FY22 Additional Budget Request Initial Report

# Professional Individual End User Poll

**Request #** FY22-05

**Approved Support** $50,000

**ICANN Community** ALAC

**ICANN org Implementation Liaison(s)** Heidi Ullrich and Ergys Ramaj

# Alignment

This approved At-Large Advisory Committee (ALAC) [Fiscal Year 2022 (FY22) Additional Budget Request (ABR)](https://community.icann.org/display/atlarge/At-Large+FY22+Additional+Budget+Request+Implementation+Workspace) is a recommendation for support for “more knowledge [that] would be helpful to the ICANN community” about priority issues in ICANN policy development, advisory, or technical work.

The At-Large Advisory Committee (ALAC), in collaboration with over 250 At-Large Structure organizations across the globe, acts in the best interest of individual end-users within the ICANN community and the context of ICANN Policy Development. Advocating for the interests of end-users, the ALAC advises on the activities of ICANN, including Internet policies developed by ICANN's Supporting Organizations.

This [End User Survey ABR](https://community.icann.org/display/projfinadhocws/ALAC+-+FY22+Additional+Budget+Requests?preview=/151847210/158139112/FY22%20Community%20Request%20-%20Polling%5B1%5D.docx) encourages the ALAC to work with the ICANN org Policy Development Support and Public Responsibility Support functions to collect the perspectives of targeted end users *about one topic in one language in selected countries*, within the limitations of the estimated support allocation. A community group, consisting of current and former ALAC and At-Large leadership, formed in August 2021 to address the topic, questions, criteria and evaluation of the End User Survey ABR. The group consisting of current and former ALAC Members, the At-Large End User Survey Working Party (EUS-WP), decided to create a survey on the topic of [Internationalized Domain Names](https://www.icann.org/resources/pages/idn-2012-02-25-en) (IDNs) and [Universal Acceptance](https://www.icann.org/ua) (UA), after consultation with community and org experts. The survey will be in Hindi, conducted in specific regions of India. As part of their ongoing efforts to gain knowledge of issues of interest to individual end users, the ALAC will collect the perspectives of targeted end users through this survey, which will include professional design, distribution of questions, gathering of responses and provision of the data results and initial analysis.

Working with ICANN org, the ALAC plans to engage a professional polling organization. The estimated amount of this ABR is 50,000 USD. The estimated support envisages professional design and distribution of questions. The EUS-WP has developed criteria for the Request for Proposal (RFP) and the vendor to conduct the survey. The ALAC will be responsible for analyzing the data and publishing the findings.

After submitting this Initial Report, the ALAC will submit a final draft report, including preliminary analysis of survey results, by 30 June 2022 to abr-reports@icann.org. See Estimated Timeline at the end of the Initial Report.

# Current Status

## ICANN Community Work

A community group, consisting of current and former ALAC and At-Large leadership, formed in August 2021 to address the topic, questions, criteria and evaluation of the End User Survey ABR. Jonathan Zuck, ALAC Vice Chair for Policy, serves as lead of the regionally-representative community group, known as the At-Large End User Survey Working Party (EUS-WP). ICANN Policy staff in support of the At-Large community, Heidi Ullrich and Evin Erdoğdu, support the community group and implementation of the ABR.

The EUS-WP began meeting on a weekly basis in August 2021. Community membership includes:

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| --- | --- | --- |
| **Region** | **ALAC Member** | **Position** |
| **NARALO** | Jonathan Zuck | Chair of EUS-WP, ALAC Vice Chair for Policy |
| **AFRALO** | Hadia Elminiawi | Member, Former ALAC Member |
| **APRALO** | Maureen Hilyard | Member, ALAC Chair |
| **APRALO** | Cheryl Langdon-Orr | Member, Former ALAC Chair |
| **APRALO** | Justine Chew | Member, Former ALAC Member |
| **EURALO** | Olivier Crepin-Leblond | Member, Former ALAC Chair |
| **EURALO** | Joanna Kulesza | Member, ALAC Vice Chair for Outreach |
| **NARALO** | Alan Greenberg | Member, Former ALAC Chair |
| **NARALO** | Evan Leibovitch | Member, Former ALAC Vice-Chair and NARALO Chair |

The members of the group met and prioritized divergent views on priority end user issues that could be addressed by the ABR, within its scope, timeline and budget.

In September 2021, [Collaborative Google Doc, on Topics and Questions for End User Survey](https://docs.google.com/document/d/155anZ-1oEMoOmQ4rP0pNybkd3N1bFbfQLMyqO75Lex4/edit?usp=sharing) was created to evaluate the end user issue(s) most relevant to the ABR. Over a series of meetings, community members evaluated relevant topics and questions, utilizing ICANN org resources and expertise. In October 2021, the EUS-WP members drafted [Criteria for the End User Survey on a collaborative Google Doc](https://docs.google.com/document/d/1M1rASifqFlIE3I2PLb1cI3UJ1PECT3btlopwAsHYWMA/edit).

Throughout the process, members of the EUS-WP briefed the ALAC and At-Large Consolidated Policy Working Group (CPWG) on the progress of the ABR, soliciting relevant input and feedback for the draft documentation and reporting. In mid-November 2021, the group finalized their criteria for the End User Survey RFP.

## ICANN Organization Work

ICANN org Policy Development Support, Public Responsibility Support, Global Stakeholder Engagement, IDN and UA Programs and Procurement functions have collaborated to support the ALAC and EUS-WP implementation of the ABR. The implementation of this ABR has so far included weekly meetings, including internal and external reporting and presentations.

ICANN Policy staff, in support of the At-Large community, created a workspace for the EUS-WP. Policy staff supported the community’s efforts to prioritize divergent views on priority end user issues that could be addressed by the ABR, within its scope, timeline and budget. Over a series of meetings, community members evaluated relevant topics and questions, utilizing ICANN org resources and expertise. The selected End User Survey topic, Universal Acceptance (UA) and Internationalized Domain Names (IDNs), is of significant interest to the ALAC/At-Large community and ICANN.

In October 2021, the ICANN Global Stakeholder Engagement (GSE) function and IDNs and UA Programs function provided expertise on the topic, including challenges and opportunities in various regions of the world. *The EUS-WP determined that the survey would be conducted in sub-region(s) of India, in the language of Hindi[[1]](#footnote-1).* ICANN Policy staff in support of the At-Large community coordinated with the ICANN Procurement function to gather requirements for a Request for Proposal (RFP) for the survey vendor in the region.

In mid-November 2021, the group finalized their [Criteria for the End User Survey](https://docs.google.com/document/d/1M1rASifqFlIE3I2PLb1cI3UJ1PECT3btlopwAsHYWMA/edit) RFP. In coordination with the Policy, Public Responsibility, and Procurement functions, the ALAC/At-Large EUS-WP confirmed a timeline for the remainder of the ABR, including survey vendor selection, questionnaire development, and survey implementation.

In December 2021, RFP preparation by ICANN org is officially underway, including 1) Requirements gathering, 2) Creation of RFP documents, 3) Bidder research/solicitation/communication, 4) Collection/verification of bidder contact info, and 5) Planning/approvals/finalizing announcement.

## Expenditures

The estimated amount of this ABR is 50,000 USD. The estimated support envisages professional design and distribution of questions. Working with ICANN org, the ALAC plans to engage a professional polling organization through an RFP. To date, none of the ABR allocation has been spent.

# Challenges

The members of the ALAC group (EUS-WP) took several months to gain consensus on divergent views regarding priority end user issues that could be addressed by the ABR, within its scope, timeline and budget. This thorough evaluation and consensus was necessary to produce a survey that will be useful to both ICANN org and the ALAC.

This is the first ICANN RFP to be conducted outside the United States, and in India.

The RFP process takes several months. ICANN org and the ALAC will need to coordinate closely to ensure the procured vendor is able to conduct the survey and provide a timely analysis of results.

# Mitigation

To ensure a timely implementation of the ABR, ICANN policy staff have developed a timeline for implementation of the ABR and are working closely with the ALAC and other ICANN org functions. The EUS-WP meets on a weekly basis in consultation with ICANN org, and ICANN org functions (specifically Policy Development Support, Procurement, GSE, IDNs and UA Programs) exchange information and review documentation on a weekly basis.

# Outlook

In January 2022, the public RFP will be launched and an announcement published. There will be a Q&A period with interested vendors, including a week for submission of questions and responses by ICANN org. The bidding vendors will submit their proposals for evaluation by the ALAC and ICANN in February 2022. The survey is expected to launch in March 2022, with a draft final ABR report and analysis of survey results in June 2022.

The End User Survey will provide “more knowledge [that] would be helpful to the ICANN community” about IDNs and UA, which are priority issues in ICANN policy development, advisory, and technical work. UA is a fundamental requirement for a truly multilingual and digitally inclusive Internet. UA ensures that all valid domain names, including long new TLDs and IDNs, and all valid email addresses, including those in local languages and scripts, can be used by all Internet-enabled applications, devices, and systems. Technically, they must accept, validate, store, process, and display all valid domain names and all valid email addresses consistently, and correctly. UA-ready websites, applications, and services lead to better user experiences. When a company is UA-ready, email addresses in any script from any domain name can be used. When a site is UA-ready, it will allow customers with new TLDs and IDNs to successfully use the site and its forms.

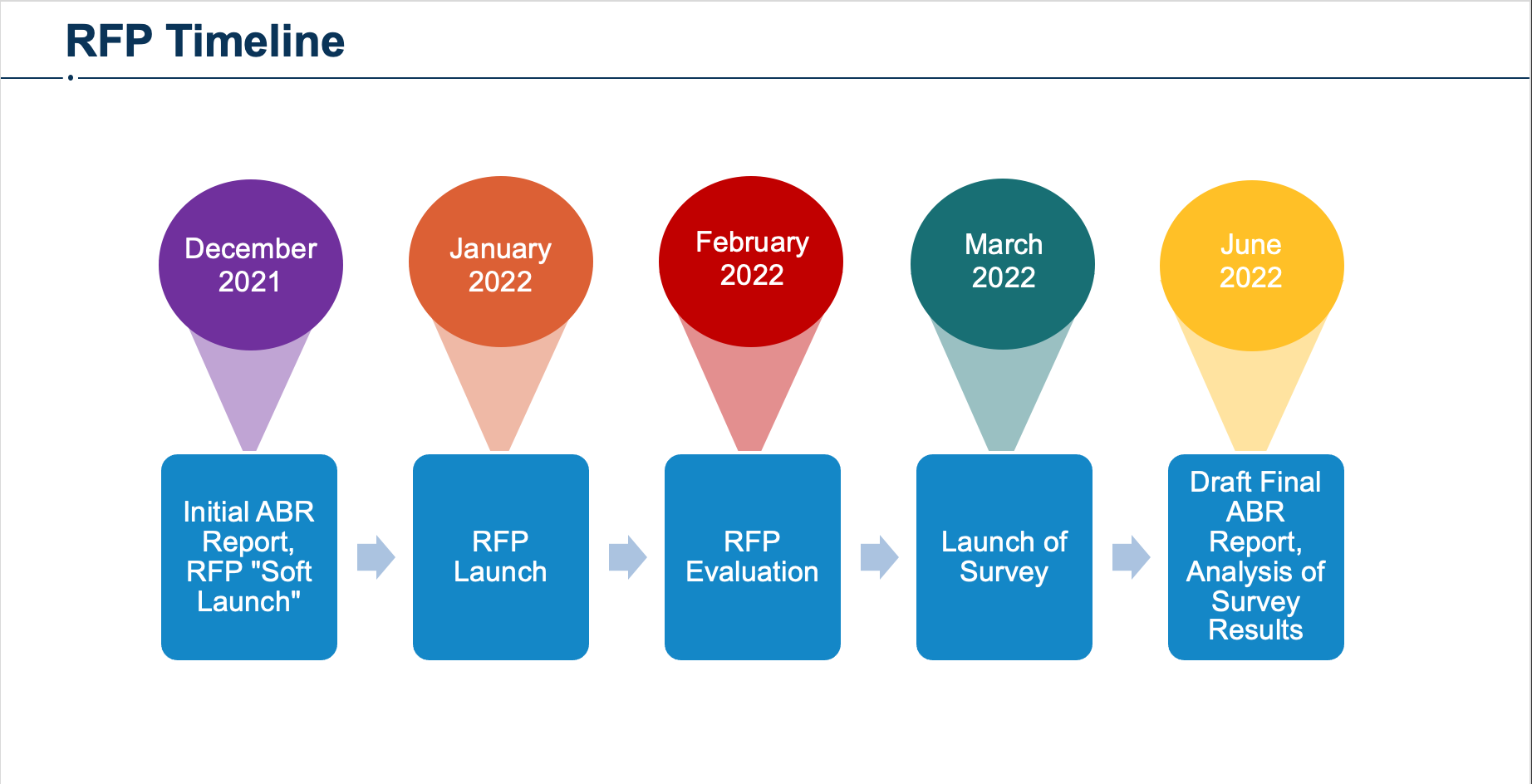
Issues such as UA, string confusion and semantic expectation are areas where more knowledge would be helpful to the ICANN community. For example, the research conducted by the [CCT Review Team](https://www.icann.org/resources/reviews/specific-reviews/cct)[[2]](#footnote-2) revealed an individual user preference for a more semantic web, where the generic Top Level Domain (gTLD) and IDN country code Top Level Domain (ccTLD) is more closely related to the purpose of the corresponding websites. This is especially true in otherwise “highly regulated” areas such as finance and healthcare. One could expect these preferences to vary by region, culture, gender and other factors and knowing them would allow the ALAC to even better represent these interests.

At the same time, the introduction of new generic top-level domains (gTLDs) and IDN ccTLDs into the Internet ecosystem through the [New gTLD Program](https://newgtlds.icann.org/en/about/program) has enabled the largest expansion of the Domain Name System (DNS). In addition to fostering innovation, competition, and consumer choice in the domain name industry, this expansion has unlocked the potential to reach communities and users around the world that face linguistic barriers to the Internet.

By allowing users to access the Internet in their chosen online identities and local languages (non-ASCII characters and scripts), private sectors, governments, and civil societies have the ability to better serve their communities and take advantage of significant business opportunities.

The ALAC and At-Large community is seeking to increase the knowledge and understanding of how end users use IDNs and face Universal Acceptance challenges. The selected End User Survey topic (IDNs and UA), will provide information to inform strategic direction of the ALAC/At-Large community and ICANN.

**Estimated Timeline**



**References**

* [At-Large FY22 Additional Budget Request Implementation Workspace](https://community.icann.org/display/atlarge/At-Large+FY22+Additional+Budget+Request+Implementation+Workspace)
* [End User Survey ABR Request Form](https://community.icann.org/display/projfinadhocws/ALAC+-+FY22+Additional+Budget+Requests?preview=/151847210/158139112/FY22%20Community%20Request%20-%20Polling%5B1%5D.docx)
* [FY22 Additional Budget Request: At-Large End User Survey Working Party (EUS-WP)](https://community.icann.org/pages/viewpage.action?pageId=173703451)
* [Collaborative Google Doc: Criteria for End User Survey](https://docs.google.com/document/d/1M1rASifqFlIE3I2PLb1cI3UJ1PECT3btlopwAsHYWMA/edit)
* [Collaborative Google Doc: Topics for End User Survey](https://docs.google.com/document/d/155anZ-1oEMoOmQ4rP0pNybkd3N1bFbfQLMyqO75Lex4/edit?usp=sharing)
* [Example: Request for Proposal: Public Relations Services](https://www.icann.org/en/announcements/details/request-for-proposal-public-relations-services-9-8-2021-en)

1. EN is needed for communication with ICANN, and in survey data analysis. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. The review team for the CCT Review (“CCT Review Team”) examined the extent to which the expansion of gTLDs has promoted competition, consumer trust and consumer choice. It also assessed the effectiveness of the New gTLD Round’s application and evaluation process, as well as the safeguards put in place to mitigate issues arising from the New gTLD Round. [↑](#footnote-ref-2)