=v2)
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7. [community.icann.org/download/attachments/315490346/EXT\\_Brand%20String%20Change\\_2024-11-08.pdf?version=1&modificationDate=1731073383000&api=v2](https://community.icann.org/download/attachments/315490346/EXT_Brand%20String%20Change_2024-11-08.pdf?version=1&modificationDate=1731073383000&api=v2)
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9. [icann.org/en/board-activities-and-meetings/materials/approved-resolutions-regular-meeting-of-the-icann-board-14-11-2024-en](https://icann.org/en/board-activities-and-meetings/materials/approved-resolutions-regular-meeting-of-the-icann-board-14-11-2024-en)
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# Get Involved

## Upcoming Public ICANN Meetings

### Interested in getting more involved with ICANN and policy work?

Consider joining the following groups (as relevant to your business):

- ICANN Business Constituency, [icannbc.org](https://icannbc.org)
- Intellectual Property Constituency, [ipconstituency.org](https://ipconstituency.org)
- Brand Registry Group, [brandregistrygroup.org](https://brandregistrygroup.org)

# Upcoming ICANN Meetings

Community Forum .....

8 - 13 March, 2025



Seattle, Washington, USA



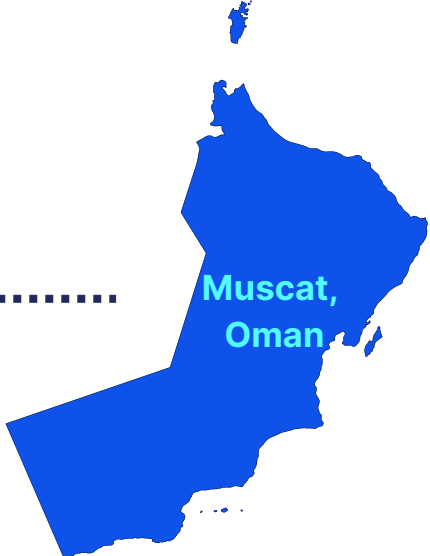
Prague, Czech Republic

..... Policy Forum

9 - 12 June, 2025

Annual General Meeting .....

25 - 30 October, 2025



Muscat,  
Oman



Should you need any further information or assistance, please contact your Domain Portfolio Advisor (DPA) or email [customer.service@markmonitor.com](mailto:customer.service@markmonitor.com)

Markmonitor provides strategic domain management solutions that help protect the revenue and reputation of the world's leading brands.

Since 1999, Markmonitor has served the domain portfolio needs of businesses around the globe, including many of the most visited websites in the world. An ICANN accredited domain registrar since its establishment, Markmonitor leverages its extensive industry relationships, innovative technology, and broad expertise to manage and protect company domain portfolios, all with data-driven, white-glove consultation designed to maximize domain portfolio value.