Module 1: Development of the Applicant Support Program (1998-2012)

Policy Transition Program Pilot

17 October 2022

ICANN

1. Historical context to the Applicant Support Program (1998-2010)

There has not always been a fixed set of rules for adding top-level domains (TLDs) to the Domain Name System (DNS). Prior to ICANN's establishment, Jon Postel managed the Internet Assigned Numbers Authority (IANA), which administered the assignment of Internet names, numbers, and addresses. In 1984, Postel published RFC 920 which outlined the purpose of domains, the requirements for domains, and listed the initial set of TLDs.[1] The initial set included categorical domains (.GOV, .EDU, .COM, .MIL, and .ORG) and also included provisions for adding country code top-level domains (ccTLDs). ICANN was established in 1998 to coordinate and oversee the DNS; this included developing policies for determining the circumstances under which new top-level domains are added to the DNS root zone.[2]

Since ICANN's establishment, there have been three opportunities for people to apply to operate new generic top-level domains (gTLDs), or any TLD that does not represent a two-letter country code (.UK, .IN, .JP, etc.). The first two rounds in 2000 and 2004 resulted in an additional 22 new gTLDs. The most recent round in 2012 introduced over 1,200 new gTLDs. The 2012 round also included the introduction of the Applicant Support Program. Although the round launched in 2012, the policy deliberations for the program began in 2005.

In September 2005, the Generic Names Supporting Organization (GNSO) Council requested an Issues Report on the introduction of new gTLDs to determine if the GNSO should proceed with a policy development process (PDP) on a new TLD strategy. The Issues Report found that "*issues surrounding the creation of new top--level domains and the policies for undertaking that work are directly relevant to the GNSO's mission and the ICANN Bylaws*" and that the "*work will have a lasting value and applicability and will establish a framework for future decision making.*" Later in November 2005, the GNSO Council voted to initiate the PDP on new gTLDs.[3]

REQUIRED READING

Please read pages 9-26 and 56-58 of the **GNSO Issues Report: Introduction of New Top--Level Domains** to learn more about

1) How ICANN org staff considered whether to recommend introducing new gTLDs
2) Selection Criteria for the 2000 and 2004 rounds
3) Proposed Selection Criteria for New TLDs

The GNSO Council's new TLD Committee shared its Initial Report for Public Comment in July 2006.[4] In relation to applicant support, the Committee specifically asked, "*thinking about*

---

[1] For more information on early domain requirements, read RFC 920: Domain Requirements, https://www.rfc-editor.org/rfc/rfc920

[2] For more information on the incorporation of ICANN in 1998, read the Articles of Incorporation of Internet Corporation for Assigned Names and Numbers as revised November 21, 1998, https://www.icann.org/resources/pages/articles-2012-02-25-en

[3] For more historical context on the GNSO's proceedings, see Council Resolutions 1999 - 2019, https://gnso.icann.org/en/council/resolutions/1999-2019

[4] For the original announcement on the PDP's New TLD Initial Report, see "Comments Sought on New TLD Initial Report," https://www.icann.org/en/announcements/details/comments-sought-on-new-tld-initial-report-28-7-2006-en

the issue of application fees for any new top level domain application, is there merit in graduated application fees to assist applicants?".[5]

REQUIRED READING

Please read the **GNSO Initial Report Introduction of New Generic Top-Level Domains** to learn more about

1) The GNSO's rationale for recommending new gTLDs be introduced
2) Selection Criteria for New Top-Level Domains
3) Allocation Methods for New Top-Level Domains
4) Policy to Guide Contractual Conditions for New Top-Level Domains

---

The GNSO Council unanimously accepted the Committee's Final Report on the Introduction of New gTLDs and submitted it to the ICANN Board in September 2007.[6] In June 2008, the ICANN Board adopted the Final Report policy recommendations and directed ICANN org to further develop and complete a detailed implementation plan for the Board and community to approve.[7] The Final Report included implementation guidelines establishing the early foundations of an applicant support program:

● Application fees will be designed to ensure that adequate resources exist to cover the total cost to administer the new gTLD process. Application fees may differ for applicants.
● ICANN may put in place a fee reduction scheme for gTLD applicants from economies classified by the UN as least developed.

REQUIRED READING

Please read the **Summary of ICANN GNSO's Final Report on the Introduction of gTLDs and Related Activity** to get an overview of the final set of recommendations and related implementation guidelines

---

Following the Board's instruction, ICANN org produced the first draft of the gTLD Applicant Guidebook (AGB) in October 2008 for Public Comment.[8] In an accompanying explanatory Memoranda on Cost Considerations of the New gTLD Program, the GNSO noted that "*some community members expressed concern that financial requirements and fees might discourage applications from developing nations, or indigenous and minority peoples, who may have different sets of financial opportunities or capabilities [... However,] no practical method of ICANN financial assistance or fee reductions was identified for the first round of*

---

[5] For the full text of comments received on the PDP's New TLD Initial Report, see https://forum.icann.org/lists/newgtlds-comments/

[6] For the full report and set of recommendation, see ICANN Generic Names Supporting Organization Board Report: Introduction of New Generic Top-Level Domains, https://gnso.icann.org/sites/default/files/filefield_5957/council-report-to-board-pdp-new-gtlds-11sep07.pdf

[7] For the full Board Resolution accepting the GNSO Final Report on the Introduction of New TLDs, see https://www.icann.org/resources/board-material/resolutions-2008-06-26-en#_Toc76113171

[8] See "How to Apply for a New Generic Top-Level Domain Draft Applicant Guidebook Now Available for Comment | New Names will Change the Face of the Internet through Innovation, Choice and Diversity," https://www.icann.org/en/announcements/details/how-to-apply-for-a-new-generic-top-level-domain-draft-applicant-guidebook-now-available-for-comment--new-names-will-change-the-face-of-the-internet-through-innovation-choice-and-diversity-23-10-2008-en

new gTLD applications".[9] In the AGB Public Comments, wider community interest began to emerge for supporting new gTLD applicants of underserved communities and developing countries.[10]

ICANN org revised the AGB based on public feedback and produced the second draft in February 2009.[11] However, the second version of the AGB also did not allow for any type of fee reduction.[12] In August 2009, the Governmental Advisory Committee (GAC) advised the ICANN Board of several concerns the GAC had related to version 2 of the draft AGB. The GAC shared its concerns for a number of implementation issues, including that "*a single fee structure creates limitations, notably by skewing the market in favor of applications from the developed world and those with significant financial resources.*"

The ICANN Board considered the GAC's feedback along with the full report of Public Comment submissions from version 2 of the draft AGB. In March 2010, the Board requested that the community form a "*Working Group to develop a sustainable approach to providing support to applicants requiring assistance in applying for and operating new gTLDs.*"[13]

2. Developing the Criteria for Applicant Support (2010-2012)

Following the Board's request, the GNSO Council established the Joint SO/AC New gTLD Applicant Support Working Group (JAS WG) in April 2010[14] and called for volunteers from all of the ICANN Supporting Organizations (SOs) and Advisory Committees (ACs). A large majority of participants came from the At-Large Advisory Committee (ALAC) or the GNSO. Other individuals, including several GAC members, as well as three Board liaisons also participated in the JAS WG.[15]

The JAS WG was initially tasked to provide recommendations "*regarding specific support to new gTLD applicants in justified cases.*"[16] See Annex A for the WG's five objectives listed in the original charter.[17]

The WG divided its work between two parallel Working Teams. Working Team 1 (WT1) was tasked with identifying ***how*** the net cost to applicants that fulfill appropriate criteria can be reduced, in keeping with the principle of cost recovery. Working Team 2 (WT2) was tasked with addressing issues regarding ***who*** would be entitled to special support and ***what*** the

---

[9] See "New gTLD Program Explanatory Memorandum: Cost Considerations of the New gTLD Program", https://archive.icann.org/en/topics/new-gtlds/cost-considerations-23oct08-en.pdf

[10] See page 17, "New gTLD Draft Applicant Guidebook: Analysis of Public Comment", https://archive.icann.org/en/topics/new-gtlds/agv1-analysis-public-comments-18feb09-en.pdf

[11] See "New gTLD Draft Applicant Guidebook, Version 2 (V2)," https://www.icann.org/en/public-comment/proceeding/new-gtld-draft-applicant-guidebook-version-2-v2-18-02-2009

[12] See Annex B for a descriptive list of how the different versions of the AGB reference applicant support.

[13] See "Support for Applicants Requesting New gTLD Applicants," https://www.icann.org/resources/board-material/resolutions-2010-03-12-en#20

[14] See "GNSO Council Minutes 1 April 2010, Item 6: Any Other Business," https://gnso.icann.org/en/meetings/minutes-council-01apr10-en.htm

[15] See "JAS WG Member Attendance Log," https://community.icann.org/display/jaswg/JAS+WG+Member+Attendance+Log

[16] See "Milestone Report, Applicant Support New generic Top-Level Domain Program: Annex A – JAS WG Charter," 11 November 2010, https://archive.icann.org/en/topics/new-gtlds/jas-milestone-report-11nov10-en.pdf

[17] See Annex A, the JAS WG operated under its initial charter from April 2010 until the publication of its first Milestone Report. In the Milestone Report the JAS WG identified additional work to be completed and initiated a rechartering process from December 2010 - February 2011.

nature of the support would look like. In June 2010, the JAS WG published a snapshot[18] of its initial progress and shared it with the ICANN community for Public Comment.[19] Avri Doria, then a JAS WG member from the Noncommercial Stakeholder Group, presented the snapshot and the JAS WG's preliminary proposals during ICANN38.

REQUIRED LISTENING

Please listen to the audiocast of the WG's ICANN38 presentation, **Reducing Barriers to New gTLD Creation in Developing Regions**, to get an overview of how the JAS WG framed its work on developing the *how*, *who*, and *what* of applicant support.

● **00:00 - 15:55   Avri Doria's Overview of JAS WG Charter, WT1, WT2**

The JAS WG continued its work and produced its Final Report in September 2011.[20] See Annex A for an overview of the key events throughout the progress of the JAS WG. The JAS WG ultimately provided the following recommendations for the creation of the Applicant Support Program:

- **Timing of Support:** a full array of financial and non-financial support for approved candidates should be available in the first and all subsequent rounds of new gTLD applications.
- **Financial Support**
  - Application fee reduced to $47,000 from $185,000
  - Installment payments allowed for application fees
  - Relaxing or deferring of the upfront costs of the required "continuity instrument"
  - Possible creation of a development fund
- **Non-Financial Support**
  - Assistance with the preparation of gTLD applications;
  - Facilitation of IPv6 compliance;
  - Consulting and education regarding DNSSEC implementation;
  - Outreach and education efforts regarding the New gTLD Program;
  - Logistical, translation and technical support; and
  - Establishment of Registry Service Providers in regions where none or few exist.
- **Support Candidate Eligibility Requirements**
  - Service to the public interest; and
  - Both a level of financial need and of financial capability.
- **Support Evaluation Process (SEP)**
  - Should take place before the standard gTLD application review.

---

[18] See "Joint SO/AC Working Group on New gTLD Applicant Support Snapshot," https://archive.icann.org/en/topics/new-gtlds/jas-wg-snapshot-16jun10-en.pdf
[19] See "Public Comment: Joint SO/AC Working Group on New gTLD Applicant Support Snapshot," https://www.icann.org/en/public-comment/proceeding/joint-soac-working-group-on-new-gtld-applicant-support-snapshot-16-06-2010.
[20] See "Final Report of the Joint SO/AC New gTLD Applicant Support Working Group," https://archive.icann.org/en/meetings/dakar2011/bitcache/Final%20Report%20of%20the%20Joint%20SO_AC%20New%20gTLD%20Applicant%20Support%20Working%20Group-vid=29189&disposition=attachment&op=download.pdf

- Application should be evaluated by a Support Application Review Panel (SARP). The SARP should be composed of volunteers from the ICANN community and outside experts, all with knowledge of the existing new gTLD processes, potential gaming patterns and the general needs and capabilities of Support Candidates from developing economies.
- When the SARP rejects a Support Candidate, the SARP should explain its reasons. The Support Candidate may then work to improve its application and reapply for support or may apply for a gTLD without support.
- Support Candidates are still responsible for paying the USD5,000 gTLD application deposit.
- The ICANN Staff should produce a Support Candidate Guide.

REQUIRED LISTENING

Please listen to the audiocast of the WG's ICANN42 presentation, **Developing Regions and New gTLD Program - JAS Final Report**, to get an overview of the Final Report's recommendations on the Applicant Support Program.

- **00:00 - 40:00   Overview of JAS WG Final Report (Required)**
- 40:01 - 1:24:41 Questions from the public (Supplemental)

The ICANN Board first considered the JAS WG Final Report in October 2011[21] and directed ICANN org to propose a detailed plan to implement the WG's recommendations. ICANN org delivered a plan to the Board and in December 2011, the Board approved the launch of the Applicant Support Program (ASP) to begin in January 2012. The Board also approved the fee reduction to $47,000 Applicant Support candidates that qualify according to the established criteria and directed staff to amend the communications campaign to incorporate the ASP.[22]

In January 2012, ICANN org published the final version of the New gTLD Applicant Guidebook (AGB)[23] and the New gTLD Financial Assistance Handbook.[24] The AGB references the ASP but does not provide the eligibility criteria or program details (see Annex B for a descriptive list of how the different versions of the AGB reference applicant support). The New gTLD Financial Assistance Handbook provides the application timeline for applicant support, criteria for eligibility, evaluation fees, application process, evaluation process, evaluation criteria and scoring rubrics.

REQUIRED READING

Please review the **Applicant Support Program page** on ICANN's New Generic Top-Level Domains site, including the **New gTLD Financial Assistance Handbook,** to understand the final determination for the eligibility criteria, evaluation fees, application process, and evaluation process for the ASP.

---

[21] See "Approved Board Resolutions | Regular Meeting of the ICANN Board | Dakar, 28 Oct 2011, Joint Applicant Support," https://www.icann.org/resources/board-material/resolutions-2011-10-28-en#2

[22] See "Approved Board Resolutions | Special Meeting of the ICANN Board, 08 Dec 2011, Applicant Support," https://www.icann.org/resources/board-material/resolutions-2011-12-08-en#1.1

[23] See "Applicant Guidebook Version 9," https://newgtlds.icann.org/en/about/historical-documentation/matrix-agb-v9

[24] See "Applicant Support Program (ASP), New gTLD Financial Assistance Handbook," https://newgtlds.icann.org/en/applicants/candidate-support

3. The 2012 Applicant Support Program

On 11 January 2012, ICANN org announced it began accepting applications for new gTLDs and provided details on the ASP.[25] ICANN org highlighted three main elements to the program:[26]

- **Access to *pro bono* services for startup gTLD registries:** including an Applicant Support Directory[27] to connect potential applicants who wish to establish a new public interest gTLD registry in their community with organizations who wish to offer either financial or non-financial assistance.
- **Financial assistance**: Qualified applicants could receive reduced evaluation fees of US$47,000 instead of the full US$185,000.
- **The Applicant Support Fund:** The ICANN Board has set aside US$2,000,000 as seed funding to assist applicants. This was a seed fund to which other organizations can donate.

As directed by the ICANN Board to generate awareness and interest for the ASP, ICANN org included information about the program in its new gTLD communication campaign. This campaign included announcements from ICANN org that were shared on social media. ICANN org developed an ASP awareness twibbon campaign for Twitter and Facebook profile photos to encourage followers to spread awareness of the program with people from developing economies.[28] ICANN org developed an ASP Fact Sheet for easy distribution.[29] ICANN org gave a presentation on the ASP during ICANN43 in March 2012.[30] ICANN org also released a podcast with the ASP manager in March 2012.

REQUIRED LISTENING

Please listen to the podcast, **What is Applicant Support?**, to understand part of ICANN org's awareness campaign for the Applicant Support Program

---

Applicants would first be evaluated by the independent Support Applicant Review Panel (SARP)[31] to determine if they qualified for Applicant Support; non-prevailing applicants would be excluded from the Program. The SARP evaluated applicants using the criteria laid out in the Financial Assistance Handbook. The handbook notes that "*the criteria are, to a certain extent, subjective. That subjectivity is deemed necessary to enable the SARP to reach a fair*

---

[25] See "New gTLDs Update: Applications Accepted Today; New Guidebook Posted; Financial Assistance for Qualifying Applicants," https://www.icann.org/en/announcements/details/new-gtlds-update-applications-accepted-today-new-guidebook-posted-financial-assistance-for-qualifying-applicants-11-1-2012-en

[26] See "Applicant Support Program (ASP), Understanding the Applicant Support Program," https://newgtlds.icann.org/en/applicants/candidate-support

[27] See "Applicant Support Directory," https://newgtlds.icann.org/en/applicants/candidate-support/non-financial-support

[28] See "SPREAD THE WORD ABOUT THE NEW GTLD APPLICANT SUPPORT PROGRAM," https://newgtlds.icann.org/en/applicants/candidate-support/spread-the-word?fbclid=IwAR2q1olUmdDbxne7GkXonQGWbYIn58Y815s11xOKzDf2EElX3RnrfJgrtW0

[29] See "Applicant Support Fact Sheet," https://newgtlds.icann.org/en/applicants/candidate-support/applicant-support-fact-sheet-20feb12-en.pdf

[30] See "New gTLD Applicant Support Program," for the audiocast of the ICANN43 presentation on ASP, https://archive.icann.org/en/meetings/costarica2012/node/29721.html

[31] For more information on the members of the 2012-2013 SARP, see "ICANN Acknowledges Members of the Support Applicant Review Panel," https://newgtlds.icann.org/en/announcements-and-media/announcement-28may13-en

result and provide the discretion to interpret the information provided to it in the best light."
The handbook defined the following three criteria sets:

- **Public Interest Benefit**: to prioritize funds for those projects that would offer demonstrable benefit to the public or suitable community group, including support for distinct cultural, linguistic or ethnic communities, as well as communities with a defined social need.
- **Financial Need**: to distribute funds to those entities that lack sufficient financial resources to pay for application fees or otherwise execute their projects, or who would not be able to raise those resources through other means.
- **Financial Capabilities**: to help ensure those receiving funding will be able to manage those funds and execute this project if successful.

To meet the threshold for support, support applications must score at least:
- 5 of 9 points on Public Interest Benefit criteria
- 3 of 5 points on Financial Need criteria
- 1 of 2 points on Financial Capability criteria

Applicants had until 12 April 2012 to submit their completed Financial Assistance Applications and New gTLD Applications. ICANN received three applications for support under the ASP. They came from DotKids Foundation Ltd (.KIDS) in Hong Kong, Nameshop (.IDN) in India, and Ummah Digital Ltd (.UMMAH) in Gambia. The SARP results were first released on 12 March 2013.[32] An updated version of the SARP results was released on 20 March 2013:[33]

SARP Determination for Financial Assistance

Applied for String	Applicant Name	Criteria 1: Public Interest Benefit	Criteria 2: Financial Need	Criteria 3: Financial Capabilities	Overall Results
.KIDS	DotKids Foundation Ltd	Met Criteria	Met Criteria	Met Criteria	**Met Criteria**
.IDN	Nameshop	Did Not Meet Criteria	Did Not Meet Criteria	Did Not Meet Criteria	**Did Not Meet Criteria**
.UMMAH	Ummah Digital Ltd	Did Not Meet Criteria	Met Criteria	Met Criteria	**Did Not Meet Criteria**

---

[32] See "Applicant Support Program Update, 12-March-2013,"
https://newgtlds.icann.org/en/applicants/candidate-support/sarp-results-12mar13-en.pdf
[33] See "Applicant Support Program Update, 20-March-2013,"
https://newgtlds.icann.org/en/applicants/candidate-support/sarp-results-20mar13-en.pdf

ANNEX A. Summary of Key Events in the Progress of the Joint SO/AC New gTLD Applicant Support Working Group

1 April 2010: GNSO Council approves proposal for Joint SO/AC New gTLD Applicant Support Working Group

---

10 May 2010: Adoption of WG Charter by participating SOs and ACs

Objective 1: To identify suitable criteria that new gTLD applicants must fulfill to qualify for dedicated support. The criteria may be different for different types of support identified in line with Objective 2 and 3 below.

Objective 2: To identify how the application fee can be reduced and/or subsidized to accommodate applicants that fulfill appropriate criteria to qualify for this benefit, in keeping with the principle of full cost recovery of the application process costs.

Objective 3: To identify what kinds of support (e.g. technical assistance, organizational assistance, financial assistance, fee reduction) and support timelines (e.g. support for the application period only, continuous support) are appropriate for new gTLD applicants fulfilling identified criteria.

Objective 4: To identify potential providers of the identified kinds of support as well as appropriate mechanisms to enable support provisioning.

Objective 5: To identify conditions and mechanisms required to minimize the risk of inappropriate access to support. Agreed within WG, pending GNSO Council and ALAC adoption.

---

16 June 2010: WG publishes a snapshot of its work plans and progress.

WG includes initial proposals for applicant support and a series of principles that are recommended to guide the community as the support process is finalized.

---

23 June 2010: WG presentation during ICANN38: Reducing Barriers to New gTLD Creation in Developing Regions

JAS WG provides an overview on its charter and work plan for developing applicant support program criteria. WT1 and WT2 members present initial findings and proposals. Open question and answer session with JAS WG.

---

28 October 2010: ICANN Board Resolution on New gTLD Applicant Support

ICANN Board thanked JAS WG for their work and encouraged continued community input on guidelines for implementation. Board also stressed that any applicant support program must have a sustainable funding model.

---

11 November 2010: JAS WG publishes its first Milestone Report

WG met the initial goals and milestones outlined in the May 2010 charter. WG lists additional work for consideration by the ALAC and GNSO. WG provides the following recommendations:
- Kinds of support that should be offered: cost reduction support; sponsorship and other funding support; modifications to the financial continued operation instrument obligation; logistical support; technical support for applicants in operating or qualifying to operate a gTLD; and exception to the rules requiring separation of the Registry and Registrar function.
- applicants entitled to receive support: main criterion for eligibility should be financial need.
- proposed constraints on aid: series of principle to guide the community as the support process is finalized

December 2010 - February 2011: JAS WG updates its charter

ALAC and GNSO separately develop new charters for the additional work identified in the November 2010 Milestone Report.

Common Work Items:
1. Propose criteria for financial need and a method of demonstrating that need. Financial need has been established as the primary criterion for support. The group should seek out expert advice in this area, especially given the comparative economic conditions and the cross-cultural aspects of this requirement.
2. Propose mechanisms for determining whether an application for special consideration should be granted and what sort of help should be offered;
3. Propose methods for applicants to seek out assistance from registry service providers.
4. Propose methods for applicants to seek out assistance from other top-level domain consultants, translators, and technicians, in the application for, and administration of, a new top-level domain)
5. Design mechanisms to encourage the build out of Internationalized Domain Names (IDNs) in small or underserved languages.

Items approved only by ALAC
1. Propose mechanism(s) for revenue income and other asset management to support new gTLD applicants who meet the criteria as established in objective a). This effort can include recommendations for managing any auction income, beyond costs, for future rounds and ongoing assistance;
2. Investigate the options for ICANN or third parties to facilitate or coordinate the assistance identified in ALAC item 1).
3. Investigate the options for ICANN or third parties to facilitate or coordinate the assistance identified in Common work item 4).
4. Establish methods for coordinating cooperation among qualified applicants, and assistance volunteered by third parties.
5. In cooperation with ICANN Staff and donor experts establish policies and practices for fundraising and for establishing links to possible donor agencies. This activity may include assisting in the establishment of initial relationships with any donor(s) who may be able to help in first round with funding

May 2011: WG publishes Second Milestone Report
To qualify for eligibility under this program applicants must meet all three criteria:
- Demonstrate service to the public interest, including one or more of the following characteristics,
  - Support by and/or for distinct cultural, linguistic and ethnic communities
  - Service in an under-served language
  - Operation in an emerging market or nation in a manner that provides genuine local social benefit
  - Sponsored by non-profit, civil society and non-governmental organizations in a manner consistent with the organizations' social service mission(s)
  - Operated by local entrepreneur, providing demonstrable social benefit in those geographic areas where market constraints make normal business operations more difficult
- Demonstrate financial capabilities and need
- NOT have any of the following characteristics
  - From a governmental or para-statal applicant
  - TLD string explicitly based, and related to, a trademark (i.e. a "dot brand" TLD)
  - TLD string that is, or is based on, a geographic name

- Sponsors or partners who are bankrupt or under bankruptcy protection
- Sponsors or partners who are subject of litigation or criminal investigation
- Otherwise incapable of meeting any of the Applicant Guidebook's due diligence procedures

Types of support recommended: cost reductions, staggered fees, partial refund from any auction proceeds, other forms of financial support, non-financial support from ICANN, support from third parties facilitated by ICANN, directory and referral service only for eligible applicants, and IPv6 support.

---

20 June 2011: [ICANN Board Resolution on the Approval of the New gTLD Program](#)

Board authorizes the President and CEO to implement the new gTLD program which includes the following elements:

4. **a program to ensure support for applicants from developing countries**, with a form, structure and processes to be determined by the Board in consultation with stakeholders including:
(a) consideration of the GAC recommendation for a **fee waiver** corresponding to 76 percent of the $185,000 USD evaluation fee,
(b) consideration of recommendations of the ALAC and GNSO as chartering organizations of the Joint Applicant Support (JAS) Working Group,
(c) designation of a **budget of up to $2 million USD for seed funding**, and creating opportunities for other parties to provide matching funds, and
(d) the review of additional community feedback, advice from ALAC, and recommendations from the GNSO following their receipt of a Final Report from the JAS Working Group (requested in time to allow staff to develop an implementation plan for the Board's consideration at its October 2011 meeting in Dakar, Senegal), **with the goal of having a sustainable applicant support system in place before the opening of the application window**;

---

13 September 2011: WG publishes [Final Report](#)

Timing of Support: Full array of financial and non-financial support for approved candidates should be available in the first and all subsequent rounds of new gTLD applications.

Financial Support: Application fee reduced to $47,000 from $185,000; Installment payments allowed for application fees; Relaxing or deferring of the upfront costs of the required "continuity instrument"; and Possible creation of a development fund.

Non--Financial Support: Assistance with the preparation of gTLD applications; Facilitation of IPv6 compliance; Consulting and education regarding DNSSEC implementation; Outreach and education efforts regarding the New gTLD Program; Logistical, translation and technical support; and Establishment of Registry Service Providers in regions where none or few exist.

Support Candidate Eligibility Requirements: Service to the public interest; and Both a level of financial need and of financial capability.

Support Evaluation Process (SEP)
- Should take place before the standard gTLD application review.
- Application should be evaluated by a Support Application Review Panel (SARP). The SARP should be composed of volunteers from the ICANN community and outside experts, all with knowledge of the existing new gTLD processes, potential gaming patterns and the general needs and capabilities of Support Candidates from developing economies.
- When the SARP rejects a Support Candidate, the SARP should explain its reasons. The Support Candidate may then work to improve its application and reapply for support or may apply for a gTLD without support.
- Support Candidates are still responsible for paying the USD5,000 gTLD application deposit.
- The ICANN Staff should produce a Support Candidate Guide.

24 October 2011: WG presentation during ICANN42: Developing Regions and New gTLD Program

JAS WG presents an overview of the Final Report followed by a public question and answer session. The presentation covered: terminology clarification, why support should be provided, timeline of activities, Final Report structure, Final Report highlights, and next steps.

28 October 2011: ICANN Board Resolution on Joint Applicant Support

Board receives the Final Report of the Joint Applicant Support Working Group, convenes a Board working group to implement its proposals, and directs the President and CEO to propose a detailed plan that could be discussed at a special meeting in December 2011.

8 December 2011: ICANN Board Resolution on Applicant Support

Board directs staff to finalize the implementation plan for the launch of the Applicant Support Program in January 2012, approves the fee reduction to $47,000 for Applicant Support candidates, and directs staff to amend the communications campaign to incorporate the Applicant Support Program.

11 January 2012: ICANN org publishes New gTLD Financial Assistance Handbook

Handbook provides the applications timeline for applicant support, criteria for eligibility, evaluation fees, application process, evaluation process, evaluation criteria and scoring rubrics.

ANNEX B. Mentions of Applicant Support in the New gTLD Applicant Guidebook Over Time

Version and Date	Text
Version 1 **October 2008**	No reference to possible resources for applicant support
Version 2 **February 2009**	No reference to possible resources for applicant support
Version 3 **October 2009**	No reference to possible resources for applicant support
Version 4 **May 2010**	No reference to possible resources for applicant support
Version 5 **November 2010**	**Section 1.2.10 Resources for Applicant Assistance** A variety of support resources are available to gTLD applicants. More information will be available on ICANN's website at http://www.icann.org/en/topics/new-gtldprogram.htm. *Footnote*: The Joint SO/AC New gTLD Applicant Support Working Group is currently developing recommendations for support resources that may be available to gTLD applicants. Information on these resources will be published on the ICANN website once identified.
Version 6 **April 2011**	**Section 1.2.10 Resources for Applicant Assistance** A variety of support resources are available to gTLD applicants. More information will be available on ICANN's website at http://www.icann.org/en/topics/new-gtldprogram.htm. *Footnote*: The Joint SO/AC New gTLD Applicant Support Working Group is currently developing recommendations for support resources that may be available to gTLD applicants. Information on these resources will be published on the ICANN website once identified.
Version 7 **May 2011**	**Section 1.2.10 Resources for Applicant Assistance** A variety of support resources are available to gTLD applicants. For example, ICANN may establish a means for providing financial assistance to eligible applicants, as well as providing a webpage as an informational resource for applicants seeking assistance, and organizations offering support. More information will be available on ICANN's website at http://www.icann.org/en/topics/new-gtldprogram.htm. *Footnote*: The Joint SO/AC New gTLD Applicant Support Working Group is currently developing recommendations for support resources that may be available to gTLD applicants. Information on these resources will be published on the ICANN website once identified.
Version 8 **September 2011**	**Section 1.2.10 Resources for Applicant Assistance** A variety of support resources are available to gTLD applicants. For example, ICANN is establishing a means for providing financial assistance to eligible applicants, through a process independent of this Guidebook. In

	addition, ICANN will maintain a webpage as an informational resource for applicants seeking assistance, and organizations offering support. More information will be available on ICANN's website at http://www.icann.org/en/topics/new-gtld-program.htm. *Footnote*: The Joint SO/AC New gTLD Applicant Support Working Group is currently developing recommendations for support resources that may be available to gTLD applicants. Information on these resources will be published on the ICANN website once identified.
Version 9 **January 2012**	**Section 1.2.10 Resources for Applicant Assistance** A variety of support resources are available to gTLD applicants. Financial assistance will be available to a limited number of eligible applicants. To request financial assistance, applicants must submit a separate financial assistance application in addition to the gTLD application form. To be eligible for consideration, all financial assistance applications must be received by **23:59 UTC 12 April 2012**. Financial assistance applications will be evaluated and scored against pre-established criteria. In addition, ICANN maintains a webpage as an informational resource for applicants seeking assistance, and organizations offering support. See http://newgtlds.icann.org/applicants/candidatesupport for details on these resources