23 April 2024

Dear RySG,

Thank you very much for the input received concerning new gTLD applicant decisions and milestones. We appreciate and understand that potential applicants need certain pieces of information at certain points in time to inform their planning and decision-making processes.

As you may be aware, we've been working on the detailed planning for the different workstreams and projects that cover the implementation of the New gTLD Program: Next Round. On that basis, we are pleased to share the following information in relation to each of the items that were included in the list:

RySG items	ICANN org plans to share with IRT/community by[1]	Notes / Dependencies
Cost of an application		

1. Application fees for:
  i. A TLD string using a pre-evaluated RSP.
  ii. A TLD string that includes the price of the RSP evaluation.
	June 2024	Note: There will be no difference in the gTLD application fee for a gTLD string that is using a pre-evaluated RSP or a string for which the RSP needs to be evaluated during the gTLD evaluation period. The RSP evaluation fee is separate and paid separately from the gTLD application fee.

iii. A variant of an existing TLD string or for an applied-for string and whether or not this fee will vary if the existing or applied for string is operated by the same or different entity as the current applicant	June 2024	Note: This is dependent on a decision by the ICANN Board on the EPDP IDN Phase 1 Final Report. which includes Final Recommendation 3.11: "A future applicant applying for a primary gTLD string and up to four (4) of that string's allocatable variant labels during an application round must incur the same base application fee as any other gTLD applicant who does not apply for variant labels in that round" and Final Recommendation 3.12: "Any applicant applying for more than four (4) allocatable variant labels of a primary gTLD string in an application round may incur additional fees that ICANN org considers to be proportionate to any additional costs associated with evaluating the application and consistent with the cost recovery principle."
2. The total costs for each of the other evaluations that are not		

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included in fees above, including: i. Costs of a Community Priority Evaluation ii. Costs of an extended evaluation (if any) iii. Ongoing annual registration Fees iv. Costs of an application change process (if any) v. Costs (if any) for application queuing process	Q4 2024 Q4 2024 Not within the remit of the next round Program June 2024 June 2024	
3. Refund schedule (if any)	December 2024	
4. Requirements for a COI such as a Letter of Credit	Completed (none needed)	As communicated to the IRT on 11 December 2023, ICANN org intends to discontinue the Continued Operations Instrument (COI).
5. Costs for TMCH and other vendors	August 2024	Note: The costs for the TMCH are expected to be included in the Registry Agreement (as is currently the case) which is expected to be shared with the IRT in August 2024. It is not clear what "other vendors" is referring to.
Requirements		
According to the latest information provided by the SubPro IRT, we expect the "final Applicant Guidebook" to be completed in April 2025, (1 year prior to the Window opening). The RySG believes that the following elements must also be finalized (either within the AGB itself), or published separately, but at the same time: a) The actual dates in which the Applicant Window opens and closes; including any milestones such as payment deposits, expected reveal date, opening of comment and objection periods, etc. b) The final Registry Agreement for the New gTLDs c) The final Escrow Agreement and requirements d) Final rules of Private Resolution of Contention sets / Mechanism of	 a) May 2025 b) August 2024 (draft Registry Agreement) c) August 2024 (draft Escrow Agreement) d) June 2024 (draft rules)	ICANN org can confirm that all these items are expected to be included in the AGB or published at the same time as the final Applicant Guidebook (May 2025). Note that some detailed timing may change depending on the community and Board feedback.

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last resort / timing of process and placing bids e) Any unique Registry / Registrar requirements / Code of Conduct f) Must include Background Check Requirements and all Disclosure Requirements g) Need to know what the Name Collision Mitigation Framework will look like to plan launch schedules.	e) August 2024 f) September 2024 g) Dependent on Board consideration of NCAP Final Report, once Final Report is received	
Other Important Timeline Information		
a) RSP Pre-Evaluation Program 　1. Date final requirements will be set 　2. Opening of RSP Pre-Evaluation Program Window 　3. Closing date of RSP Pre-Evaluation Program Window 　4. Dates in which results will be posted 　5. Timing of Appeals Process (if any)	1. May 2024 2. ICANN org plans to open the Pre-Evaluation Program Window on 19 November 2024 3. ICANN org plans to close the Pre-Evaluation Program Window on 20 May 2025 4. ICANN org plans to publish the list of evaluated RSPs for the first time on 9 December 2025. The list will continue to be updated as RSPs are evaluated. 5. This is dependent on the GNSO's Supplemental Recommendation on limited challenge / appeals mechanism (Topic 32, recommendations 32.1, 32.2 and 32.10) and the Board's action on it.	Note that the draft RSP Handbook has been out for public comment (see https://www.icann.org/en/public-comment/proceeding/review-of-the-draft-registry-service-provider-rsp-handbook-new-gtld-program-13-03-2024). Comments were due 22 April 2024.
b) Applicant Support Program 　1. Date final requirements will be set 　2. Opening of Applicant Support Program window	1. Depends on the public comments received, working with ASP-IRT sub-track to address comments; and	Note that some ASP Handbook dependencies relate to AGB language being finalized. For instance, New gTLD Program Eligibility, Cybersquatting History Check, and Legal Compliance

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3. Closing of Applicant Support window 4. Dates in which results will be posted / Timing for unsuccessful ASP 5. applicants to pay full application fee if they want to stay in. 6. Timing of Appeals Process (if any)	resolving ASP Handbook dependencies. Updated version of the ASP Handbook in response to public comment is scheduled for the end of May 2024. 2. Q4 2024 3. Q4 2025 4. Latest by Q1 2026; ASP applicants will receive the results of their ASP evaluation on an ongoing basis. If they apply the last date; they will know the results by Q1 2026 As indicated in the draft ASP Handbook, applicants that do not qualify for support and were not found to have gamed / abused the ASP are permitted to submit a gTLD application and pay the full fee. 5. This is dependent on the GNSO's Supplemental Recommendation on limited challenge / appeals mechanism (Topic 32, recommendations 32.1, 32.2 and 32.10) and the Board's action on it.	check. The ASP Handbook will have bracketed/placeholder text until those AGB dependencies are resolved. ASP handbook will also have bracketed/placeholder text for the following items until those dependencies are resolved: ● IDN ePDP Working Group Phase 1 decision on how many variants an applicant gets per string ● Challenge/appeal mechanism for ASP ● Decision on bid credit/multiplier based on; research outcome to be brought to ASP-IRT ● Terms & Conditions
c) Timeline after Application Window through Delegation (and everything in between) 1. Timing of Reveal Day 2. Setting of contention sets 3. Timing of date in which application queue will be known (and whether in person will be required)	For all items: May 2025	The timeline after the application submission window through delegation is expected to be included in the publication of the final AGB for public comment (May 2025) at the latest.

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4. Application Comment Period 5. Objection Period / Independent Objection / GAC Early Warnings Date 6. Release of Initial Evaluation Results 7. Extended Evaluation timing 8. Name Collision Framework / timing 9. Process / Timing of initiating the contract process / contract signature 10. Pre-delegation testing timeline 11. Delegation timing / Intersection between RZ Delegation Rate		

The New gTLD Program: Next Round Team appreciates the importance of timing and notes that it has put sufficient effort in planning the different steps that we expect are needed to allow us to get to the dates outlined in the table above. As also noted, there are some external dependencies that may impact some of these dates, such as Board decisions / direction and community input through either the IRT or Public Comment, but we commit to communicating on a regular basis the state of progress as well as any risks that may impact delivering in line with the timing noted above as well as mitigation plans put in place to address these risks (see also https://newgtlds.icann.org/sites/default/files/new-gtld-next-round-implementation-plan-31jul23-en.pdf).

We again want to express our thanks to the RySG for its feedback and remain available should you have any further questions or comments.

On behalf of the new gTLD Program Team,

Marika