



DRAFT OPERATING & FINANCIAL PLANS

FOR FY25-29 (FIVE-YEAR) AND FY25 (ONE-YEAR)

DECEMBER 2023

TABLE OF CONTENTS

LETTER FROM SVP, PLANNING & CFO

HIGHLIGHTS

INTRODUCTION

- About ICANN
- ICANN Plans
- FY25–29 Planning Assumptions

FY25–29 OPERATING PLAN

- Approach
- FY25–29 Operating Initiatives
- FY25–29 New gTLD Program: Next Round
- FY25–29 Functional Activities

FY25–29 FINANCIAL PLAN

- Approach
- FY25–29 Funding Assumptions and Projections
- FY25–29 Financial Projections

FY25 OPERATING PLAN

- Approach
- FY25 Operating Initiatives
- FY25 New gTLD Program: Next Round
- FY25 Functional Activities

FY25 BUDGET

APPENDIX



Letter from the SVP, PLANNING & CFO

The Internet Corporation for Assigned Names and Numbers (ICANN) continues to ensure fulfillment of its mission and Bylaws-mandated responsibilities by planning and allocating resources to support the community’s work, implement the Board-approved recommendations, and carry out ICANN’s ongoing activities. ICANN remains committed to accountability, transparency, fiscal responsibility, operational excellence, and continuous improvement.

Fiscal Year 2025 is the last year of ICANN’s current Adopted ICANN FY21-25 Strategic Plan. ICANN’s planning process emphasizes collaboration between the organization, Board, and community, prioritizing key activities to advance the Strategic Plan and ICANN’s mission, all while maintaining high standards of fiscal responsibility.

ICANN anticipates maintaining a stable financial position over the next five years, in the context of inflationary pressures and the challenges of slower funding growth than inflation rate. With the current economic circumstances, ICANN is increasing its focus on identifying new efficiencies and process improvements to maintain support and services while minimizing costs. This seeks to offset inflationary increases while funding is stable. This will be achieved while ensuring the Reserve Fund remains at or above its minimum target level.

ICANN developed the Five-Year Operating and Financial Plan for Fiscal Years 2025–2029 and One-Year Operating Plan and Budget for Fiscal Year 2025 using a forward-looking methodology for funding that incorporates “base” scenario funding projections. This approach aims to identify predictions about future funding conditions while utilizing a set of base assumptions that are expected to result in a realistic outcome.

ICANN's Operating Plan includes operating initiatives, which are key activities to achieve the Strategic Plan, and functional activities, which support the processes and mechanisms that permit the community to complete its work. Key activities highlighted in these plans include:

- The implementation of Specific Review Recommendations
- The New gTLD Program: Next Round implementation
- Operating Initiatives to achieve the FY21-25 Strategic Plan

Some operating initiatives in the Operating Plan also incorporate multi-year goals outlined in the blog titled "ICANN Interim President and CEO Shares Goals for Fiscal Year 2024," and these goals will be noted where applicable.

The ICANN organization deeply values the ongoing involvement of the community – both individual members and organizations – in the annual planning process. Community participation is fundamental to ICANN's public accountability, and we recognize the significant time and attention it demands. We look forward to advancing many important initiatives in FY25.

Sincerely,

Xavier Calvez

Senior Vice President, Planning and Chief Financial Officer

HIGHLIGHTS

- ▶ Read the [highlights](#) of the ICANN FY25–29 Operating and Financial Plan and ICANN FY25 Operating Plan and Budget.

INTRODUCTION

- About ICANN
- ICANN Plans
- FY25–29 Planning Assumptions

ABOUT ICANN

The Internet Corporation for Assigned Names and Numbers' (ICANN's) mission is to help ensure a stable, secure, and unified global Internet. To reach another person on the Internet, you need to type an address – a name or a number – into your computer or other device. That address must be unique so computers know where to find each other. ICANN helps coordinate and support these unique identifiers across the world. ICANN was formed in 1998 as a nonprofit public benefit corporation with a community of participants from all over the world.

ICANN's vision is to be a champion of the single, open, and globally interoperable Internet, by being the independent, trusted, multistakeholder steward of the Internet's unique identifiers, and by providing an open and collaborative environment where diverse stakeholders come together in the global public interest.

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES WITHIN ICANN

ICANN provides a service to the world through the performance of a specific set of technical jobs that play a fundamental role in maintaining the stability and security of the Internet.

ICANN community members work together through a bottom-up process to give advice, make policy recommendations, conduct reviews, and propose implementation solutions for issues that may arise that are consistent with ICANN's mission.

A fundamental responsibility of the Board of Directors is to act in the best interest of ICANN and the Internet community as a whole. It is the duty of the Board to oversee management's performance to ensure that ICANN operates with efficiency and effectiveness, in a fiscally responsible and accountable manner, and in a manner that is responsive to the needs of the global Internet community. The Board is also responsible for establishing ICANN's strategy and conducting oversight of the development of the Operating Plan.

ICANN organization (org) is the operational arm of ICANN. ICANN org:

1. Focuses staff and resources on policy development support, event management, registrars and registry operators support, community support, contractual compliance, the Internet Assigned Numbers Authority (IANA) functions, outreach and capacity development, external services for the broader community, and internal staff services.
2. Implements Board-approved community recommendations.
3. Strives for accountability through transparency, financial responsibility, operational excellence, and continuous improvement, while acting in the global public interest in an evolving global environment.

ICANN PLANS

ICANN’s planning process has three components: a Five-Year Strategic Plan, a Five-Year Operating and Financial Plan, and an annual Operating Plan and Budget. Input from ICANN constituency groups and other stakeholders, the ICANN Board of Directors, and ICANN org is key to the development of these plans, in keeping with ICANN’s multistakeholder model.

FIVE-YEAR STRATEGIC PLAN

Designed to shape ICANN’s priorities, the Five-Year Strategic Plan establishes a vision and a set of strategic objectives and goals in service of ICANN’s mission. The Strategic Plan enables ICANN to continue to fulfill its mission and meet new and continuously evolving challenges and opportunities. ICANN’s Bylaws require the preparation and adoption of a Strategic Plan every five years. The current Five-Year Strategic Plan covers fiscal years 2021 through 2025.

FIVE-YEAR OPERATING AND FINANCIAL PLAN

The Five-Year Operating and Financial Plan articulates the feasibility and timing of activities and milestones identified to achieve the Strategic Plan’s objectives and goals. It is intended to serve as an overarching view of the activities ICANN is undertaking, or will undertake, in support of the Strategic Plan, to carry out ICANN’s mission in the public interest over the next five years. ICANN’s Bylaws require the preparation and adoption of a Five-Year Operating Plan at the beginning of each fiscal year.

ANNUAL OPERATING PLAN AND BUDGET

Informed by the Five-Year Operating and Financial Plan, the Annual Operating Plan and Budget further clarifies specific activities and resources for the upcoming year. The Annual Operating Plan and Budget sets forth the focus of efforts and organizational commitments for the current fiscal year. ICANN’s Annual Operating Plan and Budget includes the IANA and Public Technical Identifiers Annual Operating Plan and Budget. ICANN’s Bylaws require the preparation and adoption of an Annual Operating Plan and Budget prior to the commencement of each fiscal year.

FY25–29 PLANNING ASSUMPTIONS

Below are the assumptions underlying the operations of ICANN, which apply to both the Five-Year and One-Year Operating Plans.

UPDATES TO THE STRATEGIC PLAN

The Five-Year Strategic Plan undergoes periodic reviews and adaptations to address evolving trends. ICANN conducts these updates by monitoring the impact of trends on the Internet ecosystem. In March and April 2023, ICANN hosted 12 sessions to identify strategic outlooks, involving 207 participants from the community, Board, and org. Feedback from those sessions, including assessment of trends, risks, opportunities, and potential impacts on ICANN, was collected and analyzed.

Based on this data, certain ongoing activities will continue to be prioritized and reflected in the FY25 Operating Plan. On 26 October 2023, the [Board resolved](#) that the FY21–25 Strategic Plan would remain in force and unchanged, with no restatement needed at this time. The details of this analysis and conclusions are documented in the [FY25 Strategic Outlook Trends Report](#).

AFFORDABILITY

Affordability is a cornerstone of the FY25–29 Operating and Financial Plan, which adopts forward-looking “base” scenario operation funding projections. However, it maintains financial flexibility beyond FY25, enabling ICANN to adapt activity and expenses to accommodate potential shifts in funding. The plan prioritizes sustaining operating expenses within or below budgeted funding levels, utilizing designated and accessible funding sources. Upholding two fundamental principles of ICANN’s long-term financial sustainability is paramount: (i) preventing operating expenses from exceeding operation funding; and (ii) ensuring the continuous maintenance of adequate reserves.

In 2018, the Board [approved](#) an eight-year strategy to replenish the Reserve Fund, striving to achieve a balance equal to at least 12 months of operating expenses based on the current year’s budget. Presently, the Reserve Fund exceeds this target, underscoring ICANN’s commitment to maintaining a balance exceeding one year of budgeted expenses.

FACE-TO-FACE MEETINGS AND ENGAGEMENT

ICANN org has chosen to solicit input for its planning and budgeting forecast processes for FY25–29 by engaging with participants at hybrid ICANN Public Meetings. This also encompasses the Board, org, and community travel aligned with the planned meetings schedule. ICANN org remains flexible and prepared to adjust and revise its operational plans in close collaboration with the Board and the community as needed.

PLANNING FOR BOARD-APPROVED ACTIVITIES

ICANN org supports community-led activities resulting in recommendations from reviews, cross-community working groups, policy development processes, and advisories. These recommendations undergo multiple stages, including initiation, development, finalization, Board assessment, implementation planning, and execution. The planning and design of expected implementation work commences once these recommendations receive Board approval and are prioritized through the community-led Planning Prioritization process.

As part of a commitment to providing a comprehensive overview of projected ICANN operations over the upcoming five years, the FY25–29 Operating and Financial Plan includes areas of work that are still under community discussion or awaiting Board consideration. For detailed information, please see [Appendix B – ICANN Rolling Five-Year Roadmap](#).

ICANN org updates the Five-Year Operating and Financial Plan annually to include the latest activities. While this plan offers a high-level roadmap of community-led activities, any implementation activities expected during the coming fiscal year are integrated into the Annual Operating Plan and Budget.

PLANNING PRIORITIZATION

ICANN is dedicated to efficiently prioritizing and allocating resources for the successful execution of Operating Initiatives and Functional Activities in the FY25–29 Operating and Financial Plan and FY25 Operating Plan and Budget.

The Planning Prioritization process represents an enhancement in the annual planning process due to the ICANN Operating Initiative. In May and June 2023, the community-led FY25 Planning Prioritization process took place resulting in a [list of prioritized activities](#) suggested by community members for consideration in Operating Plan development ([SSR2 Recommendations 5.3 and 7.5](#)). For more details, please see the [FY25 Planning Prioritization page](#) on the Planning and Finance community workspace.

This plan also includes multi-year work, including activities prioritized during the [FY23](#) and [FY24](#) community-led Planning Prioritization Process that are planned to continue.

ICANN FY25-29 OPERATING PLAN

- Approach
- FY25–29 Operating Initiatives
- FY25–29 New gTLD Program: Next Round
- FY25–29 Functional Activities

APPROACH

The FY25–29 Operating and Financial Plan includes descriptions of the major work ICANN org will undertake to fulfill ICANN’s Strategic Plan, operate the organization, and implement its mission.

Within the FY25–29 Operating and Financial Plan, ICANN org describes 11 operating initiatives and 34 functional activities for the upcoming five-year period. Each entry within this document includes background on the purpose, scope, and activities related to each major work stream, as well as a description of needed resources and considerations or risks that may impact the work.

The operating initiatives and functional activities provide what can be considered ICANN org’s statement of intention, outlining planned activities while acknowledging the challenges and dependencies that could impact ultimate delivery.

It is important for readers to consider that planning over a five-year horizon is quite different from budgeting for the next year. A five-year plan is more high-level and relies on more assumptions and fewer facts than a one-year budget does. This is simply because there is more unknown information in a longer horizon and therefore less specificity can be provided. This is particularly well illustrated by the lack of specificity that can be provided to the financial information supporting a five-year plan.

OPERATING INITIATIVES

FY25 – 29

Operating initiatives describe how ICANN will achieve the objectives and goals set out in the Five-Year Strategic Plan. The 11 operating initiatives listed below represent major areas of work that support the strategic objectives identified in the [ICANN Strategic Plan](#). Operating initiatives were published for [Public Comment](#) and presented to the ICANN Board for feedback. Two operating initiatives (noted to the right) have been completed and any ongoing activities will be incorporated into the respective functional activity.

Each operating initiative is cross-referenced against the strategic goals identified in the Strategic Plan, so readers can gain a comprehensive understanding of the strong interconnectedness of ICANN org’s work. Please refer to [Appendix A – Operating Initiatives Supporting the Strategic Plan](#) for details.

1. Support the evolution and strengthening of Root Zone Management and the Root Server System.
2. Facilitate DNS ecosystem improvements.
3. Evolve and strengthen the multistakeholder model to facilitate diverse and inclusive participation in policymaking.
4. Evolve and strengthen the ICANN community’s decision-making processes to ensure efficient and effective policymaking.
5. Evolve and improve internal and external ethics policies.
6. Promote and evolve the DNS through open and transparent processes that enable competition and open entry in Internet-related markets while ensuring the stability, security, and resiliency of the DNS.
7. Geopolitical monitoring, engagement, and mitigation.
8. Improve the depth of understanding of the domain name marketplace drivers that impact ICANN’s funding *(Completed as the key milestones have been achieved. Any additional activities will be incorporated into the GDD Accounts and Service Functional Activity)*.
9. Implement New gTLD auction proceeds recommendations as approved by the Board.
10. Planning at ICANN.
11. ICANN Reserves *(Completed as the key milestones have been achieved. Any additional activities will be incorporated into the Finance and Procurement Functional Activity)*.

1. Support the evolution and strengthening of Root Zone Management and the Root Server System.

PURPOSE

As the DNS evolves due to change in demand and new technologies, ICANN will continue to support and collaborate with key stakeholders to ensure the stable, secure, and resilient operation of the DNS root zone for the global Internet community. ICANN will coordinate the continued advancement of the technology platform used for root zone management services, in order to address increasingly complex requirements, meet higher customer expectations, and respond to new policy demands. Additionally, work will also be conducted to advance security mechanisms for the DNS root zone. This includes addressing the reliable changing of cryptographic keys through routine rollovers, and the safe implementation of new cryptographic algorithms. In governance, efforts are underway to implement a governance structure to ensure the proper accountability and management of root server operators (RSOs).

SCOPE

This initiative covers these work areas:

- **Supporting Governance Documents:** The Office of the Chief Technology Officer (OCTO) and the Policy Development Support function aid the community-based Root Server System Governance Working Group (GWG) in its implementation of two key documents: [RSSAC037](#), titled “A Proposed Governance Model for the DNS Root Server System,” and [RSSAC038](#), titled “RSSAC Advisory on a Proposed Governance Model for the DNS Root Server System.” Both documents were published on 15 June 2018.
- The OCTO team will support the eventual outcome of RSSAC037 and RSSAC038.
- **KSK Rollover Policy:** Leveraging lessons learned from the first root zone Key Signing Key (KSK) rollover, defining and publishing a long-term root zone KSK Rollover Policy. This policy will guide subsequent rollovers.
- **Enhancements to Root Zone Management:** Identify and implement features that enhance the Root Zone Management System (RZMS). These enhancements are geared toward improving operations while ensuring the accuracy, quality, and timeliness of business processes.
- **Meeting New Community Requirements:** Develop technical and operational solutions that meet new community requirements. These requirements may arise from efforts such as the New Generic Top-Level Domain (gTLD) Program: Next Round and Internationalized Domain Names (IDNs) Policy Development Processes.

HOW PROGRESS IS TRACKED

ICANN uses a combination of milestones and reports to ensure that initiatives advance. The following measures will be used over the five-year period for this initiative:

Root Server System:

- Monitor and report on the implementation of the RSS governance changes proposed in RSSAC037 and RSSAC038.
- The prototype root zone metric monitoring system was initially implemented in FY23. In the future, the Root Server System Advisory Committee (RSSAC) may ask ICANN org to undertake a comprehensive implementation, potentially evolving the metric monitoring system. Additionally, ICANN org will internally implement the system solely for research purposes. The metric, as defined within RSSAC047, aims to ensure that the root server operators maintain their respective root servers within specified thresholds.

Root Zone Management System Enhancements:

- FY25–FY26: Technical Check Warnings
 - Introduction of the capability to categorize technical check issues as either ‘warnings’ or ‘failures.’ Issues categorized as ‘warnings’ will be designed to be self-dismissed by the customer without the need for IANA staff intervention.
- FY25–FY26: Passkeys
 - Implementation of passkeys, which are based on Fast Identity Online standards. Passkeys serve as a secure and convenient alternative to passwords for logging into websites and apps across various devices. Unlike traditional passwords, passkeys offer enhanced security and resistance to phishing attempts.
- FY26–FY27: New technical checks
 - IANA will actively engage with the community to gather input regarding the evolution of technical checks, including which checks should be performed and how they should be conducted. This engagement will include a formal comment period, following which IANA will make informed decisions on the changes to be implemented.
- FY25–FY29: Audit criteria of the RZMS is updated, documented, and managed.

DNS Root Zone Operations:

- FY25–FY29: Implementation of Board-approved policy recommendations on IDNs.
- FY25–FY29: Implementation of approved policy recommendations on New gTLD Subsequent Procedures, including training of ICANN org’s Operations team.

DNSSEC:

- FY25–FY29: Review the recommendations from the Algorithm Rollover Study to be published in FY24, and coordinate implementation with the multistakeholder communities.
- Key Rollover:
 - FY25 Assuming the work to replace the current Hardware Security Modules vendor is completed in FY24, IANA will begin preparations for the second next Key Rollover.
 - FY26: Develop systems, testing solutions, and implementation plans to ensure readiness for the next key rollover.
 - FY27: Occurrence of the KSK rollover.
 - FY28–FY29: Monitor the outcome of the second rollover and plan for future rollovers based on established cadence.

RESOURCES

Effective cross-functional collaboration is an essential element for success in most of ICANN's work. Specific examples of collaboration needed for this initiative are:

- The progression of RSSAC037 and RSSAC038, such as development of a coordinated emergency response, requires collaboration between the OCTO and Policy Development Support functions.
- Awareness about the implementation plan for RSSAC037 and RSSAC038 will require collaboration with ICANN's Global Stakeholder Engagement and Government and Intergovernmental Organization (IGO) Engagement functions to reach audiences and coordinate messaging.
- OCTO will need support from ICANN's Communications team to develop tailored messaging for relevant stakeholders.
- Resources (existing or new) are required to support ICANN's efforts to preserve and enhance the security, stability, and resiliency of the DNS including RSS governance, mitigation of DNS security threats, promotion and facilitation of Domain Name System Security Extensions (DNSSEC) deployment, mitigation of name collisions, and DNS operations research.
- Staff members are assigned a percentage of their time to these initiatives, along with minor additional ad hoc resources for tasks such as security testing of the applications prior to deployments.
- Full-time equivalents within ICANN's Engineering and IT perform software development for the RZMS and OCTO provide technical subject matter expertise to the DNSSEC projects that are in scope for this initiative.
- IANA's direct and dedicated personnel lead the project, product, and operations management to RZMS enhancements as well as the activities related to DNS Root Zone Operations and DNSSEC.
- Activities support ICANN's efforts to preserve and enhance the security, stability, and resiliency of the DNS including RSS governance, mitigation of DNS security threats, promotion of DNSSEC, and Domain Metrics deployment, the mitigation of name collisions, and DNS operations research. Learn more about ICANN's overall approach in [Appendix D – ICANN Security, Stability, and Resiliency \(SSR\) of the Unique Internet Identifiers](#).

CONSIDERATIONS

The following risks and considerations exist for this initiative and may impact its advancement:

- Political considerations surrounding RSOs.
- Continued unforeseen risks surrounding future KSK rollovers.
- Assumption that FY24 projects relating to Key Rollover and Algorithm Rollover are completed.
- Ensuring the RSS continues to meet requirements as defined by the Internet community.
- Success depends heavily on the stability and commitment of engineering resources.
- The greatest risk is the possible loss of development resources that are prioritized to other objectives.
- Risk that the IANA team is unable to provide sufficient designs and requirements settings to inform development given its limited resources.
- The ICANN community's policy development efforts, including those related to the New gTLD Program: Next Round and Internationalized Domain Names, require monitoring by individuals possessing IANA expertise. This is crucial to ensure that the RZMS and its associated business processes can meet the emerging requirements stemming from those policy developments. ■

2. Facilitate the DNS ecosystem improvements.

PURPOSE

This initiative encompasses efforts to understand, document, maintain, and improve the DNS ecosystem in order to prevent emergencies and limit the impacts of any incidents or threats.

SCOPE

The scope of this initiative covers three main work areas:

• Advocate and Promote Improvements to DNS Security Infrastructure

- Advocate for DNS operators to enable DNSSEC, both signing and validation, by default.
- Advocate and support ICANN Domain Metrica, previously known as DNS-based Authentication of Named Entities (DANE) through community engagement, training, and collaboration with the technical standards communities.
- Support the community's policy discussions related to combatting DNS abuse.

• Technical Engagement and Capacity-Development

- Continue to improve and provide capacity development training on critical Internet technologies, such as DNSSEC and relevant applications like Domain Metrica, to enhance the security of the DNS ecosystem in alignment with ICANN's technical responsibilities.
- Expand ICANN's technical training footprint through new course material and virtual lab environments.
- Continue expanding training programs focused on DNS ecosystem security, with the goal of actively involving Computer Emergency Readiness Teams worldwide, providing them with enhanced training opportunities and fostering collaboration.
- Continue to work with the community to develop, enhance and promote commonly agreed norms for a secure DNS ecosystem through projects such as the Knowledge-sharing and Instantiating Norms for DNS and Naming Security ([KINDNS](#)) initiative.
- Evolve efforts to educate registry operators, registrars, and others about DNS security threats and approaches to measure, prevent, detect, and mitigate DNS security threats within their platforms.

• Research

- Continue to collect data, analyze, and publish fact-based, unbiased, objective information on how the DNS is used and abused.
- Research, report, and raise community awareness on emerging identifiers technologies and how they impact and compare with the DNS through the OCTO series of documents and other avenues of publication.
- Research the application of machine learning to improve the detection and understanding of abusive trends in DNS registrations. While the project began in FY23, it will require continued funding beyond FY25 to maintain the system's functionality.

HOW PROGRESS IS TRACKED

ICANN uses a combination of milestones and reports to ensure that initiatives advance. These measures will be used over the five-year period for this initiative:

- Establishment of community agreement regarding requirements for the DNS Security Facilitation Center. The DNS Security Facilitation Initiative (DSFI) will investigate and promote activities that engage the DNS and relevant communities. The goal is to establish and promote best practices, facilitate communications between ecosystem participants, and implement processes to effectively address threats.
 - The community-led DSFI work party has completed its assessment, and the org is undergoing a feasibility assessment of the recommendations resulting from the assessment. The implementation of approved recommendations will align with ICANN's budgeting and prioritization efforts.
- Implementation of data collection and gathering for various statistical analyses.

RESOURCES

Effective cross-functional collaboration is an essential element for success in most of ICANN's work. Specific examples of collaboration needed for this initiative are:

- Training and outreach activities require collaboration with the ICANN community as well as ICANN org functions, such as Global Stakeholder Engagement, Communications, and Government and Intergovernmental Organization (IGO) Engagement, Global Domains and Strategy and Contractual Compliance.
- Emergency preparedness efforts also support the work of teams such as Contractual Compliance.
- Activities support ICANN's efforts to preserve and enhance the security, stability, and resiliency of the DNS including RSS governance, mitigation of DNS security threats, promotion of DNSSEC and Domain Metrica deployment, mitigation of name collisions, and DNS operations research.

Learn more about ICANN's overall approach in [Appendix D – ICANN Security, Stability, and Resiliency \(SSR\) of the Unique Internet Identifiers](#).

CONSIDERATIONS

The following risks and considerations exist for this initiative and may impact its advancement:

- Care must be taken not to exceed ICANN's remit.
- Privacy considerations may impact activities.
- Lack of access to all the relevant data may impede activities.
- Key stakeholders may not agree with norms developed. ■

3. Evolve and strengthen the multistakeholder model to facilitate diverse and inclusive participation in policymaking.

PURPOSE

This initiative aims to ensure that participation in the policy development work of ICANN’s three Supporting Organizations (SOs) and policy advice developed by the four Advisory Committees (ACs) is globally representative. The work of the SOs and ACs is carried out through informed participation in the policy process by diverse stakeholders committed to reaching consensus.

SCOPE

The scope of this initiative includes these work areas:

- Continuing to support the community’s implementation of recommendations from the Cross-Community Working Group on Enhancing ICANN Accountability (CCWG-Accountability) Work Stream 2 (WS2). This includes providing support and tools to assist the SOs and ACs in periodically assessing their diversity criteria and objectives, as outlined in WS2.
- Evaluating the specific community-led initiatives identified in the [“Enhancing the Effectiveness of ICANN’s Multistakeholder Model”](#) project, including initiatives that support representation and inclusivity. This evaluation will aid the community in determining any additional actions needed to maintain inclusivity and global representation within ICANN policymaking.
- Facilitating the development of a final governance model for the RSS. This model will ensure that the system’s structures and business models align with accountability, transparency, and other key governance requirements, including principles set forth in the documents RSSAC037 and RSSAC038.
- Implementing a new Policy Development Accelerator Program designed to bridge knowledge gaps. This program will help individuals transition from ICANN’s newcomer programs to active participation in SO/AC work. It builds on a successful limited pilot project conducted in FY24.
- Conducting the Pilot Holistic Review, as directed by the ICANN Board in response to the Third Accountability and Transparency Review Team’s Recommendation 3.5. The review will focus on four primary objectives, including assessing collaboration mechanisms, accountability, the structure and purpose of SOs and ACs, and continuous improvement efforts. The community prioritized the Pilot Holistic Review during the FY22 Planning Prioritization Framework exercise. Subject to community support for the Revised Pilot Holistic Review Terms of Reference, the Pilot Holistic Review is anticipated to begin in FY25 and last into FY26.
 - Once the Pilot Holistic Review concludes, the ICANN Board and community will determine whether the pilot was successful and whether the Holistic Review should be added into the Bylaws. The process for Board-initiated Bylaws amendments starts with a Public Comment proceeding on any proposed amendments.

HOW PROGRESS IS TRACKED

ICANN org uses a combination of milestones and reports to ensure that initiatives advance. These measures are examples of those that will be used over the five-year period for this initiative:

- Metrics related to diversity and global representation in membership and participation in SOs, ACs, and Generic Names Supporting Organization (GNSO) Stakeholder Groups and Constituencies.
- Number of CCWG-Accountability WS2 recommendations that are implemented over the Plan timeframe.
- Metrics and trends related to Public Comment proceedings and ICANN Public Meetings (including ICANN Prep Week) to track stakeholder participation in policy activities.
- For Pilot Holistic Review, the progress will be tracked via a Fact Sheet, based on a project plan developed from the community supported Terms of Reference.

RESOURCES

Effective cross-functional collaboration is an essential element for success in most of ICANN's work. Specific examples of collaboration needed for this initiative are:

- In addition to the Policy Development Support function, ICANN's Communications, Language Services, Meetings, Meetings Technical Services, and Engineering and IT functions each provide services that ensure diverse, global, and inclusive participation in community-driven policy making.
- ICANN's Policy Development Support function also collaborates with the Global Domains and Strategy, Policy Research, Government and IGO Engagement, and Global Stakeholder Engagement teams to reach targeted audiences and facilitate informed stakeholder participation in policy development and advice work.

CONSIDERATIONS

Risks and considerations exist for this initiative and may impact its advancement:

- ICANN org's resource planning needs to be aligned with Board and community expectations, including the ability to staff and support all the work that is underway or planned. Collaboration with the community on prioritization and the deployment of new project and program management tools to assist with community workload management and planning will continue to be key.
- Informed and effective participation in increasingly complex policy work requires newer community members to be knowledgeable about ICANN processes and historical background, and veteran community members to adjust to new tools and collaborative working methods.
- The need for participants in the policy process to have expertise and experience on legally or technically complex problems could result in less diverse participation.
- With the return to hybrid meetings, there has been a noted impact from COVID-19 on stakeholder participation in technical and policy discussions, particularly for newcomers.
- In connection with the Pilot Holistic Review, the progress of work is dependent on community support for the Terms of Reference (Public Comment proceeding to be held in the first half of FY24). ■

4. Evolve and strengthen the ICANN community’s decision-making processes to ensure efficient and effective policymaking.

PURPOSE

This initiative is intended to ensure that process improvements adopted by ICANN’s three SOs and four ACs enable the development of efficient and effective consensus policies and community advice.

SCOPE

The scope of this initiative includes these work areas:

- Periodic review by community groups of their internal procedures to address challenges and gaps and improve consensus-based decision-making.
- Development and deployment of uniform project and program management tools to assist SOs and ACs with planning, managing and tracking their work.
- Continuing migration to the Community Engagement System (CES) to enable consistent and accurate tracking and reporting of stakeholder participation in policy processes and their outcomes. This operating initiative work area is also included as a multi-year goal in the blog titled [“ICANN Interim President and CEO Shares Goals for Fiscal Year 2024” as CEO Goal 1](#).

HOW PROGRESS IS TRACKED

ICANN org employs milestones, reports, and specific metrics to drive the advancement of initiatives. For this initiative, progress is tracked using the following indicators:

- Utilization of project and program management tools to oversee policy work, including documentation of policy working groups’ responses to Public Comment proceedings and the reporting of milestones and timelines.
- Membership management and reporting via the CES to track policy outcomes and decisions.

RESOURCES

Effective cross-functional collaboration is an essential element for success in most of ICANN org’s work. Specific examples of collaboration and support needed for this initiative are:

- Adoption and support of uniform project and program management tools to better track and manage community-driven projects and activities.
- Implementation of CES to allow for accurate, timely reporting and more efficient management of community work.
- Continued engagement to ensure that expectations are realistic and aligned across the Board, org, and community as to workload, resources available, and prioritization.

CONSIDERATIONS

The following risks and considerations exist for this initiative and may impact its advancement:

- Effective planning, management, and prioritization of their work by community groups remains a challenge even as workload remains high and new projects are planned to address policy issues identified as important or urgent.
- Increasing complexity of policy issues and diversity of stakeholder views and interests mean that significant time and effort is required to define the issue and understand multiple viewpoints to reach consensus, thereby impacting project timelines and decision-making.
- Reliance on virtual meeting tools and other collaborative mechanisms means that ICANN org must constantly evaluate improvements to existing tools and new options as well as improve and expand its support for the tools necessary to support community work.
- Identifying appropriate sources for factual data and collecting that data across different formats can be challenging, which can result in data-driven policy work being difficult and time-consuming. Decisions may be made based on anecdotal rather than comprehensive factual evidence. ■

5. Evolve and improve internal and external ethics policies.

PURPOSE

This Operating Initiative aims to enhance and refine ICANN's internal and external ethics policies, guiding behavior for both ICANN org and the community. The internal Ethics Policy will offer additional guidance for ICANN staff, fostering greater transparency and strengthening the community's confidence in staff conduct.

The ICANN Community Ethics Policy will provide transparency and guidance regarding how members of the ICANN community should approach their ICANN-related work and interact with one another.

SCOPE

The scope of this initiative covers these work areas:

- Assess, improve, and implement an internal ICANN org Ethics Policy.
- Assess, develop, and support an ICANN Community Ethics Policy.

HOW PROGRESS IS TRACKED

ICANN org uses a combination of milestones and reports to ensure that initiatives advance. The following steps will be taken over the five-year period for this initiative:

- Improve and implement org Ethics Policies to provide additional guidance and direction for FY25–29.
 - Assess and improve existing related policies and procedures by FY25 Q1.
 - Develop an ICANN org survey by FY25 Q3.
 - Create performance evaluation criteria for ICANN org leadership related to the internal ICANN org Ethics Policy by FY26 Q2.
 - Evolve existing related policies and procedures to align with the internal ICANN org Ethics Policy by FY26 Q2.
 - Formulate a communications plan to enhance awareness and compliance within ICANN org by FY26 Q3.
 - Formalize the ICANN org Ethics Policy and determine formal oversight, either via Executive Oversight or the establishment of an Ethics function within new or existing org function by FY27 Q1.
 - Implement compliance training for ICANN org leadership and ICANN Community leadership by FY27 Q1.
 - Ongoing implementation of the Ethics Policies and performance reviews within ICANN org, utilizing related performance evaluation criteria by FY27 Q1.
- Collaborate with the ICANN community to develop the ICANN Community Ethics Policy for FY25–29.

RESOURCES

Effective cross-functional collaboration is an essential element for success in most of ICANN’s work. Specific examples of collaboration needed for this initiative are:

- The Legal team leads this initiative and coordinates with Human Resources, Policy Development Support, and Communications.
- Collaboration with ICANN’s Engineering and IT function to help with tracking mechanisms.

CONSIDERATIONS

Please note that the above timelines span a two-year timeframe. Depending on organizational and community priorities, the timeline may shift to later within the ICANN FY25–29 (Five-Year) Operating and Financial Plan period.

The primary risks that may impact this initiative’s advancement are a lack of internal and external awareness of the work and a resulting lack of buy-in to the effort. ■

6. Promote and evolve the DNS through open and transparent processes that enable competition and open entry in Internet-related markets while ensuring the stability, security, and resiliency of the DNS.

PURPOSE

This initiative encompasses ICANN’s efforts to foster a competitive environment in the DNS marketplace. It includes key projects and ongoing activities, such as enhancing services for gTLD registry operators and ICANN-accredited registrars to facilitate compliance with their agreements and community-developed consensus policies. Additionally, the initiative involves the implementation of ICANN Board-approved GNSO consensus policy recommendations, conducting research and analysis to gain a deeper understanding of the DNS ecosystem, and sharing this valuable information with the community through data and research papers.

This initiative plays a key role in building and promoting a multilingual Internet. It incorporates efforts aimed at ensuring the Universal Acceptance (UA) of domain names and email addresses. UA is a vital element in expanding global consumer choice and facilitating broader access for users worldwide. It also supports the continued evolution of the DNS.

The UA efforts require coordination across all levels of the Internet ecosystem. This involves strengthening and enhancing ICANN’s capacity for strategy and engagement. Additionally, it entails providing support to the ICANN community on both technical and policy fronts, as well as reaching out to new stakeholders.

This initiative monitors project work in anticipation of the launch of the New gTLD Program: Next Round. It does so by adhering to Board-approved community-developed policy recommendations for future rounds and by leveraging insights gained from the implementation of the 2012 round and subsequent reviews assessing various aspects of the program. ICANN org has published an [Implementation Plan](#) for the next gTLD application round, and is working to implement the approved recommendations.

SCOPE

The scope of this initiative covers these work areas:

- Implementation of community-developed recommendations, approved and directed by the Board, relating to gTLD registry operators and ICANN-accredited registrars. This operating initiative work area is also included as a multi-year goal in the blog titled [“ICANN Interim President and CEO Shares Goals for Fiscal Year 2024” as CEO Goal 11](#), published in September 2023.
- Production of the Domain Name Marketplace Indicators and other supporting analysis. Planning and implementation of an operational infrastructure (systems, processes, and people) to support the ongoing operations of the New gTLD Program.
- Execution of capacity development, outreach and engagement, and global communications and awareness plans for the New gTLD Program.
- Outreach to providers of standards, programming languages, tools, and platforms to support UA.
- Raising the awareness and capacity of software application developers to develop or update applications to be UA-ready.
- Raising the awareness and capacity of email tools and service providers to support Email Address Internationalization.
- Raising awareness in the technical community and public sector for them to adopt UA readiness in their practices and tendering processes respectively.
- Updating ICANN org’s relevant technical systems to be UA-ready.

HOW PROGRESS IS TRACKED

Tracking and status information for implementation of Board-approved GNSO policy recommendations is published and regularly updated on the Consensus Policy Implementation Framework page.

The Board has directed the organization to provide updates on the implementation of the work toward a future gTLD application round, at a minimum, two weeks before each ICANN Public Meeting. The org has also created a dedicated webpage for activities related to future rounds.

Data relating to domain name marketplace indicators, registry reporting, and other areas is available via the [Open Data Initiative](#).

Specific measures on UA progress are tracked via regular reporting and documentation covering:

- The extent of remediation of underlying technology, e.g., programming languages, email tools, etc.
- The extent of deployment of UA-ready systems, e.g., websites, email servers, and other applications.
- The extent of training for technical stakeholders on developing and deploying UA-ready software.
- The amount of outreach for creating public sector awareness of making government and citizen-focused services UA-ready.

RESOURCES

The work related to this initiative is generally conducted by teams within the org, for which resources are allocated according to specific project timing and needs. This initiative requires significant cross-functional collaboration and support from functions including Legal, Communications, Global Stakeholder Engagement, Human Resources, Finance, Global Domains and Strategy, OCTO, IANA, and Engineering and IT.

Following the recommendations of the SubPro PDP Working Group, it is anticipated that the operation of future gTLD application rounds will continue to adhere to the principle of cost recovery. This means that funding for the necessary preparatory and development expenses, including future processing fees, will be sourced from fees paid by applicants. The implementation efforts for the next round are currently funded by existing sources, including remaining funds from the 2012 application round, until application fees are collected.

The successful execution of this initiative also requires significant support from ICANN community resources.

Specific examples of collaboration needed as part of this initiative are:

- The ICANN community, particularly the At-Large Advisory Committee (ALAC) and Governmental Advisory Committee (GAC), and ICANN org functions including Communications, Technical Engagement, Global Stakeholder Engagement, and Government and Intergovernmental Organization Engagement, will need to help raise awareness of UA.
- Support is also needed for the Universal Acceptance Steering Group and other community-based working groups addressing UA at a global level as well as for local initiatives focusing on specific geographies.
- Volunteer Implementation Review Team(s) assist the org in implementing new policy recommendations.

CONSIDERATIONS

The following risks and considerations exist for this initiative and may impact its advancement:

- Given the scale of the implementation work of developing a new gTLD application round, advance planning and preparation are essential to ensure successful implementation.
- Planning for a new round requires an upfront commitment to design and build the operational infrastructure (people, processes, and systems) without precise knowledge of, or insight into, the volume of applications in the next and future rounds. Determining the scope and level of investment is based on certain working assumptions, as detailed in the Implementation Plan.
- Efforts to increase UA readiness include globally reaching and activating stakeholders beyond the conventional ICANN community that may have different priorities.
- Raising awareness of the need to incorporate UA as a mainstream design consideration for private and public sector technical systems may require considerable effort and time. ■

7. Geopolitical monitoring, engagement, and mitigation.

PURPOSE

Governments and Intergovernmental Organizations (IGOs) are increasingly formulating policies, legislation, and regulations that may potentially exert indirect or direct influence over the Internet. Some of these actions also potentially may impact ICANN's ability to develop policies, run its operations, and fulfill its mission. To address these issues and to ensure a single, globally interoperable Internet, ICANN identifies where these discussions and initiatives are taking place and determines whether, when, and how the ICANN organization should engage. Several components of this operating initiative have been successfully completed and continue as part of ongoing functional activities. In addition, there are components of this operating initiative that are ongoing during FY25.

ICANN's role in this initiative encompasses recognizing, tracking, and informing the community about global geopolitical legislative and regulatory changes that may affect ICANN's ability to fulfill its mission. This includes analyzing the legal and technical impacts of proposed policy, regulatory, or legislative initiatives. The nature of engagements can include technical training, targeted briefings, or providing additional protocol information to governments to help ensure that lawmakers have the full benefit of ICANN's technical expertise.

The Government and IGO Engagement (GE) team at ICANN takes a strategic approach to prioritizing and targeting its engagement activities, guided by their identification of emerging trends and continuous monitoring of governmental initiatives. Through targeted engagement, ICANN org focuses on two areas: working with governments and IGOs engaged with ICANN org and the policy development process through ICANN's Governmental Advisory Committee (GAC), and more broadly, working with governments and IGOs on issues beyond those being addressed through an ICANN policy development process.

SCOPE

The scope of this initiative covered the following work areas:

- Strengthening existing relationships and identifying new actors as an ongoing activity. In conjunction with legislative and regulatory tracking, this will give ICANN another layer of insight and help to prioritize targeted engagement. This includes an ongoing review of alliances based on emerging issues or changes in the focus of other organizations.
- Developing an approach to align engagement through face-to-face and virtual gatherings for organizations and actors within the global Internet ecosystem that are relevant to ICANN's remit.
- Identifying new opportunities for informing global Internet processes and discussion of issues.
- Participating in targeted policy and technical Internet governance briefings, forums, webinars, and events.
- Creating targeted information and capacity-development materials to better equip government stakeholders around the world, enabling them to become more knowledgeable, and, therefore, more active participants in ICANN's policymaking processes.
- Assessing expectations of government participants in capacity-development activities to identify needs.
- Assessing the scope of global events and processes relevant to ICANN on topics such as cybersecurity and the unique identifiers.

The scope of this initiative covers the following ongoing work areas:

- ICANN will develop and implement a communications and engagement strategy to address the World Summit on the

Information Society (WSIS)+20 process and ancillary events in the lead up to 2025. This Operating Initiative work area is also included as a multi-year goal in the blog titled [“ICANN Interim President and CEO Shares Goals for Fiscal Year 2024” as CEO Goal 6](#), published in September 2023.

HOW PROGRESS IS TRACKED

ICANN org uses a combination of milestones and reports to ensure that initiatives advance. All work areas in this initiative apart from WSIS+20 now form part of ongoing functional activities. The following milestones will be used to track the WSIS +20 review project:

- △ Develop and implement a strategy for a campaign to address the WSIS+20 review process and ancillary IGO events in the lead-up to 2025.
- △ Develop a WSIS+20 calendar of events to monitor for issues that touch on ICANN’s mission. This will be a living document, updated as needed.
- △ Follow and participate (wherever possible) in relevant discussions on WSIS+20 review, including the International Telecommunication Union (ITU) WSIS Forum, Commission on Science and Technology for Development, ITU Council Working Groups, the Global Digital Compact (GDC), the U.N. Summit of the Future, Annual Internet Governance Forums (IGF), and National and Regional Initiatives.
- △ Identify WSIS+20 issues that have the potential to impact ICANN’s mission and the Internet. Inform and coordinate with other relevant organizations on positions stated by governments and other stakeholders in various global forums. Propose common actions and/or responses and build coalitions with these organizations whenever possible to illustrate collaboration with the shared goal of supporting the technical underpinnings of the Internet.
- △ Conduct targeted engagement with countries active in the GDC and the WSIS+20 processes to explain the risk of unintended consequences and important issues that have an impact on ICANN’s mission. Update the community through regular geopolitical plenaries at ICANN Public Meetings, as well as through publications. Raise awareness within the appropriate governmental offices in those countries (as well as in their respective Permanent Missions to the U.N.) that can be supportive of the multistakeholder model of global Internet governance.
- △ Conduct regional outreach engagement with the targeted ministries within the governments (Ministries of Foreign Affairs). Meetings with relevant IGO officials from Ministries of Foreign Affairs in each geographic region – a minimum of three per quarter or as necessary.
- △ Publish materials addressing information gaps among the targeted audiences or to mitigate misinformation. At least one such publication per quarter, or as needed. Leverage speaking events and media opportunities where ICANN org or Board members are present.
- △ Participate in telling the story about the benefits of, and ICANN’s role in, the existence and maintenance of a single, globally interoperable Internet.
- △ Provide the Board with updates on the WSIS+20 Review Process, as needed.
- △ Organize briefings for diplomats from the Permanent Missions to the United Nations in New York and in Geneva on issues related to the WSIS+20.

The following milestones now form part of ongoing functional activities:

- Publish reports on government-related activity such as ICANN-led briefings and capacity-development events for diplomats from the Permanent Missions to the U.N., as well as other U.N. agencies or other IGOs.

- Work in conjunction with local government hosts and GAC members to deliver periodic High-Level Governmental meetings.
- Develop reports and statistics on participation in outreach, technical briefings, and capacity-development sessions for the GAC as well as through collaboration with other organizations in the ecosystem.
- Conduct comparison of before and after GAC capacity-development event surveys to measure delivery of information against expectations and knowledge gained.
- Provide contributions to open consultations over legislative, regulatory, policy or standards initiatives and technical briefings to policymakers. These contributions will be published on the Government Engagement page.
- Review existing Memorandums of Understanding for continuing alignment with goals.
- Track data on the number of countries and IGOs represented in the GAC as well as the number of countries and IGOs actively participating in the GAC and ICANN policy development processes.
- Provide geopolitical initiatives tracking updates and briefings through geopolitical plenaries at each ICANN Public Meeting.
- Publish reports on legislative or regulatory events with the potential to touch on ICANN’s mission.
- Conduct technical assessments or use cases on the potential impact of various legislative or policy initiatives as needed.

RESOURCES

The successful execution of the activities under this operating initiative necessitates concerted effort and collaboration among many of the functions within ICANN org. Each function plays a crucial role in contributing skills, time, and capabilities to the overall initiative. Some of these resources include engagement and outreach, communications, legal and technical analyses, and coordination with the community.

CONSIDERATIONS

There are numerous risks and considerations that exist for the ongoing functional activities:

- Increased resources may be required to cover multilateral negotiations (taking into account all the problems related to participation) with additional technical resources for engagement with all relevant stakeholders.
- Possibility of forging an alliance with an organization that takes the contrary position to ICANN’s position on a common issue.
- Need to allocate adequate resources to sufficiently monitor WSIS+20 events and trends.
- Ensuring broad and informed participation across the GAC that reflects the functional, geographic, and cultural diversity of the Internet in order to mitigate against overrepresentation by any single interest.
- Need for resources to monitor and compare information across various venues to detect “weak signals” early enough to identify trends and evaluate actions to address possible challenges. In certain cases, deliberations on issues related to ICANN’s mission take place in multilateral settings behind closed doors without much, if any, information being released publicly. Political judgment is crucial in determining when to move from monitoring to active engagement efforts to address proposed regulatory, legislative, or policy initiatives.
- Capacity constraints limiting ability to provide briefings, technical training, and other engagement efforts in some governmental or IGO bodies. ■

8. Improve the depth of understanding of the domain name marketplace drivers that impact ICANN's funding.

This operating initiative has been successfully completed. Several activities will continue as part of ongoing functional activities.

PURPOSE

The domain name marketplace has evolved and matured following the 2012 round of the New gTLD Program. ICANN org has analyzed its funding model within the context of this evolving marketplace, reviewing key market enablers and challenges that impact ICANN's funding. ICANN has effectively used these inputs to establish a solid foundation for funding projections. This initiative has successfully integrated those activities.

SCOPE

The scope of this initiative covered these work areas:

- Further enriched the quality of feedback received from the market participants.
- Reviewed and analyzed the trends and driving forces of the domain name industry marketplace that impact ICANN's funding.
- Validated and improved forecasting accuracy through review of other data sets that could provide predictive value for funding projections.

ACTIVITIES ACHIEVED

As of this year, the milestones that were in use over the past five years for this initiative have either been successfully achieved or transitioned into standard and continuous operational activities. The following have been completed or integrated into ongoing functional activities:

- Firmly integrated market intelligence collection and review as part of the process to develop and update ICANN's funding projections.
- Annually delivered funding assumptions and projections for the next five fiscal years.
- Continued enhancement of the funding model, leveraging high-value data sets as required, in relation to the forecasting process.

RESOURCES

Effective cross-functional collaboration is an essential element for success in most of ICANN org’s work. Collaboration from other functions below were pivotal in the achievement of the Operating Initiative:

- The skills of ICANN’s Global Domains and Strategy, Finance (and the Economist), OCTO, and Global Stakeholder Engagement functions collected and contextualized market intelligence and various data sets deemed relevant to the funding forecast process. They will be funded by the auction proceeds.

CONSIDERATIONS

There are numerous risks and considerations that exist for the ongoing functional activities. It is not clear how marketplace evolution and threats to the DNS might impact ICANN’s funding model. ICANN must continue to expand its understanding and knowledge of the potential impact these may have on future funding. ■

9. Implement New gTLD auction proceeds recommendations as approved by the Board.

PURPOSE

This initiative relates to the implementation of the Board-approved recommendations arising from the Cross-Community Working Group on New gTLD Auction Proceeds (CCWG-AP).

SCOPE

The scope of this initiative covers these work areas:

- ICANN will complete the implementation of the Board-approved CCWG-AP recommendations and launch the ICANN Grant Program, through which the auction proceeds will be disbursed to eligible applicants and projects. This operating initiative work area is also included as a multi-year goal in the blog titled [“ICANN Interim President and CEO Shares Goals for Fiscal Year 2024” as CEO Goal 5](#), published in September 2023.
- ICANN will evaluate the first grant cycle, after cycle completion to assess its effectiveness and whether implementation has been in line with the CCWG-AP recommendations.

HOW PROGRESS IS TRACKED

Work within this initiative will happen in stages. The specific milestones guiding next steps are:

- Launch of the first grant cycle (FY24).
- Internal evaluation of the first grant cycle and preparation of subsequent cycles (FY25–29).
- External evaluation of the first three cycles (FY25–29).

RESOURCES

Effective cross-functional collaboration is an essential element for success in most of ICANN org’s work. To ensure the success of this initiative and of the Grant Program:

- Subject matter experts within ICANN will closely collaborate to define and design the work in specific areas, including administrative and procedural aspects, communications, legal matters, and technical aspects.
- The costs of the implementation plan will be determined based on the final recommendations approved by the Board. These costs will be covered by the proceeds generated from the auction.
- An in-depth resource assessment will be carried out, taking into account the implementation design of the recommendations. This assessment aims to more accurately determine the estimated workload, required skills, and whether there is a need for potential new hires.
- As implementation progresses, the auction proceeds will fund any resource supporting this work.

Resources for this initiative are included within the functional activities of the financial plan core budget and therefore, no incremental resources are needed. As implementation progresses, dedicated resources might be added. They will be funded by the auction proceeds.

CONSIDERATIONS

This work relies on elements and dependencies that might be identified during the implementation phase. ■

10. Planning at ICANN.

PURPOSE

Careful planning of ICANN activities helps safeguard ICANN's long-term operational and financial sustainability while ensuring that ICANN org is accountable to the public in its stewardship of ICANN's mission. This initiative defines and implements improvements to the planning process over the duration of the ICANN Strategic Plan for fiscal years 2021–2025.

SCOPE

- In FY23 (April–June 2023), ICANN introduced enhancements to the FY25 planning process. These enhancements included integrating the planning prioritization step into the annual planning process. This integration resulted from the pilot prioritization phase (pre-development of the draft plans), which is described and measured under the Planning Functional Activity.
- The Planning Prioritization Group consists of community members nominated by SO and AC leadership. They provide input to ICANN org regarding the prioritization of activities considered during the creation of the annual Operating Plan and Budget.
- Further improvements to the planning process are anticipated in FY24 and FY25, with the aim of establishing a framework for measuring progress. This framework is slated to be completed by the end of FY25 and will be used to assess how well ICANN is achieving the strategic objectives and goals outlined in the [Adopted FY21–25 Strategic Plan](#). This effort will also involve enhancing the mechanisms for reporting progress against the Operating Plan and Strategic Plan.

HOW PROGRESS IS TRACKED

ICANN uses a combination of milestones and reports to ensure that initiatives advance. For this initiative these include:

- Evolution of ICANN's planning processes, including integration of the strategic outlook and strategic planning processes into an overall rolling planning process. This milestone was completed in FY21.
- Planning Prioritization Framework:
 - During the planning process for the FY25 Operating Plan and Budget, the planning prioritization framework was implemented.
- Progress Reporting Framework:
 - In FY24, ICANN will continue to analyze and identify gaps in the current progress reporting mechanisms, and then design a framework to evolve the progress reporting mechanisms. Engage with the Board and community on the proposed framework
 - In FY25, develop and deliver a progress reporting framework.
 - Following FY25, implement the progress reporting framework to monitor achievement toward the strategic objectives and goals set forth in the adopted FY21–25 Strategic Plan.

RESOURCES

Resources for the planning prioritization framework are included within the planned functional activities and continuing operations budget. No incremental resources are needed. Additional resources for the progress reporting framework are required and will be drawn from available funds.

CONSIDERATIONS

The following risks and considerations exist for this initiative and may impact its advancement:

- Newer community members need time to get used to ICANN's planning process and may not fully engage in webinars, consultations, and Public Comment proceedings on these initiatives. ■

11. ICANN Reserves.

This operating initiative has been successfully completed. Several activities will continue as part of ongoing functional activities.

PURPOSE

To safeguard ICANN's long-term financial sustainability and ensure that ICANN org is accountable to the public in its stewardship of ICANN's mission, the level of ICANN reserves must be continuously set, reached, and maintained, consistent with the complexity and risks of ICANN's environment.

SCOPE

The scope of this initiative covered these work areas:

- Ensured implementation of the October 2018 Board resolution to replenish the Reserve Fund to an amount equal to one year of operating expenses as the minimum target level of the Reserve Fund.
- Maintained minimum target level of the Reserve Fund as operating expenses changed.

ACTIVITIES ACHIEVED

The following have been completed and now form part of ongoing Functional Activities:

- ICANN has made \$55M in contributions to the Reserve Fund since the Board approved the replenishment strategy in October 2018. Since then, the initiative consists of closely and continuously monitoring the Reserve Fund level to ensure continued compliance with policy.
- FY23 year-end balance of \$170M is slightly higher than 12 months of budgeted operating expenses.
- Future allocations to the Reserve Fund may occur, leading to further strengthening of ICANN's financial sustainability.

RESOURCES

Resources for this initiative are included within the functional activities of the financial plan core budget and therefore no incremental resources are needed.

CONSIDERATIONS

There are numerous following risks and considerations that exist for the ongoing functional activities:

- The stability of ICANN's funding.
- No events requiring Board-approved withdrawals from the Reserve Fund during the period.
- The stability of the minimum target level for the Reserve Fund. ■

FY25–29 NEW gTLD PROGRAM: NEXT ROUND

INTRODUCTION

The ICANN Board requested that ICANN org deliver an implementation plan for the New gTLD Program: Next Round, a community-driven initiative enabling the continued expansion of the DNS no later than 1 August 2023. In July 2023, ICANN org published an [Implementation Plan](#) for the next gTLD application round, and is currently working to implement the approved recommendations.

This project covers work in anticipation of the launch of new application rounds for new gTLDs. It adheres to community-developed policy recommendations for future rounds and leverages insights gained from the implementation of the 2012 round of the New gTLD Program and subsequent reviews that assessed various aspects of the program.

The Implementation plan contains a work plan that includes relevant information for infrastructure development, timelines, and anticipated resource requirements for implementation of the New gTLD Program: Next Round. Execution of the Implementation Plan has and will continue to require significant org resources to develop and construct the essential program infrastructure including IT systems, operational processes, and applicant procedures to ensure the successful launch and operate the New gTLD Program: Next Round. Per community recommendations, the New gTLD Program is run on a cost-recovery basis. ICANN org maintains a separate budget to manage the funds that support the program work.

SCOPE

The scope of this initiative covers the below work areas leading to the planned application submission period in Q2 2026, and planned support for the operation of the round will follow this period.

- Deliver to the Board an overall framework that includes an implementation plan for the [New gTLD Program: Next Round](#) and a pathway to opening the application round. The ICANN organization delivered the [implementation plan](#) to the Board in July and will update the Board on the progress of the program. This project is also included as a multi-year goal in the blog titled [“ICANN Interim President and CEO Shares Goals for Fiscal Year 2024” as CEO Goal 11](#).
- Planning and implementation of an operational infrastructure (systems, processes, and people) to support the ongoing operations of the New gTLD Program: Next Round.
- Development and execution of capacity development, outreach and engagement, and global communications and awareness plans for future gTLD application rounds.

HOW PROGRESS IS TRACKED

The Board has directed the organization to provide updates on the implementation of the work toward a future gTLD application round, at a minimum, two weeks before each ICANN public meeting. The org has also created a dedicated [webpage](#) for activities related to future rounds.

RESOURCES

The work related to this project is generally conducted by staff teams within the org, for which resources are allocated according to specific project timing and needs. This project requires significant cross-functional collaboration and support from teams including Legal, Communications, Global Stakeholder Engagement, Human Resources, Finance, Global Domains and Strategy, Office of the Chief Technology Officer, Internet Assigned Numbers Authority, and Engineering and IT.

Following the recommendations of the SubPro Policy Development Process Working Group, it is anticipated that the operation of future gTLD application rounds will continue to adhere to the principle of cost recovery. This means that funding for the necessary preparatory and development expenses, including future processing fees, will be sourced from applicant fees paid by applicants. The implementation efforts for the next round are currently funded by existing sources, including remaining funds from the 2012 application round, until application fees are collected.

CONSIDERATIONS

The following risks and considerations exist for this initiative and may impact its advancement:

- Given the scale of the work involved in developing a new application round for new gTLDs, advance planning and preparation are essential to ensure successful implementation. The commencement of such planning and preparatory work is dependent on Board action on community-developed recommendations.
- Planning for a new round requires an upfront commitment to design and build the operational infrastructure (people, processes, and systems) without precise knowledge of, nor insight into, the volume of applications in the next and future rounds. Determining the scope and level of investment is based on certain working assumptions, as detailed in the Implementation Plan.
- The implementation plan identifies a number of dependencies which carry a risk that if they are not resolved by the prescribed time, it could extend the overall implementation timeline. ICANN org has also noted some operational and strategic dependencies for the first delegation of gTLDs in the next round, such as updates to the systems required to support registry operators (e.g., Service Level Agreement Monitoring). ■

FUNCTIONAL ACTIVITIES

FY25–29

Functional activities are those necessary to operate the organization, such as Human Resources or Finance, or implement ICANN’s mission, such as Contractual Compliance or the IANA function. These 34 functional activities describe ICANN’s continuing operations for the period of FY25–29.

The 34 functional activities have been placed into five service groups:

- Technical and Domain Name System (DNS) Security
- Policy Development and Implementation Support
- Community Engagement and Services
- ICANN Org Governance
- ICANN Org Shared Services

These service groups were selected because they represent the broad categories of work that ICANN org conducts in fulfillment of its mission. The five service groups express the functional activities at a high level.

The draft FY25–29 Operating Plan updates the FY24–28 Operating Plan and continues to demonstrate how ICANN org implements its current Strategic Plan. Many of ICANN org’s functional activities are in place to implement its mission or conduct ongoing activities. Any new activities or strategic changes to existing ones are marked with a delta (Δ).

FIVE SERVICE GROUPS:

TECHNICAL & DNS SECURITY

POLICY DEVELOPMENT & IMPLEMENTATION SUPPORT

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT & SERVICES

ICANN ORG GOVERNANCE

ICANN ORG SHARED SERVICES

FUNCTIONAL ACTIVITIES

FY25-29

TECHNICAL & DNS SECURITY

- Office of the Chief Technology Officer
- ICANN Managed Root Server
- Internationalized Domain Names and Universal Acceptance
- IANA Functions
- Contractual Compliance

TECHNICAL & DNS SECURITY

Office of the Chief Technology Officer

PURPOSE

ICANN org's Office of the Chief Technology Officer (OCTO) aims to constantly improve knowledge about the identifiers that ICANN helps coordinate, to disseminate this information to the Internet community, to improve the technical operation of the Internet's system of unique identifiers, and to improve ICANN's technological stature.

OPERATING INITIATIVE CONTRIBUTIONS

- Lead: Support the evolution and strengthening of Root Zone Management and the Root Server System.
- Lead: Facilitate DNS ecosystem improvements.

ACTIVITIES

• External Operations:

- Activities that have an external impact, such as exploring the expansion of the Domain Name Security Threat Information Collection and Reporting (DNSTICR).
- Continue the development of a security, stability, and resiliency (SSR) of the DNS data analysis platform, ICANN Domain Metrica.
- Continue maintenance and operation of KINDNS.org.

• Technical Engagement and Outreach:

- Support and provide training, tools, engagement, and outreach to the technical community on current and upcoming technologies.
- Provide technical expertise as needed to other functional teams such as Global Stakeholder Engagement and Government and Intergovernmental Organization (IGO) Engagement.
- Manage the OCTO series of documents and other publication channels.
- Plan and facilitate the annual ICANN DNS Symposium.

• Research:

- Research activities focused on analyzing the impact of new and existing technologies on Internet unique identifier systems.
- Activities aimed at mitigating DNS security threats.
- Establishing a machine learning architecture to explore machine learning-based algorithms for predicting maliciously registered domain names.

TECHNICAL & DNS SECURITY

- **Reporting:**

- Ongoing reporting on various aspects of the unique identifier ecosystem through ICANN Domain Metrica, previously known as DANE and Identifier Technologies Health Indicators (ITHI).

- **Internal Operations:**

- Activities primarily focused on internal impacts or recurring tasks, such as supporting the Action Request Register.
- Implementing recommendations from Specific Reviews and policy development processes.
- Collaboratively working with ICANN's Public Responsibility Support team to develop online learning materials.
- Offering technical subject matter expertise to various functions and teams within the organization.

HOW PROGRESS IS TRACKED

ICANN uses a combination of milestones, metrics, and reports to track functional activities. The following measures will be used over the five-year period for this functional activity:

- **External Operations:** Much of the progress and milestones will be tracked via the operating initiatives, such as:

- The progression of recommendations within "[RSSAC037](#)": A Proposed Governance Model for the DNS Root Server System" and "[RSSAC038](#)": RSSAC Advisory on a Proposed Governance Model for the DNS Root Server System," both published on 15 June 2018.
- Operation and evolution of KINDNS.org platform.
- Operation of DNSTICR.
- Operation of Domain Metrica, previously Domain Abuse Activity Reporting (DAAR).
- Progress of SSR Data Analysis Platform (ICANN Domain Metrica) development.

- **Technical Engagement and Outreach:**

- Deliver at least 90 percent of mutually agreed-on engagement and outreach activities requested by the community or our internal partners.

- **Research:**

- Support recommendations for NCAP Studies, if applicable.
- Operate an internal prototype RSS Metric Monitoring System as described in RSSAC047 for internal research purposes.

- **Reporting:**

- Publish data or reports relevant to the various efforts underway, such as DAAR and ITHI reporting, technical papers, etc.
- Implement data collection and gathering for various statistical analyses.

TECHNICAL & DNS SECURITY

RESOURCES

Resource requirements are expected to increase.

CONSIDERATIONS

The following risks and considerations exist for this functional activity and may impact its advancement:

- Bandwidth limitations or competing demands on available staff resources may arise when a resource serves as a subject-matter expert for internal and community efforts.
- Assumptions about the level of community interest in security and stability could change, potentially leading to the reprioritization of staff time and effort.
- While there is currently a strong appetite within the community for technical outreach, training, and engagement, it is important to recognize that this enthusiasm may fluctuate, resulting in potential reprioritization efforts.
- As certain projects are completed, the intention is to convert them into ongoing programs. This plan assumes that there will be sufficient budgetary support to sustain these programs in the future. ■

TECHNICAL & DNS SECURITY

ICANN Managed Root Server

PURPOSE

Through the ICANN Managed Root Server (IMRS) program, ICANN provides trusted technical expertise and solutions to support the global Internet by building and maintaining a sustainable, stable, and resilient root server that is able to respond to identified and vetted technical needs and the expectations of the global technical community.

OPERATING INITIATIVE CONTRIBUTIONS

There are no linked initiatives at this time. This supports ICANN's ongoing activities.

ACTIVITIES

- Deliver and maintain a highly secure, stable, and resilient root server.
- Respond to defined strategic initiatives and vetted community expectations of the RSS.
- Maintain a low total cost of operations while developing capacity, good engineering practices, and RSS community engagement.

HOW PROGRESS IS TRACKED

ICANN uses a combination of milestones, metrics, and reports to track functional activities. The following measures will be used over the five-year period for this functional activity:

- Tracking the number of IMRS instances deployed every 12 months.
- Tracking the number of IMRS service outages every 12 months from the [IMRS Activity and Incidents Reports](#).

RESOURCES

Resource requirements are expected to increase.

- Additional locations of large IMRS clusters will require additional year-on-year funding to cover connectivity, colocation, and power costs.
- Additional locations of large IMRS clusters will require year-zero capital expenses funding followed by year-two maintenance and hardware upgrades to maintain stability and resiliency.

CONSIDERATIONS

Risks and considerations exist for this functional activity and may impact its advancement:

- Hiring and retaining expert-level staff continues to be challenging in the current economic climate.
- Staff may leave if clear paths for professional development are not implemented.
- Additional locations will require a measured approach to adding additional staff for both deployment and maintenance activities. ■

TECHNICAL & DNS SECURITY

Internationalized Domain Names and Universal Acceptance

PURPOSE

This Functional Activity supports ICANN org and community work and leads internal operations for Internationalized Domain Names (IDNs) and Universal Acceptance (UA) efforts.

OPERATING INITIATIVE CONTRIBUTIONS

- Lead: Promote and evolve the DNS through open and transparent processes that enable competition and open entry in Internet-related markets while ensuring the stability, security, and resiliency of the DNS.

ACTIVITIES

- Conduct security and stability reviews of IDN tables for gTLD registries, in a consistent and transparent manner, and publish the results in the IANA Repository of IDN Practices.
- Work with relevant communities to develop Reference Label Generation Rules for the second level.
- Support the application and evaluation of IDN country code top-level domains (ccTLDs).
- Support the community in its maintenance of Root Zone Label Generation Rules (RZ-LGR).
- Support IDN policy development and implementation work, including relating to IDN variant top-level domains (TLDs).
- Promote UA awareness, capacity, and adoption by organizing UA Day.
- Promote UA adoption by conducting outreach to software developers and system administrators to promote UA readiness in their software tools, applications and email services.
- Develop and conduct training for technology developers and email tools and service providers to promote UA readiness.
- Reach out to the public sector to promote UA readiness awareness and demand.
- Support the community-driven Universal Acceptance Steering Group to undertake work toward increasing UA adoption.
- Manage the internal IDN and UA Steering Committee to coordinate ICANN's IDN and UA-related activities across functions.

TECHNICAL & DNS SECURITY

HOW PROGRESS IS TRACKED

ICANN uses a combination of milestones, metrics, and reports to track functional activities. The following milestones will be used over the five-year period for this functional activity:

- Publish additional Reference IDN Tables at <http://icann.org/idn>. Continue to implement the updated IDN Table review process, in a transparent and consistent manner, using the Reference IDN tables.
- Implement IDN Guidelines version 4.1, based on approval from the ICANN Board.
- Maintain outreach efforts to engage communities using the remaining scripts identified in the Maximal Starting Repertoire, fostering the development of proposals for RZ-LGR.
- Sustain community progress in UA through the annual action plans, facilitated by UA Steering Group’s global working groups and local initiatives.
- Continue progress in making its systems UA-ready.
- Implement IDN variant TLDs for gTLDs and ccTLDs in alignment with policies finalized by the GNSO and the ccNSO, subject to ICANN Board approval.
- Monitor and report on the progress of IDN registrations, UA readiness, and adoption through annual reports on IDNs (e.g., the [“IDN Annual Report 2022”](#)) and UA readiness (e.g., the [“UA Readiness Report for FY22”](#)).

RESOURCES

Resource needs are projected to grow in order to bolster technical outreach efforts aimed at promoting the universal acceptance of domain names and email addresses. Additionally, these resources will support UA Day activities.

CONSIDERATIONS

The following risks and considerations exist for this functional activity and may impact its advancement:

- The work on the implementation of IDN variant TLDs depends on the finalization of the respective policies by the GNSO and ccNSO. The ICANN Board has asked the SOs to develop a consistent set of policies for variant TLDs.
- Work on UA is based on influencing technology developers and policymakers who may have other priorities and may not be part of the ICANN community. ■

TECHNICAL & DNS SECURITY

IANA Functions

PURPOSE

The purpose of the IANA functions is to assign unique identifiers for the Internet in accordance with relevant policies, and to be the registry of record for those allocations. This work is essential to promoting Internet interoperability by ensuring devices on the Internet communicate in a standardized manner. This work is administered through contracts that provide accountability to the respective communities that use these services.

ICANN's affiliate Public Technical Identifiers (PTI) performs these functions on behalf of ICANN org according to service level agreements (SLAs) and other obligations defined in the contracts. PTI has a separate Operating Plan and Budget. The PTI Operating Plan and Budget constitutes a large component of the IANA Operating Plan and Budget and is included in the ICANN Operating Plan and Budget. Read the [FY25 PTI](#) and [IANA Operating Plans and Budgets](#).

There are currently two separate Public Comment proceedings running. The first proceeding includes drafts of the [ICANN FY25-29 Operating and Financial Plan, the ICANN FY25 Operating Plan and Budget](#), and the [IANA FY25 Operating Plan and Budget](#). The second proceeding exclusively covers the Draft [PTI FY25 Operating Plan and Budget](#).

OPERATING INITIATIVE CONTRIBUTIONS

- Lead: Support the evolution and strengthening of Root Zone Management and the Root Server System.
- Support: Facilitate DNS ecosystem improvements.
- Support: Promote and evolve the DNS through open and transparent processes that enable competition and open entry in Internet-related markets while ensuring the stability, security, and resiliency of the DNS.

ACTIVITIES

- **Operations:** Daily activities required to provide the IANA functions in accordance with SLA and contractual obligations, and maintaining systems and processes to ensure secure and high availability of IANA-critical Internet infrastructure.
- **Operational Excellence:** Monitoring and improving operations through regular analysis and review that include third-party audits, customer engagement and satisfaction surveys, and organizational assessments. Validate IANA's contingency and continuity of operations and disaster recovery plans through regular tabletop exercises.
- **Technical Services:** Development of new tools and systems, software enhancements, website administration, and other discrete development projects to improve delivery of the IANA functions. Improvements to key management facilities to mitigate security threats and maintain facility quality.
- **Governance:** Regularly engage with stakeholders within the ICANN community and related bodies such as the PTI Board, the Regional Internet Registries, the Internet Engineering Task Force, and the Customer Standing Committee. Provide support to the IANA team through regular performance management and professional development training opportunities, and provide IANA subject-matter expertise to support org-wide initiatives. The work in this area also supports ICANN in its governance efforts to sustain and improve openness, inclusivity, accountability and transparency.

TECHNICAL & DNS SECURITY

HOW PROGRESS IS TRACKED

ICANN uses a combination of milestones, metrics, and reports to track functional activities. The following milestones will be used over the five-year period for this functional activity

- **Operations:** Continue to report on IANA performance against its SLAs and maintain the transparency of KSK ceremony administration practices.
- **Operational Excellence:** Continue to analyze customer feedback received through surveys as well as areas for improvement identified through external audits and use the results to drive operational improvements.
- **Technical Services:** Launch systems and tools according to the expectations of the IANA functions customers, receive an exception-free System and Organization Controls 3 (SOC3) Audit Report; perform KSK ceremonies in compliance with the DNSSEC Practice Statement; complete root zone key management facilities upgrades in the Eastern and Western U.S. regions.
- **Governance:** Continue to engage with key stakeholders to ensure suggested improvements are implemented to the systems, processes, and facilities. Manage and report on project condition, staff performance, budget, risk, strategy implementation, and resource allocation.

RESOURCES

An increase in head count is expected in order to meet the objectives set forth in the [PTI FY21–24 Strategic Plan](#), which was recently extended to FY25, as well as new requirements driven by community-developed policies. In addition to being highly specialized, most roles in the IANA team currently lack redundancies, so losing staff can impact the progress of key projects such as the RZMS, the Registry Workflow System, and the IANA website improvements.

- Professional services are a cost-effective, flexible way to supplement full-time equivalents that do not require highly specialized skills, and should be considered along with additional hiring.

CONSIDERATIONS

The following risks and considerations exist for this functional activity and may impact its advancement:

- Meeting growing customer volume and expectations while adhering to SLAs depends on systems advancement.
- Evolving customer expectations of the level of sophistication in IANA systems. Slow delivery of system enhancements can impact customer satisfaction rates.
- Increased demands relating to the operating envelope around the KSK management. This includes more regular hardware replacement cycles, more frequent key replacement cycles (rollovers), and new security facilities.
- Without additional resources, IANA may not have bandwidth to deliver additional anticipated activities such as implementation of new policies.
- Losing staff can significantly impact the function. Most roles in the team lack redundancy and filling positions when staff depart has often proved challenging.
- A higher number of gTLDs may impact the root zone. ■

TECHNICAL & DNS SECURITY

Contractual Compliance

PURPOSE

The Contractual Compliance function ensures that gTLD registry operators and ICANN-accredited registrars comply with community consensus policies and their contractual agreements with ICANN.

OPERATING INITIATIVE CONTRIBUTIONS

There are no linked initiatives at this time. This supports ICANN's ongoing activities.

ACTIVITIES

- Conduct audits, monitoring, and outreach to ensure contracted parties are in compliance with agreements.
- Receive and resolve complaints regarding potential compliance issues with contracted parties.
- Support policy development processes (PDPs), Organizational and Specific Reviews, and the Registrar Accreditation Agreement and Registry Agreement contracting process, by providing input from a contractual compliance perspective. Implement recommendations arising from Specific Reviews and PDPs as necessary and appropriate.
- Improve business operations, methods, and processes. This includes looking to increase automation in FY25–29.
- The team reduced professional services by migrating complaint processing to the Naming Services Portal (NSp) in FY23. The team also plans to increase its headcount to support contractual compliance audits and reporting activities.
- Participate in outreach and training activities with contracted parties, or others (as needed), to raise awareness of contractual obligations.
- Provide metrics and data on received complaints to help inform community discussions on contractual requirements.

HOW PROGRESS IS TRACKED

ICANN uses a combination of milestones, metrics, and reports to track functional activities. The following measures will be used over the five-year period for this functional activity:

- Number of low-complexity complaints processed.
- Number of high-complexity complaints processed.
- Turn-around time for processing low-complexity complaints.
- Closure rate of high-complexity complaints processed.
- Number of registrar or registry operators audited.
- High-risk issues mitigated through audits.
- Contracted parties and reporter satisfaction level measured via perception survey.

TECHNICAL & DNS SECURITY

- Number of outreach activities engaging with contracted parties, or others (as needed), through formal and informal means.
- Number of plans for remediating noncompliance, as presented by contracted parties, and monitored for recurrence.
- Number of newly implemented proactive monitoring initiatives and projects.
- Number of formal enforcement actions conducted.

RESOURCES

Resource requirements are expected to be stable.

- Migration to NSp can potentially reduce outside vendor expenditures.
- Adding staff to provide in-house performance and metrics reporting and reducing expenditures on third-party vendors.

CONSIDERATIONS

The following risks and considerations exist for this functional activity and may impact its advancement:

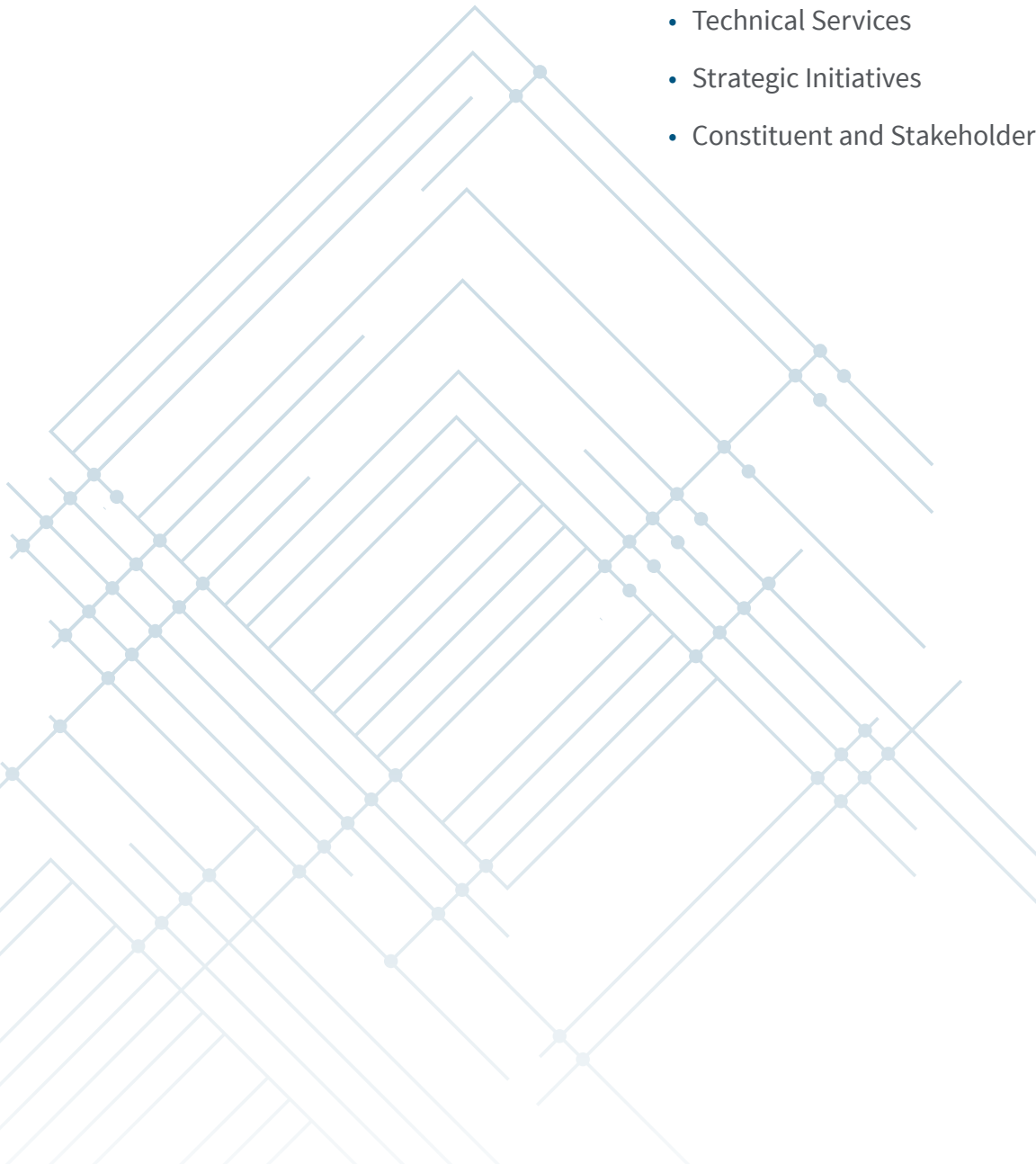
- Successful execution of recurring activities depends on hiring and training for backfill positions.
- Opportunities to reduce spending depend on timely, successful, and complete (including metrics) migration to the Contractual Compliance ticketing platform.
- Cross-functional work related to supporting reviews and policy development reduces Contractual Compliance resources available to execute core functions.
- Unknown impact on volume, type, and complexity of complaints submitted to Contractual Compliance as a result of unknown registry directory service (RDS) obligations.
- Complaints may increase in volume, type, and complexity. This may lead to a reallocation of existing resources among queues as well as to a need for additional staff.
- Implementing new requirements or projects may have an unknown impact on the volume, type, and complexity of complaints submitted to Contractual Compliance. ■

FUNCTIONAL ACTIVITIES

FY25-29

POLICY DEVELOPMENT & IMPLEMENTATION SUPPORT

- Policy Development and Advice
- Policy Research and Stakeholder Programs
- Contracted Parties Services Operations
- Technical Services
- Strategic Initiatives
- Constituent and Stakeholder Travel



POLICY DEVELOPMENT & IMPLEMENTATION SUPPORT

Policy Development and Advice

PURPOSE

The Policy Development Support function facilitates the policy development and advisory work of the ICANN community. It provides governance and process management, subject-matter expertise, and administrative and professional secretariat support to ICANN's SOs, ACs, and other formally chartered community structures, including the Empowered Community Administration, the Customer Standing Committee, and the Root Zone Evolution Review Committee.

OPERATING INITIATIVE CONTRIBUTIONS

- Lead: Evolve and strengthen the multistakeholder model to facilitate diverse and inclusive participation in policymaking.
- Lead: Evolve and strengthen the ICANN community's decision-making processes to ensure efficient and effective policymaking.
- Support: Support the evolution and strengthening of Root Zone Management and the Root Server System.
- Support: Promote and evolve the DNS through open and transparent processes that enable competition and open entry in Internet-related markets while ensuring the stability, security, and resiliency of the DNS.
- Support: Planning at ICANN.

ACTIVITIES

- Facilitate policy and advice development and consensus decision-making by managing the policy process from start to end for all community-driven policy-related projects. This includes:
 - Conducting research and analysis, drafting reports, tracking recommendations, preparing briefings, and updating working drafts as policy work progresses.
 - Providing secretariat, operations, and administrative services such as meeting planning, record keeping, and process management.
 - Providing impartial and neutral guidance on substantive, procedural, and strategic issues.
 - Publishing papers and regular information, and conducting webinars and presentations, to inform the public about policy initiatives.
- Manage community governance processes, and build and maintain relationships across multiple and diverse stakeholders globally.
- Manage Public Comment proceedings.
- Support the SO and AC councils and leadership teams in their management and oversight work by providing process guidance and subject-matter expertise, coordinating SO and AC strategic planning, and tracking the progress of all community policy activities.

POLICY DEVELOPMENT & IMPLEMENTATION SUPPORT

- Manage key communication channels about current and pending policy issues, including ICANN Prep Week sessions, the Community Digest, sessions at ICANN Public Meetings, and through regular policy briefings.
- Adopt a function-wide project management-based approach and related tools to facilitate effective organizational management, planning and reporting of community activities, including milestones, work plans, and outcomes.
- Continue the transition to and implementation of the CES to manage and report on community participation in ICANN policy processes, including working group enrollment, record keeping, status reporting, and membership management for each SO and AC. This operating initiative work area is also included as a multi-year goal in the blog titled [“ICANN Interim President and CEO Shares Goals for Fiscal Year 2024” as CEO Goal 1.](#)
- Implement comprehensive strategy in partnership with Engineering and IT and other functions supporting community work (such as Language Services and Meetings Technical Services) via the prioritization and improvement of communication and collaboration tools, and evaluating improvements to community-requested services.
- Complete the function-wide adoption of uniform project management tools and framework.

HOW PROGRESS IS TRACKED

ICANN uses a combination of milestones, metrics, and reports to track functional activities. The following measures will be used over the five-year period for this functional activity:

- Track progress of community-driven projects (e.g., number and duration of projects and activities, volume and extent of community work including meeting hours, webinars, and preparation time required) and publication of resolutions, policy recommendations, and other community decisions.
- Report on community enrollment, membership, and participation in ICANN policy processes.
- Document and report on Public Comment proceedings and other community consultations managed by the Policy Development Support function.
- Progress on migration and transition to CES platform.
- Report on community activities at ICANN Public Meetings, including:
 - ICANN Prep Week reports and statistics.
 - ICANN Public Meetings reports and statistics.
 - Annual ICANN Public Comment proceedings reports.
 - ICANN Public Meeting Policy Outlook and Policy Outcomes reports.

POLICY DEVELOPMENT & IMPLEMENTATION SUPPORT

RESOURCES

Resource requirements are expected to increase.

- There is a clear upward trend in the number and scope of policy initiatives across the ICANN community. In addition, current strategic objectives and strategic goals call for increased, diverse, and meaningful participation that will require org support and improved reporting. Without deliberately capping the number of active policy efforts in concurrent operation, these trends will require a correlated increase in resources (e.g., staff, travel, and professional services).
- While the Policy Development Support function has reorganized some staff teams and established a function-wide Community Operations Management structure to better handle increased requests for support, the current number of staff and available resources are unlikely to be sufficient to manage additional projects and activities.
- Based on current trends and the expected workload, the need for additional full-time policy staff positions is anticipated. These positions would ideally be at the analyst, specialist, or higher levels, and filled by individuals with skills in research, data analysis, and process management. This expansion is seen as necessary to provide adequate support for the community's work.
- Professional services may be an additional cost-effective and flexible way to supplement full-time equivalents that do not require highly specialized skills, and should be considered along with additional hiring.

CONSIDERATIONS

The following risks and considerations exist for this activity and may impact its advancement:

- There is an ongoing need to align community expectations for increased facilitation and other support of its work from the Policy Development Support team with the Board's and org's understanding of the community's needs, workload and priorities.
 - Maintaining existing staffing and resource levels in the face of increasing work will negatively impact the ability to provide consistent high-quality support for the community's work.
 - The need to prioritize may require the Board, org and community to defer or reduce the number of new policy projects, which may require trade-offs across the community about what to prioritize given the divergence of stakeholder interests.
- As the complexity of policy work increases, the skills and experience levels required of staff to support this work will increase. This will require resources and commitment to training for motivated staff.
- The focus on data-driven policy development and advice work may require additional resources, either in-house or provided by third-party experts and service providers (e.g., professional survey designers). ■

POLICY DEVELOPMENT & IMPLEMENTATION SUPPORT

Policy Research and Stakeholder Programs

PURPOSE

The Policy Research and Stakeholder Programs Functional Activity leads and supports the implementation of key policies and cross-functional projects, provides research and thought leadership capabilities to support relevant organizational work, and leads and supports community-based work to develop and promote a multilingual Internet and secure user experience.

This function also ensures cross-functional coordination and subject-matter support for the Board's and org's activities around relevant recommendations and advice from the multistakeholder community.

OPERATING INITIATIVE CONTRIBUTIONS

- Lead: Promote and evolve the DNS through open and transparent processes that enable competition and open entry in Internet-related markets while ensuring the stability, security, and resiliency of the DNS.

ACTIVITIES

- Supporting Board consideration of GNSO consensus policy recommendations. See [Appendix B – ICANN Rolling Five-Year Roadmap](#) showing current and anticipated policy activities.
- Managing organizational activities around implementation of Board-approved GNSO consensus policy recommendations.
- Managing periodic reviews of consensus policies.
- Executing and supporting data, research, and study requests from internal and external stakeholders.
- Providing subject-matter support to internal and external stakeholder projects, including support during development of recommendations by SOs and ACs.
- Managing implementation of relevant Board-approved AC advice and Specific Review recommendations.
- Manage and support programs derived from multistakeholder policy recommendations, advice, review team, and other outcomes as directed by the Board.

HOW PROGRESS IS TRACKED

ICANN uses a combination of milestones, metrics, and reports to track functional activities. The following measures will be used over the five-year period for this functional activity:

- Progress on implementation of Board-approved policy recommendations is reported on a dedicated consensus policy implementation webpage. Milestones include draft policy language, terms and requirements, analysis of input received on implementation via Implementation Review Team feedback and Public Comment, and the announcement of policy effective dates.

POLICY DEVELOPMENT & IMPLEMENTATION SUPPORT

- Progress on implementation of relevant advice items is reported on a dedicated webpage that provides the status of advice to the Board from ACs. Milestones include confirmation of understanding, exchanges and discussions with the relevant AC, and closure of the advice item.

For many of this function's activities, the timing and milestones depend on factors such as community decisions and engagement, and Board consideration and direction. The team communicates progress by direct engagement with the relevant SOs, ACs, and other stakeholder groups, by sharing work plans and draft documents for community comment and consultation, publishing blogs and announcements, and holding webinars and public meeting sessions.

RESOURCES

Increased resources will likely be needed to deliver this work, as major policy efforts continue through implementation, and operational readiness work continues to support future gTLD application rounds. Existing staff collaborate with resources from other functions including:

- Legal, Contractual Compliance, Communications, Office of the Chief Technology Officer, Policy Development Support, and Global Stakeholder Engagement.

Additionally, increased resources are needed to support the ongoing implementation of Board-approved review team recommendations, including a number of study and research requests. Some of these requests require the procurement of professional services, e.g., consumer and registrant surveys, extension of statistical analysis of DNS abuse, and economic analysis.

CONSIDERATIONS

- A number of Board-approved recommendations from the Competition, Consumer Trust, and Consumer Choice (CCT) Review, Second Registration Directory Service (RDS-WHOIS) Review, and SSR Review teams relate to this function's areas of responsibility. Prioritization and resource allocation for these activities is subject to the inputs of the planning process.
- In this five-year period, this function plans to support numerous policy implementation efforts for Board-approved recommendations, including but not limited to Rights Protection Mechanisms Phase 1, Proxy & Privacy Services Accreditation, Translation & Transliteration, and Expedited Policy Development Process (EPDP) on the Temporary Specification for gTLD Registration Data Phase 2a.
- Within this five-year period, this function will also be responsible for the execution of the Implementation Plan for future gTLD application rounds.
- The specific organization and resource allocation for these projects will be based on resource availability and prioritization discussions. ■

POLICY DEVELOPMENT & IMPLEMENTATION SUPPORT

Contracted Parties Services Operations

PURPOSE

Contracted Parties Services Operations delivers defined, high-quality, repeatable services and processes to applicants and contracted parties in a timely, consistent, and predictable manner.

OPERATING INITIATIVE CONTRIBUTIONS

No linked Operating Initiatives. This function supports ICANN's continued operation.

ACTIVITIES

- Process contracted party service requests. Continually improve procedural aspects related to delivery of service requests.
- Manage contracted party agreements, including these steps:
 - Facilitate agreement execution.
 - Generate and execute contract amendments as a result of service requests.
 - Process agreement terminations.
- Manage registrar application and evaluation process.
- Monitor certain conditions required by contracted party agreements and execute outbound communications to facilitate contracted party compliance with agreements.
- Contracted party account management.
- Manage all aspects of vendor life cycle from procurement to operations for vendors that provide contracted party services, applicant evaluation, or related needs.
- Support New gTLD Program: Next Round-related activities around process development, operationalization and application processing.
- Support the 2012 round of the New gTLD Program, including:
 - Application processing (evaluation, contention resolution, application change requests, etc.).
 - Contracting (Registry Agreement execution, Specification 13, and Code of Conduct Exemption Amendments).
 - Pre-delegation activities (pre-delegation testing, onboarding, and transition to delegation).
 - Support for ICANN's Legal team on New gTLD Program-related Accountability Mechanisms and litigation.

POLICY DEVELOPMENT & IMPLEMENTATION SUPPORT

HOW PROGRESS IS TRACKED

ICANN uses a combination of metrics and reports to track functional activities. The following milestones will be used over the five-year period for this functional activity:

- Service level targets will continue to be monitored and modified as per operational needs.
- Report of service delivery against service level targets will continue.
- Monitor contracted party transactional survey responses.

RESOURCES

Resource requirements are expected to be stable.

CONSIDERATIONS

The following risks and considerations exist for this functional activity and may impact its operation:

- Services defined by contracts and policies are varied, complex, and difficult to automate. Critical thinking and human judgment are required to complete transactions.
- Operations resources are in high demand both internally and outside the organization. Providing development opportunities and career growth to retain staff is critical to successful ongoing operations.
- New gTLD Program 2012 Round support activities are currently projected to run through FY25. Changes to that timeline would impact resources and activities.
- Accountability mechanisms and litigation pertaining to the New gTLD Program: Next Round typically require significant and unplanned time and effort, and may require significant expenditure of resources to manage. ■

POLICY DEVELOPMENT & IMPLEMENTATION SUPPORT

Technical Services

PURPOSE

The Technical Services function provides technical knowledge and data inside ICANN org regarding the DNS and works to maintain the security and stability of the DNS.

OPERATING INITIATIVE CONTRIBUTIONS

- Support: Promote and evolve the DNS through open and transparent processes that enable competition and open entry in internet-related markets while ensuring the stability, security, and resiliency of the DNS.
- Support: Facilitate the DNS ecosystem improvements.

ACTIVITIES

- Manage systems such as the Service Level Agreement Monitoring, Technical Compliance, Registration Reporting Interface (RRI), Technical Onboarding, Monitoring System Application Program Interface (MoSAPI), Zone File Access, Bulk Registration Data Access, Controlled Interruption monitoring, and the Centralized Zone Data Service (CZDS). Coordinate and support ICANN initiatives, such as Registration Data Access Protocol (RDAP) implementation.
- Manage services such as the Emergency Back-end Registry Operation and Registry System Testing (RST).
- Develop and maintain technical specifications used by the contracted parties, such as data escrow, Trademark Clearinghouse, RRI, and MoSAPI.
- Engage with the technical community.

HOW PROGRESS IS TRACKED

ICANN uses a combination of metrics and reports to track functional activities. The following milestones will be used over the five-year period for this functional activity:

- Deliver new and updated systems.
- Update services as needed.
- Maintain up-to-date technical specifications.

POLICY DEVELOPMENT & IMPLEMENTATION SUPPORT

RESOURCES

Resource requirements are expected to increase. Additional resources will potentially be needed due to:

- EPDP on the Temporary Specification for gTLD Registration Data Phase 2 implementation.
- Operational readiness planning to support future gTLD applications and operation.
- Increased responsibilities, e.g., CZDS, RST, Technical Onboarding re-platforming, implementing the RDAP amendment, and implementing changes related to the Registration Data Policy.

CONSIDERATIONS

Additional resources would be required when the team is assigned or delegated unbudgeted projects. ■

POLICY DEVELOPMENT & IMPLEMENTATION SUPPORT

Strategic Initiatives

PURPOSE

The Strategic Initiatives functional activity leads and provides support for strategic initiatives and evolving issues that impact ICANN's remit and stakeholders. It includes supporting work undertaken by the community, such as the coordination of ICANN's strategy as it relates to compliance with the European Union's General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) and other global data protection and privacy legislation, mitigating DNS security threats, special projects related to the New gTLD Program: Next Round, IDNs and UA-related topics, and provides general support for the Global Domains and Strategy (GDS) function.

OPERATING INITIATIVE CONTRIBUTIONS

- Support: Evolve and strengthen the multistakeholder model to facilitate diverse and inclusive participation in policymaking.
- Support: Promote and evolve the DNS through open and transparent processes that enable competition and open entry in Internet-related markets while ensuring the stability, security, and resiliency of the DNS.

ACTIVITIES

- **Special Projects for the New gTLD Program: Next Round:**
 - Lead the development of updated and comprehensive web assets for the New gTLD Program: Next Round, serving as a central source for tools and resources related to the program.
 - Develop a comprehensive project plan to ensure a consistent experience for New gTLD Program: Next Round applicants.
- **Data Protection and Privacy Issues:**
 - Cross-functional coordination as it relates to data protection and privacy issues, including Registration Directory Service (RDS) compliance with GDPR and other relevant laws.
 - Continued management of the EPDP Phase 2 recommendations on a System for Standardized Access/Disclosure to Nonpublic gTLD Registration Data, including tracking progress and reporting on the operation of the Registration Data Request Service (RDRS).
- **DNS Security Threat Mitigation:**
 - Continued coordination of org-wide strategy to ensure ICANN is recognized as a trusted source of information; provide tools to the community to mitigate DNS security threats; and enforce related contractual provisions.

POLICY DEVELOPMENT & IMPLEMENTATION SUPPORT

- **IDNs and UA:**

- Manage IDN-related operations, including review of IDN tables, implementation of IDN Guidelines and running the IDN ccTLD Fast Track process.
- Develop and maintain resources for secure and stable implementation of IDNs by publishing additional reference Label Generation Rules and maintaining the RZ-LGR.
- Support implementation of GNSO and ccNSO policies for implementation of IDNs and their variant labels.
- Promote UA adoption by conducting outreach and training to the various stakeholders, including developers of software applications and tools developers, and email service providers.
- Support community efforts, including UA Steering Group, in planning and promoting UA globally.
- Support ongoing IDN and UA-related policy development and implementation.
- Manage ICANN's IDN and UA Steering Committee to develop and execute an effective cross-functional strategy for increasing IDN implementation and UA-readiness globally.

- **Operational Initiatives:**

- Provide support services across ICANN org on a range of shared activities, including correspondence, Board advice, communications, budgets, and others, as required.

HOW PROGRESS IS TRACKED

Standard project management tracking will ensure timely completion of deliverables and coordination among functions as they relate to strategic initiative support.

- **Special Projects for the New gTLD Program: Next Round:**

- Develop updated New gTLD Program: Next Round website and provide regular updates to keep the community, potential applicants, and new applicants apprised of progress as the opening of the application window nears.
- Coordinate necessary tools and resources required on the website for the next round of gTLDs.

- **Data Protection and Privacy Issues:**

- Provide support for implementation of policy recommendations resulting from EPDP Phase 2 should the Board adopt the recommendations, or decide to implement another solution in consultation with the GNSO Council.
- Coordinate ICANN's strategy and related activities across functions to ensure alignment with the org's goals related to data protection and privacy laws, including GDPR. This coordination aims to ensure that RDRS and access to nonpublic gTLD registration data meet the necessary requirements.

- **DNS Security Threat Mitigation:**

- Continue to coordinate org-wide strategy, including the org's participation in ICANN community discussions on DNS security threat topics.

POLICY DEVELOPMENT & IMPLEMENTATION SUPPORT

- **IDNs and UA:**

- Review IDN tables based on requests by registry operators, track and address issues related to implementation of IDN Guidelines with registry operators, and any IDN ccTLD applications received are evaluated.
- Publish additional reference Label Generation Rules and update RZ-LGR as needed.
- Track and report progress on IDN implementation and UA outreach and adoption through annual reports.
- Provide support for tracking the progress of cross-functional strategy for increasing IDN implementation and UA-readiness globally.

- **Operational Initiatives:**

- Coordinate operational activities across ICANN org by adhering to service level targets.

RESOURCES

Resource requirements are commensurate with existing staff, though adjustments may be required as the Board directs future org work on the RDRS, or requests additional support for New gTLD Program: Next Round special projects, and growth in the scope of IDN and UA programs.

CONSIDERATIONS

The following risks and considerations exist for this functional activity and may impact its advancement:

- Activities related to the implementation of the New gTLD Program: Next Round, including the emphasis on IDN and UA-related work could result in adjustments to resource requirements.
- Similarly, a Board decision on the EPDP Phase 2 policy recommendations during this time period could result in new work related to the RDRS or a possible System for Standardized Access/Disclosure. ■

POLICY DEVELOPMENT & IMPLEMENTATION SUPPORT

Constituent and Stakeholder Travel

PURPOSE

The Constituent and Stakeholder Travel function aims to provide travel support for community members selected through appropriate processes and promote broader participation in ICANN's activities.

OPERATING INITIATIVE CONTRIBUTIONS

- Support: Evolve and strengthen the multistakeholder model to facilitate diverse and inclusive participation in policymaking.
- Support: Evolve and strengthen the ICANN community's decision-making processes to ensure efficient and effective policymaking.

ACTIVITIES

- Provide travel support for community members selected through appropriate processes following Travel Support Guidelines.
- Update Travel Support Guidelines as needed and solicit Public Comment on updates.

HOW PROGRESS IS TRACKED

The following measure will be used over the five-year period for this functional activity:

- Publication of reports following each ICANN Public Meeting with details of the travel support provided.

RESOURCES

FY25–29: Resource requirements are expected to be stable. The number, cost, and level of support of funded seats for SO and AC constituent travel is stable

CONSIDERATIONS

The following risks and considerations exist for this activity and may impact its advancement:

- Allocating limited travel funding among ICANN community members requires prioritization.
- Advance planning is needed to ensure cost-effective pricing. ■

FUNCTIONAL ACTIVITIES

FY25-29

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT & SERVICES

- Global Stakeholder Engagement
 - Regional Offices
- Engagement Programs
- Global Meeting Operations
- Government and Intergovernmental Organization Engagement (GE)
- GDD Accounts and Services
- Global Support Center
- Global Communications and Language Services
- Ombuds

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT & SERVICES

Global Stakeholder Engagement

In 2021, under the President and CEO's direction, the Global Stakeholder Engagement (GSE) team reviewed its purpose and priorities within ICANN org's community-facing functions. In late 2022, the team initiated a process to integrate with the Public Responsibility Support and Global Meetings Operations teams, creating a consolidated Stakeholder Engagement function at ICANN. This new function has been reorganized into three sub-functions: Global Stakeholder Engagement (GSE), Engagement Programs (previously Public Responsibility Support) and Global Meeting Operations (Meetings).

For FY25, staff costs associated with the Meetings team are included in Global Stakeholder Engagement and Engagement Programs. The Meetings department budget covers venue, catering, professional services, and administrative costs to support ICANN global meetings and ICANN-managed events.

PURPOSE

ICANN org's GSE team serves as the global point of contact for ICANN and the community. The team leads outreach, facilitates ICANN-organized events and travel, and supports engagement programs through local coverage in ICANN's regions. The combined function's purpose is to:

- Raise awareness and understanding of ICANN's role.
- Encourage participation in ICANN's policy development and technical activities.
- Enhance ICANN's operating model across regional offices.
- Build relationships and develop trust among stakeholders.
- Facilitate best-in-class hybrid events, travel support, and logistics for ICANN and the community.
- Provide subject matter expertise and advice for public responsibility initiatives within ICANN's remit related to diversity, human rights, anti-harassment, and the global public interest.

OPERATING INITIATIVE CONTRIBUTIONS

As the leading unit for engagement and outreach within ICANN org, GSE offers both direct and indirect support to various Operating Initiatives that involve outreach components. These initiatives include:

- Evolve and strengthen the multistakeholder model to facilitate diverse and inclusive participation in policymaking.
- Implement New gTLD auction proceeds recommendations as approved by the Board.
- Facilitate the DNS ecosystem improvements.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT & SERVICES

ACTIVITIES

- **Cross-Functional Regional Engagement:**
 - Technical and policy initiative involvement.
 - Participation in relevant national and regional discussions.
 - Delivery of regional engagement strategies.
- **Capacity Development:**
 - Increase understanding of ICANN's mission.
 - Diversify participation in core activities.
- **Targeted Stakeholder Engagement:**
 - Focus on stakeholders and key influencers who impact ICANN.
 - Outreach to those not typically involved in ICANN meetings.
- **Engagement Monitoring:**
 - Interaction measurement, planning, and administration.
- **Cross-Organizational Support:**
 - Collaboration for legislative tracking, government engagement, and planning.
- **Engagement Activities Related to:**
 - Implementation of Specific and Organizational Reviews.
 - Outreach and awareness efforts for Internationalized Domain Names, Universal Acceptance, and New gTLD Program: Next Round.
- **Regional Team Support:**
 - Assist ICANN org team initiatives at the regional level, including Office of the Chief Technology Officer (OCTO), Government and IGO Engagement (IGO), and more.
- **Subject Matter Expertise:**
 - Participation in internal expert teams for Organizational and Specific Reviews.
 - Implementation of the Applicant Support Program for the New gTLD Program: Next Round.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT & SERVICES

HOW PROGRESS IS TRACKED

ICANN uses a combination of milestones, metrics, and reports to track Functional Activities. The following milestones and metrics will be used over the five-year period for GSE:

- Alignment of regional engagement strategies with the Strategic Plan.
- Geographical presence and services to regional stakeholders.
- Number of capacity development and training events and analysis of community feedback.
- Incorporation of stakeholder journeys data into the ICANN Open Data Initiative.
- Metrics related to cross-functional work on Domain Name System (DNS) ecosystem security, Domain Name System Security Extensions (DNSSEC) deployment, Universal Acceptance, and IMRS instances.
- Support of community prioritization effort at the regional level to increase participation in Public Comment periods.
- DNSSEC statistics from regional trainings and local adoption levels among top-level domains, Internet service providers, and others.
- Delivery on projects in support of the Coalition for Digital Africa. This Operating Initiative work area is also included as a multi-year goal in the blog titled [“ICANN Interim President and CEO Shares Goals for Fiscal Year 2024” as CEO Goal 3](#).

RESOURCES

Resource requirements are expected to increase.

- △ GSE anticipates the need for increased funding to support the demand for: engagement stemming from Operating Initiatives; implementation of Board-approved Organizational Review recommendations; raising awareness for potential future rounds of new Generic top-level domains (gTLDs) (including the Applicant Support Program and Registry Services Evaluation); regional capacity-development requests; and collaboration with Government Engagement at the regional level on potential legislation and ministerial briefings on ICANN and the multistakeholder model.
- △ GSE plans to hold regional ICANN DNS Forums or meetings in collaboration with Global Domains and Strategy (GDS) and OCTO to raise awareness of DNS security issues, technical Internet governance, DNS industry issues, and policy development.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT & SERVICES

CONSIDERATIONS

The following considerations exist for the GSE team, some of which may pose risks:

- Close integration of engagement activities across the GDS, OCTO, and Government and IGO engagement functions will continue and these functions rely on cross-organizational collaboration to deliver on ICANN priorities.
- Improvements in collaboration with the Managing Directors network for the regional offices, informed by experiences from the return to offices following the COVID-19 pandemic. Continued attention to staff retention, development, and performance is important during this period.
- The organizational priority on legislative tracking continues to require resources and engagement.
- The community prioritization effort may identify the need to recruit new stakeholders, which will involve the GSE team to target new active participants.
- Work continues on full deployment of software tools through the ICANN Community Engagement System (CES) to enable cross-functional collaboration, request management, and performance tracking. This multi-year project is part of [ICANN Interim President and CEO Goal 1 for FY24](#).
- Hybrid meetings will return at a regional level, but participation levels need to be monitored as some stakeholders may no longer be able to participate in ICANN work.
- Changes in the ecosystem post-COVID-19 may affect the ability for newcomers to participate in ICANN technical and policy work and may impact on the volunteers in the ICANN community. ■

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT & SERVICES

Regional Offices

ICANN has regional offices in Brussels, Belgium; Istanbul, Turkey; Montevideo, Uruguay; and Singapore. ICANN has engagement centers in Nairobi, Kenya; Washington, D.C., USA and Beijing, China.

PURPOSE

The primary purpose of the regional offices is stakeholder engagement. Besides bringing ICANN's functions closer to stakeholders, the offices facilitate the functions housed in the region to achieve the goals set out in the Strategic Plan.

OPERATING INITIATIVE CONTRIBUTIONS

Each regional office leads stakeholder engagement in its region and collaborates with other ICANN functions at a regional level, thereby offering direct or indirect support to all Operating Initiatives.

ACTIVITIES

ICANN's regional offices work with the community to help them obtain the support and services they need from ICANN org. Each office provides a broad range of localized services to the community. The regional offices are often a first point of contact for stakeholders in the area, and serve as the regional interface for ICANN org.

HOW PROGRESS IS TRACKED

ICANN uses a combination of milestones, metrics, and reports to track Functional Activities. Key measures for the regional offices in the five-year period are:

- Facilitate collaboration to achieve identified cross-functional goals based on the Strategic Plan. The success of this collaboration will be tracked against the goals.
- Collaborate to address engagement gaps, develop an engagement gaps matrix, and incorporate into an org-wide platform.

RESOURCES

Brussels: Resource requirements are expected to increase in the European region.

- △ Personnel requirements are projected to rise to accommodate expanded engagement in technical and legislative matters, as well as to support new initiatives like potential future rounds of new gTLDs. There is a specific need to bolster staff coverage for Eastern Europe and Central Asia and to enhance engagement efforts in the United Kingdom post-Brexit.
- △ Support for community and engagement meetings.
- △ Indexation and related required costs have risen in Brussels.

Istanbul: Resource requirements are expected to remain stable.

- △ Staff needs are expected to increase in order to accommodate expanded engagement in relation to Domain Name System Security Extensions (DNSSEC) adoption, Knowledge-sharing and Instantiating Norms for DNS and Naming Security (KINDNS), Internationalized Domain Names (IDNs) and Universal Acceptance(UA), as well as the New gTLD Program: Next Round.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT & SERVICES

- △ Increased funding is needed for Istanbul-based staff to support ICANN org engagement activities across Middle East and adjoining countries.

Montevideo: Resource requirements are expected to increase.

- △ Increased funding needed for regional staff to attend annual capacity-development week and officewide meetings.
- △ Staff needs are expected to increase to support the contracted parties in the region and administrative support to the regional office.

Singapore: Resource requirements are expected to increase.

- △ Resource needs are expected to increase in order to support increased engagement activities related to the New gTLD Program: Next Round, as well as growing IDNs in South and Southeast Asia.

CONSIDERATIONS

- The following risks and considerations exist for the success of the regional offices and may impact their progression:
- Work depends on other functions, which may have other priorities.
- Functional teams should have region-specific plans and goals in place. Use of a Customer Engagement System (CES) to better coordinate regional requests and assign resources.
- Adequate budget allocation is needed for GSE staff and regional support.
- Willingness of the community to use the regional offices for ICANN-supported face-to-face meetings.
- The Istanbul office may need to be expanded if the demand for larger face-to-face meetings in that region increases. ■

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT & SERVICES

Engagement Programs

PURPOSE

ICANN's Engagement Programs (formerly Public Responsibility Support) are anchored in the global public interest within ICANN's mission. Initiatives range from education to capacity-development opportunities for ICANN beginners and more seasoned community members; management of ICANN's online learning platform; the provision of research expertise in the areas of human rights, diversity and anti-harassment; emergency financial support for continued Internet access, and travel support for funded travelers and staff.

These complement broader efforts to strengthen and evolve ICANN's multistakeholder model.

As noted in the Global Stakeholder Engagement (GSE) section, the Engagement Programs function is being integrated into Stakeholder Engagement (along with Meetings in FY24) and this integration will be finalized by FY25.

OPERATING INITIATIVE CONTRIBUTIONS

- Support: Implement New gTLD auction proceeds recommendations as approved by the Board.
- Support: Facilitate the DNS ecosystem improvements.
- Support: Evolve and strengthen the multistakeholder model to facilitate diverse and inclusive participation in policymaking.
- Support: Evolve and strengthen the ICANN community's decision-making processes to ensure efficient and effective policymaking.

ACTIVITIES

- Lead engagement programs: ICANN Fellowship Program, NextGen@ICANN, ICANN for Beginners Virtual Program, Registrant Program, Leadership Program, Chairing Skills Program, and ICANN Community Childcare Grants.
- Implement a more data-driven approach to diversity issues, program management, and evaluation.
 - Evaluate and improve Engagement Programs on a rolling basis
 - Conduct a five-year review for the Fellowship Program and NextGen@ICANN.
- Support adoption and expansion of Community Engagement System platform use across ICANN org. This multi-year project is part of [ICANN Interim President and CEO Goal 1 for FY24](#).
- Improve linkages between newcomers and individuals and groups that perform policy development and advice work through mentorship and engagement with Fellows and NextGen@ICANN alumni.
 - Raise awareness about issues and challenges impacting registrants.
 - Ensure that registrants' perspectives are represented in ICANN org's work when implementing policies and services.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT & SERVICES

- Expand online curricula and virtual programming to meet increased ICANN community demand for online learning and capacity development (ICANN Learn, ICANN for Beginners, Chairing Skills, Registrant).
- Raise awareness via outreach and capacity-development efforts about issues and challenges impacting registrants.
- Measure and enhance the effectiveness of anti-harassment/upstander training opportunities across the ICANN community.
- Facilitate support for ICANN human rights framework of interpretation and diversity initiatives, including implementation of Board-approved recommendations from Work Stream 2 (WS2).
- Support implementation of activities under the Coalition for Digital Africa. This multi-year project is part of [ICANN Interim President and CEO Goal 3 for FY24](#).
- Support outreach efforts related to the ICANN Grant Program and the Applicant Support Program.
- Timely delivery of initial milestones for the development of ICANN's environmental sustainability strategy in alignment with the FY24 CEO goal.

HOW PROGRESS IS TRACKED

ICANN uses a combination of milestones, metrics, and reports to track Functional Activities. The following measures will be used over the five-year period for this Functional Activity:

- Support community groups and the ICANN Board in conducting regular diversity assessments starting in FY25.
- Support outreach efforts related to the ICANN Grant Program and the Applicant Support Program.
- Engagement Programs: Number of participants by gender, region and sector when available.
 - Five-year reviews of diversity programs: Fellowship and NextGen@ICANN in FY25.
 - Additional Fellowship and NextGen@ICANN metrics include:
 1. Number of pen holders on policy reports and documents
 2. Number of mailing list contributors
 3. Number of Public Comment contributors
 4. Number of alumni in leadership positions
 - ICANN Learn, ICANN for Beginners Virtual Program, Registrant Program metrics include:
 1. Number of active users / participants
 2. Number of new courses or materials
 3. Number of multilingual courses or materials
 - Travel support: Number of travelers supported

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT & SERVICES

RESOURCES

Stable. Engagement Programs resources will remain at FY24 levels (adjusted annually for inflation).

CONSIDERATIONS

The following risks and considerations exist for this Functional Activity and may impact its advancement:

- Work depends on clear community and organizational global public interest priorities and cross-functional collaboration.
- There is a risk of new volunteers dropping off and participants in ICANN's multistakeholder processes not reflecting the evolution of the broader Internet user base.
- Reputational risks may arise from failure to provide sufficient transparency and ability to demonstrate impact and return on investment of programs. This includes failure to support educated and informed stakeholders and a perceived lack of diversity in Engagement Programs.
- Continued improvement to Engagement Program operations is needed, increasing transparency, scalability, and responsiveness to the community.
- The demand for self-paced, online capacity-development opportunities across the ICANN community continues to rise each year. Over 3,000 learners have actively taken training in the last 12 months, 50 percent more from the previous year. ICANN Learn should be leveraged to improve scalability of capacity-development efforts and resources to manage the expansion of training content. Self-paced, online learning is an effective tool for preparing participants to optimize in-person or live capacity development.
- Level of support for the ICANN Emergency Assistance Program for Continued Internet Access is subject to availability of funds.
- ICANN is seeing an upward trend in the number of face-to-face and virtual meetings, even with flat funding. ■

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT & SERVICES

Global Meeting Operations

PURPOSE

Global Meeting Operations (Meetings) supports face-to-face and virtual meetings hosted by ICANN globally. For face-to-face meetings, the team ensures that the selected cities, venues, meeting facilities, and services provide an environment conducive to an effective meeting. They work in close collaboration with the community to establish the meeting schedule and provide travel support for funded travelers and staff.

For hybrid meetings, the team works with the community and the org to establish the schedule and ensure an effective participation strategy for the online and in-person participants.

As noted in the Global Stakeholder Engagement (GSE) section, in FY24 the Meetings function is being integrated into the overall Stakeholder Engagement function, along with Engagement Programs. This integration will be complete by FY25.

OPERATING INITIATIVE CONTRIBUTIONS

No linked initiatives at this time. This supports ICANN's ongoing activities.

ACTIVITIES

The team provides extensive preplanning and on-site and virtual support for:

- Three ICANN Public Meetings a year.
- Three Board workshops a year.
- Community face-to-face and virtual meetings, the number of which varies from year to year.
- Support for ICANN-managed regional events, including regional DNS and Engagement Forums, capacity development trainings and other workshops.

HOW PROGRESS IS TRACKED

ICANN uses a combination of milestones, metrics, and reports to track Functional Activities. The following measures will be used over the five-year period for this Functional Activity:

- Meaningful stakeholder participation increases, demonstrated by community members effectively engaged in multistakeholder model processes and committed to cooperating toward an agreed-on global public interest.
- Continued efforts of the ICANN Board, community, and org to facilitate the inclusion and participation of all stakeholders.
- Meetings team: Number of meetings supported.
- Travel Support: Number of travelers supported.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT & SERVICES

RESOURCES

Resource requirements are expected to increase. As face-to-face and virtual meeting demand continues to increase and consume available resources, the team's ability to complete work in a timely manner is increasing direct and indirect costs due to reduced lead times. The team anticipates needing additional resources in FY25–29.

CONSIDERATIONS

The following risks and considerations exist for this Functional Activity and may impact its advancement:

- There is a need to define the purpose of ICANN Public Meetings and work toward internal alignment within ICANN org.
- ICANN is seeing an upward trend in the number of face-to-face and virtual meetings, even with flat funding.
- ICANN org has confirmed locations through June 2024 and is in the process of finalizing contracting for some meeting venues. Changes to the number or type of meetings could incur cancellation penalties.
- Future changes in the delivery of ICANN-supported meetings and events may impact the experience for stakeholders and participants. ■

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT & SERVICES

Government and Intergovernmental Organization Engagement (GE)

PURPOSE

ICANN's GE team is responsible for outreach and engagement with national and regional governments and IGOs to protect the remit and mandate of ICANN. The team acts as a central point of contact within ICANN to help governments and IGOs understand and be mindful of the way the Internet functions and the role ICANN plays in technical Internet governance. The team's goal is to provide information to make governments aware of or mitigate the sometimes unintended consequences of government action on areas within ICANN's remit or on policies developed through ICANN's multistakeholder processes. The team specifically provides information about ICANN's role in the management of the Internet's unique identifiers, including the global DNS, IP addresses, and protocol parameters.

The GE team works with the GAC as the home of governments and IGOs within ICANN. The team also represents the mission of ICANN with government ministries and IGOs.

OPERATING INITIATIVE CONTRIBUTIONS

- Linked to OI7: Geopolitical monitoring, engagement, and mitigation. This supports ICANN's ongoing activities.

ACTIVITIES

- Publish reports on government-related activity such as ICANN-led briefings and capacity-development events, including engagement with diplomats and U.N. agencies.
- Collaborate with local government hosts and GAC members to conduct periodic High-Level Governmental meetings.
- Develop reports and statistics on GAC participation, outreach, and technical briefings.
- Contribute to open consultations, legislative, regulatory, policy, and standards initiatives, and publish contributions on the [Government Engagement page](#).
- Review and align existing Memorandums of Understanding with goals.
- Track data on GAC representation and participation in ICANN policy development.
- Assess risks from legislative and regulatory processes, and global IGO activities.
- Facilitate government engagement strategies reflecting geopolitical changes and Strategic Plan updates.
- Engage in cross-functional regional activities related to technical and policy work.
- Promote capacity development and update activities against the Strategic Plan.
- Support cross-organizational collaboration for legislative tracking, government engagement, and strategic planning.
- Align global GE strategies with the ICANN FY21-25 Strategic Plan.
- Update capacity-development activities against the Strategic Plan.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT & SERVICES

- Evaluate and modify government engagement events for effectiveness.
- Develop and implement an annual engagement plan for the IGF.
- Annually review and revise engagement strategies for International Telecommunication Union (ITU), ITU-Development Sector, and the WSIS+20 review.
- Monitor and report on developments at the U.N., ITU, and other U.N. agencies, dealing with WSIS+20, as well as development of the U.N. Cybercrime Convention and other relevant U.N. and ITU documents.
- Execute the milestones under CEO Goal #6: Develop and implement a communications and engagement strategy designed to address the WSIS+20 review process.

HOW PROGRESS IS TRACKED

ICANN uses a combination of milestones, metrics, and reports to track functional activities. All work areas in this initiative apart from WSIS+20 now form part of ongoing functional activities. The following measures will be used over the five-year period:

- Execute CEO Goal #6: “Develop and implement a communications and engagement strategy designed to address the WSIS+20 review process” in the lead-up to the 2025 WSIS+20 review process.
- Delivery of the postponed High-Level Governmental meeting may occur in FY25 as a hybrid (virtual and in-person) event in conjunction with an ICANN meeting, depending on pandemic safety protocols and discussions with the GAC. Subsequent High-Level Governmental meetings potentially could occur biennially.
- Reports and statistics on participation in outreach, technical briefings, and capacity-development sessions for the GAC and through collaboration with other organizations in the ecosystem.
- Comparison of surveys conducted before and after GAC capacity-development events to measure information learned and delivery of information against expectations.
- Completed review of existing Memorandums of Understanding for continuing alignment with goals.
- Metrics related to the number of countries and IGOs represented in the GAC and the number of countries and IGOs actively participating in the GAC and ICANN policy processes.

RESOURCES

Increased resources will be needed to address:

- △ Risks to the multistakeholder model of Internet governance from processes such as the United Nations General Assembly review of the progress made since the World Summit on the Information Society, known as the WSIS+20 Review or the Global Digital Compact.
- △ WSIS+20 Review outcomes with the potential to impact ICANN’s mission.
- △ Growing risks stemming from government and IGO legislative and regulatory actions, both intended and unintended.
- △ Risks to the global Internet’s stability due to new technologies, lack of government understanding, or political initiatives aimed at addressing perceived challenges posed by those technologies.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT & SERVICES

- △ Heightened demand for engagement and capacity development, driven by the GAC's Underserved Regions and Public Safety Working Groups.
- △ Increased regional capacity-development workshops, technical briefings, and training efforts delivered by ICANN or in collaboration with other organizations in the Internet ecosystem.
- △ Growing activity in cybersecurity, reflecting rising governmental concerns and proactive measures to address or exploit possible vulnerabilities in critical Internet infrastructure.
- △ Increased need for professional service contracts to cover specialized events, such as those related to the U.N. Open-Ended Working Group, the Ad Hoc Committee, discussions concerning the cybercrime convention, the next round of the WSIS discussions, as well as the ITU Plenipotentiary 26. Moreover, there's an increasing need for service contracts related to information gathering and analysis in various regions.
- △ Participation in previously unexplored arenas with potential impacts on ICANN's mission due to shifts in political action.
- △ Increased operational responsibilities in FY25–29 will require an increase in headcount.

CONSIDERATIONS

The following risks and considerations exist for this functional activity and may impact its advancement:

- There could be continuous work for ICANN in the U.N. system beyond 2025, depending on the outcome of the WSIS+20 review process.
- Changes in the assessment of the risk environment.
- Changes in functional resources and team allocation.
- Expanding geopolitical activity and corresponding global spread will require increased collaboration and demand on the resources of GSE, OCTO, Global Communications, and other community-facing functions in ICANN org. ■

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT & SERVICES

GDD Accounts and Services

PURPOSE

The Global Domains Division (GDD) Accounts and Services team, part of the Global Domains and Strategy Function, serves as ICANN's main connection to registrars and registry operators. This team's roles include managing ICANN's relationships and contracts with the DNS industry, leading or supporting the implementation of requests from the ICANN community that relate to the registries or registrars, evolving the contractual obligations to best serve the Internet community, and developing solutions for ICANN's effective, equitable, and efficient management of contracts with registrars and registry operators. Additionally, the team identifies DNS ecosystem trends, manages financial forecasts, and leads ICANN's DNS Security Threat Mitigation Program.

OPERATING INITIATIVE CONTRIBUTIONS

- Support: Promote and evolve the DNS through open and transparent processes that enable competition and open entry in Internet-related markets while ensuring the stability, security, and resiliency of the DNS.

ACTIVITIES

- Continue to build and maintain relationships with ICANN's contracted parties.
- Conduct capacity-development sessions with contracted parties to ensure understanding of new obligations or changes to processes driven by new policies, contractual changes or operational changes. Collect and contextualize market intelligence about the domain name industry ecosystem.
- Implement GNSO policy recommendations after adoption by the ICANN Board.
- Implement and enhance services for the contracted parties.
- Develop the annual and five-year funding forecast and funding assumptions.
- Implement assigned Specific Review recommendations.
- Lead efforts to prepare to evolve the Registry Agreement to support the New gTLD Program: Next Round.
- Lead efforts to define the criteria and evaluation parameters for registry operators to support the New gTLD Program: Next Round and ongoing operations.
- Prepare for the implications of the New gTLD Program: Next Round on existing processes and services to registry operators.
- Lead evaluation of applications for Registrar Accreditation, and proposed assignments or changes of control related to registrars and registries.
- Coordinate ICANN's efforts to conduct research and provide tools, factual information, and education for the ICANN community regarding DNS security threats and DNS abuse.
- Collaborate and coordinate with industry actors on reducing DNS security threats (botnets, malware, pharming, phishing, and spam when used as vectors).

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT & SERVICES

- Collaborate with the community to pinpoint areas where ICANN can address DNS Abuse and develop strategies to mitigate it.
- Host an annual Contracted Parties Summit, which provides ICANN org and contracted parties an opportunity to engage and address issues of mutual interest and importance.

HOW PROGRESS IS TRACKED

ICANN uses a combination of milestones, metrics, and reports to track functional activities. The following measures will be used over the five-year period for this functional activity:

- Production of funding forecast and forecast assumptions for quarterly and annual budgeting processes.
- Implementation of adopted consensus policies.
- Periodic survey of contracted parties.

RESOURCES

Resource requirements are expected to increase for various reasons:

- Additional staffing levels are needed to support the implementation of several GNSO PDPs, including those in progress and completed.
- The team must allocate additional resources to address Specific Review recommendations approved by the Board, particularly the New gTLD Program: Next Round.
- More resources are necessary to lead and support the evolution of the Registry Agreement in preparation for the next round of gTLDs. This includes defining criteria and processes for future ROs.
- Account management resources will need to be expanded to provide adequate support to a growing base of registries and registrars, which will increase with the next round and subsequent rounds of new gTLDs.
- Enhanced financial forecasting efforts will demand more resources for market analysis and improved financial models.

CONSIDERATIONS

- Implementation of approved GNSO-developed, GNSO Council-approved policy recommendations partially depends on volunteer-based Implementation Review Teams.
- Implementation of several of the Board-approved Specific Review recommendations require consultation with contracted parties and potential changes to agreements.
- Any changes to the Registry Agreement or Registrar Agreement require agreement with relevant stakeholder groups and approval by a supermajority of the relevant contracted parties. ■

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT & SERVICES

Global Support Center

PURPOSE

The Global Support team is a geographically dispersed team within the Global Domains and Strategy Function. It provides support five days a week, 24 hours a day, to contracted parties, new gTLD applicants, and the Internet community. The team manages requests received via email, phone, and the Naming Service portal (by contracted parties). It also supports various aspects of ICANN's mission and strategy with a particular emphasis on continuous improvement.

OPERATING INITIATIVE CONTRIBUTIONS

No linked initiatives. These are ongoing operational functions.

ACTIVITIES

- Tier one support for ICANN org functions.
- Contracted party support and communications management.
- New gTLD applicant support.
- Contact management.
- Registrant and community support.

HOW PROGRESS IS TRACKED

ICANN uses a combination of metrics and reports to track functional activities. The following milestones will be used over the five-year period for this functional activity:

- Continued monitoring and modification as needed of service level targets.
- Continued measurement, reported regularly through transactional surveys, of customer satisfaction.

RESOURCES

Resource requirements are expected to increase to support the Registry Data Request Service and New gTLD Program: Next Round-related inquiries.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT & SERVICES

CONSIDERATIONS

The following risks and considerations exist for this functional activity and may impact its operations:

- Estimating future demand for the Global Support Center is challenging due to potential fluctuations caused by regional and global events.
- The Global Support Center must continuously adapt to changing policies and contractual obligations to ensure accurate responses to contracted parties and community members.
- The Global Support Center's effectiveness and efficiency heavily rely on specific operating systems and tools, notably the Naming Services portal and the inContact Telephony Platform.
- Global Support Center resources are in high demand both internally and externally, emphasizing the importance of staff retention for ongoing success. ■

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT & SERVICES

Global Communications and Language Services

PURPOSE

ICANN's Global Communications and Language Services function is responsible for creating awareness of ICANN and its role in supporting the public interest, and ensuring that ICANN is represented accurately and consistently in all forms of communication. This is accomplished by:

- Demonstrating successes, knowledge, and thought leadership through compelling, clear, and consistent messaging.
- Continuing to grow, globalize, and diversify communications efforts and channels for geographic and target-audience reach.
- Expanding and engaging with new audiences by reaching outside of traditional forums.
- Leveraging media and industry contacts to amplify key messages.
- Increasing external understanding of and participation in ICANN's policy development processes and multistakeholder model.
- Explaining the role of the IANA functions and ICANN's technical remit.
- Educating internal audiences and supporting staff activities.
- Facilitating access to ICANN by providing translations, interpretation, and transcription services in the six U.N. languages for ICANN Public Meetings and other events.

The secondary purpose is to provide communication tools to staff and the community to advance their work.

OPERATING INITIATIVE CONTRIBUTIONS

- Support: Facilitate DNS ecosystem improvements.
- Support: Evolve and strengthen the multistakeholder model to facilitate diverse and inclusive participation in policymaking.
- Support: Evolve and strengthen the ICANN community's decision-making processes to ensure efficient and effective policymaking.
- Support: Promote and evolve the DNS through open and transparent processes that enable competition and open entry in Internet-related markets while ensuring the stability, security, and resiliency of the DNS.
- Support: Support the evolution and strengthening of Root Zone Management and the Root Server System.
- Support: Implement New gTLD auction proceeds recommendations as approved by the Board.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT & SERVICES

ACTIVITIES

- This team is responsible for ensuring professional and consistent messaging that effectively positions ICANN within the community. Their responsibilities encompass the use of traditional media, social media, and other communication channels. Specifically, they oversee brand and usage standards, website content, social media management, graphic design, writing, proofreading, and editing.
 - The team will continue the development and implementation of the Information Transparency Platform by adding more features to icann.org and transitioning the community sites to the new user experience.
 - The Global Communications function supports capacity-development efforts in regional offices through public relations, media facilitation, and communication strategy.
 - This function is part of the strategic communications planning and implementation (drafting, editing, content review, and scorecard development) for many of the functions within ICANN org. They also provide internal communications support, including editing, writing, and communications planning for internal functions such as Engineering and IT, Finance, and HR.
 - Facilitating access to ICANN by providing translations, interpretation, and transcription services in the six U.N. languages for ICANN Public Meetings and other events, the ICANN website and other content as requested.
- △ In FY25–29, Global Communications anticipates adding a writer, a media specialist, and a graphic designer to the team to better support each function.
- △ Additionally, the team will be actively involved in supporting various Board-approved recommendations, including those from the New gTLD Subsequent Procedures Working Group, Expedited Policy Development Process on Temporary Specification for gTLD Registration Policy Phase 2, and the Cross-Community Working Group on New gTLD Auction Proceeds.

HOW PROGRESS IS TRACKED

ICANN uses a combination of metrics and reports to track functional activities. The following milestones will be used over the five-year period for this functional activity:

The Global Communications team will use tools, such as social listening and media monitoring, to track key metrics including: press release, blog, and announcement reach, content likes, retweets, shares, etc.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT & SERVICES

RESOURCES

Resource requirements are expected to increase, as the team has requested the addition of staff to increase capacity.

CONSIDERATIONS

The following risks and considerations exist for this functional activity and may impact its advancement:

- Overall, unclear or inconsistent communications and messaging to stakeholders can negatively impact ICANN's reputation.
- Advance notice of special projects or initiatives that will require communications support is key to ensuring that resources are available to provide assistance. Other functions are strongly encouraged to involve the team as early as possible.
- Promoting a shared understanding of key and current issues requires that staff throughout ICANN org work with the Global Communications team to access accurate and consistent information on topics of interest.
- Translated materials that are costly to produce are not well used in some of the languages. ■

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT & SERVICES

Ombuds

PURPOSE

The Office of the Ombuds is a neutral dispute resolution practitioner for the ICANN community. Its principal function is to provide an independent internal evaluation of complaints by members of the ICANN community who believe that the ICANN org, Board, or an ICANN constituent body has treated them unfairly. The Ombuds serves as a neutral advocate for fairness, and seeks to evaluate and resolve complaints about unfair or inappropriate treatment by ICANN org staff, the Board, or ICANN constituent bodies, clarifying the issues and using conflict resolution tools such as negotiation, facilitation, and “shuttle diplomacy” to achieve these results.

The Ombuds also has a formal role in conducting a substantive review of Reconsideration Requests. However, if the office has been previously involved in the subject matter of the Reconsideration Request, the Ombuds will recuse themselves from such a review.

OPERATING INITIATIVE CONTRIBUTIONS

No linked initiatives at this time. This supports ICANN’s ongoing activities.

ACTIVITIES

The primary role of the Ombuds includes:

- Complaint management.
- Increasing the visibility of the Office of the Ombuds and how it can support constituents, including awareness of the Expected Standards of Behavior and the Community Anti-Harassment Policy.
- Increasing online presence in virtual meetings to demonstrate availability of the Office of Ombuds, its service to the community, and to serve as a preventative resource to reduce or mitigate conflict.
- Promoting anti-harassment training via ICANN Learn.
- Ongoing education to empower leadership in community via ICANN Learn and providing training for community leaders to empower and educate on conflict resolution.
- Substantive evaluation of Requests for Reconsideration under ICANN Bylaws, Article 4, section 4.2.1.
- Implementation of recommendations related to the Ombuds from the Cross-Community Working Group on Enhancing ICANN Accountability Work Stream 2.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT & SERVICES

HOW PROGRESS IS TRACKED

ICANN Bylaws require the Office of the Ombuds to produce an annual report with consolidated analysis of the year's complaints and resolutions, documentation of adherence to confidentiality obligations and concerns, as well as recommendations for steps to minimize future complaints.

RESOURCES

The Office of the Ombuds is evolving to meet the changing needs of the ICANN ecosystem. Resource requirements are expected to change to support this evolution. This may include additional staff to support the office. Additionally, the Ombuds conducts a substantive evaluation of Requests for Reconsideration. The number of Reconsideration Requests submitted each fiscal year varies and is unpredictable, which can affect the resources required to support the office.

CONSIDERATIONS

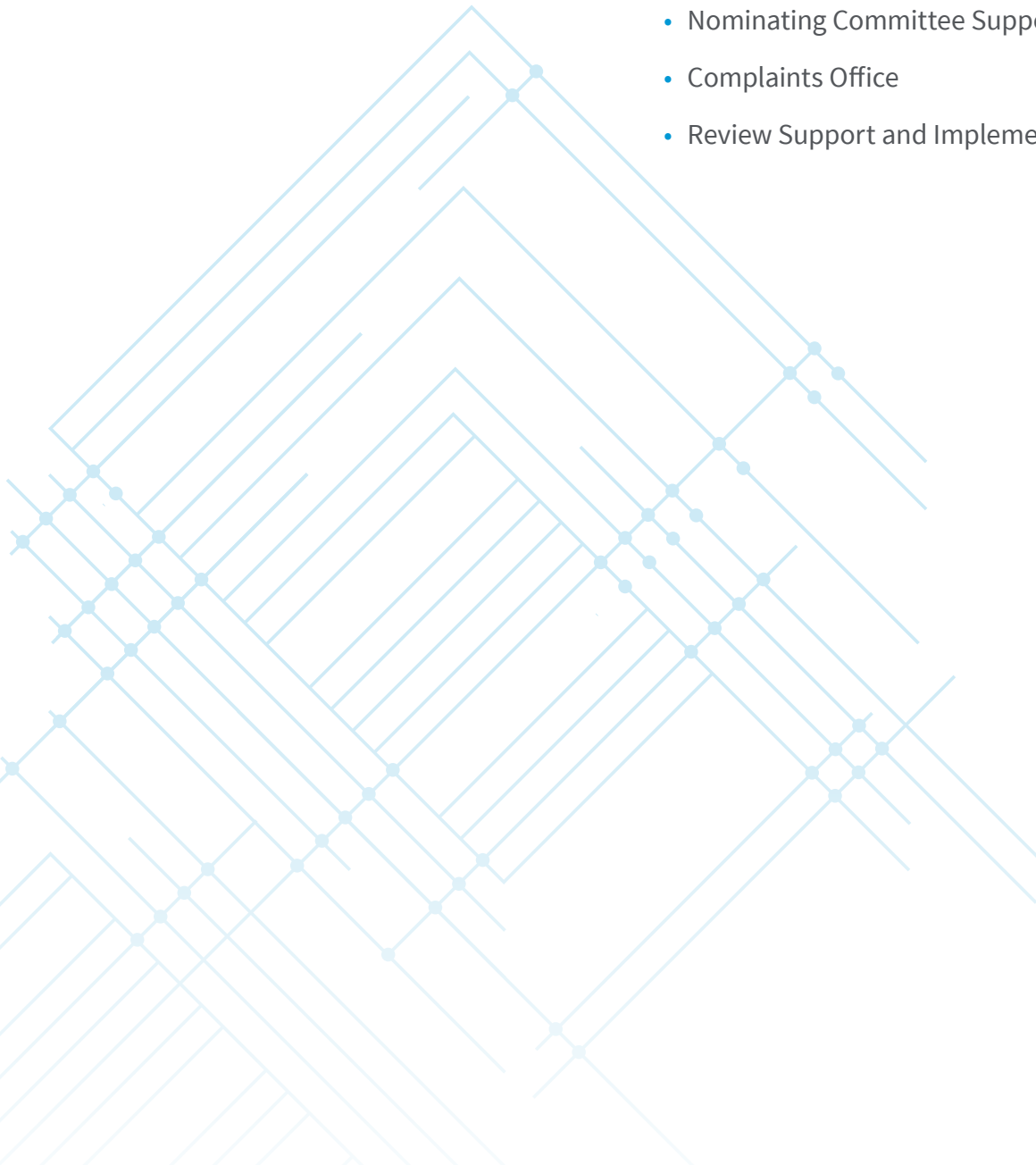
Work Stream 2 of the Cross-Community Working Group on Enhancing ICANN Accountability issued recommendations that have been accepted by the Board. The accepted recommendations include wording relating to the Office of the Ombuds. The Office of the Ombuds supports and contributes to the implementation of Ombuds-related recommendations. ■

FUNCTIONAL ACTIVITIES

FY25-29

ICANN ORG GOVERNANCE

- Board Activities
- Office of the President and CEO
- Governance Support
- Nominating Committee Support
- Complaints Office
- Review Support and Implementation



ICANN ORG GOVERNANCE

Board Activities

PURPOSE

The Board Activities Functional Activity represents the work and responsibilities of the ICANN Board of Directors. Among its duties, the ICANN Board:

- Ensures that ICANN remains at all times true to its mission, commitments, and core values.
- Oversees ICANN org’s performance to ensure it operates with efficiency and effectiveness in a fiscally responsible and accountable manner and, where practicable and not inconsistent with ICANN’s other obligations under the Bylaws, in a manner that is responsive to the needs of the global Internet community.
- Oversees development and periodic revisions of the Strategic Plan and Operating Plan.
- Ensures that ICANN operates pursuant to the highest ethical standards, complies with applicable laws, and considers adherence to best practices in all areas of operation.
- Ensures all policy development and decision-making processes are transparent, open, reflective of the public interest, and accountable to all stakeholders.

OPERATING INITIATIVE CONTRIBUTIONS

The Board supports all of ICANN’s operations and ongoing activities.

ACTIVITIES

- Establish Committees - Committees allow a smaller group of Board members to work together when a more focused approach is needed. The list of committees as well as the scope of their duties and activities can be found on [this page](#). When necessary, establish working groups or caucuses that are focused on a specific topic or issue.
- Hold regular workshops, information calls, and meetings to ensure the Board is kept abreast of ICANN’s ongoing activities.
- Focus on serving ICANN and the global public interest.
- Participate in external events to develop effective relationships across the global Internet ecosystem. Advocate for ICANN’s mission and its multistakeholder model of governance within the Internet governance ecosystem.

ICANN ORG GOVERNANCE

HOW PROGRESS IS TRACKED

The ICANN Board fulfills its objectives and outcomes by directing the President and CEO to implement the Board's decisions. The following measures will be used over the five-year period:

- **Outcomes:**

- Successful implementation of the Strategic Plan and the Operating and Financial Plan.
- Successful support of the implementation of the [ICANN Interim President and CEO Goals](#).
- Successful implementation and delivery of the New gTLD Program: Next Round per the approved [Implementation Plan](#).
- Strengthened DNS and RSS security.
- Evolution of unique identifier systems.
- ICANN's long-term financial sustainability.

- **Performance metrics:**

- Timely revision of the Strategic Plan and the Operating and Financial Plan.
- Amount of funds transferred into the Reserve Fund, per the [Board resolution](#), for replenishment.
- Number of geopolitical issues impacting ICANN's mission identified on time and successfully addressed.
- Number of additional stakeholders that join ICANN globally.
- Number of effective relationships with key actors in the global Internet ecosystem established.

RESOURCES

Resource requirements are expected to be stable. This may change as community recommendations related to the ICANN Grant Program and the upcoming New gTLD Program: Next Round progress.

CONSIDERATIONS

The following risks and considerations exist for the ICANN Board in its activities:

- Workload and competing priorities may slow down progress in key areas of work.
- Maintaining institutional knowledge is helped if there is stability in the Board's composition over the long term.
- The ability to select and retain qualified and diverse Board members is dependent on factors such as available candidate pool, time commitments required, and compensation.
- Noticing trends affecting ICANN and proactively reviewing its strategic objectives is key to achieving positive outcomes. ICANN org's annual trends assessment helps ensure ICANN navigates these changes effectively. ■

ICANN ORG GOVERNANCE

Office of the President and CEO

PURPOSE

The Office of the President and CEO provides support to the President and CEO, who has fiduciary responsibility for the organization. The goals of the President and CEO are achieved through work conducted by ICANN org.

OPERATING INITIATIVE CONTRIBUTIONS

The Office of the President and CEO supports all of ICANN's ongoing operations and activities.

ACTIVITIES

The nature of the Office of the President and CEO is to provide ongoing support to the President and CEO, to effectively manage ICANN org.

Activities include:

- Supporting the President and CEO in day-to-day activities, including travel and meetings arrangement and other administrative tasks.
- Providing strategic direction to the Executive Team to achieve organizational goals.
- Meeting regularly with SO and AC leadership and the ICANN Board to ensure ICANN org effectively implements policy.
- Ensuring ICANN org is accountable to the Board and community.

HOW PROGRESS IS TRACKED

Progress of the Office of the President and CEO is related to the progress made on the established [goals](#) of the President and CEO, some of which are multi-year and are approved by the ICANN Board. Additionally, the President and CEO and Executive Team provide [regular reports](#) to the Board and the community before ICANN Public Meetings.

RESOURCES

Resource requirements are expected to be stable. ■

ICANN ORG GOVERNANCE

Governance Support

PURPOSE

Governance Support legally safeguards ICANN org and mitigates risk and regulatory impacts to ICANN org.

OPERATING INITIATIVE CONTRIBUTIONS

- Lead: Evolve and improve internal and external ethics policies.
- Support: Evolve and strengthen the ICANN community's decision-making processes to ensure efficient and effective policymaking.
- Support: Promote and evolve the DNS through open and transparent processes that enable competition and open entry in Internet-related markets while ensuring the stability, security, and resiliency of the DNS.
- Support: Facilitate DNS ecosystem improvements.
- Support: Support the evolution and strengthening of Root Zone Management and the Root Server System.
- Support: Implement New gTLD auction proceeds recommendations as approved by the Board.

ACTIVITIES

- Litigation and accountability mechanisms support, such as maintaining litigation readiness, monitoring and managing ICANN litigation matters, and accountability mechanism proceedings.
- General legal internal support.
- Advice to senior management.
- Contractual support, such as contract review, analysis, recommendations, risk assessments, and amendments.
- Secretarial support to ICANN Board and PTI Board, such as performing duties related to notices, meetings, corporate records, and implementation of Board and committee decisions.
- Service as Chief Data Protection Officer, with a focus on ICANN organization-level data to ensure ICANN's internal data protection and privacy program is compliant and up-to-date.
- Support for anticipated implementation of Board-approved policy recommendations for the New gTLD Program: Next Round.
- Support for RDRS to handle requests for access to nonpublic registration data related to gTLDs.
- Support for implementation of Board-approved recommendations from Specific Reviews, including the Holistic Review.
- Support for implementation of the ICANN Grant Program based on the Cross-Community Working Group (CCWG) Auction Proceeds recommendations.
- Support the anticipated implementation of the Board-approved recommendations from the RSS Governance Working Group.
- Establishment of a contract management database.

ICANN ORG GOVERNANCE

HOW PROGRESS IS TRACKED

ICANN uses a combination of milestones, metrics, and reports to track functional activities. The following measures will be used over the five-year period for this functional activity:

- Achieving functional purpose within funding allowance.
- Sufficient contingency funds to address unforeseen legal events, which involves a thorough assessment of past trends, the current environment, and future projections to determine annual contingency fund amounts.

RESOURCES

The governance team is actively preparing for a substantial increase in resource requirements. This includes addressing the operationalization of the New gTLD Program: Next Round, continued development of the SSAD, management of the ICANN Grant Program, and expected Specific Reviews activities. While some of these tasks can be accommodated within existing budgeted resources, the scope of work necessitates the addition of full-time staff. Furthermore, substantial support from external legal counsel, possibly from multiple firms, may be required. There is a need for additional full-time positions, such as lawyers, paralegals, project managers, analysts, and administrative support professionals to effectively manage these responsibilities.

CONSIDERATIONS

The following risks and considerations exist for this functional activity and may impact its advancement:

- Changing landscape of privacy regulations.
- Outcomes related to litigation or general internal legal support depend on when the Legal team becomes involved in matters or issues.
- Providing advance notice of special projects or initiatives requiring legal services is crucial for ensuring that the budget and resources are available. Other functions are strongly encouraged to engage the Legal team as early as possible in the planning stages.
- Large-scale initiatives such as the New gTLD Program: Next Round require substantive support from the Governance Support function and require scaling to accommodate growth in other areas of the organization. For example, if fifty new employees or contracted staff are added across ICANN org to support the New gTLD Program: Next Round, additional legal support and guidance will be necessary to meet the increased organizational demand. Each function's proposals for adding new resources will affect the additional legal support required.
- Within programs such as the New gTLD Program: Next Round and the ICANN Grant Program, timing, quantity, and scale issues need to be considered. For example, supporting multiple requests for proposals that must be launched simultaneously or designing new processes. The undefined timing and scale of effort needed could impact the availability of legal resources.
- To provide meaningful legal support and guidance for program-related activities, it is important to emphasize the time and effort needed to prepare lawyers at all levels. This includes in-house lawyers as well as outside counsel. Such training is essential to ensure effective contributions to the program. ■

ICANN ORG GOVERNANCE

Nominating Committee Support

PURPOSE

The Nominating Committee Support function provides support and coordination for the ICANN Nominating Committee (NomCom), an independent committee responsible for appointing leadership positions to the ICANN Board, PTI Board, At-Large Advisory Committee, ccNSO, and GNSO. The NomCom acts on behalf of the interests of the global Internet community while operating within the scope of ICANN's mission and the Bylaws.

OPERATING INITIATIVE CONTRIBUTIONS

- Support: Evolve and strengthen the ICANN community's decision-making processes to ensure efficient and effective policymaking.

ACTIVITIES

This team supports the NomCom by providing:

- **Systems Administration:** Configure systems and tools for NomCom use, such as the NomCom application system, web pages, and workspace.
- **Meeting Planning:** Plan and coordinate phone, face-to-face, and virtual NomCom meetings.
- **Meeting Support:** Facilitate the work of the NomCom, including maintaining process and procedures documents and agendas.
- **Training:** Utilize current NomCom training programs. Develop new training programs, such as Unconscious Bias Training, Leadership Training, Interview Skills Training, and others recommended by the NomCom Recommendation Implementation Working Group.
- **Vendor Management:** Procuring, negotiating, contracting, and managing vendors in support of NomCom functions.
- Coordination of media and communication program.

HOW PROGRESS IS TRACKED

ICANN uses a combination of milestones, metrics, and reports to track functional activities. In FY25–29, the following metrics will be used for this functional activity:

- Number of face-to-face meetings supported.
- Number of phone or virtual meetings supported.
- Number of leadership positions filled.
- Number of committee training sessions completed to meet the requirements of the recommendations of the NomCom Recommendation Implementation Working Group.

ICANN ORG GOVERNANCE

RESOURCES

Resource requirements may need to be reviewed in order to complete the implementation work of the ICANN Board-approved recommendations made by the NomCom Recommendation Implementation Working Group.

CONSIDERATIONS

The following risks and considerations exist for this functional activity and may impact its advancement:

- Implementing Board-approved recommendations from the NomCom Recommendation Implementation Working Group may surpass the skills and capacity of existing resources.
- Ongoing NomCom operational costs may increase as a result of the NomCom Recommendation Implementation Working Group recommendations.
- Given the changing leadership within NomCom, ICANN org must remain flexible in revising operating procedures and approaches. ■

ICANN ORG GOVERNANCE

Complaints Office

PURPOSE

The Complaints Office enables ICANN org to transparently identify and resolve issues in one centralized location. The Complaints Office handles complaints regarding ICANN org that do not fall under existing mechanisms, such as Contractual Compliance, Reconsideration process, Independent Review process or the Office of the Ombuds.

The Complaints Office reviews verifiable information to provide fact-based recommendations and resolutions. It strives to be open and transparent, responsive and accountable to all parties, and to make recommendations that are constructive and actionable. Above all, the Complaints Office upholds the highest standards of integrity in service of ICANN's mission.

OPERATING INITIATIVE CONTRIBUTIONS

No linked initiatives at this time. This supports ICANN's ongoing activities.

ACTIVITIES

The Complaints Office responsibilities include:

- Receive, research, analyze, and respond to submitted complaints.
- Report on activities of the office.
- Plan, implement, and communicate Complaints Office changes and updates.
- Internal and external engagement.
- Implement Board-approved recommendations from the Cross Community Working Group on Enhancing ICANN Accountability Work Stream 2 (CCWG-WS2), including:
 - Support Ombuds in helping differentiate services provided by the Complaints Office.

HOW PROGRESS IS TRACKED

ICANN uses a combination of milestones, metrics, and reports to track functional activities. The following measures will be used over the five-year period for this functional activity:

- Number of complaints received.
- Number of complaints received in scope.
- Number of complaints resolved.
- May consider reporting turnaround time in FY25–29.

ICANN ORG GOVERNANCE

RESOURCES

Resource requirements are expected to be stable.

CONSIDERATIONS

The following risks and considerations exist for this functional activity and may impact its advancement:

- Shifting to a centralized system for complaints depends on ICANN’s prioritization and resource availability.
- The function’s limited staffing presents a risk that could result in delayed or stalled delivery on commitments.
- As awareness and visibility of the Complaints Office increase over time, there is a potential for a rapid escalation in the number of in-scope complaints. ■

ICANN ORG GOVERNANCE

Review Support and Implementation

PURPOSE

ICANN's Bylaws-mandated reviews are a core mechanism for continuously enhancing the multistakeholder model. These improvements stem from the Board-approved recommendations made either by community-led review teams (Specific Reviews) or external independent reviewers (Organizational Reviews).

ICANN org provides functional support for these reviews through two key teams:

- The Review Support and Accountability (RSA) team within the Global Domain Services (GDS) function manages and supports Specific and Organizational Reviews, from their initiation to completion. It also facilitates process improvements.
- The Implementation Operations (IO) team in the Office of the Chief Financial Officer function oversees the implementation of non-policy recommendations approved by the Board. This includes outputs from Specific Reviews and community-led working groups like the CCWG on Enhancing ICANN Accountability Work Stream 2, New gTLD Auction Proceeds, and the Enhancing the Effectiveness of ICANN's Multistakeholder Model project.

OPERATING INITIATIVE CONTRIBUTIONS

- Lead: Implement New gTLD auction proceeds recommendations as approved by the Board.
- Support: Evolve and strengthen the multistakeholder model to facilitate diverse and inclusive participation in policymaking.
- Support: Planning at ICANN.

ACTIVITIES

- Supporting ICANN org cross-functional engagement throughout the entire Review process, including the facilitation and support of the Reviews' Board Caucuses and the ICANN Board Organizational Effectiveness Committee, including their annual work plan and activities.
 - Facilitating and supporting of the Fourth Accountability and Transparency Review (ATR4) subject to Board and community consideration of the timing.
- Facilitating improvements to the reviews process through the Lifecycle of Reviews Project, including:
 - Supporting Bylaws and Operating Standards revisions as needed.
 - Developing a process for continuously improving reviews to ensure the proper metrics and procedures are in place to enable the real-time evaluation of reviews effectiveness. This includes both the efficiency of the reviews process and the value of its outputs.

ICANN ORG GOVERNANCE

- Overseeing the implementation of Board-approved Specific Reviews recommendations ([See Appendix C](#)), including:
 - Supporting related prioritization efforts.
 - Reporting on and documenting implementation.
 - Delivering on implementation, including:
 - Continuing the Pilot Continuous Improvement Program (ATRT3 Recommendation 3.6) to monitor progress related to deferrals of Organizational Reviews and Review timing over the next three-to-five years.
 - Preparing for the first assessment period (Q2 FY25–Q2 FY28) and the second period (Q2 FY29–end of Q2 FY32), subject to completion of the CIP Framework in FY24.
 - Implementing ATRT3 Recommendation 3.5 for a Holistic Review. The CIP will inform the Pilot Holistic Review and eventual Holistic Review.
- Continuing to monitor and address dependencies associated with Specific Reviews recommendations pending Board consideration to prepare the Board to take action, as appropriate.
- Overseeing the implementation of Board-approved recommendations emerging from the CCWG on Enhancing ICANN Accountability Work Stream 2.
- Furthering the implementation of the [Enhancing the Effectiveness of ICANN’s Multistakeholder Model](#) project.
- Continuing to work on the implementation of the ICANN Grant Program through which ICANN org will distribute the auction proceeds funds.

HOW PROGRESS IS TRACKED

ICANN uses a combination of metrics and reports to track functional activities. The following milestones will be used over the five-year period for this functional activity:

- Lifecycle of Reviews:
 - Facilitation of improvements to the reviews process through the Lifecycle of Reviews Project (through FY25).
 - Update of the Operating Standards for Specific Reviews, in compliance with the ICANN Bylaws (Q1 FY25).
- Implementation of Board-approved Specific Reviews recommendations (throughout FY25–29), including:
 - Implementation of ATRT3 Recommendation 3.6 to evolve Organizational Reviews into a Continuous Improvement Program (CIP), including a development of a CIP Framework in collaboration with the community by Q2 FY25, and completing the first assessment cycle by FY28. The Board will also assess potential Bylaws modifications to replace Organizational Reviews with the Continuous Improvement Program. Pending the Board’s assessment, the second CIP assessment cycle could be underway by the end of FY29.
- Production of quarterly reports on the status of Specific Reviews recommendations and implementation of Work Stream 2 (throughout FY25–29).

ICANN ORG GOVERNANCE

- Production of the Annual Review Implementation Report, in compliance with the Bylaws (yearly throughout FY25–29).
- Implementation of Board-approved Work Stream 2 recommendations (by FY27).
- Implementation of the Enhancing the Effectiveness of ICANN’s Multistakeholder Model project (throughout FY25–29).
- Completion of the implementation of the Grant Program and launch of the grant cycles (throughout FY25–29).
- Publication and maintenance of Reviews schedule on icann.org, subject to completion of the implementation of related ATRT3 recommendations and updates to the relevant Bylaws provisions.

RESOURCES

To ensure the success of the activities listed above:

- Close collaboration with ICANN org subject matter experts for the implementation of Board-approved recommendations. Resource adjustments will be introduced as reviews are streamlined and improvements or changes made to how ICANN org supports reviews in line with the Lifecycle of Reviews project. Resource adjustments will also be introduced in line with the published Reviews schedule resulting from the updated relevant Bylaws provisions.
- Resources associated with the ongoing support for the CIP representing the evolution of Organizational Reviews will be defined and planned once the CIP Framework is adopted and each SO/AC/NomCom plans its ongoing CIP activities.
- Grant Program resource estimates will be defined while the Program implementation progresses.

CONSIDERATIONS

The following elements may affect the implementation of these activities:

- Close collaboration with ICANN org subject matter experts for the implementation of Board-approved recommendations.
- Support of the ATRT4, subject to the determination of the appropriate timing for this Bylaws-mandated review, considering its relationship to the Pilot Holistic Review and its timing (FY25–29).
- Review process improvements from the Lifecycle of Reviews Project will shape future Specific Reviews’ process and operations.
- The outcome of the Pilot Holistic Review (part of Operating Initiative #3) will influence Bylaws modifications in the Reviews section based on ATRT3 recommendations. The timing of the Pilot Holistic Review will also affect the fourth Accountability and Transparency review, as no other reviews can be conducted simultaneously with the Holistic Review.
- Design of the CIP Framework and community’s adoption of it into its operations will inform whether Organizational Reviews will be replaced by the CIP. The ICANN Board will consider this matter in the third quarter of FY25 (development of CIP Framework estimated completion in December 2024).
- Results of the evaluation of projects and initiatives associated with the Enhancing the Effectiveness of the ICANN’s Multistakeholder Model Work Plan.
- High-level reprioritization of ICANN org work. ■

FUNCTIONAL ACTIVITIES

FY25-29

ICANN ORG SHARED SERVICES

- Planning
- Finance and Procurement
- Risk Management
- Grant Program
- Engineering and Information Technology
- Global Human Resources and Administrative Services
- Security Operations
- Board Operations
- ICANN Offices

ICANN ORG SHARED SERVICES

Planning

PURPOSE

The purpose of this functional activity is to support the development, implementation, monitoring, and evolution of ICANN's planning activities to ensure that ICANN org is accountable to the public in its stewardship of ICANN's mission. The Planning function leads and coordinates all planning activities with the ICANN community, org, and Board.

The long-term objective of the Planning function is to continuously increase the organization's effectiveness through adequate planning and performance measurement. The Planning function also includes the economist function, which contributes to the strategic planning activities and analysis on economic trends. This role serves as a subject matter expert and adviser on DNS market analysis, providing advisory and programmatic support throughout the organization by conducting research and analysis utilizing market and macroeconomic data.

OPERATING INITIATIVE CONTRIBUTIONS

- Lead: Planning at ICANN.

ACTIVITIES

- Lead ICANN's annual planning processes, including strategic outlook and strategic planning, operating planning, budgeting and progress reporting.
- Communicate and engage on the planning processes, timelines, and milestones with ICANN org, Board, and community.
- Manage the development of all plans per ICANN Bylaws requirements.
- Ensure alignment of regional and other planning programs and implementation efforts with ICANN plans.
- Develop, implement and manage progress reporting and measurement to report progress on the achievement of the Operating Plans and the Strategic Plan.
- Provide economic, advisory and programmatic support to subject-matter experts within ICANN org.
- Conduct economic research and analysis.

HOW PROGRESS IS TRACKED

ICANN uses a combination of milestones, metrics, and reports to track functional activities. The following measures will be used over the five-year period for this functional activity:

- Timely delivery of ICANN's Five-Year Strategic Plan, Five-Year Operating and Financial Plan, and Annual Operating Plan and Budget per ICANN's Bylaws requirement.
- Regular completion of trends identification. Ability to factually inform trends based on public data.

ICANN ORG SHARED SERVICES

- Regular completion of trends, prioritization, and impacts analysis.
- Regular decision to revise or prolong the Strategic Plan.
- As needed, revision of the Strategic Plan.
- Regular reports on achievements and progress against the ICANN plans.
- Evolve and improve ICANN's planning processes, including the strategic planning process, operating planning process, budgeting process, and process reporting process.
- Monitor global macroeconomic conditions, DNS marketplace, and Internet-related economic sectors.
- Timely delivery of initial milestones for the development of ICANN's Strategic Plan FY26–30, the FY26–30 Operating and Financial Plan, and FY26 Operating Plan and Budget to achieve the timeline per the Bylaws requirements.

RESOURCES

Resource requirements are expected to be stable.

CONSIDERATIONS

The following risks and considerations exist for this Functional Activity and may impact its advancement:

- Lack of sufficient time and process for the planning, including data collection and analysis, to facilitate org-wide prioritization and progress reporting can impact the efficiency and effectiveness of planning activities.
- Cross-functional collaboration and resources are needed and progress will depend on their availability.
- Global macroeconomic and financial conditions are subject to change. Any assessment is done with base-level parameters and expectations. Unanticipated changes in the global economic environment can therefore render prior assessments and opinions outdated or invalid.
- Global macroeconomic factors may change priority areas, as the economic climate may prompt additional research needs for the organization. ■

ICANN ORG SHARED SERVICES

Finance and Procurement

PURPOSE

The Finance and Procurement function is the steward of ICANN's public funds, and a champion of financial accountability and transparency. It provides timely, accurate, and reliable financial and procurement services that support responsible decision-making.

OPERATING INITIATIVE CONTRIBUTIONS

- Support: Planning at ICANN.
- Support: Implement New gTLD auction proceeds recommendations as approved by the Board.

ACTIVITIES

The Finance and Procurement function handles all accounting, auditing, financial analysis, financial reporting, statutory reporting, taxes, payroll, billing and collections, insurance, treasury (including payments), procurement, and sourcing for ICANN operations, IANA functions, and PTI, as applicable. Financial analysis specific to the New gTLD Program: Next Round will be a key focus area.

HOW PROGRESS IS TRACKED

ICANN uses a combination of milestones, metrics, and reports to track functional activities. The following measures will be used over the five-year period for this functional activity:

- Continuous improvement of processes to gain efficiency and improve quality.
- Continuous improvement of financial analysis.
- Evaluation and reports of service-level metrics.
- Volume and frequency of ICANN's Reserve Fund replenishment.
- Contribution to the Operating Initiative Planning at ICANN.

RESOURCES

FY25: Resources are expected to be stable.

FY25–29: Resources will increase as the Board approves additional recommendations leading to the New gTLD Program: Next Round and the org implements the Board-approved recommendations.

CONSIDERATIONS

No new risks or considerations noted. ■

ICANN ORG SHARED SERVICES

Risk Management

PURPOSE

The role of the Risk Management function is to facilitate the identification and articulation of risks faced by ICANN so that the org may make informed decisions about planning for and managing those risks. Through the established Risk Management Framework, the function focuses on developing a risk-aware culture that incorporates the risk framework into ICANN's activities and planning.

OPERATING INITIATIVE CONTRIBUTIONS

- Risk Management supports all operating initiatives.

ACTIVITIES

- Work with org functions to actively identify and articulate the risks to ICANN allowing for informed decisions to be taken regarding risks.
- Ensure awareness of risks so that risks are managed before they become a threat to fulfilling ICANN's objectives.
- Proactively manage risks and minimize surprises.
- Foster a risk-aware culture where all staff members feel empowered to identify and escalate risk concerns.
- Provide facilitating support to staff and functions in owning the risks and responses related to their activities.
- Provide concise and insightful reporting to executive management and the Board.

HOW PROGRESS IS TRACKED

ICANN uses a combination of milestones, metrics, and reports to track functional activities. The following measures will be used over the five-year period for this functional activity:

- Consistency of Risk Management process, such as risk identification, monitoring, and reporting.
- Disciplined risk planning.
- Risk Appetite Statement referenced by staff.
- Risk ownership by staff.

ICANN ORG SHARED SERVICES

RESOURCES

Resource requirements are expected to be stable.

CONSIDERATIONS

The largest consideration for this functional activity is the team's dependency on other functions and staff, who have many other priorities. The function relies on Risk Liaisons from each function to actively participate in risk-management initiatives. ■

ICANN ORG SHARED SERVICES

Grant Program

PURPOSE

The Implementation Operations (IO) team in the Office of the Chief Financial Officer function is responsible for the implementation of Board-approved non-policy recommendations. This includes the implementation of recommendations from the Cross Community Working Group on Auction Proceeds (CCWG-AP), which form the foundation of the ICANN New gTLD Auction Proceeds, as well as the ICANN Grant Program. The Grant Program is the instrument through which ICANN org will distribute the proceeds from the auctions.

OPERATING INITIATIVE CONTRIBUTIONS

- Lead: Implement New gTLD auction proceeds recommendations as approved by the Board.

ACTIVITIES

- Implementation of the CCWG-AP recommendations.
- Producing and promptly publishing an implementation report for each CCWG-AP recommendation on the ICANN wiki page dedicated to the Grant Program.
- Conducting the first internal and external review of the Grant Program in accordance with CCWG-AP Recommendation 12.
- Refining the Grant Program procedures based on the lessons learned and the evaluation at the end of each cycle.
- Regularly engaging with stakeholders who might be interested in submitting an application.

HOW PROGRESS IS TRACKED

ICANN uses a combination of metrics and reports to track functional activities. The following milestones will be used over the five-year period for this functional activity:

- Completion of the implementation design of the Grant Program and launch of the grant cycles (throughout FY25–29).
- Internal and external review.
- Progressive disbursement of the funds.

RESOURCES

FY25: Resources are expected to be stable.

FY25–29: Resources are expected to be stable.

ICANN ORG SHARED SERVICES

CONSIDERATIONS

The following elements may impact the progress of the activities:

- The outcome of the internal and external reviews, which could result in significant changes to Grant Program procedures.
- The need to identify new vendors for outsourced services.
- Ongoing refinement of the Grant Program department due to unexpected workload. ■

ICANN ORG SHARED SERVICES

Engineering and Information Technology

PURPOSE

Engineering and Information Technology (E&IT) provides trusted technical expertise to support the global multistakeholder model and ICANN by:

- Building a sustainable and resilient team that is able to respond to organizational needs.
- Fostering trusted, transparent relationships with stakeholders through collaborative planning and data-driven decisions.
- Delivering secure, effective, and accessible services through innovation and persistence.

OPERATING INITIATIVE CONTRIBUTIONS

- Support: Evolve and strengthen the multistakeholder model to facilitate diverse and inclusive participation in policymaking.
- Support: Support the evolution and strengthening of Root Zone Management and the Root Server System.
- Support: Promote and evolve the DNS through open and transparent processes that enable competition and open entry in Internet-related markets while ensuring the stability, security, and resiliency of the DNS.

ACTIVITIES

- Align E&IT delivery capacity along the organization's long-term strategy.
- Enable organizational effectiveness through efficient use of ICANN's digital services.
- Provide effective support to ICANN's international office strategy.
- Maintain financial soundness and business continuity.
- Achieve lower total cost of ownership for products and services while developing capacity.
- Secure ICANN's digital services and systems.
- Support all functions within ICANN org, Board, and community via end-user support, business analysis, custom application development, off-the-shelf software selection and support, infrastructure support, security monitoring, and network services.
- Continue to emphasize portfolio management and a platform reduction mindset.
- Collaborate with other teams on designing a framework for organizational capacity planning to define, develop, and deliver on requests to the organization.
- Investigate professional development opportunities to improve retention, provide greater clarity to staff, and help identify resource gaps.
- Expect to move from Capability Maturity Model (CMM) Level 3 to CMM Level 4, with process definition, redesign, measurement, and improved transparency being some of the desired outcomes.
- Continue to prioritize platform rationalization and consolidation.

ICANN ORG SHARED SERVICES

HOW PROGRESS IS TRACKED

ICANN uses a combination of milestones, metrics, and reports to track functional activities. The following measures will be used over the five-year period for this functional activity:

- Number of projects and services requested and completed every six months.
- Number of projects delayed or canceled every six months.
- Evaluation of financial management through review of planned and actual budgets.
- Digital services availability.
- Universal Acceptance readiness of icann.org systems.
- Completed phases of adoption and use of the National Institute of Standards and Technology Cybersecurity Framework.

RESOURCES

Continued platform rationalization should yield some efficiencies but not enough to offset the demand for net new services from the organization and the community (e.g., the New gTLD Program: Next Round). Therefore resource requirements are expected to increase. The internal resource count and mix could also be impacted if a new platform technology is sourced to support new initiatives.

CONSIDERATIONS

The following risks and considerations exist for this functional activity and may impact its advancement:

- Completion of strategic projects depends on Board and community efforts.
- Staff may leave, but improvements in process documentation can reduce the time and resources required to onboard new staff.
- Initiatives offering career progression should be implemented to help retain staff.
- Business decisions may impact platform reduction efforts and lead to the need for additional staff.
- A lack of understanding of the function's capacity and capability can lead to unrealistic expectations. ■

ICANN ORG SHARED SERVICES

Global Human Resources and Administrative Services

PURPOSE

The primary purpose of Global Human Resources is to attract and retain top talent, and enable high performance for ICANN. This includes talent acquisition, onboarding and offboarding of staff, administration of global compensation and benefit plans, performance management, employee relations, investigations, learning and development, employment policies and workplace compliance, global mobility and immigration, team member morale and engagement activities, Enterprise Resource Planning data integrity and reporting, and organizational planning and development.

The primary purpose of Administrative Services is to provide office administrative support and facilities management for ICANN org across all locations. This includes real estate and lease management, construction management, ergonomics program management, office security access controls management, and special events planning for employee morale, activities, and events.

OPERATING INITIATIVE CONTRIBUTIONS

- Support: Promote and evolve the DNS through open and transparent processes that enable competition and open entry in Internet-related markets while ensuring the stability, security, and resiliency of the DNS.
- Support: Implement New gTLD auction proceeds recommendations as approved by the Board.
- Support: Planning at ICANN.

ACTIVITIES

Throughout FY25–29, Global Human Resources activities will include:

- Ensuring appropriate staffing levels, including both full-time and temporary staff, to support various initiatives, such as the maintenance of technical platforms and the implementation of Board-approved recommendations.
- Collaborating with the Legal team to assist in the development of ethics policies relevant to staff.
- Offering internal programs aimed at leadership training and professional development for staff, with the goal of enhancing engagement and talent retention.
- Implementing a new Career Framework for all staff, providing increased clarity regarding career paths and growth opportunities, consistent criteria for advancement, and a revised salary grade structure. This framework enables managers to incorporate it into ongoing staff development discussions, further bolstering retention efforts.
- Leveraging the established Career Framework to focus on improving the understanding of talent across geographies and functions, which will facilitate the retention of critical knowledge and transferable skills.
- Continuing the ongoing strategy to maintain, grow, and foster diversity, equity, and inclusion initiatives as a key component of staff engagement.

ICANN ORG SHARED SERVICES

Administrative Services activities include:

- Monitoring market conditions to ensure lease negotiations remain competitive and support business needs.
- Maintaining appealing, collaborative workspaces within ICANN offices, promoting in-person activities while adhering to cost-conscious practices.
- Remaining flexible and prepared to adjust office space requirements if the need decreases, with a focus on ensuring cost efficiency.
- Ensuring the readiness and safety of ICANN offices to effectively manage potential risks stemming from COVID-19 surges.

HOW PROGRESS IS TRACKED

ICANN uses a combination of milestones, metrics, and reports to track functional activities. The following measures will be used over the five-year period for this functional activity:

- Global Human Resources will focus on maintaining staff engagement by sustaining ICANN’s organizational culture seamlessly across offices, regions, and remote working while continuing to build diversity to best represent the community ICANN org serves.
 - A primary measure is the annual staff engagement survey, which gathers structured feedback from global staff on their employment experience. The survey results allow the org to understand priority areas of focus to make meaningful improvements toward ensuring staff engagement across the organization.
- Administrative Services will ensure lease negotiations and working environment changes maintain budgetary commitments.

RESOURCES

With continued expansion of ICANN headcount to address key priorities (e.g., New gTLD Program: Next Round), resource requirements are expected to marginally increase.

CONSIDERATIONS

The following risks and considerations exist for the Global Human Resources component:

- Maintaining staff engagement amid expanding workloads is a challenge.
- Developing a clear strategy to handle increased demands for hiring technical and engagement staff in new countries without registered ICANN offices is essential.
- A more competitive labor market, as economies restart growth, will make hiring and retaining full-time and part-time staff more challenging.

The following risks and considerations exist for the Administrative Services component:

- Ensuring efficient utilization of ICANN real estate, considering the increased number of staff working remotely or in a hybrid fashion. ■

ICANN ORG SHARED SERVICES

Security Operations

PURPOSE

The purpose of Security Operations is to provide a safe and secure environment in which the community, Board, and org operate.

OPERATING INITIATIVE CONTRIBUTIONS

No linked initiatives at this time. This function supports ICANN's ongoing activities.

ACTIVITIES

- **Event Security:** Provide on-site event health, safety, and security support to ICANN Public Meetings and other ICANN-hosted events in line with ICANN's COVID-19 Return to Normal Operations (RTNO) Framework and Implementation Plan – Travel and Events.
- **Travel Security:** Assess, approve, and support org and Board travel in line with RTNO Framework and Implementation Plan – Travel and Events and ICANN's long-standing travel security best practices.
- **Security Intelligence:** Research and provide key security information and situational awareness for ICANN's presence around the world, including offices, staff, events, and travelers.
- **Response Planning:** Furnish ICANN with the necessary tools to successfully respond to any incident at both tactical (emergency response) and strategic (crisis management) levels.
- **Physical Security:** Ensure that ICANN's global offices are sufficiently secured. Implement physical security upgrades and enhancements where warranted and feasible.
- **Threat Management:** Detect, assess, mitigate, and respond to ICANN's internal and external security threats.
- **Knowledge Management:** Create and deliver comprehensive training to ensure ICANN org has consistent, relevant, and actionable information and skills to address security and safety needs.

HOW PROGRESS IS TRACKED

ICANN org uses a combination of milestones, metrics, and reports to track Functional Activities. The following measures will be used over the five-year period for this Functional Activity:

- **Risk Identification, Assessment, and Security Planning**
 - Leverage new Event Security Planning and Travel Security mechanisms developed within ICANN's RTNO Framework and Implementation Plan – Travel and Events. This will ensure that Security Operations continues to play a pivotal role in event location selection and planning, and that a risk-driven review and approval process is applied to travel and face-to-face business activities.

ICANN ORG SHARED SERVICES

- Ensure that Security Operations continues to support ICANN Public Meetings and events as cost-effectively and efficiently as possible while sufficiently mitigating identified risks.
- Establish and maintain a regular cadence of collaboration between Security Operations, Risk Management, Information Security, Administrative Services, IANA, and OCTO teams to ensure ICANN’s comprehensive risk profile is sufficiently understood and managed.
- **Culture of Security Awareness**
 - Continue to promote a culture of security awareness to inform the org’s decision-makers and furnish staff with the tools and know-how to operate and travel safely and securely in an increasingly insecure threat landscape. This helps ensure that all those with ICANN org are “street-smart” and “travel-savvy.”
- **Bolster Incident Response Capabilities**
 - Complete annual training for the Global Crisis Management Team and office Emergency Response Teams.
 - Promote synergy among ICANN’s various response mechanisms to ensure a unified and optimized response to crisis events impacting the org.

RESOURCES

Resource requirements are expected to increase.

CONSIDERATIONS

The following risks and considerations exist for this functional activity and may impact its advancement:

- ICANN’s mission and engagement requires ICANN to send travelers to and host events within locations of highly variable risk profiles. These risks have only increased in response to the global COVID-19 pandemic. In addition, many of these risks may be unknown at any given moment in time. As a result, ICANN may be required to conduct engagement in rapidly changing, higher-risk locations, requiring planning flexibility and increased and more costly Security Operations support. While Security Operations does not control where ICANN hosts events or travels, the team is still responsible for sufficiently supporting events and travel as safely and cost-effectively as possible.
- Security Operations will continue its efforts to develop and bolster an organizational culture of security awareness. This will both inform the decision-making of the organization’s key stakeholders and empower individuals to proactively mitigate security risks and reduce the likelihood of safety incidents.
- Security Operations will continue to ensure that the org is sufficiently prepared to respond to emerging threats and crises. ■

ICANN ORG SHARED SERVICES

Board Operations

PURPOSE

The purpose of this function is to support the ICANN and PTI Boards, and to serve as liaison between the ICANN Board and org. This includes coordinating with ICANN org to provide substantive content and logistical support to the ICANN Board, its committees, and subgroups. Additionally, this function facilitates the interaction between the Board and the community.

OPERATING INITIATIVE CONTRIBUTIONS

No linked initiatives at this time. This supports all of ICANN's operations and ongoing activities.

ACTIVITIES

- **Content Management:** Support the agenda development for Board meetings and workshops; facilitate preparation and submission of org-wide materials for Board meetings, workshops, committees, and other subgroup meetings; manage Board materials publication; Board Correspondence, and Board Public Comment submissions; and facilitate preparation for Board and stakeholder meetings.
- **Logistics Management:** Manage Board members' travels and expenses, manage vendors, manage and report Board budget, and facilitate and organize calls and meetings.
- **Training and Capacity Development:** Support the Board training programs and tools, including Board members onboarding, development, and mentorship programs.
- **Board Communications and Engagement:** Support and facilitate the Board's communications and engagement efforts with the community as well as participation in other meetings, events, and speaking engagements.
- **Tools:** Support the development of IT tools aiming at facilitating the work of the Board and the preservation of institutional memory (i.e., Board papers repository, Board pages on icann.org)
- **Chair Office Management:** Provide dedicated administrative support for the Board Chair (agenda management, note-taking, speaking engagement support)
- **Org Cross-functional Improvements Efforts:** Participate in cross-functional ICANN org teams and projects aimed at improving effectiveness and cost management.

△ The team does not anticipate any significant changes but will continue its focus on operational excellence and team member development. These efforts will concentrate on process improvements and tools enhancement. Additionally, one team member's role has been adjusted to focus on collaborating with Engineering & IT while also providing key administrative support to the Chair.

ICANN ORG SHARED SERVICES

HOW PROGRESS IS TRACKED

ICANN org uses a combination of milestones, metrics, and reports to track functional activities. The following measures will be used over the five-year period for this functional activity:

- Outcome Measurement:
 - Smooth operations of the Board activities (content, logistics, skills development, etc.) and continuous advancement in Board best practices.
 - Continuous advancement of org-wide support to Board.
- Performance Measurement:
 - Content Management: Bylaws compliance, accountability and transparency metrics.
 - Percent of Board materials ready prior to Board meetings.
 - Percent of Board meeting agendas published prior to meeting per Bylaws.
 - Logistic Management:
 - Number of trips booked for the Board.
 - Number of expense reports managed for the Board.
 - Training and capacity-development:
 - Number of Board members completing the onboarding process.
 - Number of trainings attended by individual Board members.
 - Number of trainings attended by the full Board.
 - Improvements in Board members' skill sets.

RESOURCES

Resource requirements are expected to be stable. Supplemental resources may be needed to support additional work.

CONSIDERATIONS

The following risks and considerations exist for this functional activity and may impact its advancement:

- The team works closely with ICANN org, including the Legal team, to deliver content to the Board and publish Board materials. However, this support depends on the workload and priorities of other functions responsible for preparing the initial drafts.
- The potential loss of institutional knowledge on the Board poses a risk and could negatively affect the Board's operational effectiveness, subsequently impacting ICANN org. The team's plan includes ongoing collaboration with the President and CEO and the General Counsel and Secretary to advance Board and committee manuals, enhance process documentation, provide training and development, and more. ■

ICANN ORG SHARED SERVICES

ICANN Offices

PURPOSE

ICANN offices are located around the world and work together to serve the global community. Brussels, Istanbul, Montevideo, and Singapore have detailed plans described in the Global Stakeholder Engagement section of the Draft FY25–29 Operating and Financial Plan.

RESOURCES

Resource requirements are expected to increase. ■

ICANN FY25-29 FINANCIAL PLAN

- Approach
- FY25–29 Funding Assumptions and Projections
- FY25–29 Financial Projections

APPROACH

The FY25–29 financials provide forward-looking information, aiming to conservatively estimate ICANN’s future funding and expenses. The intent is to maximize the chances that such future funding matches or exceeds these projections, minimizing the risk of a budget deficit.

This document relies on reasonable assumptions derived from the most current information at the time of the FY25–29 Operating and Financial Plan’s publication. However, using such forward-looking information involves risks and uncertainties. As a result, actual funding levels may deviate from those projected in this document in any given year.

The FY25–29 financials are not fully costed. Instead, they are a high-level overview of ICANN org’s financial assumptions. The financials are intended to be flexible, and ICANN org anticipates that these numbers will shift as time passes and be adjusted accordingly. This also allows for activities to be reprioritized based on the current environment.

Please note the following considerations:

- The FY25–29 financials do not include head count at the function level, allowing for flexibility in managing internal staff and external resources.
- Many activities in the FY25–29 financials will require substantial internal resources, which may result in fewer resources for other activities. The Resources section of the ICANN FY25–29 Operating and Financial Plan highlights the cross-collaboration within the org.

This document will be supplemented by ICANN org’s annual plans and budgets, which will provide fully costed financial information for their respective years.

It is important to note that the Five-Year Operating and Financial Plan will undergo an annual review and update. Any activity, initiative, or financial estimate included in the Five-Year Operating and Financial Plan will be reevaluated periodically throughout the five-year period.

FY25–29 FUNDING ASSUMPTIONS AND PROJECTIONS

ICANN org uses external information to develop multiple scenarios that incorporate various assumptions of growth or decline for each of its funding categories. These assumptions aim to create reasonably conservative funding projections and are not meant to reflect ICANN org’s stance on any specific aspect of the DNS ecosystem. Other parties may use the same information but for different purposes, which can lead them to draw different conclusions. Read the report on the [Five-Year Funding Forecast Assumptions](#).

The funding assumptions and forecasts outlined in this document have been prepared amid expectations of challenging global macroeconomic prospects. The World Bank, in its June 2022 publication on global economic prospects, suggests that just after two years of contending with a global recession induced by the COVID-19 pandemic, the world economy is now again likely to experience a sharp deceleration and prolonged slowdown in growth, further exacerbated by a steep increase in inflation rates. In light of these unprecedented circumstances and as a good practice, this document presents a number of forecast scenarios, each incorporating different assumptions and thresholds, to depict plausible viewpoints of how ICANN’s funding might evolve over the five-year horizon.

This document describes ICANN’s “base-case” funding scenario, along with “low” and “high” funding scenarios and further outlines the prospective impacts that these scenarios have on ICANN’s funding. This is consistent with ICANN’s approach to developing funding forecast assumptions, which are regularly evaluated and calibrated as additional data becomes available.

ICANN org used a three-step process to forecast its future funding levels over the next five years. Considering the uncertainty on the timing of the release into the root of new generic top-level domain names resulting from the New gTLD Program: Next Round, it is assumed that no funding from such new top-level domains will be generated over the five-year period. Below, each step of the process is explained in greater detail.

1. Marketplace Horizon Scan

A marketplace horizon scan was performed to take a comprehensive look at the key factors expected to affect the DNS industry over the forecast horizon. ICANN org engaged with an independent industry analyst to summarize key industry drivers and inhibitors. The results of this activity, which is based on interviews with industry representatives and a review of publicly available information, are summarized within Section 1 of the [Five-Year Funding Forecast Assumptions](#) document.

2. Formulation of Assumptions

Based on the trends identified in the marketplace horizon scan, and supplemented by developments in domain name transaction counts and the size of its contracted party base, ICANN org reviews its existing forecast assumptions and updates these as required.

For example, the marketplace horizon scan highlighted uncertainty concerning the near-term growth rates of total domains under management due to the potential risk of slower global growth having a negative impact on the demand for domains. Notwithstanding this, the scan affirmed the continued importance of domain names in establishing a digital presence on the global Internet.

Accordingly, the forecast assumes that irrespective of any short-term weakness that mirrors global macroeconomic conditions, domain transactions will not witness any long-lasting dislocations. “Base-case” and “high” funding scenario assumptions were developed anticipating that domain transactions would likely continue to see some growth over the forecast horizon, albeit at varying levels. An additional, more pessimistic “low” funding scenario was created to account for a potential decline in total domain name transaction counts over the entire five-year forecast period. This reflects the possibility of an acceleration in the maturation of the DNS industry and the negative impacts of a protracted stagflationary environment.

FY25–29 Funding Assumptions and Projections, Cont’d.

3. Forecast Generation

With the scenarios in place, ICANN org assigned values to produce a range of projections related to ICANN’s future funding, which are outlined in the table below.

5-Year Projections	FY25	FY26	FY27	FY28	FY29
ICANN Ops Funding <i>(In Millions USD)</i>					
Base	\$ 148.0	\$ 149.3	\$ 149.8	\$ 151.2	\$ 154.8
Low	\$ 134.3	\$ 130.3	\$ 124.6	\$ 119.5	\$ 117.1
High	\$ 155.9	\$ 164.0	\$ 171.2	\$ 178.7	\$ 188.9
Transaction Volume <i>(In Millions)</i>					
Base	216.5	221.9	228.6	237.0	246.0
Low	189.6	183.0	177.0	172.2	168.2
High	234.0	251.7	271.7	292.5	314.7
Contracted Parties					
Base	3,711	3,692	3,675	3,659	3,644
Low	3,507	3,362	3,264	3,202	3,166
High	3,739	3,787	3,835	3,883	3,932

Because forecasting relies on assumptions that are hypothetical and can become outdated, ICANN org will conduct a regular review of its funding forecast, making necessary adjustments as required.

The FY25–29 Financial Plan also includes a contribution to support ICANN’s efforts to preserve and enhance the security, stability, and resiliency of the DNS. This includes activities related to RSS governance, mitigation of DNS security threats, promotion and facilitation of DNS Security Extensions deployment, the mitigation of name collisions, and DNS operations research.

In January 2020, ICANN and Verisign, the registry operator of the .com top-level domain, announced a proposed framework for collaboration on initiatives concerning the security, stability, and resiliency of the DNS. This framework was formalized through a binding Letter of Intent (LOI) as approved on 27 March 2020. Under this LOI, Verisign committed to contributing a total of \$20M over five years, starting in calendar year 2021.

FY25–29 Funding Assumptions and Projections, Cont’d.

The FY25–29 Financial Plan includes the funding of these cooperative DNS resiliency initiatives over the five-year period, which will primarily be carried out as part of the following planned Operating Initiatives:

- Support the evolution and strengthening of Root Zone Management and the Root Server System.
- Facilitate the DNS ecosystem improvements.

These joint security-focused initiatives and related expenses will undergo continued monitoring and transparent reporting over the five-year period, to ensure full accountability of the funds collected and used.

FINANCIAL SUSTAINABILITY PRINCIPLES AND APPLICATION

Throughout FY25–29, ICANN’s expenses will be covered by the available annual funding, adhering to two fundamental principles of ICANN’s long-term financial sustainability:

- Expenses do not exceed funding.
- Sufficient reserves are reached and maintained at all times.

The FY25 Budget will be subject to updates to the forecast during FY24 as part of the FY25–29 Operating and Financial Plan and FY25 Operating Plan and Budget process. These updates will be made in time for the publication of the FY25 annual planning documents, expected in December 2023. ICANN’s activities will be carried out under a principle of increased prudence and frugality, and with heightened attention to necessity. It is important to understand that all activities previously planned will be reevaluated with this new perspective and mindset. These considerations apply to all ICANN activities and expenses.

FY25–29 FINANCIAL PROJECTIONS

The table below reflects financial projections for the FY25–29 period. The projections define the maximum amount of operational expenses to be incurred on an annual basis.

ICANN Operations <i>(In Millions USD)</i>						
5-Year Projections	FY25 Budget	FY26 Projections	FY27 Projections	FY28 Projections	FY29 Projections	5-Year Total
Funding	\$148	\$149	\$150	\$151	\$155	\$753
Expenses						
Personnel	\$90	\$92	\$94	\$96	\$99	\$470
Travel and Meetings	\$13	\$13	\$13	\$13	\$13	\$65
Professional Services	\$24	\$24	\$23	\$23	\$23	\$117
Administrative	\$19	\$19	\$19	\$19	\$19	\$95
Capital	\$1	\$1	\$1	\$1	\$1	\$7
Contingency	\$5	\$5	\$5	\$5	\$5	\$25
Cost Savings Initiatives	(\$5)	(\$5)	(\$5)	(\$5)	(\$5)	(\$26)
Total Operating Expenses	\$148	\$149	\$150	\$151	\$155	\$753
Net Operating Excess/(Deficit)	-	-	-	-	-	-
Average FTE	407	407	407	407	407	407

Full-Time Equivalent (FTE)

FY 25–29 Financial Projections, Cont’d.

OPERATING INITIATIVES RESOURCES

The Operating Initiatives are strategic activities included in the Five-Year Operating and Financial Plan that support the ICANN FY21–25 Strategic Plan. There are 11 Operating Initiatives included in the plan, with nine drawing resources from the Functional Activities of the ICANN Operations Budget. Notably, two of the Operating Initiatives will be separately funded, as detailed in the following table.

Any project-based work within an Operating Initiative will follow ICANN’s Project Management Framework to plan the activities and seek funding once the project plan is approved. Once the resource requirements for the plans are authorized, all approved projects will be considered for funding.

	Operating Initiatives	Assumptions
1	Support the evolution and strengthening of Root Zone Management and the Root Server System.	Resources for this initiative are included within the Functional Activities of the financial plan.
2	Facilitate DNS ecosystem improvements.	Resources for this initiative are included within the Functional Activities of the financial plan.
3	Evolve and strengthen the multistakeholder model to facilitate diverse and inclusive participation in policymaking.	Resources for this initiative are included within the Functional Activities of the financial plan.
4	Evolve and strengthen the ICANN community’s decision-making processes to ensure efficient and effective policymaking.	Resources for this initiative are included within the Functional Activities of the financial plan.
5	Evolve and improve internal and external ethics policies.	Resources for this initiative are included within the Functional Activities of the financial plan.
6	Promote and evolve the DNS through open and transparent processes that enable competition and open entry in Internet-related markets while ensuring the stability, security, and resiliency of the DNS.	While the New gTLD Program: Next Round is included in this initiative, it will be separately funded. Resources for Universal Acceptance-related activities are included within the Functional Activities of the financial plan.
7	Geopolitical monitoring, engagement, and mitigation.	Resources for this initiative are included within the Functional Activities of the financial plan.
8	Improve the depth of understanding domain name marketplace drivers that impact ICANN’s funding.	Resources for this initiative are included within the Functional Activities of the financial plan.
9	Implement New gTLD auction proceeds recommendations as approved by the Board.	This initiative will be separately funded by auction proceeds.
10	Planning at ICANN.	Resources for this initiative are included within the Functional Activities of the financial plan.
11	ICANN Reserves.	Resources for this initiative are included within the Functional Activities of the financial plan.

ICANN DRAFT FY25 OPERATING PLAN

- Approach
- FY25 Operating Initiatives
- FY25 New gTLD Program: Next Round
- FY25 Functional Activities

APPROACH

The FY25 Operating Plan includes descriptions of the major work the ICANN organization (org) will undertake to achieve its Strategic Plan, operate the organization, and implement its mission.

Operating initiatives describe how ICANN org will achieve the objectives and goals set out in the FY21–25 Strategic Plan. Functional activities are those necessary to operate the organization, such as Human Resources or Finance, or implement its mission, such as Contractual Compliance or the Internet Assigned Numbers Authority (IANA) functions.

Each of the 11 operating initiatives and 34 functional activities provide what can be considered ICANN org’s statement of intention, outlining planned activities while acknowledging the challenges and dependencies that could impact ultimate delivery.

OPERATING INITIATIVES

FY25

The 11 operating initiatives listed here represent major areas of work that support the strategic objectives identified in the Strategic Plan. Each operating initiative describes the importance of the initiative as well as what ICANN org aims to achieve. Operating initiatives describe how ICANN will achieve the objectives and goals set out in the [ICANN Strategic Plan](#). Operating initiatives were published for [Public Comment](#) and presented to the ICANN Board for feedback. Two operating initiatives (noted to the right) have been completed and any ongoing activities will be incorporated into the respective functional activity.

Each operating initiative is cross-referenced against the goals identified in the Strategic Plan, so readers can gain a comprehensive understanding of the strong interconnectedness of ICANN org's work. Please refer to [Appendix A – Operating Initiatives Supporting the Strategic Plan](#) for details.

1. Support the evolution and strengthening of Root Zone Management and the Root Server System.
2. Facilitate the DNS ecosystem improvements.
3. Evolve and strengthen the multistakeholder model to facilitate diverse and inclusive participation in policymaking.
4. Evolve and strengthen the ICANN community's decision-making processes to ensure efficient and effective policymaking.
5. Evolve and improve internal and external ethics policies.
6. Promote and evolve the DNS through open and transparent processes that enable competition and open entry in Internet-related markets while ensuring the stability, security, and resiliency of the DNS.
7. Geopolitical monitoring, engagement, and mitigation.
8. Improve the depth of understanding of the domain name marketplace drivers that impact ICANN's funding (*Completed as the key milestones have been achieved. Any additional activities will be incorporated into the GDD Accounts and Service functional activity*).
9. Implement New gTLD auction proceeds recommendations as approved by the Board.
10. Planning at ICANN.
11. ICANN Reserves (*Completed, as the key milestones have been achieved. Any additional activities will be incorporated into the Finance and Procurement functional activity*).

1. Support the evolution and strengthening of Root Zone Management and the Root Server System.

PURPOSE

As the DNS evolves due to change in demand and new technologies, ICANN will continue to support and collaborate with key stakeholders to ensure the stable, secure, and resilient operation of the DNS root zone for the global Internet community. ICANN will coordinate the continued advancement of the technology platform used for root zone management services, in order to address increasingly complex requirements, meet higher customer expectations, and respond to new policy demands. Additionally, work will be conducted to advance security mechanisms for the DNS root zone. This includes addressing the reliable changing of the cryptographic keys through routine rollovers and the safe implementation of new cryptographic algorithms. Efforts also are underway to implement a governance structure to ensure the proper accountability and management of root server operators.

SCOPE

This initiative covers these work areas:

- **Supporting Governance Documents:** The Office of the Chief Technology Officer (OCTO) and the Policy Development Support function aid the community-based Root Server System Governance Working Group in its implementation of two key documents: [RSSAC037](#), titled “A Proposed Governance Model for the DNS Root Server System,” and [RSSAC038](#), titled “RSSAC Advisory on a Proposed Governance Model for the DNS Root Server System.” Both were published on 15 June 2018.
- The OCTO team will support the eventual outcome of RSSAC037 and RSSAC038.
- **Key Signing Key (KSK) Rollover Policy:** This initiative involves leveraging lessons learned from the first root zone KSK rollover, defining and publishing a long-term root zone KSK Rollover Policy. This policy will guide subsequent rollovers.
- **Enhancements to Root Zone Management:** Identify and implement features that enhance the Root Zone Management System (RZMS). These enhancements are geared toward improving operations while ensuring the accuracy, quality, and timeliness of business processes.
- **Meeting New Community Requirements:** Develop technical and operational solutions that meet new community requirements. These requirements may arise from efforts such as the New Generic Top-Level Domain (gTLD) Subsequent Procedures and Internationalized Domain Names (IDNs) Policy Development Processes.

ACTIVITIES

During FY25, ICANN will:

- Continue to offer subject matter and advisory support for RSSAC037 and RSSAC038.
- Continue the operation of RSS Metric Monitoring System.
- Begin preparations for the next KSK rollover.
- Review and engage with stakeholders on the Algorithm Rollover Study (once published).
- Continue to enhance the RZMS.
- Continue to monitor the policy development work being done in the ICANN community (most notably through the New gTLD Subsequent Procedures Policy Development Process and on IDNs) to ensure RZMS will meet those emerging requirements.

HOW PROGRESS IS TRACKED

ICANN uses a combination of milestones and reports to ensure that initiatives advance. These measures are examples of those that will be used for this initiative in FY25:

Root Server System:

- Monitor and report on the implementation of the RSS governance changes proposed in RSSAC037 and RSSAC038.
- The prototype root zone metric monitoring system was initially implemented in FY23. In the future, the Root Server System Advisory Committee (RSSAC) may request that ICANN undertake a comprehensive implementation, potentially evolving the metric monitoring system. Additionally, ICANN will internally implement the system solely for research purposes. The metric, as defined in RSSAC047, aims to ensure that root server operators maintain their respective root servers within specified thresholds.

Root Zone Management System Enhancements:

- Technical check warnings: Introduce the capability to categorize technical check issues as either ‘warnings’ or ‘failures.’ Issues categorized as ‘warnings’ will be designed to be self-dismissable by the customer without the need for IANA staff intervention.
- Passkeys: Implementation of passkeys, which are based on Fast Identity Online standards. Passkeys serve as a secure and convenient alternative to passwords for logging into websites and apps across various devices. Unlike traditional passwords, passkeys offer enhanced security and resistance to phishing attempts.

DNS Root Zone Operations:

- FY25 Implementation of Board-approved policy recommendations on IDNs.

DNSSEC:

- Review the recommendations from the Algorithm Rollover Study to be published in FY24, and coordinate implementation with the multistakeholder communities.
- Key Rollover: Assuming the work to replace the current Hardware Security Modules (HSM) vendor is completed in FY24, IANA will begin preparations for the next Key Rollover.

RESOURCES

Effective cross-functional collaboration is an essential element for success in most of ICANN's work. Specific examples of collaboration needed for this initiative are:

- The progression of RSSAC037 and RSSAC038, such as development of a coordinated emergency response, requires collaboration between the OCTO and Policy Development Support functions.
- Awareness about the implementation plan for RSSAC037 and RSSAC038 will require collaboration with ICANN's Global Stakeholder Engagement and Government and Intergovernmental Organization Engagement functions to reach audiences and coordinate messaging.
- OCTO will need support from ICANN's Communications team to develop tailored messaging for relevant stakeholders.
- Resources (existing or new) are required to support ICANN's efforts to preserve and enhance the security, stability, and resiliency of the DNS including RSS governance, mitigation of DNS security threats, promotion and facilitation of Domain Name System Security Extensions (DNSSEC) deployment, mitigation of name collisions, and DNS operations research.
- Staff members are assigned a percentage of their time to these initiatives, along with minor additional ad hoc resources for tasks such as security testing of the applications prior to deployments.
- Full-time equivalents in ICANN's Engineering and IT team perform software development for the RZMS and in OCTO provide technical subject matter expertise to the DNSSEC projects that are in scope for this initiative.
- IANA direct and dedicated personnel lead the project, product, and operations management to RZMS enhancements as well as the activities related to DNS Root Zone Operations and DNSSEC.
- Activities support ICANN's efforts to preserve and enhance the security, stability, and resiliency of the DNS including RSS governance, mitigation of DNS security threats, promotion of DNSSEC and ICANN Domain Metrics deployment, the mitigation of name collisions, and DNS operations research. Learn more about ICANN's overall approach in [Appendix D – ICANN Security, Stability, and Resiliency \(SSR\) of the Internet's Unique Identifiers](#).

CONSIDERATIONS

The following risks and considerations exist for this initiative and may impact its advancement:

- Political considerations surrounding root server operators.
- Continued unforeseen risks surrounding future KSK rollovers.
- Assumption that FY24 projects relating to Key Rollover and Algorithm Rollover are completed.
- Ensuring the RSS continues to meet requirements as defined by the Internet community.
- Success depends heavily on the stability and commitment of engineering resources.
- The greatest risk is the possible loss of development resources that are prioritized to other objectives.
- Risk that the IANA team is unable to provide sufficient designs and requirements settings to inform development given its limited resources.
- The ICANN community's policy development efforts, including those related to the New gTLD Program: Next Round and Internationalized Domain Names, require monitoring by individuals with IANA expertise. This is crucial to ensure that the RZMS and its associated business processes can meet the requirements stemming from those policy developments. ■

2. Facilitate DNS ecosystem improvements.

PURPOSE

This initiative encompasses efforts to understand, document, maintain, and improve the DNS ecosystem in order to prevent emergencies and limit the impacts of any incidents or threats.

SCOPE

The scope of this initiative covers three main work areas:

• Advocate and Promote Improvements to DNS Security Infrastructure

- Advocate for developers to enable DNSSEC, both signing and validation, by default.
- Advocate and support ICANN Domain Metrica, previously known as DNS-based Authentication of Named Entities (DANE) through community engagement, training, and collaboration with the technical standards communities.
- Support the community's policy discussions related to combatting DNS abuse.

• Technical Engagement and Capacity-Development

- Continue to improve and provide capacity development training on critical Internet technologies, such as DNSSEC and relevant applications like Domain Metrica, to enhance the security of the DNS ecosystem in alignment with ICANN's technical responsibilities.
- Expand ICANN's technical training footprint through new course material and virtual lab environments.
- Continue to expand training programs focused on DNS ecosystem security with the goal of actively involving Computer Emergency Readiness Teams worldwide, fostering collaboration and providing enhanced training opportunities.
- Continue to work with the community to develop and promote commonly agreed norms for a secure DNS ecosystem through projects such as the Knowledge-sharing and Instantiating Norms for DNS and Naming Security ([KINDNS](#)) initiative.
- Evolve efforts to educate registry operators, registrars, and others about DNS security threats and approaches to measure, prevent, detect, and mitigate these threats within their platforms.

• Research

- Continue to collect and analyze data and publish fact-based, unbiased, objective information on how the DNS is used and abused.
- Research, report, and raise community awareness on emerging identifiers technologies and how they impact and compare with the DNS through the OCTO series of documents and other avenues of publication.
- Research the application of machine learning to improve the detection and understanding of abusive trends in DNS registrations. While the project commenced in FY23, it requires continued funding beyond FY25 to maintain the system's functionality.

ACTIVITIES

During FY25, ICANN will:

- Continue operation of the RSS Metric Monitoring System and incorporate responses from RSSAC on future developments.
- Evaluate recommendations provided by the Domain Name Security Facilitation Initiative Technical Study Group, established in 2020 in response to significant DNS attacks.
 - a. ICANN has conducted a feasibility assessment on these recommendations and will subsequently discuss the results with the Board.
 - b. Recommendations deemed feasible and actionable will proceed to implementation planning, pending prioritization.
- Continued maintenance and operation of KINDNS.org.
- Publish and implement KSK Rollover Policy.
- Evolve internal tools to help identify and combat DNS abuse.

HOW PROGRESS IS TRACKED

ICANN uses a combination of milestones and reports to ensure that initiatives advance. These measures are examples of those that will be used for this initiative in FY25:

- Implementation of appropriate DSFI recommendations (subject to prioritization and planning).
- Continued operation of KINDNS and further enhancements to the platform to improve community outreach.
- Utilization of data collection and gathering for various statistical analyses.

RESOURCES

Effective cross-functional collaboration is an essential element for success in most of ICANN's work. Specific examples of collaboration needed for this initiative are:

- Training and outreach activities with the ICANN community as well as ICANN organizational functions, such as Global Stakeholder Engagement (GSE), Global Communications, Government and Intergovernmental Organization Engagement (GE), Global Domains and Strategy (GDS), and Contractual Compliance.
- Emergency preparedness efforts to support the work of teams such as Contractual Compliance.
- Activities to support ICANN's efforts to preserve and enhance the security, stability, and resiliency of the DNS including Root Server System governance, mitigation of DNS security threats, promotion and facilitation of DNSSEC and ICANN Domain Metrics deployment, mitigation of name collisions, and DNS operations research.

Learn more about ICANN's overall approach in [Appendix D – ICANN Security, Stability, and Resiliency \(SSR\) of the Internet's Unique Identifiers](#).

CONSIDERATIONS

The following risks and considerations exist for this initiative and may impact its advancement:

- Care must be taken not to exceed ICANN's remit.
- Privacy considerations may impact activities.
- Lack of access to all the relevant data may impede activities.
- Key stakeholders may not agree with norms developed. ■

3. Evolve and strengthen the multistakeholder model to facilitate diverse and inclusive participation in policymaking.

PURPOSE

This initiative aims to ensure that participation in the policy development work of ICANN's three Supporting Organizations (SOs) and advice developed by the four Advisory Committees (ACs) is globally representative. The work of the SOs and ACs is carried out through informed participation in the policy development process by diverse stakeholders committed to reaching consensus.

SCOPE

The scope of this initiative includes these work areas for FY25:

- Conducting the Pilot Holistic Review, as directed by the ICANN Board in response to the Third Accountability and Transparency Review Team's Recommendation 3.5. The review will focus on four primary objectives: assessing collaboration mechanisms, accountability, the structure and purpose of SO/AC/Nominating Committee entities, and continuous improvement efforts. The community prioritized the Pilot Holistic Review during the FY22 Planning Prioritization Framework exercise.
 - Subject to community support for the Revised Pilot Holistic Review Terms of Reference, the Pilot Holistic Review is anticipated to begin in FY25 and last into FY26.
 - Once the Pilot Holistic Review concludes, the ICANN Board and community will determine whether the pilot was successful and whether the Holistic Review should be added into the Bylaws.
 - This project is part of [ICANN Interim President and CEO Goal 11 for FY24](#) on Community Reviews and represents a multi-year effort.
- Continuing to support the community's implementation of recommendations from the Cross-Community Working Group on Enhancing ICANN Accountability (CCWG-Accountability) Work Stream 2 (WS2). This includes providing support and tools to assist the SOs/ACs in periodically assessing their diversity criteria and objectives, as outlined in WS2.
- Evaluating the specific community-led initiatives identified in the ["Enhancing the Effectiveness of ICANN's Multistakeholder Model"](#) project, including initiatives that support representation and inclusivity. This evaluation will aid the community in determining any additional actions needed to maintain inclusivity and global representation within ICANN policymaking.
- Facilitating the development of a final governance model for the RSS. This model will ensure that the system's structures and business models align with accountability, transparency, and other key governance requirements, including principles set forth in the documents RSSAC037 and RSSAC038.
- Implementing a new Policy Development Accelerator Program, which is designed to bridge knowledge gaps. This program will help individuals transition from ICANN's newcomer programs to active participation in SOs/ACs work.

ACTIVITIES

During FY25, ICANN will:

- Continue to support the community’s implementation of those recommendations and best practices from the CCWG-WS2 that are directed at the community and relate to diversity and SO/AC accountability.
- Continue cross-functional coordination within the organization to engage the community in evaluating the work covered by the Evolving ICANN’s Multistakeholder Model project, with a view toward considering next steps.
- Work with the Root Server System Governance Working Group and the community to finalize a governance model for the RSS.
- Launch the new Policy Development Accelerator Program.

HOW PROGRESS IS TRACKED

ICANN uses a combination of milestones and reports to ensure that initiatives advance. These measures are examples of those that will be used for this initiative in FY25:

- Reporting on progress in the community’s implementation of the CCWG-Accountability WS2 recommendations and best practices relating to diversity and SO/AC accountability.
- Tracking progress of the work on developing a final governance model for the Root Server System.
- Tracking milestones and metrics for the Policy Development Accelerator Program.
- Implementation of the Holistic Review will begin with the initiation of pre-planning for Pilot Holistic Review following Board approval of a community-agreed Terms of Reference, currently estimated for March 2024. The activities following Board approval of the Terms of Reference are estimated to be as follows:
 - Logistical planning: Q1 FY25
 - Review team appointment: Q1 FY25
 - Initiation of the review: Q1 FY25
 - Conduction of the review: Q1-Q4 FY25 (ending in Q2 FY26)

RESOURCES

The FY25 level of resources is generally expected to be consistent with the current level of staff, assuming that open positions are filled and that there is a continuing ability to rely on professional services contractors for additional needs. Resources are likely to be needed to support improved or new virtual collaboration tools and more face-to-face or intersessional meetings to advance or complete major policy projects and allow for globally representative participation.

CONSIDERATIONS

Risks and considerations exist for this initiative and may impact its advancement:

- With the return to hybrid meetings and the continuing high community workload, ICANN’s resource planning needs to be aligned with Board and community expectations, including the ability to staff and support all the work that is underway or planned. Collaboration with the community on prioritization and the deployment of new project and program management tools to assist with community workload management and planning will continue to be key.
- Diminishing stakeholder interest in ICANN policy work could contribute to volunteer burnout, resulting in work being done by a small number of community members.
- Informed and effective participation in increasingly complex policy work requires newer community members to be familiar with ICANN policy processes and historical background. The new Policy Development Accelerator Program may help bridge some of that knowledge gap, but its scope is limited.
- Policy issues are becoming more legally and technically complex, and the need for participants in the policy process to have the requisite expertise and experience could result in less diverse participation. ■

4. Evolve and strengthen the ICANN community’s decision-making processes to ensure efficient and effective policymaking.

PURPOSE

This initiative is intended to ensure that process improvements adopted by ICANN’s three SOs and four ACs enable the development of efficient and effective consensus policies and community advice.

SCOPE

The scope of this initiative includes these work areas:

- Developing uniform project and program management tools to assist SOs ACs with planning, managing and tracking their work.
- Deployment of the Community Engagement System (CES) to enable consistent and accurate tracking and reporting of stakeholder participation in policy processes and their outcomes. This operating initiative work area is also included as a multi-year goal in the blog titled [“ICANN Interim President and CEO Goals for Fiscal Year 2024” as CEO Goal 1.](#)

ACTIVITIES

In FY25, activities for this initiative include:

- Deploying uniform project and program management tools across each SO and AC and training of relevant staff.
- Continuing migration to the CES platform.
- Continuing collaboration between ICANN’s Planning and Policy Development Support functions to engage the community in collaborative prioritization of community work in view of limited resources.

HOW PROGRESS IS TRACKED

ICANN uses a combination of milestones and reports to ensure that initiatives advance. For this specific initiative, the following examples will be used in FY25:

- Tracking and reporting on community progress in implementing CCWG-WS2 recommendations and relevant best practices.
- Using project management tools to facilitate prompt reporting and decision-making by policy working groups.
- Tracking progress on migration to the CES platform.

RESOURCES

The resources allocated for FY25 are anticipated to remain relatively stable, contingent upon the filling of open staff positions and the continued use of professional services contractors to address additional requirements. There may be an additional need for resources to fund in-person or intersessional meetings, which are crucial for achieving consensus on significant policy projects, as well as to support the ongoing migration efforts related to the CES platform.

CONSIDERATIONS

The following risks and considerations exist for this initiative and may impact its advancement:

- Despite the sustained high workload, community groups still face challenges in effectively planning, managing, and prioritizing activities. Additionally, the community has already made commitments to initiate new projects to address pressing policy matters in the near future.
- Increasing complexity of policy issues and diversity of stakeholder views and interests means that significant time and effort is required to define issues, understand multiple viewpoints, and engage in deliberations with a view toward finding consensus. This is likely to impact project timelines and the ability to make timely decisions.
- Achieving consensus and completing projects in a timely manner may require additional resources for face-to-face and intersessional meetings. ■

5. Evolve and improve internal and external ethics policies.

PURPOSE

This operating initiative aims to enhance and refine ICANN’s internal and external ethics policies, thereby guiding behavior for the ICANN organization and the community. The internal ethics policy will offer additional guidance for ICANN staff, fostering greater transparency and strengthening the community’s confidence in staff conduct.

The ICANN community ethics policy will provide transparency and guidance regarding how members of the ICANN community should approach their ICANN-related work and interact with one another.

SCOPE

The scope of this initiative covers these work areas:

- Assess, improve, and implement an internal ICANN organization ethics policy.
- Assess, develop and support an ICANN community ethics policy.

ACTIVITIES

In FY25, ICANN will:

- Improve and implement an ICANN org ethics program to provide additional guidance and direction for ICANN organization staff for FY25–26.
- Collaborate with the ICANN community to develop the ICANN community ethics policy for FY25–26.

HOW PROGRESS IS TRACKED

ICANN uses a combination of milestones and reports to ensure that initiatives advance. These are examples of those that will be used for this initiative in FY25:

- Examine current ICANN documents and programs pertaining to ethics, identifying any gaps or missing elements.
- Evaluate the degree to which leaders actively advocate for and uphold a culture of ethics and compliance within the ICANN organization and community.
- Provide additional guidance and direction for the ICANN organization and community.

RESOURCES

Effective cross-functional collaboration is an essential element for success in most of ICANN’s work. Specific examples of collaboration needed for this initiative are:

- The Legal team leads this initiative and coordinates with Human Resources, Policy Development Support, and Communications.

CONSIDERATIONS

The primary risks that may impact the advancement of this initiative are the lack of internal and external awareness and resulting lack of buy-in to the effort, as well as availability of community resources to meaningfully engage in discussion. ■

6. Promote and evolve the DNS through open and transparent processes that enable competition and open entry in Internet-related markets while ensuring the stability, security, and resiliency of the DNS.

PURPOSE

This initiative encompasses ICANN activities to foster a competitive environment in the DNS marketplace. It includes key projects and ongoing activities, such as enhancing services for gTLD registry operators and ICANN-accredited registrars to facilitate compliance with their agreements and community-developed consensus policies. Additionally, the initiative involves the implementation of ICANN Board-approved GNSO consensus policy recommendations, conducting research and analysis to gain a deeper understanding of the DNS ecosystem, and sharing this valuable information with the community through data and research papers.

This initiative is a key part of building and promoting the multilingual Internet. It incorporates efforts aimed at ensuring the Universal Acceptance (UA) of domain names and email addresses. UA is important to expanding global consumer choice and providing broader access for Internet users around the world, supporting the continued evolution of the DNS.

The efforts to advance UA require coordination across all levels of the Internet ecosystem. This involves strengthening and enhancing ICANN's capacity for strategy and engagement. It also entails providing support to the ICANN community on both technical and policy fronts, as well as reaching out to new stakeholders.

This initiative monitors project work in anticipation of the launch of the New gTLD Program: Next Round. It does so by adhering to Board-approved, community-developed policy recommendations for future rounds and leveraging insights gained from the implementation of the 2012 round and subsequent reviews of the program. The ICANN organization has published an [Implementation Plan](#) for the next gTLD application round, and is actively working to implement the approved recommendations.

SCOPE

The scope of this initiative covers these work areas:

- Implementation of community-developed recommendations, approved and directed by the Board, relating to gTLD operators and ICANN-accredited registrars. This operating initiative work area is also included as a multi-year goal in the blog titled [“ICANN Interim President and CEO Shares Goals for Fiscal Year 2024” as CEO Goal 11](#), published in September 2023.
- The following operating initiative work areas are also included as a multi-year goal in the blog titled [“ICANN Interim President and CEO Shares Goals for Fiscal Year 2024” as CEO Goals 4 and 12](#), published in September 2023.
- Production of the Domain Name Marketplace Indicators and other supporting analysis.
- Planning and implementation of an operational infrastructure (systems, processes, and people) to support ongoing operations of the New gTLD Program.
- Execution of capacity development, outreach and engagement, and global communications and awareness plans for the New gTLD Program.
- Outreach to providers of standards, programming languages, tools, and platforms to support UA.
- Raising awareness and capacity of software application developers to create or update applications to be UA-ready.
- Raising awareness and capacity of email tools and service providers to support Email Address Internationalization.
- Raising awareness in the public sector for governments to require UA-readiness in their tendering processes.
- Updating ICANN org's relevant technical systems to be UA-ready.

ACTIVITIES

Activities for this initiative include:

- Supporting the Board by developing data and analysis necessary to inform its decisions on the Subsequent Procedures policy recommendations, and providing regular reporting to the Board on costs, timing, and risks for the implementation work.
- Developing documentation related to the New gTLD Program: Next Round application process in line with new policy guidance.
- Planning and executing operational readiness activities including systems, tools, process definition, procurement, and other activities in support of the New gTLD Program: Next Round.
- Planning and executing communications and outreach to support the New gTLD Program: Next Round.
- Convening Implementation Review Teams and supporting their work of reviewing and providing input on the organization's implementation documentation.
- Conducting gap analyses of tools and systems for UA readiness.
- Continuing to reach out to technology tool providers for UA remediation.
- Continuing to raise awareness and capacity of technology developers and system administrators for UA readiness through local initiatives in different geographies.
- Supporting the community-based UA working groups on technology, email address internationalization, communications, and measurements, as well as local initiatives in different countries to promote UA readiness.
- Engaging with the At-Large Advisory Committee (ALAC) and GAC and working with ICANN org's GSE and GE teams to raise awareness, especially among public sector organizations (e.g., by organizing the annual UA Day).
- Developing materials for integration into existing IT curricula within academic programs at universities.
- Engaging with TLD registry operators and registrars on UA readiness for their systems.

HOW PROGRESS IS TRACKED

Tracking and status information for implementation of Board-approved GNSO policy recommendations is published and regularly updated on the Consensus Policy Implementation Framework page.

The Board has directed the organization to provide updates on the implementation of the work toward a future gTLD application round, at a minimum, two weeks before each ICANN Public Meeting. The organization also has created a dedicated webpage for activities related to future rounds.

Data relating to domain name marketplace indicators, registry reporting, and other areas is available via the Open Data Initiative at <https://opendata.icann.org/pages/home-page/>.

Specific measures on UA progress are tracked via regular reporting and documentation covering:

- The extent of remediation of underlying technology, e.g., programming languages, email tools, etc.
- The extent of deployment of UA-ready systems, e.g., websites, email servers, and other applications.
- The extent of training for technical stakeholders on developing and deploying UA-ready software.
- The amount of outreach for creating public sector awareness of making government and citizen-focused services UA-ready.

RESOURCES

The work related to this initiative is generally conducted by teams within the organization, for which resources are allocated according to specific project timing and needs. This initiative requires significant cross-functional collaboration and support from functions including Legal, Communications, Global Stakeholder Engagement, Human Resources, Finance, Global Domains and Strategy, OCTO, IANA, and Engineering and IT.

Following the recommendations of the SubPro PDP Working Group, it is anticipated that the operation of future gTLD application rounds will continue to adhere to the principle of cost recovery. This means that funding for the necessary preparatory and development expenses, including future processing fees, will be sourced from fees paid by applicants. The implementation efforts for the next round are currently funded by existing sources, including remaining funds from the 2012 application round, until application fees are collected.

The successful execution of this initiative also requires significant support from ICANN community resources.

Specific examples of collaboration needed as part of this initiative are:

- The ICANN community, particularly the ALAC and GAC, and ICANN organization functions including Global Communications, Technical Engagement, Global Stakeholder Engagement, and Government and Intergovernmental Organization Engagement will be needed to help raise awareness of UA.
- Support is also needed for the Universal Acceptance Steering Group and other community-based working groups addressing UA at a global level as well as for local initiatives focusing on specific geographies.
- Volunteer Implementation Review Team(s) assist the organization in implementing new policy recommendations.

CONSIDERATIONS

The following risks and considerations exist for this initiative and may impact its advancement:

- Given the scale of the implementation work of developing a new gTLD application round, advance planning and preparation are essential to ensure successful implementation. The commencement of such planning and preparatory work is dependent on Board action on community-developed recommendations.
- Planning for a new round of applications requires an upfront commitment to design and build the operational infrastructure (people, processes, and systems) without precise knowledge of, or insight into, the volume of applications in the next and future rounds. Determining the scope and level of investment is based on certain working assumptions, as detailed in the Implementation Plan.
- Efforts to increase UA readiness involve globally reaching and activating stakeholders beyond the conventional ICANN community and may have different priorities.
- Raising awareness to incorporate UA as a mainstream design consideration for private and public sector technical systems may require considerable effort and time. ■

7. Geopolitical monitoring, engagement, and mitigation.

PURPOSE

Governments and IGOs are increasingly formulating policies, legislation, and regulations that may potentially exert indirect or direct influence over the Internet. Some of these actions also potentially may impact ICANN's ability to develop policies, run its operations, and fulfill its mission. To address these issues and to ensure a single, globally interoperable Internet, ICANN identifies where these discussions and initiatives are taking place and determines whether, when, and how the ICANN organization should engage. Several components of this operating initiative have been successfully completed and continue as part of ongoing functional activities. In addition, there are components of this operating initiative that are ongoing during FY25.

ICANN's role in this initiative encompasses recognizing, tracking, and informing the community about global geopolitical legislative and regulatory changes that may affect ICANN's ability to fulfill its mission. This includes analyzing the legal and technical impacts of proposed policy, regulatory, or legislative initiatives. The purpose is to assess whether, when, and how to engage to avoid unintended consequences of governmental actions. The nature of engagements can include technical training, targeted briefings, or providing additional protocol information to governments to help ensure that lawmakers have the full benefit of ICANN's technical expertise.

The Government and IGO Engagement (GE) team at ICANN takes a strategic approach to prioritizing and targeting its engagement activities, guided by their identification of emerging trends and continuous monitoring of governmental initiatives. Through targeted engagement, ICANN org focuses on two areas: working with governments and IGOs engaged with ICANN org and the policy development process through ICANN's Governmental Advisory Committee (GAC), and more broadly, working with governments and IGOs on issues beyond those being addressed through an ICANN policy development process.

SCOPE

The scope of this initiative covered the following work areas:

- Strengthening existing relationships and identifying new actors as an ongoing activity. In conjunction with legislative and regulatory tracking, this will give ICANN another layer of insight and help to prioritize targeted engagement. This includes an ongoing review of alliances based on emerging issues or changes in the focus of other organizations.
- Developing an approach to align engagement through face-to-face and virtual gatherings for organizations and actors within the global Internet ecosystem that are relevant to ICANN's remit.
- Identifying new opportunities for informing global Internet processes and discussion of issues.
- Participating in targeted policy and technical Internet governance briefings, forums, webinars, and events.
- Creating targeted information and capacity-development materials to better equip government stakeholders around the world, enabling them to become more knowledgeable, and, therefore, more active participants in ICANN's policymaking processes.
- Assessing expectations of government participants in capacity-development activities to identify needs.
- Assessing the scope of global events and processes relevant to ICANN on topics such as cybersecurity and the unique identifiers.

The scope of this initiative covers the following ongoing work areas:

- ICANN will develop and implement a communications and engagement strategy to address the World Summit on the Information Society (WSIS)+20 process and ancillary events in the lead up to 2025. This Operating Initiative work area is also included as a multi-year goal in the blog titled [“ICANN Interim President and CEO Shares Goals for Fiscal Year 2024” as CEO Goal 6](#), published in September 2023.

HOW PROGRESS IS TRACKED

ICANN org uses a combination of milestones and reports to ensure that initiatives advance. All work areas in this initiative apart from WSIS+20 now form part of ongoing functional activities. The following milestones will be used to track the WSIS +20 review project:

- △ Develop and implement a strategy for a campaign to address the WSIS+20 review process and ancillary IGO events in the lead-up to 2025.
- △ Develop a WSIS+20 calendar of events to monitor for issues that touch on ICANN’s mission. This will be a living document, updated as needed.
- △ Follow and participate (wherever possible) in relevant discussions on WSIS+20 review, including the International Telecommunication Union (ITU) WSIS Forum, Commission on Science and Technology for Development, ITU Council Working Groups, the Global Digital Compact (GDC), the U.N. Summit of the Future, Annual Internet Governance Forums (IGF), and National and Regional Initiatives.
- △ Identify WSIS+20 issues that have the potential to impact ICANN’s mission and the Internet. Inform and coordinate with other relevant organizations on positions stated by governments and other stakeholders in various global forums. Propose common actions and/or responses and build coalitions with these organizations whenever possible to illustrate collaboration with the shared goal of supporting the technical underpinnings of the Internet.
- △ Conduct targeted engagement with countries active in the GDC and the WSIS+20 processes to explain the risk of unintended consequences and important issues that have an impact on ICANN’s mission. Update the community through regular geopolitical plenaries at ICANN Public Meetings, as well as through publications. Raise awareness within the appropriate governmental offices in those countries (as well as in their respective Permanent Missions to the U.N.) that can be supportive of the multistakeholder model of global Internet Governance.
- △ Conduct regional outreach engagement with the targeted ministries within the governments (Ministries of Foreign Affairs). Meetings with relevant IGO officials from Ministries of Foreign Affairs in each geographic region – a minimum of three per quarter or as necessary.
- △ Publish materials addressing information gaps among the targeted audiences or to mitigate misinformation. At least one such publication per quarter, or as needed. Leverage speaking events and media opportunities where ICANN org or Board members are present.
- △ Participate in telling the story about the benefits of, and ICANN’s role in, the existence and maintenance of a single, globally interoperable Internet.
- △ Provide the Board with updates on the WSIS+20 Review Process, as needed.
- △ Organize briefings for diplomats from the Permanent Missions to the United Nations in New York and in Geneva on issues related to the WSIS+20.

The following milestones now form part of ongoing functional activities:

- Publish reports on government-related activity such as ICANN-led briefings and capacity-development events for diplomats from the Permanent Missions to the U.N., as well as other U.N. agencies or other IGOs.
- Work in conjunction with local government hosts and GAC members to deliver periodic High-Level Governmental meetings.
- Develop reports and statistics on participation in outreach, technical briefings, and capacity-development sessions for the GAC as well as through collaboration with other organizations in the ecosystem.
- Conduct comparison of before and after GAC capacity-development event surveys to measure delivery of information against expectations and knowledge gained.
- Provide contributions to open consultations over legislative, regulatory, policy or standards initiatives and technical briefings to policymakers. These contributions will be published on the Government Engagement page.
- Review existing Memorandums of Understanding for continuing alignment with goals.
- Track data on the number of countries and IGOs represented in the GAC as well as the number of countries and IGOs actively participating in the GAC and ICANN policy development processes.
- Provide geopolitical initiatives tracking updates and briefings through geopolitical plenaries at each ICANN Public Meeting.
- Publish reports on legislative or regulatory events with the potential to touch on ICANN's mission.
- Conduct technical assessments or use cases on the potential impact of various legislative or policy initiatives as needed.

RESOURCES

The successful execution of the activities under this operating initiative necessitates concerted effort and collaboration among many of the functions within ICANN org. Each function plays a crucial role in contributing skills, time, and capabilities to the overall initiative. Some of these resources include engagement and outreach, communications, legal and technical analyses, and coordination with the community.

CONSIDERATIONS

There are numerous risks and considerations that exist for the ongoing functional activities:

- Increased resources may be required to cover multilateral negotiations (taking into account all the problems related to participation) with additional technical resources for engagement with all relevant stakeholders.
- Possibility of forging an alliance with an organization that takes the contrary position to ICANN's position on a common issue.
- Need to allocate adequate resources to sufficiently monitor WSIS+20 events and trends.
- Ensuring broad and informed participation across the GAC that reflects the functional, geographic, and cultural diversity of the Internet in order to mitigate against overrepresentation by any single interest.
- Need for resources to monitor and compare information across various venues to detect “weak signals” early enough to identify trends and evaluate actions to address possible challenges. In certain cases, deliberations on issues related to ICANN's mission take place in multilateral settings behind closed doors without much, if any, information being released publicly. Political judgment is crucial in determining when to move from monitoring to active engagement efforts to address proposed regulatory, legislative, or policy initiatives.
- Capacity constraints limiting ability to provide briefings, technical training, and other engagement efforts in some governmental or IGO bodies. ■

8. Improve the depth of understanding of the domain name marketplace drivers that impact ICANN's funding.

This operating initiative has been successfully completed. Several activities will continue as part of ongoing functional activities.

PURPOSE

The domain name marketplace has evolved and matured following the 2012 round of the New gTLD Program. ICANN org has analyzed its funding model within the context of this evolving marketplace, reviewing key market enablers and challenges that impact ICANN's funding. ICANN has effectively used these inputs to establish a solid foundation for funding projections. This initiative has successfully integrated those activities.

SCOPE

The scope of this initiative covered these work areas:

- Further enriched the quality of feedback received from the market participants.
- Reviewed and analyzed trends and driving forces of the domain name industry marketplace that impact ICANN's funding.
- Validated and improved forecasting accuracy through review of further data sets that could provide predictive value for funding projections.

ACTIVITIES

The ICANN organization uses a combination of milestones and reports to ensure that initiatives advance. The following milestones have been completed and are now part of ongoing functional activities:

- Integration of market intelligence collection and review as part of the process to develop and update ICANN's funding projections.
- Annually delivered funding assumptions and projections for the next five fiscal years.
- Continued enhancement of the funding model, leveraging high-value data sets as required, in relation to the forecasting process.

ACTIVITIES ACHIEVED

The ICANN organization uses a combination of milestones and reports to ensure that initiatives advance. The following milestones that have been used over the five-year period for this initiative are now either completed or have been moved into regular and ongoing functional activities:

- Built and established a process to develop the funding model.
- Annually delivered funding assumptions and projections for the following five fiscal years.
- Continued enhancement of the funding model and increasing the team's market intelligence in relation to the forecasting process.

RESOURCES

Effective cross-functional collaboration is an essential element for success in most of ICANN org’s work. Specific examples of collaboration from other functions below were pivotal in the achievement of the operating initiative:

- The skills of ICANN’s Global Domains and Strategy, Finance (and Economist), OCTO, and Global Stakeholder Engagement functions to collect and contextualize market intelligence and various data sets deemed relevant to the funding forecast process.

CONSIDERATIONS

There are numerous risks and considerations that exist for the ongoing Functional Activities. It is not clear how marketplace evolution and threats to the DNS might impact ICANN’s funding model. ICANN must continue to expand its understanding and knowledge of the potential impact these may have on future funding. ■

9. Implement New gTLD auction proceeds recommendations as approved by the Board.

PURPOSE

This initiative relates to the implementation of the Board-approved recommendations from the Cross-Community Working Group on New gTLD Auction Proceeds (CCWG-AP).

SCOPE

The scope of this initiative covers these work areas:

- ICANN will complete the implementation of the Board-approved CCWG-AP recommendations and launch the ICANN Grant Program through which the auction proceeds will be disbursed to eligible applicants and projects. This Operating Initiative work area is also included as a multi-year goal in the blog titled [“ICANN Interim President and CEO Shares Goals for Fiscal Year 2024” as CEO Goal 5](#), published in September 2023.
- ICANN will evaluate the first grant cycle and will plan the launch of future cycles.

ACTIVITIES

In FY25, ICANN org will:

- Further refine the implementation design of the Grant Program.
- Evaluate the first grant cycle and introduce program refinements based on evaluation results.
- Announce tentative timings for future cycles.

HOW PROGRESS IS TRACKED

Work in this initiative will happen in stages. The FY25 specific milestones are:

- Implementation of ICANN Grant Program according to plan.
- Disbursement of the funds available for the first grant cycle.
- Evaluation report of the first grant cycle.
- Announcement of future cycles.

RESOURCES

Effective cross-functional collaboration is an essential element for success in most of ICANN org's work. To ensure the success of this initiative and the Grant Program:

- Subject-matter experts within ICANN will closely collaborate to define and design the work in specific areas, including administrative and procedural aspects, communications, legal matters, and technical aspects.
- The costs of the implementation plan will be determined based on the final recommendations approved by the Board. These costs will be covered by the proceeds generated from the auction.
- An in-depth resource assessment will be carried out, taking into account the implementation design of the recommendations. This assessment aims to more accurately determine the estimated workload, required skills, and need for potential new hires.
- As implementation progresses, the auction proceeds will fund any resource supporting this work.

CONSIDERATIONS

This work relies on elements and dependencies that might be identified during the implementation phase. ■

10. Planning at ICANN.

PURPOSE

Careful planning of activities helps safeguard ICANN's long-term operational and financial sustainability while ensuring that the organization is accountable to the public in its stewardship of ICANN's mission. This initiative defines and implements improvements to the planning process over the duration of the ICANN Strategic Plan for fiscal years 2021–2025.

SCOPE

- Delivery of a planning prioritization framework to enhance and improve ICANN's overall planning process. Moving forward, the planning process has been integrated into the annual planning process (pre-development of the draft plans), which is described and measured under the Planning Functional Activity.
- Improvements in the planning process that will contribute to the development of a progress measurement framework are slated for FY24 and FY25. This framework will be completed by the end of FY25 and used to measure the ICANN's achievement of the strategic objectives and goals set forth in the [Adopted FY21–25 Strategic Plan](#).
- Improve the progress reporting mechanisms to provide more effective performance reporting against the Operating Plan and Strategic Plan.

ACTIVITIES

In FY25, ICANN org will:

- Research, develop, and engage with the community and Board regarding a draft progress measurement framework.

HOW PROGRESS IS TRACKED

ICANN uses a combination of milestones and reports to ensure that this initiative advances during FY25. ICANN org plans to:

- Develop and deliver the progress reporting framework.

RESOURCES

Resources for the planning prioritization framework are included within the planned Functional Activities and continuing operations budget and no incremental resources are needed. Additional resources for the progress reporting framework are required and will be drawn from available funds.

CONSIDERATIONS

The following risks and considerations exist for this initiative and may impact its advancement:

- Newer community members need time to get used to ICANN's planning process and may not fully engage in webinars, consultations, and Public Comment proceedings on these initiatives. ■

11. ICANN Reserves.

This operating initiative has been successfully completed. Several activities will continue as part of ongoing Functional Activities.

PURPOSE

To safeguard ICANN's long-term financial sustainability and ensure that ICANN org is accountable to the public in its stewardship of ICANN's mission, the level of ICANN reserves must be continuously set, reached, and maintained consistent with the complexity and risks of ICANN's environment.

SCOPE

The scope of this initiative covered these work areas:

- Ensured implementation of the October 2018 Board resolution to replenish the Reserve Fund to an amount equal to one year of operating expenses as the minimum target level of the Reserve Fund.
- Maintained minimum target level of the Reserve Fund as operating expenses changed.

ACTIVITIES ACHIEVED

The following have been completed and now form part of ongoing functional activities:

- ICANN has made \$55M in contributions to the Reserve Fund since the Board approved the replenishment strategy in October 2018. Since then, the initiative consists of closely and continuously monitoring the Reserve Fund level to ensure continued compliance with policy.
- FY23 year-end balance of \$170M is slightly higher than 12 months of budgeted operating expenses.
- Future allocations to the Reserve Fund may occur, leading to further strengthening of ICANN's financial sustainability.

For information on FY25 finances, please see the FY25 Budget for the Reserve Fund balance and planned replenishment. ■

FY25–29 NEW gTLD PROGRAM: NEXT ROUND

INTRODUCTION

The ICANN Board requested that ICANN organization (org) deliver an implementation plan for the New gTLD Program: Next Round, a community-driven initiative enabling the continued expansion of the Domain Name System (DNS) no later than 1 August 2023. In July 2023, ICANN org published an [Implementation Plan](#) for the next gTLD application round, and is currently working to implement the Board-approved recommendations.

This project covers work in anticipation of the launch of new application rounds for new gTLDs. It adheres to Board-approved community-developed policy recommendations for future rounds and leverages insights gained from the implementation of the 2012 round of the New gTLD Program and subsequent reviews that assessed various aspects of the program.

The Implementation Plan contains a work plan that includes relevant information for infrastructure development, timelines, and anticipated resource requirements for implementation of the New gTLD Program: Next Round. Execution of the Implementation Plan has and will continue to require significant org resources to develop and construct the essential program infrastructure such as IT systems, operational processes, and applicant procedures, required to ensure the successful launch and operation of the New gTLD Program: Next Round. Per community recommendations, the New gTLD Program is run on a cost-recovery basis. ICANN org maintains a separate budget to manage the funds that support the program work. See the [Draft ICANN FY25 Budget](#) for more information.

SCOPE

The scope of this initiative covers these work areas:

- Deliver to the Board an overall framework that includes an implementation plan for the [New gTLD Program: Next Round](#) and a pathway to opening the application round. The ICANN organization delivered the [implementation plan](#) to the Board in July 2023 and will update the Board on the progress of the program. This project is also included as a multi-year goal in the blog titled [“ICANN Interim President and CEO Shares Goals for Fiscal Year 2024” as CEO Goal 11](#).
- Planning and implementation of an operational infrastructure (systems, processes, and people) to support the ongoing operations of the New gTLD Program: Next Round.
- Development and execution of capacity development, outreach and engagement, and global communications and awareness plans for future gTLD application rounds.

HOW PROGRESS IS TRACKED

The Board has directed the organization to provide updates on the implementation of the work toward a future gTLD application round, at a minimum, two weeks before each ICANN Public Meeting. The org has also created a dedicated [webpage](#) for activities related to future rounds.

ACTIVITIES

Activities for this project include:

- Supporting the Board by developing information and analysis necessary to inform its decisions on the Subsequent Procedures policy recommendations and providing regular reporting to the Board on the costs, timing, and risks to implementation work.
- Developing documentation for the New gTLD Program: Next Round application process in line with new policy guidance.
- Planning and executing operational readiness activities including systems, tools, process definition, procurement, and other activities in support of the New gTLD Program: Next Round.
- Planning and executing communications and outreach to support the New gTLD Program: Next Round.
- Continue working with the SubPro Implementation Review Team and supporting its work of reviewing and providing input on the org's implementation documentation.

RESOURCES

Effective cross-functional collaboration is an essential element for success in most of ICANN org's work. Collaboration from the below ICANN functions will be pivotal in the successful execution of this project:

- Global Domains and Strategy
- Engineering and IT
- Governance Support
- Global Communications and Language Services
- Global Human Resources and Security Ops
- Office of the CFO
- Stakeholder Engagement
- Policy Development Support and SO/AC Engagement
- Contractual Compliance
- Governmental Engagement

The total number of full time equivalent resources across all functions is 46.2. Over the course of this project, we may look to leverage other functions to capitalize on opportunities and improve efficiencies. Please see the [Draft ICANN FY25 Budget document section 5.2 New gTLD Program: Next Round](#) for more financial information on the next round.

The successful execution of this project also requires significant support coming from ICANN community resources.

CONSIDERATIONS

The following risks and considerations exist for this initiative and may impact its advancement:

- Given the scale of the work involved in developing a new application round for gTLDs, advance planning and preparation are essential to ensure successful implementation. Accordingly, ICANN org developed and published a comprehensive Implementation Plan to cover the range of work streams and projects needed to open the round.
- Planning for a new round requires an upfront commitment to design and build the operational infrastructure (people, processes, and systems) without precise knowledge of, nor insight into, the volume of applications in the next and future rounds. Determining the scope and level of investment is based on certain working assumptions, as detailed in the Implementation Plan.
- The Implementation Plan identifies a number of dependencies, which carry a risk that if not resolved by the prescribed time, could extend the overall implementation timeline for the next round. ICANN org has also noted some operational and strategic dependencies for the first delegation of gTLDs in the next round, such as updates to the systems required to support registry operators (e.g., Service Level Agreement Monitoring). ■

FUNCTIONAL ACTIVITIES

FY25

Functional activities are those necessary to operate the organization, such as Human Resources or Finance, or to implement ICANN’s mission, such as Contractual Compliance or the IANA function. These 34 functional activities describe ICANN’s continuing operations for FY25.

The 34 functional activities have been placed into five service groups:

- Technical and DNS Security
- Policy Development and Implementation Support
- Community Engagement and Services
- ICANN Org Governance
- ICANN Org Shared Services

These service groups were selected because they represent the broad categories of work that the ICANN organization conducts in seeking to fulfill its mission. The five service groups express the Functional Activities at a high level.

The draft FY25 Operating Plan updates the FY24 Operating Plan and continues to demonstrate how ICANN org implements its current Strategic Plan. Many of ICANN org’s functional activities are to implement its mission or conduct ongoing activities. Any new activities or strategic changes to existing ones are marked with a delta (Δ).

FIVE SERVICE GROUPS:

TECHNICAL & DNS SECURITY

POLICY DEVELOPMENT & IMPLEMENTATION SUPPORT

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT & SERVICES

ICANN ORG GOVERNANCE

ICANN ORG SHARED SERVICES

FUNCTIONAL ACTIVITIES

FY25

TECHNICAL & DNS SECURITY

- Office of the Chief Technology Officer
- ICANN Managed Root Server
- Internationalized Domain Names and Universal Acceptance
- IANA Functions
- Contractual Compliance



TECHNICAL & DNS SECURITY

Office of the Chief Technology Officer

PURPOSE

ICANN org's Office of Chief Technology Officer (OCTO) aims to continuously improve knowledge about the identifiers that ICANN helps coordinate; disseminate this information to the Internet community; improve the technical operation of the Internet's system of unique identifiers; and improve ICANN's technological stature.

OPERATING INITIATIVE CONTRIBUTIONS

- Lead: Support the evolution and strengthening of Root Zone Management and the Root Server System.
- Lead: Facilitate DNS ecosystem improvements.

ACTIVITIES

• External Operations:

- Activities that have an external impact, such as exploring the expansion of the Domain Name Security Threat Information Collection and Reporting (DNSTICR).
- Continue the development of a security, stability and resiliency (SSR) of the DNS data analysis platform, ICANN Domain Metrica.
- Continue maintenance and operation of KINDNS.org.

• Technical Engagement and Outreach:

- Support and provide training, tools, engagement, and outreach to the technical community on current and upcoming technologies.
- Provide technical expertise as needed to other ICANN org teams such as Global Stakeholder Engagement and Government and Intergovernmental Organization Engagement.
- Manage the OCTO series of documents and other publication channels.
- Plan and facilitate the annual ICANN DNS Symposium.

• Research:

- Research activities focused on analyzing the impact of new and existing technologies on Internet unique identifier systems.
- Activities aimed at mitigating DNS security threats.
- Establishing a machine learning architecture to explore machine learning-based algorithms for predicting maliciously registered domain names.

TECHNICAL & DNS SECURITY

- **Reporting:**

- Continue reporting on various aspects of the unique identifier ecosystem via ICANN Domain Metrica, previously DANE and Identifier Technologies Health Indicators (ITHI).

- **Internal Operations:**

- Activities that have an internal impact or recurring activities such as support of the Action Request Register.
- Implementation of recommendations from Specific Reviews and policy development processes.
- Collaboratively working with ICANN's Public Responsibility Support team on online learning development.
- Provide technical subject matter expertise to various functions and teams within the organization.

HOW PROGRESS IS TRACKED

ICANN uses a combination of milestones, metrics, and reports to track Functional Activities. In FY25, the following milestones will be met:

- **External Operations:** ICANN uses a combination of milestones, metrics, and reports to track Functional Activities. In FY25, the following milestones will be met:

- Operation and evolution of KINDNS.org platform
- Operation of DNSTICR
- Operation of Domain Metrica, previously Domain Abuse Activity Reporting (DAAR)
- Progress of SSR Data Analysis Platform (ICANN Domain Metrica) development

- **Technical Engagement and Outreach:**

- Deliver at least 90 percent of mutually agreed-on engagement and outreach activities requested by the community or our partners.

- **Research:**

- Track and support recommendations for NCAP studies, if applicable.
- Operate an internal prototype RSS Metric Monitoring System as described in RSSAC047 for internal research purposes.

- **Reporting:**

- Publish data or reports on the various efforts underway, such as DAAR and ITHI reporting, technical papers, etc.
- Implement data collection and gathering for various statistical analyses.

TECHNICAL & DNS SECURITY

RESOURCES

FUNCTIONAL ACTIVITY	FTE	Staff	Non-Staff	TOTAL
Office of the Chief Technology Officer	20	\$5.4	\$3.4	\$8.8

*In Millions USD
Full-Time Equivalent (FTE)*

CONSIDERATIONS

The following risks and considerations exist for this functional activity and may impact its advancement:

- Bandwidth limitations or competing demands on available staff resources may arise when a resource serves as a subject-matter expert for internal and community efforts.
- Assumptions about the level of community interest in security and stability could change, potentially leading to the reprioritization of staff time and effort.
- While there is currently a strong appetite within the community for technical outreach, training, and engagement, it’s important to recognize that this enthusiasm may fluctuate, resulting in potential reprioritization. ■

TECHNICAL & DNS SECURITY

ICANN Managed Root Server (IMRS)

PURPOSE

Through the IMRS program, ICANN provides trusted technical expertise and solutions to support the global Internet by building and maintaining a sustainable, stable, and resilient root server that is able to respond to identified and vetted technical needs and the expectations of the global technical community.

OPERATING INITIATIVE CONTRIBUTIONS

There are no linked initiatives at this time. This supports ICANN's ongoing activities.

ACTIVITIES

- Deliver and maintain a highly secure, stable, and resilient root server.
- Respond to defined strategic initiatives and vetted community expectations of the RSS.
- Maintain a low total cost of operations while developing capacity, good engineering practices, and RSS community engagement.

HOW PROGRESS IS TRACKED

ICANN uses a combination of milestones, metrics, and reports to track Functional Activities. In FY25, the following milestones will be met:

- Tracking the number of IMRS instances deployed every 12 months.
- Tracking the number of IMRS service outages every 12 months from the IMRS Activity and Incidents Reports.

TECHNICAL & DNS SECURITY

RESOURCES

FUNCTIONAL ACTIVITY	FTE	Staff	Non-Staff	TOTAL
ICANN Managed Root Server	11	\$2.7	\$1.0	\$3.7

*In Millions USD
Full-Time Equivalent (FTE)*

CONSIDERATIONS

The following risks and considerations exist for this functional activity and may impact its advancement:

- Hiring and retaining expert-level staff continues to be challenging in the current economic climate.
- Staff may leave if clear paths for professional development are not implemented.
- Additional locations will require a measured approach to adding additional staff for both deployment and maintenance activities. ■

TECHNICAL & DNS SECURITY

Internationalized Domain Names and Universal Acceptance

PURPOSE

This functional activity supports community work and leads internal operations for Internationalized Domain Names (IDNs) and Universal Acceptance (UA) efforts.

OPERATING INITIATIVE CONTRIBUTIONS

- Lead: Promote and evolve the DNS through open and transparent processes that enable competition and open entry in Internet-related markets while ensuring the stability, security, and resiliency of the DNS.

ACTIVITIES

- Support IDN policy development and implementation work, including IDN variant top-level domains (TLDs), by the Country Code Names Supporting Organization (ccNSO) and Generic Names Supporting Organization (GNSO).
- Conduct security and stability reviews of IDN tables for generic top-level domains (gTLD) registries, in a consistent and transparent manner, and publish results in the IANA Repository of IDN Practices.
- Support the community in its maintenance of the Root Zone Label Generation Rules (RZ-LGR). Reach out to communities to organize work on Thaana and Tibetan scripts identified in the Maximal Starting Repertoire.
- Work with relevant communities to develop Reference Label Generation Rules (LGRs) for the second level.
- Implement IDN Guidelines 4.1 and communicate details with the contracted parties.
- Support the application and evaluation of IDN country code top-level domains (ccTLDs).
- Support the Universal Acceptance Steering Group's working groups on technology, Email Address Internationalization, communications, and measurements, as well as its local initiatives in different countries and regions to promote UA readiness. Help set up additional working groups to oversee UA Day and engagement with the governments.
- Promote UA awareness, capacity, and adoption by organizing UA Day.
- Support UA working groups in the At-Large Advisory Committee and GAC, as needed.
- Develop and conduct training and UA-related communications in collaboration with the community to encourage stakeholders to become UA-ready.
- Manage the internal IDN and UA Steering Committee to coordinate ICANN's IDN and UA-related activities across functions.

TECHNICAL & DNS SECURITY

HOW PROGRESS IS TRACKED

ICANN uses a combination of milestones, metrics, and reports to track Functional Activities. The following milestones will occur in FY25:

- Publish progress achieved in FY24 regarding UA readiness in early FY25, utilizing the UA annual report for FY23 as a baseline.
- Facilitate local initiatives in various countries for UA training and promotion, with ICANN’s support.
- Maintain RZ-LGR and provide support for the development of proposals concerning active panels for remaining scripts.
- Publish reference LGRs for additional scripts.
- Implement version 4.1 of the updated IDN Guidelines, as approved by the Board.
- Conduct active outreach to governments and engage with tool and technology providers to promote UA adoption.
- Organize UA Day to raise global awareness of Universal Acceptance.

RESOURCES

FUNCTIONAL ACTIVITY	FTE	Staff	Non-Staff	TOTAL
Internationalized Domain Names and Universal Acceptance	3	\$0.6	\$0.4	\$1.0

*In Millions USD
Full-Time Equivalent (FTE)*

CONSIDERATIONS

Work on UA is based on influencing technology developers and policymakers, who may also be motivated by additional considerations. This may impact advancement in this functional activity. ■

TECHNICAL & DNS SECURITY

IANA Functions

PURPOSE

The purpose of the IANA functions is to assign unique identifiers for the Internet in accordance with relevant policies, and to be the registry of record for those allocations. This work is essential to promoting Internet interoperability by ensuring devices on the Internet communicate in a standardized manner. This work is administered through contracts that provide accountability to the respective communities that use these services.

ICANN's affiliate, Public Technical Identifiers (PTI), performs these functions on behalf of ICANN according to service level agreements (SLAs) and other obligations defined in the contracts. PTI has a separate Operating Plan and Budget process. The PTI Operating Plan and Budget constitutes a large component of the IANA Operating Plan and Budget and is included in the ICANN Operating Plan and Budget. Read the [FY25 PTI](#) and [IANA Operating Plans and Budgets](#).

There are currently two separate Public Comment proceedings running. The first proceeding includes drafts of the [ICANN FY25-29 Operating and Financial Plan](#), the [ICANN FY25 Operating Plan and Budget](#), and the [IANA FY25 Operating Plan and Budget](#). The second proceeding exclusively covers the [Draft PTI FY25 Operating Plan and Budget](#).

OPERATING INITIATIVE CONTRIBUTIONS

- Lead: Support the evolution and strengthening of Root Zone Management and the Root Server System.
- Support: Facilitate DNS ecosystem improvements.
- Support: Promote and evolve the DNS through open and transparent processes that enable competition and open entry in Internet-related markets while ensuring the stability, security, and resiliency of the DNS.

ACTIVITIES

The largest set of activities that are in scope for the FY25 IANA Operating Plan and Budget (OP and B) are laid out in the [FY25 PTI OP and B](#). Reviewing the FY25 PTI Operating Plan and Budget is essential to understanding the FY25 IANA Operating Plan and Budget as it will detail the planned assumptions, scope of work, and budget structure used to deliver the IANA functions.

The additional components of the FY25 IANA Operating Plan and Budget are IANA support activities that are performed by the ICANN organization and excluded from the [FY25 PTI OP and B](#):

- Logistical support for community oversight groups like the Customer Standing Committee (CSC), review committees and teams such as the Root Zone Evolution Review Committee, IANA Naming Functions Review, and the CSC Effectiveness Review.
- Costs relating to the Root Zone Maintainer Agreement.
- Activities supporting the continued evolution of the RSS.
- Support for policy development work that will have a direct impact on IANA service delivery.

Please see the [PTI](#) and [IANA FY25 Operating Plans and Budgets](#), Scope of Work section for information on PTI and IANA activities.

TECHNICAL & DNS SECURITY

HOW PROGRESS IS TRACKED

ICANN uses a combination of milestones, metrics, and reports to track functional activities. In FY25, the following milestones will be met:

- Regular reporting on project conditions, engagement activities, risks, and budget.
- Deliver the IANA functions by meeting all associated contractual deliverables.
- Issue and deliver to stakeholders the System and Organization Controls 2 (SOC) Audit Report of IANA systems.
- Issue and publish an exception-free System and Organization Controls 3 (SOC) Audit Report of the RZ KSK System.
- Perform KSK ceremonies in compliance with the DNSSEC practice statement.
- Complete Root Zone Key Management Facilities upgrades in U.S. East and West regions.

Metrics

- Performance SLAs.
- Customer satisfaction surveys.
- Audit Control Matrix.

RESOURCES

FUNCTIONAL ACTIVITY	FTE	Staff	Non-Staff	TOTAL
IANA Functions	19	\$4.1	\$1.3	\$5.3

*In Millions USD
Full-Time Equivalent (FTE)*

TECHNICAL & DNS SECURITY

CONSIDERATIONS

The following risks and considerations exist for this functional activity and may impact its advancement:

- Meeting growing customer volume and expectations while adhering to SLAs depends on increasing systems advancement.
- Customer expectations of the level of sophistication in IANA systems grows over time. Slow delivery of system enhancements can impact customer satisfaction rates.
- Increased demands relating to the operating envelope around the KSK management. This includes more regular hardware replacement cycles, more frequent key replacement cycles (rollovers), and new security facilities.
- Without additional resources, IANA may not have bandwidth to deliver additional anticipated activities such as implementation of new policies.
- Losing staff can significantly impact the function. Most roles in the team lack redundancy and filling positions when staff depart is challenging.
- A higher number of gTLDs may impact the root zone. ■

TECHNICAL & DNS SECURITY

Contractual Compliance

PURPOSE

The Contractual Compliance function ensures that gTLD registries and ICANN-accredited registrars comply with community consensus policies and their contractual agreements with ICANN.

OPERATING INITIATIVE CONTRIBUTIONS

There are no linked initiatives at this time. This supports ICANN's ongoing activities.

ACTIVITIES

- Conduct audits, monitoring, and outreach to ensure contracted parties are in compliance with agreements.
- Receive and resolve complaints regarding potential compliance issues with contracted parties.
- Support policy development processes (PDPs), Organizational and Specific Reviews, the Registrar Accreditation Agreement and Registry Agreement contracting process by providing input from a contractual compliance perspective. Implement recommendations arising from Specific Reviews and PDPs as necessary and appropriate.
- Improve business operations, methods, and processes, including looking to increase automation in FY25.
- Reduce the use of professional services by completing the migration to Naming Services Portal (NSp) in FY25.
- Participate in outreach and training activities with contracted parties or others, as needed, to raise awareness of contractual obligations.
- Provide metrics and data on received complaints to help inform community discussions on contractual requirements.

HOW PROGRESS IS TRACKED

ICANN uses a combination of milestones, metrics, and reports to track functional activities. The following measures will be used in FY25 for this functional activity:

- Number of low-complexity complaints processed.
- Number of high-complexity complaints processed.
- Turn-around time for processing low-complexity complaints.
- Closure rate of high-complexity complaints processed.
- Number of registrars or registry operators audited.
- High-risk issues mitigated through audits.
- Contracted parties and reporter satisfaction level measured via perception survey.

TECHNICAL & DNS SECURITY

- Number of outreach activities engaging with contracted parties, or others (as needed), through formal and informal means.
- Number of plans for remediating noncompliance, as presented by contracted parties, and monitored for recurrence.
- Number of newly implemented proactive monitoring initiatives and projects.
- Number of formal enforcement actions conducted.

RESOURCES

FUNCTIONAL ACTIVITY	FTE	Staff	Non-Staff	TOTAL
Contractual Compliance	26	\$4.7	\$0.6	\$5.3

*In Millions USD
Full-Time Equivalent (FTE)*

CONSIDERATIONS

The following risks and considerations exist for Contractual Compliance and may impact its advancement:

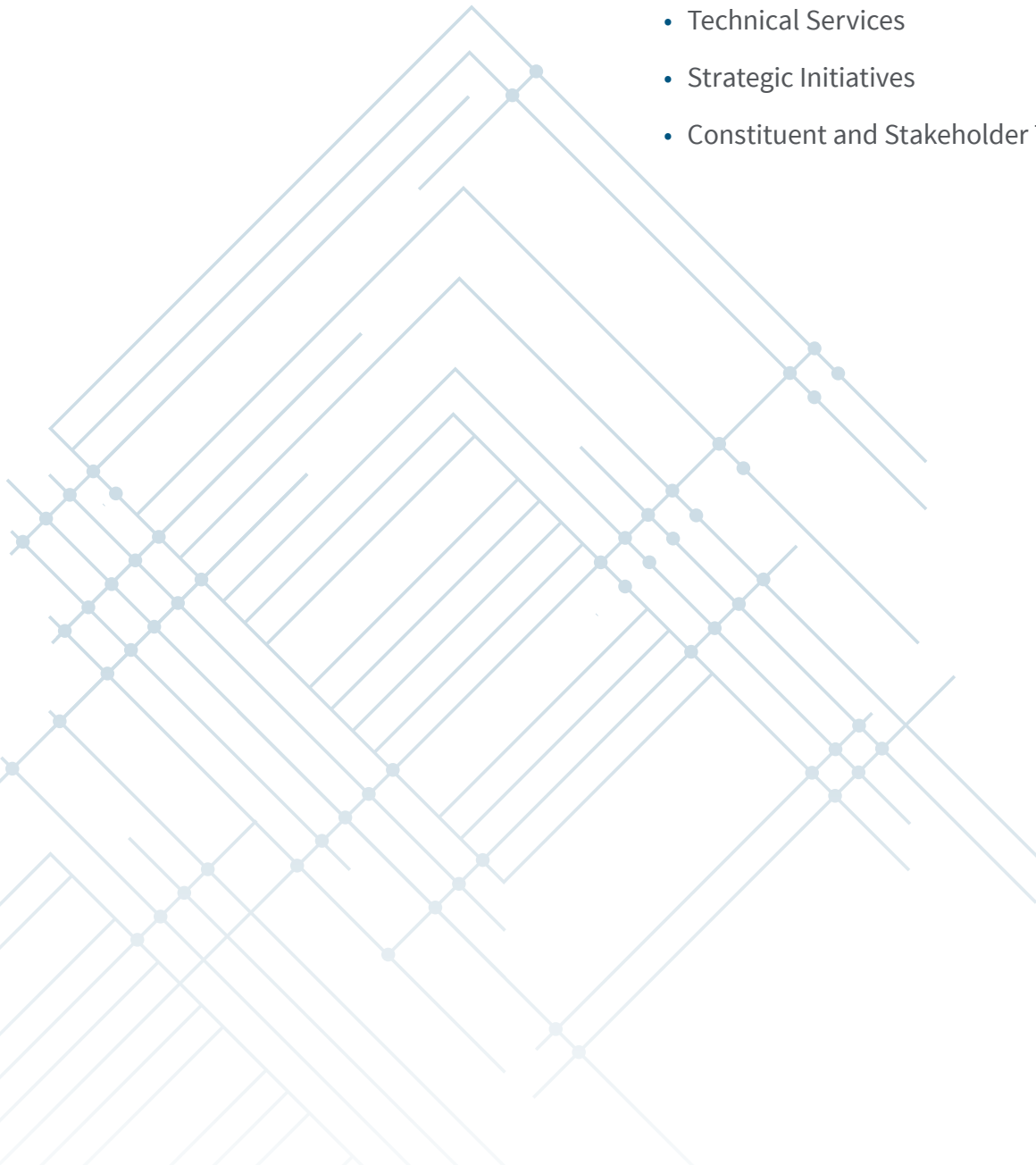
- Successful execution of recurring activities depends on hiring and training for backfill positions.
- Opportunities to reduce spending depend on timely, successful, and complete (including metrics) migration to the Contractual Compliance ticketing platform.
- Cross-functional work related to supporting reviews and policy development reduces Contractual Compliance resources available to execute core functions.
- Unknown impact on volume, type, and complexity of complaints submitted to Contractual Compliance as a result of unknown registry directory service (RDS) obligations.
- Complaints may increase in volume, type, and complexity. This may lead to a reallocation of existing resources among queues as well as to a need for additional staff. Implementing new requirements or projects may have an unknown impact on the volume, type, and complexity of complaints submitted to Contractual Compliance. ■

FUNCTIONAL ACTIVITIES

FY25

POLICY DEVELOPMENT & IMPLEMENTATION SUPPORT

- Policy Development and Advice
- Policy Research and Stakeholder Programs
- Contracted Parties Services Operations
- Technical Services
- Strategic Initiatives
- Constituent and Stakeholder Travel



POLICY DEVELOPMENT & IMPLEMENTATION SUPPORT

Policy Development and Advice

PURPOSE

The Policy Development Support function facilitates the policy development and advisory work of the ICANN community. It provides governance and process management, subject-matter expertise, and administrative and professional secretariat support to ICANN's Supporting Organizations (SOs), Advisory Committees (ACs), and other formally chartered community structures, including the Empowered Community Administration, the Customer Standing Committee, and the Root Zone Evolution Review Committee.

OPERATING INITIATIVE CONTRIBUTIONS

- Lead: Evolve and strengthen the multistakeholder model to facilitate diverse and inclusive participation in policymaking.
- Lead: Evolve and strengthen the ICANN Community's decision-making processes to ensure efficient and effective policymaking.
- Support: Support the evolution and strengthening of Root Zone Management and the Root Server System.
- Support: Promote and evolve the DNS through open and transparent processes that enable competition and open entry in Internet-related markets while ensuring the stability, security, and resiliency of the DNS.
- Support: Planning at ICANN.

ACTIVITIES

- Facilitate policy and advice development and consensus decision-making by managing the policy process from beginning to end for all community-driven policy-related projects. This includes:
 - Conducting research and analysis, drafting reports, tracking recommendations, preparing briefings, and updating working drafts as policy work progresses.
 - Providing secretariat, operations, and administrative services such as meeting planning, record keeping, and process management.
 - Providing impartial and neutral guidance on substantive, procedural, and strategic issues.
 - Publishing papers and regular information, and conducting webinars and presentations, to inform the public about policy initiatives.
- Manage community governance processes, and build and maintain relationships across multiple and diverse stakeholders globally.
- Manage Public Comment proceedings.
- Support the SO and AC councils and leadership teams in their management and oversight work by providing process guidance and subject-matter expertise, coordinating SO and AC strategic planning, and tracking the progress of all community policy activities.

POLICY DEVELOPMENT & IMPLEMENTATION SUPPORT

- Manage key communication channels for information about current and pending policy issues, including ICANN Prep Week sessions, the Community Digest, sessions at ICANN Public Meetings, and regular policy briefings.
- Deploy project and program management tools for the SO/ACs and ensure relevant staff are trained.
- Continue data migration and development of membership management features in the CES and ensure relevant staff are trained.

HOW PROGRESS IS TRACKED

ICANN uses a combination of milestones, metrics, and reports to track Functional Activities. The following measures will be used in FY25 for this functional activity:

- Tracking and reporting on active projects (including milestones and timelines), recurring activities and planned new work across the SOs and ACs.
- Providing reports on community participation in policy groups, in Public Comment proceedings (annually) and at ICANN Public Meetings (including Prep Week).

RESOURCES

FUNCTIONAL ACTIVITY	FTE	Staff	Non-Staff	TOTAL
Policy Development and Advice	37	\$7.4	\$1.9	\$9.3

*In Millions USD
Full-Time Equivalent (FTE)*

CONSIDERATIONS

The following risks and considerations exist for this initiative and may impact its advancement:

- As the volume and complexity of community work continue to grow, meeting the community’s need for high-quality support poses an increasing challenge. While filling the open positions in FY24 will address current needs, there is a potential need for additional staff to address emerging gaps in substantive research, data analysis, and project management.
- Prioritization remains a challenge for individual community groups and in cross-community work. The new program management tools that are expected to be rolled out across the SOs and ACs in FY25 may assist with workload management and forward planning, but they are not prioritization tools and in any event will require time for acceptance and comfort with a new tool. ICANN’s Prioritization Framework could also be helpful as one method that the community can consider adopting.
- Strong coordination between the Policy Development Support function and other teams (e.g., Engineering and IT, Meetings Technical Services, Legal, Communications) remains necessary to ensure that community requests for new or improved tools are handled consistently and the appropriate new tools prioritized fairly and transparently. ■

POLICY DEVELOPMENT & IMPLEMENTATION SUPPORT

Policy Research and Stakeholder Programs

PURPOSE

The Policy Research and Stakeholder Programs function leads and supports the implementation of key policies and cross-functional projects, provides research and thought leadership capabilities to support relevant organizational work, and leads and supports community-based work to develop and promote a multilingual Internet and secure user experience.

This function also ensures cross-functional coordination and subject-matter support for the Board's and org's activities around relevant recommendations and advice from the multistakeholder community.

OPERATING INITIATIVE CONTRIBUTIONS

- Lead: Promote and evolve the DNS through open and transparent processes that enable competition and open entry in Internet-related markets while ensuring the stability, security, and resiliency of the DNS.

ACTIVITIES

In FY25, activities will include:

- Supporting Board consideration of Generic Names Supporting Organization (GNSO) consensus policy recommendations.
- Managing organizational activities around implementation of GNSO consensus policy recommendations.
- Managing and performing policy reviews.
- Executing and supporting data, research, and study requests from internal and external stakeholders.
- Providing subject-matter support to internal and external stakeholder projects, including support during development and implementation of recommendations by SOs, ACs, and other relevant community groups.
- Managing and supporting programs derived from multistakeholder policy recommendations, advice, review team, and other outcomes as directed by the Board.

POLICY DEVELOPMENT & IMPLEMENTATION SUPPORT

HOW PROGRESS IS TRACKED

The following measures will be used in FY25 for this functional activity:

- Progress on the implementation of Board-approved policy recommendations is reported on a dedicated consensus policy implementation webpage.
- Progress on implementation of relevant advice items is reported on a dedicated webpage that provides the status of advice to the Board from ACs.
- Progress on implementation of relevant Specific Review recommendations is reported on a dedicated webpage that provides the status of Specific Reviews and implementation of recommendations.

For many of this function’s activities, the timing and milestones depend on factors such as community decisions and engagement, and Board consideration and direction. The team communicates progress by direct engagement with the relevant SOs, ACs, and other stakeholder groups by sharing work plans and draft documents for community comment and consultation, publishing blogs and announcements, and holding webinars and public meeting sessions.

RESOURCES

FUNCTIONAL ACTIVITY	FTE	Staff	Non-Staff	TOTAL
Policy Research and Stakeholder Programs	19	\$3.7	\$0.3	\$4.0

*In Millions USD
Full-Time Equivalent (FTE)*

CONSIDERATIONS

Additional FTEs will be needed during the fiscal year to progress the work described here. As this team leads and supports the work on the New gTLD Program: Next Round, which is subject to a separate budget, this includes resources to be allocated from both the operating budget and the New gTLD Program budget.

Several Specific Review recommendations have been approved, while others are pending Board decisions. The team anticipates continuing responsibility for a set of these recommendations in FY25, in accordance with the planning and prioritization process. ■

POLICY DEVELOPMENT & IMPLEMENTATION SUPPORT

Contracted Parties Services Operations

PURPOSE

Contracted Parties Services Operations delivers defined, high quality, repeatable services and processes to applicants and contracted parties in a timely, consistent, and predictable manner.

OPERATING INITIATIVE CONTRIBUTIONS

No linked operating initiatives. This function supports ICANN's continued operations.

ACTIVITIES

In FY25, activities will include:

- Process contracted party service requests. Continually improve procedural aspects related to delivery of service requests.
- Manage contracted party agreements, including these steps:
 - Facilitate agreement execution.
 - Generate and execute contract amendments as a result of service requests.
 - Process agreement terminations.
- Manage registrar application and evaluation process.
- Monitor certain conditions required by contracted party agreements and execute outbound communications to facilitate contracted party compliance with agreements.
- Manage Contracted Party account management.
- Maintenance and enhancements to ICANN's system of record for contracted parties, the Naming Services portal.
- Manage all aspects of vendor life cycle from procurement to operations for vendors that provide contracted party services, application evaluation, or related GDS needs. Further build out the Vendor Management function to support the next round RFP and vendor management needs.
- △ Support New gTLD Program: Next Round-related activities around process development, operationalization and application processing.
- Support the 2012 round of the New gTLD Program, including:
 - Application processing (evaluation, contention resolution, application change requests, etc.).
 - Contracting (Registry Agreement execution, Specification 13, and Code of Conduct Exemption Amendments).
 - Pre-delegation activities (pre-delegation testing, onboarding, and transition to delegation).
 - Support for ICANN org's Legal team on New gTLD Program-related Accountability Mechanisms and litigation.

POLICY DEVELOPMENT & IMPLEMENTATION SUPPORT

HOW PROGRESS IS TRACKED

ICANN uses a combination of metrics and reports to track Functional Activities. The following milestones will be used in FY25 for this functional activity:

- Service level targets will continue to be monitored and modified as per operational needs.
- Report of service delivery against service level targets will continue.
- Monitor contracted party transactional survey responses.

RESOURCES

FUNCTIONAL ACTIVITY	FTE	Staff	Non-Staff	TOTAL
Contracted Parties Services Operations	18	\$2.8	\$1.7	\$4.5

*In Millions USD
Full-Time Equivalent (FTE)*

CONSIDERATIONS

- Operations resources are in high demand both internally and outside the organization. Providing development opportunities and career growth to retain staff is critical to successful ongoing operations.
- New gTLD Program 2012 Round support activities are currently projected to run through FY25. Changes to that timeline would impact resources and activities.
- Accountability mechanisms and litigation pertaining to the New gTLD Program: Next Round, typically require significant and unplanned time and effort, and may require significant expenditure of resources to manage. ■

POLICY DEVELOPMENT & IMPLEMENTATION SUPPORT

Technical Services

PURPOSE

The Technical Services function provides technical knowledge and data inside ICANN org regarding the DNS and works to maintain the security and stability of the DNS.

OPERATING INITIATIVE CONTRIBUTIONS

- Support: Promote and evolve the DNS through open and transparent processes that enable competition and open entry in Internet-related markets while ensuring the stability, security, and resiliency of the DNS.
- Support: Facilitate the DNS ecosystem improvements.

ACTIVITIES

In FY25, activities will include:

- Coordinate projects and activities related to the implementation of Registration Data Access Protocol (RDAP).
- Enhance RDAP web client.
- Maintain an RDAP command-line client.
- Deploy a Technical Compliance Monitoring system for gTLDs.
- Enhance Service Level Agreement (SLA) monitoring for gTLDs and DNS monitoring for other TLDs and the root.
- Enhance Monitoring System Application Programming Interface for TLDs.
- Enhance Centralized Zone Data Service (CZDS).
- Develop, operate, and maintain the Registry Service Provider Evaluation program for the New gTLD Program: Next Round.
- Develop the Registry System Testing service for the New gTLD Program: Next Round.
- Coordinate the infrastructure work stream of the New gTLD Program: Next Round.
- Upgrade existing services to accommodate new gTLDs expected in the next round: Registration Reporting Interfaces (RRI), Controlled Interruption monitoring, Bulk Registration Data, Zone File Access, Technical Onboarding, Uniform Rapid Suspension (URS) contact system, SLA monitoring system, CZDS, and Trademark Clearinghouse.
- Serve as business product manager for the gTLD application system, Applicant Support system, Naming Services Portal, and the next round website and other web elements.
- Support the development of the New gTLD Program: Next Round.
- Develop the IGO notification service.
- Develop the INGO claims service.

POLICY DEVELOPMENT & IMPLEMENTATION SUPPORT

- Develop updates related to the implementation of the Registration Data policy.
- Support the implementation of Expedited Policy Development Process (EPDP) on Temporary Specification for gTLD Registration Data Phases 1 and 2, if they move forward.
- Support EPDP on Temporary Specification for gTLD Registration Data Phase 2 implementation, if adopted by the Board and subject to prioritization.
- Support Technical Onboarding systems re-platforming to remove legacy systems.

HOW PROGRESS IS TRACKED

Deployment of various systems and system enhancements.

RESOURCES

FUNCTIONAL ACTIVITY	FTE	Staff	Non-Staff	TOTAL
Technical Services	6	\$1.8	\$0.5	\$2.4

In Millions USD

Full-Time Equivalent (FTE)

CONSIDERATIONS

Additional staff may be required to support implementation of the EPDP on Temporary Specification for gTLD Registration Data Phase 2, Technical Onboarding systems re-platforming, supporting additional systems, and the New gTLD Program: Next Round. ■

POLICY DEVELOPMENT & IMPLEMENTATION SUPPORT

Strategic Initiatives

PURPOSE

The Strategic Initiatives functional activity leads and provides support for strategic initiatives and evolving issues that impact ICANN’s remit and stakeholders. It includes supporting work undertaken by the community, such as the coordination of ICANN’s strategy as it relates to compliance with the European Union’s General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) and other global data protection and privacy legislation; mitigating DNS security threats; special projects related to the New gTLD Program: Next Round, IDNs, and UA-related topics. The team also provides general support for the Global Domains and Strategy (GDS) function.

OPERATING INITIATIVE CONTRIBUTIONS

- Support: Evolve and strengthen the multistakeholder model to facilitate diverse and inclusive participation in policymaking.
- Support: Promote and evolve the DNS through open and transparent processes that enable competition and open entry in Internet-related markets while ensuring the stability, security, and resiliency of the DNS.
- Support: Geopolitical monitoring, engagement, and mitigation.

ACTIVITIES

In FY25, activities will include:

- **Special Projects for the New gTLD Program: Next Round:**
 - Coordinate the design and implementation of an updated website and associated web assets for the New gTLD Program: Next Round.
 - Develop a comprehensive project plan, to ensure a consistent experience for New gTLD Program: Next Round applicants.
- **Data Protection and Privacy Issues:**
 - Cross-functional coordination as it relates to data protection and privacy issues, including Registration Directory Service compliance with the GDPR and other laws.
 - Continued management of the Expedited Policy Development Process (EPDP) Phase 2 recommendations on a System for Standardized Access/Disclosure (SSAD) to Nonpublic gTLD Registration Data, including leading the project team for the Registration Data Request Service, a proof-of-concept system to test the demand for and usage of a centralized service for requesting nonpublic gTLD registration data.

POLICY DEVELOPMENT & IMPLEMENTATION SUPPORT

- **DNS Security Threat Mitigation:**

- Continued coordination of org-wide strategy to ensure ICANN is recognized as a trusted source of information; provide tools to the community to mitigate DNS security threats; and enforce related contractual provisions.
- Support the outcome of the DNS Abuse-related contract amendment process on Registry Agreement and Registrar Accreditation Agreement and any subsequent work that may arise as a result.

- **IDNs and UA:**

- Manage IDN-related operations, including review of IDN tables, implementation of IDN Guidelines, and running the IDN ccTLD Fast Track process.
- Publish additional reference Label Generation Rules and maintain the Root Zone Label Generation Rules.
- Promote UA adoption by conducting outreach and training to the various stakeholders, including developers of software applications and tools developers, and email service providers.
- Support community efforts, including UA Steering Group, in planning and promoting UA globally.
- Support ongoing IDN and UA-related policy development and implementation.
- Provide support for tracking the progress of cross-functional strategy for increasing IDN implementation and UA readiness globally.

- **Operational Initiatives:**

- Provide support services across the ICANN organization on a range of shared activities, including correspondence, Board advice, communications, budgets, and others, as required.

HOW PROGRESS IS TRACKED

The following milestones will be used in FY25 for this functional activity:

- **Special Projects for New gTLD Program: Next Round:**

- Publish updated information regarding the Next Round on the micro-site as well as roll-out of updated layout.
- Publish and solicit input on work to develop a comprehensive Applicant Journey, to ensure a consistent experience for applicants.

- **Data Protection and Privacy Issues:**

- Provide support for Board consideration of policy recommendations resulting from EPDP on Temporary Specification for gTLD Registration Data Phase 2 on a System for Standardized Access/Disclosure, should the Board adopt the recommendations, or implementation of another solution should the Board elect to follow that path following consultation with the GNSO Council.
 - Support the Registration Data Request Service, a proof-of-concept system to test the demand for and usage of centralized service for requesting nonpublic gTLD registration data, through monthly data publication and community engagement.

POLICY DEVELOPMENT & IMPLEMENTATION SUPPORT

- Provide collected data to the Board to aid in its discussion with the GNSO Council on the next steps for the paused recommendations from EPDP on Temporary Specification for gTLD Registration Data Phase 2 on a System for Standardized Access/Disclosure.
 - Provide support to planned policy development work related to data accuracy in gTLD registration data.
 - Coordinate ICANN’s strategy and related activities across functions to ensure alignment with the org’s goals related to data protection and privacy laws, including GDPR. This coordination aims to ensure that Registration Data Services (RDS) and access to nonpublic gTLD registration data meet the necessary requirements.
- **DNS Security Threat Mitigation:**
 - Continue to coordinate organization-wide strategy, including participation in ICANN community discussions on DNS security threat topics.
- **IDNs and UA:**
 - Review IDN tables based on requests by registry operators, track and address issues related to implementation of IDN Guidelines with registry operators, and evaluate any IDN ccTLD applications received.
 - Publish three reference Label Generation Rules and update Root Zone Label Generation Rules as needed.
 - Publish Annual IDNs Report and Annual UA Readiness Report.
 - Provide support for tracking progress of cross-functional strategy for increasing IDN implementation and UA readiness globally.
- **Operational Initiatives:**
 - Coordinate operational activities across the ICANN organization by adhering to Service Level Targets (SLTs).

RESOURCES

FUNCTIONAL ACTIVITY	FTE	Staff	Non-Staff	TOTAL
Strategic Initiatives	10	\$2.6	\$0.4	\$3.0

*In Millions USD
Full-Time Equivalent (FTE)*

CONSIDERATIONS

Activities related to recommendations from the New gTLD Subsequent Procedures Policy Development Process and the EPDP on Temporary Specification for gTLD Registration Policy Phase 2 remain major priorities for the organization and will require greater efforts and resources as the organization moves into implementation planning and implementation phases. Ongoing project planning will inform when additional resources are necessary to support required activities in this time period. ■

POLICY DEVELOPMENT & IMPLEMENTATION SUPPORT

Constituent and Stakeholder Travel

PURPOSE

The Constituent and Stakeholder Travel function aims to provide travel support for community members selected through appropriate processes and to promote broader participation in ICANN’s activities.

OPERATING INITIATIVE CONTRIBUTIONS

- Support: Evolve and strengthen the multistakeholder model to facilitate diverse and inclusive participation in policymaking.
- Support: Evolve and strengthen the ICANN community’s decision-making processes to ensure efficient and effective policymaking.

ACTIVITIES

In FY25, activities will include:

- Providing logistical travel assistance to funded travelers who are selected by Supporting Organizations, Advisory Committees, review teams, the Nominating Committee, other supported groups, and ICANN support staff for events requiring travel. These may include ICANN Public Meetings and other approved ICANN events. Approved ICANN events are those that advance ICANN’s mission, such as intersessional meetings, review team meetings, workshops, or conferences.

HOW PROGRESS IS TRACKED

The following measure will be used in FY25 for this functional activity:

- Publication of reports following each ICANN Public Meeting with details of the travel support provided.

POLICY DEVELOPMENT & IMPLEMENTATION SUPPORT

RESOURCES

FUNCTIONAL ACTIVITY	FTE	Staff	Non-Staff	TOTAL
Constituent and Stakeholder Travel	0	\$0.0	\$2.6	\$2.6

*In Millions USD
Full-Time Equivalent (FTE)*

CONSIDERATIONS

The following risks and considerations exist for this functional activity and may impact its advancement:

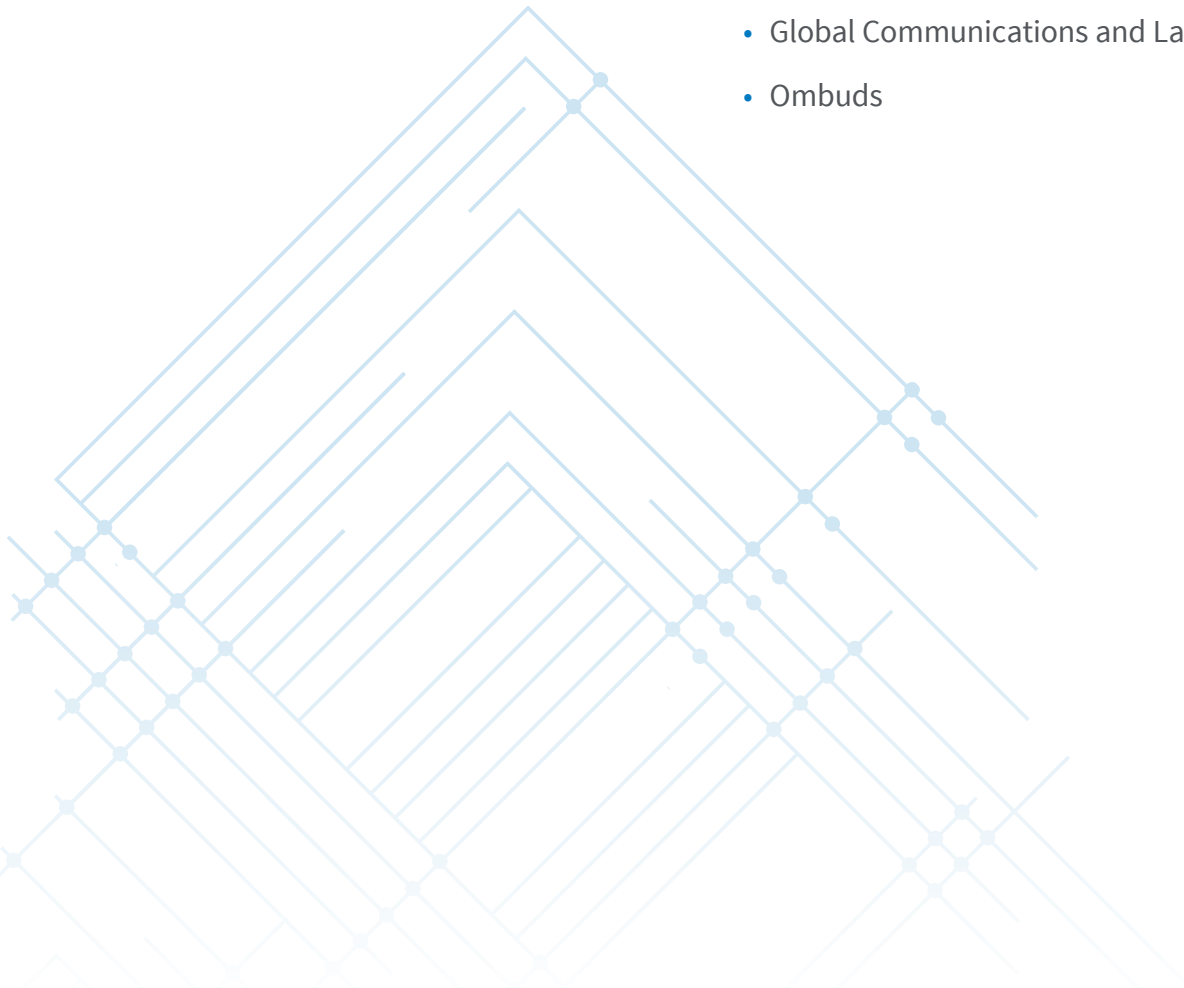
- Allocating limited travel funding among ICANN community members requires prioritization.
- Advance planning is needed to ensure cost-effective pricing. ■

FUNCTIONAL ACTIVITIES

FY25

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT & SERVICES

- Global Stakeholder Engagement
 - Regional Offices
- Engagement Programs
- Global Meetings Operations
- Government and Intergovernmental Organization Engagement (GE)
- GDD Accounts and Services
- Global Support Center
- Global Communications and Language Service
- Ombuds



COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT & SERVICES

Global Stakeholder Engagement

In 2021, under the President and CEO's direction, the Global Stakeholder Engagement (GSE) team reviewed its purpose and priorities within ICANN org's community-facing functions. In late 2022, the team initiated a process to integrate with the Public Responsibility Support and Global Meetings Operations teams, creating a consolidated Stakeholder Engagement function at ICANN. This new function has been reorganized into three sub-functions: Global Stakeholder Engagement (GSE), Engagement Programs (previously Public Responsibility Support) and Global Meetings Operations (Meetings).

For FY25, staff costs associated with the Global Meetings Operations team are included in Global Stakeholder Engagement and Engagement Programs. The Meetings department budget contains venue, catering, professional services, and administrative costs to support ICANN global meetings and ICANN-managed events.

PURPOSE

ICANN org's (GSE) team serves as the global point of contact for ICANN and the community. The team leads outreach, facilitates ICANN-organized events and travel, and supports engagement programs through local coverage in ICANNs regions. The combined function's purpose is to:

- Raise awareness and understanding of ICANN's role.
- Encourage participation in ICANN's policy development and technical activities.
- Enhance ICANN's operating model across regional offices.
- Build relationships and develop trust among stakeholders.
- Facilitate best-in-class hybrid events, travel support, and logistics for ICANN and the community.
- Provide subject matter expertise and advice for public responsibility initiatives within ICANN's remit related to diversity, human rights, anti-harassment, and the global public interest.

OPERATING INITIATIVE CONTRIBUTIONS

As the leading unit for engagement and outreach within ICANN org, GSE offers both direct and indirect support to various Operating Initiatives that involve outreach components. These initiatives include:

- Evolve and strengthen the multistakeholder model to facilitate diverse and inclusive participation in policymaking.
- Implement New gTLD auction proceeds recommendations as approved by the Board.
- Facilitate the DNS ecosystem improvements.
- Geopolitical monitoring, engagement and mitigation.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT & SERVICES

ACTIVITIES

In FY25, activities will include:

- **Building on Hybrid Meeting Best Practices:** Applying lessons learned from hybrid meetings to enhance meaningful experiences for both virtual and in-person attendees, during the return to in-person events.
- **Capacity Development:** Increasing understanding of ICANN's mission and promoting diverse participation in core activities.
- **Building Partnerships:** Establishing relationships with regional and local stakeholders.
- **Stakeholder Engagement:** Continuously engaging with target stakeholders and key influencers who can impact ICANN, even if they don't typically participate in ICANN meetings and may not fully understand ICANN's role in the DNS ecosystem.
- **Enhancing Digital Inclusivity:** Expanding outreach efforts, such as the Coalition for Digital Africa This Operating Initiative work area is also included as a multi-year goal in the blog titled "["ICANN Interim President and CEO Shares Goals for Fiscal Year 2024" as CEO Goal 3.](#)", promoting awareness of IDNs, UA, and opportunities in the New gTLD Program: Next Round, including the new Coalition Secretariat role introduced in FY24.
- **Engagement Measurement:** Extending the engagement measurement and planning function and using a Community Engagement System platform to manage engagement activities, community contacts, trip reports, cases, and Memorandums of Understanding with external organizations. Continue to measure, plan, and administer engagement activities on an ongoing basis. This multi-year project is part of ["ICANN Interim President and CEO Goal 1 for FY24.](#)
- **Cross-functional Regional Engagement:** Ongoing engagement in technical and policy work in the regions. Participation in relevant national and regional discussions. Delivery of regional engagement strategies.
- **International Office Strategy:** Support cross-organizational prioritization to deliver on needs for international office strategy.
- **Engagement Activities:** Ongoing implementation of engagement activities related to the implementation of Specific and Organizational Reviews and community work on New gTLD Subsequent Procedures PDP recommendations, and support of initiatives including OCTO, Government and IGO Engagement (GE), and Global Domains and Strategy (GDS).
- **Consolidation of Stakeholder Engagement Activities:** Complete integration of GSE, Engagement Programs and Global Meetings Operations into a broader Stakeholder Engagement function.
- △ **Legislative and Geopolitical Awareness:** Emphasize awareness-raising with GE in key conferences and events to mitigate negative impacts on ICANN or the multistakeholder model due to legislative and geopolitical issues.
- △ **Integrated Engagement and Outreach:** Continue work begun in FY22–23 to integrate ICANN org's engagement and outreach activities in the regions. Coordinate with other ICANN org functions including the Global Domains Division's Accounts and Services team, OCTO, and GE.
- △ **Outreach to ISPs and Connectivity Providers:** Continue outreach with Internet service provider (ISP) associations and connectivity providers to educate them on the role of ICANN. Support OCTO with the KINDNS initiative.
- △ **Enhanced Awareness and Outreach:** Support awareness and outreach associated with IDNs, Universal Acceptance, and the New gTLD Program: Next Round.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT & SERVICES

HOW PROGRESS IS TRACKED

ICANN uses a combination of milestones, metrics, and reports to track Functional Activities. In FY25, the following metrics will be tracked and milestones will be met:

- Improve the stakeholder engagement presence on the ICANN website to reflect the integration of GSE, Engagement Programs and Global Meetings Operations.
- Data on ICANN’s geographical presence and services to regional stakeholders.
- Number of capacity development and training events and analysis of community feedback.
- Incorporation of stakeholder journeys data into ICANN’s Open Data Program.
- Implementation of FY25 Regional At-Large Organizations outreach and engagement plans with GSE regional engagement plans.
- Metrics related to cross-functional work on Domain Name System (DNS) ecosystem security, Domain Name System Security Extensions (DNSSEC) deployment, Universal Acceptance, and IMRS instances.
- Engagement reporting on community review recommendations adopted by the Board for implementation.
- Support of community prioritization effort at the regional level to increase participation in Public Comment periods.
- DNSSEC statistics from regional training and local adoption levels by top-level domains, ISPs, and others.

RESOURCES

FUNCTIONAL ACTIVITY	FTE	Staff	Non-Staff	TOTAL
Global Stakeholder Engagement	35	\$8.3	\$1.4	\$9.7

*In Millions USD
Full-Time Equivalent (FTE)*

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT & SERVICES

CONSIDERATIONS

The following considerations exist for GSE team, some of which may pose risks in FY25:

- Increasing demand for GSE team support across ICANN org functions.
- Possible impacts on staffing and retention due to the integration of GSE, Engagement Programs and Global Meetings Operations.
- The GSE team has been largely stable over time but succession planning, ongoing professional development, and cross-functional training opportunities must be implemented for staff retention.
- Significant budget and staff resources required to support potential future rounds of gTLDs and to implement reviews' recommendations.
- GSE team members have improved their ability to speak more effectively for ICANN org on DNS and DNSSEC, DNS security threats and mitigations, IPv6, and other technical topics. OCTO also plans to add technical engagement staff in the regions.
- Transition to face-to-face meetings in the regions, leveraging lessons from virtual and hybrid events.
- GSE continues to make improvements to cross-functional collaboration with OCTO, GE, and GDS. Review of regional engagement events to include a contracted party engagement track, considering in-person safety requirements.
- Emphasis on raising awareness in regions with key decision makers who don't attend ICANN meetings due to geopolitical and legislative impacts on the Internet.
- Reputational risk if active regional stakeholders aren't retained or new volunteers attracted in a post-COVID-19 era. ■

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT & SERVICES

Regional Offices

ICANN has regional offices in Brussels, Belgium; Istanbul, Turkey; Montevideo, Uruguay; and Singapore. ICANN has engagement centers in Nairobi, Kenya; Washington, D.C., USA and Beijing, China.

PURPOSE

The primary purpose of the regional offices is stakeholder engagement. Besides bringing ICANN's functions closer to stakeholders, the offices facilitate the functions housed in the region to achieve the goals set out in the Strategic Plan.

OPERATING INITIATIVE CONTRIBUTIONS

Each regional office leads stakeholder engagement in its region and collaborates with other ICANN functions at a regional level, thereby offering direct or indirect support to all Operating Initiatives.

ACTIVITIES

The FY25 activities of the regional offices encompass recurring work related to the functions located in each office and are not listed here. Major activities undertaken by GSE staff in the regional offices in FY25 include:

- Facilitate collaboration on cross-functional goals with other ICANN org functions.
 - Facilitate engagement with stakeholders at a regional level, building on lessons learned from hybrid meetings and the post-COVID environment.
 - Provide support for office return efforts and foster collaboration across ICANN org functions.
 - Update regional engagement strategies to reflect major developments in the Strategic Plan, particularly in relation to technical and government engagement.
 - Continue to identify and address internal and external issues, needs, and demand across the regions, and facilitate collaboration, or request for resource support, from the Executive Team to address them.
 - Develop a system for the collection and analysis of metrics to measure progress and success in regional and functional participation in the ICANN community, as well as accountability indicators concerning trust in ICANN.
 - Identify engagement gaps in the region and facilitate collaboration, or request resource support to address gaps.
- △ Develop region-specific plans for promoting the New gTLD Program: Next Round.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT & SERVICES

HOW PROGRESS IS TRACKED

ICANN org uses a combination of milestones, metrics, and reports to track Functional Activities. In FY25, key measures for the regional offices are:

- Development of documents to track goals and cross-functional work by region.
- Incorporation of regional issues, engagement gaps and needs into org-wide Community Engagement System (CES) platform. This multi-year project is part of [ICANN Interim President and CEO Goal 1 for FY24](#).
- Development of tailored plans for European legislation tracking and technical engagement.
- Development of a People Development Plan for the European Region that includes tailored personal growth and training goals for staff.

RESOURCES

The administrative costs of running each regional office can be found in the [ICANN Offices](#) Functional Activity section.

CONSIDERATIONS

The following risks and considerations exist for the success of the regional offices in FY25 and may impact their progression:

- Work depends on other functions and staff, who may have other priorities.
- Functional teams should have region-specific plans and goals in place.
- Expanding adoption of an org-wide CES platform.
- Adequate budget allocation is needed for GSE staff and regional support.
- Willingness of the community to use the regional offices for ICANN-supported face-to-face meetings. ■

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT & SERVICES

Engagement Programs

PURPOSE

ICANN's Engagement Programs are anchored in the global public interest within ICANN's mission. Initiatives range from education to capacity-development opportunities for ICANN beginners and more seasoned community members; management of ICANN's online learning platform; the provision of research expertise in the areas of human rights, diversity and anti-harassment; emergency financial support for continued Internet access, and travel support for funded travelers and staff.

These complement broader efforts to strengthen and evolve ICANN's multistakeholder model.

As noted in the Global Stakeholder Engagement (GSE) section, the Engagement Programs function is being integrated into Stakeholder Engagement, along with Meetings. This integration will continue into FY25.

OPERATING INITIATIVE CONTRIBUTIONS

- Support: Implement New gTLD auctions proceeds recommendations as approved by the Board.
- Support: Facilitate the DNS ecosystem improvements.
- Support: Evolve and strengthen the multistakeholder model to facilitate diverse and inclusive participation in policymaking.
- Support: Evolve and strengthen the ICANN community's decision-making processes to ensure efficient and effective policymaking.

ACTIVITIES

In FY25, activities will include:

- Subject-matter expertise and global good practices advice for public responsibility initiatives within ICANN's remit in the areas of diversity, human rights, anti-harassment, and global public interest,
- Lead engagement programs: ICANN Fellowship Program, NextGen@ICANN, ICANN for Beginners Virtual Program, Registrant Program, Leadership Program, Chairing Skills Program, and ICANN Community Childcare Grants.
- Lead and support capacity-development initiatives: ICANN Learn, the Leadership Program, the Chairing Skills Program, the ICANN for Beginners Program, and the ICANN History Project.
- Expand ICANN Learn and ICANN for Beginners Virtual Program curriculum to meet increased demand for online learning and capacity development.
- Support community groups and the ICANN Board in conducting regular diversity assessments. Conduct a five-year evaluation and review of the Fellowship Program.
- Identify, deliver and measure the effectiveness of anti-harassment/upstander training opportunities across the ICANN community.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT & SERVICES

- Support implementation of activities under the Coalition for Digital Africa. This multi-year project is part of [ICANN Interim President and CEO Goal 3 for FY24](#).
- Support adoption and expansion of Community Engagement System (CES) platform use across ICANN org. This multi-year project is part of [ICANN Interim President and CEO Goal 1 for FY24](#).
- Raise awareness via outreach and capacity-development efforts about issues and challenges impacting registrants.
- Support outreach efforts related to the ICANN Grant Program and the Applicant Support Program.
- Environmental Sustainability strategy project: Lead the development of ICANN's environmental sustainability strategy project, which is part of [ICANN Interim President and CEO Goal 8 for FY24](#).

HOW PROGRESS IS TRACKED

ICANN uses a combination of milestones, metrics, and reports to track Functional Activities. In FY25, the following milestones will be met:

- Support community groups and the ICANN Board in conducting regular diversity assessments.
- Support outreach efforts related to the ICANN Grant Program and the Applicant Support Program.
 - Identify, deliver, and measure the effectiveness of anti-harassment training opportunities across the ICANN community.
- Engagement Programs: Number of participants by gender, region and sector when available.
 - Five-year review of the Fellowship Program and NextGen@ICANN
 - Additional Fellowship and NextGen metrics include:
 - Number of pen holders on policy reports and documents
 - Number of mailing list contributors
 - Number of Public Comment contributors
 - Number of alumni in leadership positions
- ICANN Learn, ICANN for Beginners Virtual Program, Registrant Program metrics include:
 - ICANN for Beginners program evaluation
 - Continue to leverage ICANN Learn for capacity-development.
 - Online Learn:
 - Number of active users / participants
 - Number of new courses or materials
 - Number of multilingual courses or materials

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT & SERVICES

RESOURCES

FUNCTIONAL ACTIVITY	FTE	Staff	Non-Staff	TOTAL
Engagement Programs	11	\$2.2	\$0.3	\$2.5

*In Millions USD
Full-Time Equivalent (FTE)*

CONSIDERATIONS

The following risks and considerations exist for this Functional Activity and may impact its advancement:

- Work depends on clear community and organizational public responsibility priorities and cross-functional collaboration.
- There is a risk of new volunteers dropping off and participants in ICANN’s multistakeholder processes not reflecting the evolution of the broader Internet user base.
- Reputational risks may arise from failure to provide sufficient transparency and ability to demonstrate impact and return on investment of programs. This includes failure to support educated and informed stakeholders and a perceived lack of impact and diversity in engagement programs.
- Continued improvement to Engagement Programs operations is needed, increasing transparency, scalability, and responsiveness to the community.
- The demand for self-paced, online capacity-development opportunities across the ICANN community continues to rise each year. Over 3,000 learners have actively taken training in the last 12 months, 50 percent more than the previous year. ICANN Learn should be leveraged to improve scalability of capacity-development efforts and resources to manage the expansion of training content. Self-paced, online learning is an effective tool for preparing participants to optimize in-person or live capacity development.
- Reduce barriers to participation in ICANN by improving the newcomer experience.
- Level of support for the ICANN Emergency Assistance Program for Continued Internet Access is subject to the availability of funds.
- ICANN is seeing an upward trend in the number of face-to-face and virtual meetings, even with flat funding. ■

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT & SERVICES

Global Meetings Operations (Meetings)

PURPOSE

Global Meetings Operations (Meetings) supports face-to-face and virtual meetings hosted by ICANN globally. For face-to-face meetings, the team ensures that the selected cities, venues, meeting facilities, and services provide an environment conducive to effective meetings. The team works in close collaboration with the community to establish the meeting schedule and provide travel support for funded travelers and staff.

For virtual meetings, the team works with the community and the org to establish the schedule and ensure an effective online participation strategy.

As noted in the Global Stakeholder Engagement (GSE) section, the Meetings function is being integrated into Stakeholder Engagement, along with Engagement Programs. This integration will continue into FY25.

OPERATING INITIATIVE CONTRIBUTIONS

No linked initiatives at this time. This supports ICANN's ongoing activities.

ACTIVITIES

In FY25, activities will include:

- Three ICANN Public Meetings scheduled for FY25:
 - ICANN81 Istanbul, Türkiye | Annual General Meeting
 - ICANN82 Seattle | Community Forum
 - ICANN83 TBD | Policy Forum
- Three Board workshops.
- Community face-to-face and virtual meetings.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT & SERVICES

HOW PROGRESS IS TRACKED

ICANN uses a combination of milestones, metrics, and reports to track Functional Activities. In FY25, the following milestone will be met:

- Continue to implement the approved cost-savings plan for three ICANN Public Meetings per year.

RESOURCES

FUNCTIONAL ACTIVITY	FTE	Staff	Non-Staff	TOTAL
Global Meetings Operations (Meetings)	0	\$0.0	\$4.3	\$4.3

*In Millions USD
Full-Time Equivalent (FTE)*

CONSIDERATIONS

The following risks and considerations exist for this Functional Activity and may impact its advancement:

- There is a noted increase in the demand for regional meetings, which could cause more work for the Meetings and Travel Support teams.
- Impacts from hybrid meetings, demand for more in-person meetings and ongoing COVID-19 related health and safety protocols may affect the format and cost of meetings conducted in FY25.
- With the integration of Meetings into the Stakeholder Engagement function and reimagining of regional event delivery, the team anticipates new efficiencies from closer collaboration with the regional GSE and GE teams, GDS, E&IT Meetings Technical Services, Board Operations, Policy and other functions involved in the production and delivery of ICANN-supported events. ■

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT & SERVICES

Government and Intergovernmental Organization Engagement (GE)

PURPOSE

ICANN org's GE team is responsible for outreach and engagement with national and regional governments and IGOs to protect the remit and mandate of ICANN. The team acts as a central point of contact within ICANN to help governments and IGOs understand and be mindful of the way the Internet functions and the role ICANN plays in technical Internet governance. The team's goal is to provide information to make governments aware of or mitigate the sometimes unintended consequences of government action on areas within ICANN's remit or on policies developed through ICANN's multistakeholder processes. The team specifically provides information about ICANN's role in the management of the Internet's unique identifiers, including the global DNS, IP addresses, and protocol parameters.

The GE team works with the GAC as the home of governments and IGOs within ICANN. The team also represents the mission of ICANN with government ministries and IGOs.

OPERATING INITIATIVE CONTRIBUTIONS

- Linked to OI7: Geopolitical monitoring, engagement, and mitigation. This supports ICANN's ongoing activities.

ACTIVITIES

- Publish reports on government-related activity such as ICANN-led briefings and capacity-development events, including engagement with diplomats and U.N. agencies.
- Collaborate with local government hosts and GAC members to conduct periodic High-Level Governmental meetings.
- Develop reports and statistics on GAC participation, outreach, and technical briefings.
- Contribute to open consultations, legislative, regulatory, policy, and standards initiatives, and publish contributions on the [Government Engagement](#) page.
- Review and align existing Memorandums of Understanding with goals.
- Track data on GAC representation and participation in ICANN policy development.
- Assess risks from legislative and regulatory processes, and global IGO activities.
- Facilitate government engagement strategies reflecting geopolitical changes and Strategic Plan updates.
- Engage in cross-functional regional activities related to technical and policy work.
- Promote capacity development and update activities against the Strategic Plan.
- Support cross-organizational collaboration for legislative tracking, government engagement, and strategic planning.
- Align global GE strategies with the Strategic Plan.
- Update capacity-development activities against the Strategic Plan.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT & SERVICES

- Evaluate and modify government engagement events for effectiveness.
- Develop and implement an annual engagement plan for the IGF.
- Annually review and revise engagement strategies for International Telecommunication Union (ITU), ITU-Development Sector, and the WSIS+20 review.
- Monitor and report on developments at the U.N., ITU, and other U.N. agencies, dealing with WSIS+20, as well as development of the U.N. Cybercrime Convention and other relevant U.N. and ITU documents.
- Execute the milestones under CEO Goal #6: Develop and implement a communications and engagement strategy designed to address the WSIS+20 review process.

HOW PROGRESS IS TRACKED

ICANN uses a combination of milestones, metrics, and reports to track functional activities. All work areas in this initiative apart from WSIS+20 now form part of ongoing functional activities. The following measures will be used over the five-year period:

- Execute CEO Goal #6: “Develop and implement a communications and engagement strategy designed to address the WSIS+20 review process” in the lead-up to the 2025 WSIS+20 review process.
- Delivery of the postponed High-Level Governmental meeting may occur in FY25 as a hybrid (virtual and in-person) event in conjunction with an ICANN meeting, depending on pandemic safety protocols and discussions with the GAC. Subsequent High-Level Governmental meetings potentially could occur biennially.
- Reports and statistics on participation in outreach, technical briefings, and capacity-development sessions for the GAC and through collaboration with other organizations in the ecosystem.
- Comparison of surveys conducted before and after GAC capacity-development events to measure information learned and delivery of information against expectations.
- Completed review of existing Memorandums of Understanding for continuing alignment with goals.
- Metrics related to the number of countries and IGOs represented in the GAC and the number of countries and IGOs actively participating in the GAC and ICANN policy processes.

RESOURCES

FUNCTIONAL ACTIVITY	FTE	Staff	Non-Staff	TOTAL
Governmental and IGO Engagement	11	\$3.3	\$1.5	\$4.8

*In Millions USD
Full-Time Equivalent (FTE)*

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT & SERVICES

Increased resources will be needed to address:

- △ Risks to the multistakeholder model of Internet governance from processes such as the United Nations General Assembly review of the progress made since the World Summit on the Information Society, known as the WSIS+20 Review or the Global Digital Compact.
- △ WSIS+20 Review outcomes with the potential to impact ICANN's mission.
- △ Growing risks stemming from government and IGO legislative and regulatory actions, both intended and unintended.
- △ Risks to the global Internet's stability due to new technologies, lack of government understanding, or political initiatives aimed at addressing perceived challenges posed by those technologies.
- △ Heightened demand for engagement and capacity development, driven by the GAC's Underserved Regions and Public Safety Working Groups.
- △ Increased regional capacity-development workshops, technical briefings, and training efforts delivered by ICANN or in collaboration with other organizations in the Internet ecosystem.
- △ Growing activity in cybersecurity, reflecting rising governmental concerns and proactive measures to address or exploit possible vulnerabilities in critical Internet infrastructure.
- △ Increased need for professional service contracts to cover specialized events, such as those related to the U.N. Open-Ended Working Group, the Ad Hoc Committee, discussions concerning the cybercrime convention, the next round of the WSIS discussions, as well as the ITU Plenipotentiary 26. Moreover, there's an increasing need for service contracts related to information gathering and analysis in various regions.
- △ Participation in previously unexplored arenas with potential impacts on ICANN's mission due to shifts in political action.
- △ Increased operational responsibilities in FY25–29 will require an increase in headcount.

CONSIDERATIONS

The following risks and considerations exist for this functional activity and may impact its advancement:

- There could be continuous work for ICANN in the U.N. system beyond 2025, depending on the outcome of the WSIS+20 review process.
- Changes in the assessment of the risk environment.
- Changes in functional resources and team allocation.
- Expanding geopolitical activity and corresponding global spread will require increased collaboration and demand on the resources of GSE, OCTO, Global Communications, and other community-facing functions in ICANN org. ■

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT & SERVICES

Global Domain Division (GDD) Accounts and Services

PURPOSE

The GDD Accounts and Services team, part of the Global Domains and Strategy (GDS) function, serves as ICANN's main connection to registrars and registry operators. This team's responsibilities include managing ICANN's relationships and contracts with the DNS industry, leading or supporting the implementation of requests from the ICANN community that relate to the registries or registrars, evolving the contractual obligations to best serve the Internet community, and developing solutions for ICANN's effective, equitable, and efficient management of contracts with registrars and registry operators. Additionally, the team identifies DNS ecosystem trends, manages financial forecasts, and leads ICANN's DNS Security Threat Mitigation Program.

OPERATING INITIATIVE CONTRIBUTIONS

- Support: Promote and evolve the DNS through open and transparent processes that enable competition and open entry in Internet-related markets while ensuring the stability, security, and resiliency of the DNS.

ACTIVITIES

In FY25, activities will include:

- Develop the FY25 annual and FY25–29 five-year funding forecast and funding assumptions.
- Lead the organization's efforts toward the renewal of the .com Registry Agreement.
- Lead the amendments to the few remaining registry agreements not utilizing the Base RA to align the RDAP requirements from the 2023 Global Amendment and anticipated changes for DNS Abuse.
- Continue to build and maintain relationships with ICANN's contracted parties.
- Conduct capacity development sessions with contracted parties to ensure understanding of new obligations or changes to processes driven by new policies, contractual changes or operational changes, including the introduction of [RDAP for Registration Data, Mitigation of DNS Abuse](#), the forthcoming Registration Data Policy or the transition of the [designated Data Escrow provider](#) for registrars.
- Publish updated data for the community in the Domain Name Marketplace Indicators.
- Implement Generic Names Supporting Organization (GNSO) policy recommendations after adoption by the ICANN Board.
- Implement and enhance services for the contracted parties.
- Implement assigned Specific Review recommendations.
- Lead efforts to evolve the Registry Agreement to support the New gTLD Program: Next Round and to address changes to the industry.
- Lead efforts to define the criteria and evaluation parameters for registry operators to support the New gTLD Program: Next Round and on-going operations.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT & SERVICES

- Prepare for the implications of the New gTLD Program: Next Round on existing processes and services to registry operators.
- Lead evaluation of applications for Registrar Accreditation, and proposed assignments or changes of control related to registrars and registries.
- Coordinate ICANN’s efforts to conduct research, provide tools, factual information, and education for the ICANN community regarding DNS security threats and DNS abuse.
- Collaborate and coordinate with industry actors on reducing DNS security threats (botnets, malware, pharming, phishing, and spam when used as a vector).
- Collaborate with the community to pinpoint areas where ICANN can address DNS Abuse and develop strategies to mitigate it.
- Host the Contracted Parties Summit, which provides the ICANN organization and contracted parties an opportunity to engage and address issues of mutual interest and importance.

HOW PROGRESS IS TRACKED

ICANN uses a combination of milestones, metrics, and reports to track Functional Activities. The following measures will be used in FY25 for this functional activity:

- Implementation of adopted consensus policies and assigned Specific Review recommendations Delivery of the annual and five-year funding forecast to Finance for incorporation into the budget and financial plans.

RESOURCES

FUNCTIONAL ACTIVITY	FTE	Staff	Non-Staff	TOTAL
GDD Accounts and Services	17	\$3.9	\$0.6	\$4.5

*In Millions USD
Full-Time Equivalent (FTE)*

CONSIDERATIONS

The following risks and considerations exist for this functional activity and may impact its advancement:

- Implementation of GNSO-developed, GNSO Council-approved policy recommendations partially depends on volunteer-based Implementation Review Teams.
- Changes to the Registry Agreements or Registrar Agreement require agreement with relevant stakeholder groups and approval by a supermajority of the relevant contracted parties. ■

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT & SERVICES

Global Support Center

PURPOSE

The Global Support team is a geographically dispersed group within the Global Domains and Strategy Function. It provides support five days a week, 24 hours a day, to contracted parties, new gTLD applicants, and the Internet community. The team manages requests received via email, phone, and the Naming Service portal (by contracted parties). This team supports various aspects of ICANN's mission and strategy with a particular emphasis on continuous improvement.

OPERATING INITIATIVE CONTRIBUTIONS

- No linked initiatives – these are ongoing operational functions.

ACTIVITIES

In FY25, activities will include:

- Tier-one support for ICANN organization functions.
- Contracted party support and communications management.
- Support for New gTLD Program: Next Round applicants.
- Contact management.
- Registrant and community support.
- Correspondence and Board Advice tracking.

HOW PROGRESS IS TRACKED

ICANN uses a combination of metrics and reports to track Functional Activities. During FY25, the following milestones will be monitored:

- Continued monitoring and modification as needed of service level targets. Continued measurement of customer satisfaction through transactional surveys and regular reporting.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT & SERVICES

RESOURCES

FUNCTIONAL ACTIVITY	FTE	Staff	Non-Staff	TOTAL
Global Support Center	11	\$1.4	\$0.0	\$1.4

*In Millions USD
Full-Time Equivalent (FTE)*

CONSIDERATIONS

The following risks and considerations exist in FY25 for this functional activity and may impact its operations:

- Estimating future demand for the Global Support Center is challenging due to potential fluctuations caused by regional and global events.
- Approval and execution of the New gTLD Program: Next Round are expected to increase global inquiries, requiring more Global Support resources.
- New programs or policies generating additional inquiries may necessitate an expansion of Global Support resources to maintain a satisfactory customer experience.
- The Global Support Center must continuously adapt to changing policies and contractual obligations to ensure accurate responses to contracted parties and community members.
- The Global Support Center’s effectiveness and efficiency rely heavily on specific operating systems and tools, notably the Naming Services portal and the inContact Telephony Platform.
- Global Support Center resources are in high demand both internally and externally, emphasizing the importance of staff retention for ongoing success.
- Correspondence and Advice volume is highly variable. ■

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT & SERVICES

Global Communications and Language Services

PURPOSE

ICANN's Global Communications and Language Services function is responsible for creating awareness of ICANN and its role in supporting the public interest, and ensuring that ICANN is represented accurately and consistently in all forms of communication. This is accomplished by:

- Demonstrating successes, knowledge, and thought leadership through compelling, clear, and consistent messaging.
- Continuing to grow, globalize, and diversify communications efforts and channels for geographic and target-audience reach.
- Expanding and engaging with new audiences by reaching outside of traditional forums.
- Leveraging media and industry contacts to amplify key messages.
- Increasing external understanding of and participation in ICANN's policy development processes and multistakeholder model.
- Explaining the role of the IANA functions and ICANN's technical remit.
- Educating internal audiences and supporting staff activities.
- Facilitating access to ICANN by providing translations, interpretation, and transcription services in the six U.N. languages for ICANN Public Meetings and other events, the ICANN website, and other content as requested.

This team also provides communication tools to staff and the community to advance their work.

OPERATING INITIATIVE CONTRIBUTIONS

- Support: Facilitate DNS ecosystem improvements.
- Support: Evolve and strengthen the multistakeholder model to facilitate diverse and inclusive participation in policymaking.
- Support: Evolve and strengthen the ICANN community's decision-making processes to ensure efficient and effective policymaking.
- Support: Promote and evolve the DNS through open and transparent processes that enable competition and open entry in Internet-related markets while ensuring the stability, security, and resiliency of the DNS.
- Support: Support the evolution and strengthening of Root Zone Management and the Root Server System.
- Support: Implement New gTLD auction proceeds recommendations as approved by the Board.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT & SERVICES

ACTIVITIES

In FY25, activities will include:

- Support Global Domains and Strategy through dedicated communications staff.
- Provide strategic communications support and content development for initiatives such as DNS security threats, data privacy, the ICANN Grant Program, adoption of Universal Acceptance and Internationalized Domain Names, Coalition for Digital Africa, Government and IGO Engagement activities, and the New gTLD Program: Next Round.
- Collaborate with engagement teams to strengthen alignment and consistency of messaging through narratives, briefs, presentations, media relations, and increased internal communications. Develop messaging to create awareness and strengthen ICANN’s position related to Internet governance and technical Internet governance.
- Facilitating access to ICANN by providing translations, interpretation, and transcription services in the six U.N. languages for ICANN Public Meetings and other events, the ICANN website and other content as requested.

HOW PROGRESS IS TRACKED

The Global Communications team will use tools, such as social media listening and monitoring, to track key metrics including: press release, blog, and announcement reach; content likes, retweets, shares, etc.

RESOURCES

FUNCTIONAL ACTIVITY	FTE	Staff	Non-Staff	TOTAL
Global Communications and Language Services	29	\$5.6	\$5.2	\$10.8

*In Millions USD
Full-Time Equivalent (FTE)*

CONSIDERATIONS

The following risks and considerations exist for this functional activity and may impact its advancement:

- Overall, unclear or inconsistent communications and messaging to stakeholders can negatively impact ICANN’s reputation.
- Advance notice of special projects or initiatives that will require communications support is key to ensuring that resources are available to provide assistance. Other functions are strongly encouraged to involve the team as early as possible.
- Promoting a shared understanding of key and current issues requires that staff throughout ICANN work with the Global Communications team to access accurate and consistent information on topics of interest.
- Translated materials, which are costly to produce, are not well used in some of the languages. ■

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT & SERVICES

Ombuds

PURPOSE

The Office of the Ombuds is a neutral dispute resolution practitioner for the ICANN community. The principal function of the Ombuds is to provide an independent internal evaluation of complaints by members of the ICANN community. The Ombuds serves as an objective advocate for fairness, and seeks to evaluate and resolve complaints about unfair or inappropriate treatment by ICANN org staff, the Board, or ICANN constituent bodies, clarifying the issues and using conflict resolution tools such as negotiation, facilitation, and “shuttle diplomacy” to achieve these results.

The Ombuds also has a formal role in conducting a substantive review of Reconsideration Requests. However, if the office has been previously involved in the subject matter of the Reconsideration Request the Ombuds will recuse themselves from such review.

OPERATING INITIATIVE CONTRIBUTIONS

No linked initiatives at this time. This supports ICANN’s ongoing activities.

ACTIVITIES

In FY25 activities will include:

- Complaint management.
- Increasing the visibility of the Office of the Ombuds and how it can support constituents, including awareness of the Expected Standards of Behavior and Community Anti-Harassment Policy. Increasing online presence in virtual meetings to demonstrate availability of the Office of Ombuds and its service to the community and serve as a preventative measure to reduce conflict.
- Promoting anti-harassment training via ICANN Learn.
- Ongoing education to empower leadership in community via ICANN Learn and providing training for community leaders to empower and educate on conflict resolution.
- Substantive evaluation of Requests for Reconsideration under ICANN Bylaws, Article 4, section 4.2.1.
- Implementation of recommendations related to the Ombuds from the Cross Community Working Group on Enhancing ICANN Accountability Work Stream 2.

HOW PROGRESS IS TRACKED

ICANN Bylaws require the Office of the Ombuds to produce an annual report detailing consolidated analysis of the year’s complaints and resolutions, documentation of adherence to confidentiality obligations and concerns, as well as recommendations for steps to minimize future complaints.

RESOURCES

FUNCTIONAL ACTIVITY	FTE	Staff	Non-Staff	TOTAL
Ombuds	0	\$0.0	\$0.4	\$0.4

*In Millions USD
Full-Time Equivalent (FTE)*

CONSIDERATIONS

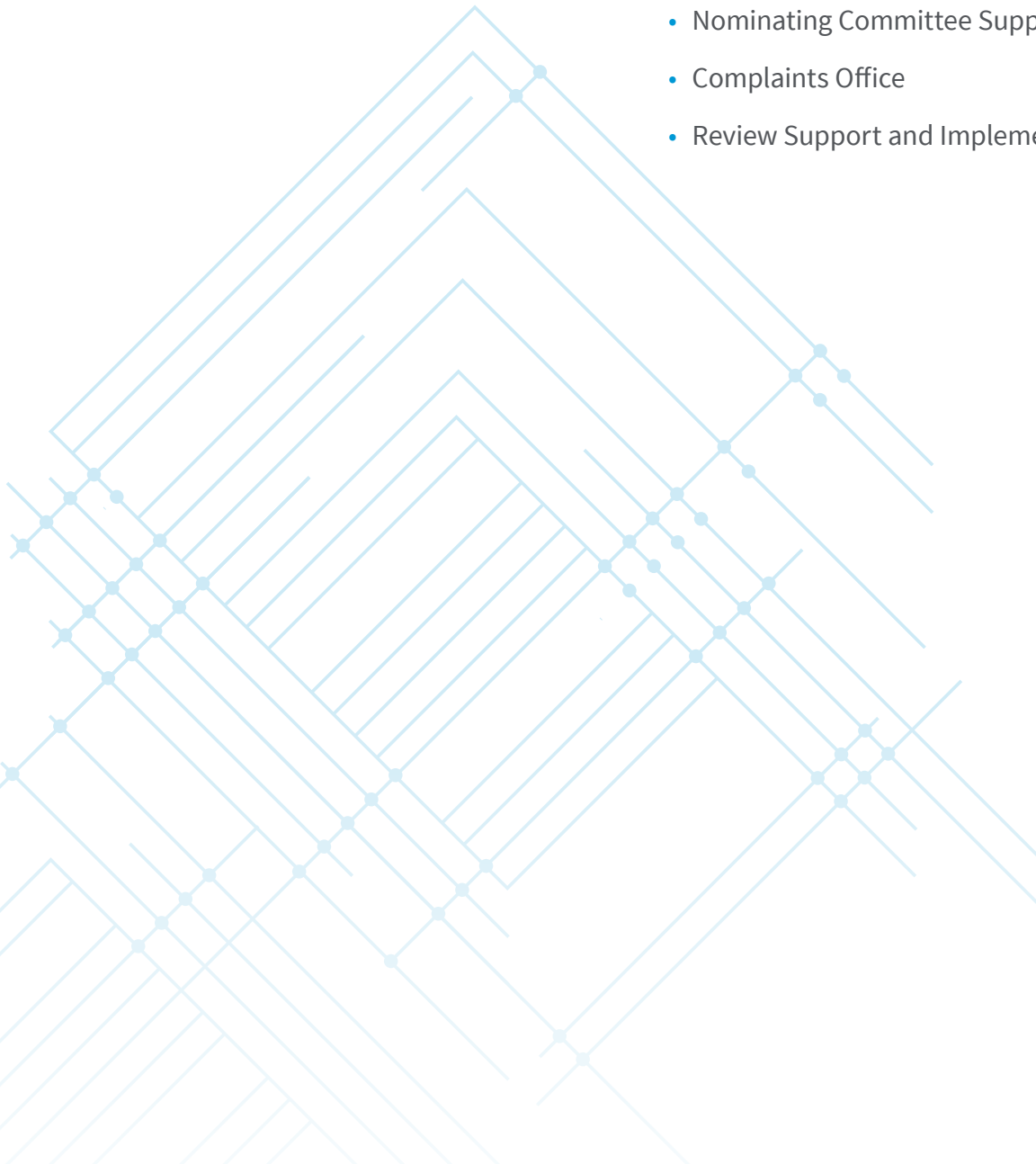
Work Stream 2 of the Cross-Community Working Group on Enhancing ICANN Accountability issued recommendations that have been accepted by the Board. The accepted recommendations include text relating to the Office of the Ombuds supports and contributes to the implementation of Ombuds related recommendations. ■

FUNCTIONAL ACTIVITIES

FY25

ICANN ORG GOVERNANCE

- Board Activities
- Office of the President and CEO
- Governance Support
- Nominating Committee Support
- Complaints Office
- Review Support and Implementation



ICANN ORG GOVERNANCE

Board Activities

PURPOSE

This functional activity represents the work and responsibilities of the ICANN Board of Directors. Among its duties, the ICANN Board:

- Ensures that ICANN remains at all times true to its mission, commitments, and core values.
- Oversees ICANN org’s performance to ensure it operates with efficiency, effectiveness, in a fiscally responsible and accountable manner, and, where practicable and not inconsistent with ICANN’s other obligations under the Bylaws, in a manner that is responsive to the needs of the global Internet community.
- Oversees development and periodic revisions of ICANN’s Strategic Plan and Operating Plan.
- Ensures that ICANN operates pursuant to the highest ethical standards, complies with applicable laws, and considers adherence to best practices in all areas of operation.
- Ensures all policy development and decision-making processes are transparent, open, reflective of the public interest and accountable to all stakeholders.

OPERATING INITIATIVE CONTRIBUTIONS

The Board supports all of ICANN’s ongoing operations and activities.

ACTIVITIES

The ICANN Board has identified five key areas of responsibility:

- **Policy Development and Cross-Community Initiatives:**
 - Prepare for Board review and action by staying well informed of the content, priority, and timing of all policies being developed by the community.
 - Respond promptly to Supporting Organization policy recommendations and Advisory Committee advice.
 - Participate in and provide timely comments to cross-community working groups and initiatives.
 - Appoint liaisons to community groups on request to support community initiatives.
- **ICANN Org Oversight:**
 - Ensure that Board-approved policies are implemented consistently with the adopted policies.
 - Oversee implementation of significant projects undertaken by the ICANN org.
 - Oversee ICANN org’s efficient and effective delivery of operational services to the community.
 - Oversee, contribute and support the yearly President & CEO’s goals determination and evaluate their implementation.

ICANN ORG GOVERNANCE

- **Strategic and Forward Thinking:**

- Review and, if necessary, revise the Strategic Plan.
- Review and revise of the FY25–29 Operating and Financial Plan.
- Lead brainstorming discussions on key strategic topics affecting ICANN.

- **Governance and Fiduciary Responsibilities:**

- Oversee work related to all key ongoing activities such as the Registration Data Request Service or the ICANN Grant Program.
- Oversee ICANN’s governance and accountability issues.
- Discharge fiduciary (legal and financial) responsibilities.
- Monitor organizational risks and mitigation actions.
- Oversee implementation and understanding of the Bylaws.
- Improve Board transparency.

- **Community Engagement and External Relationships:**

- Outreach and engagement with the community during and in between the ICANN Public Meetings.
- Participate in Board-community working groups.
- Develop effective relationships with key actors in the global Internet ecosystem.

- **Additional Activities:**

- Establish Committees. Committees allow a smaller group of Board members to work together when a more focused approach is needed. The list of Committees as well as the scope of their duties and activities can be found on this [page](#).
- When necessary, establish working groups or caucuses that are focused on a specific topic or issue. These activities are not included here.

HOW PROGRESS IS TRACKED

The ICANN Board fulfills its objectives and outcomes by directing the ICANN org to implement policies. The following measures will be used in FY25:

- **Outcomes**

- Successful implementation of the Strategic Plan and the Operating and Financial Plan.
- Successful support in the implementation of the [ICANN Interim President and CEO Goals](#). Successful implementation and delivery of the New gTLD Program: Next Round per the approved [Implementation Plan](#).
- Strengthened DNS and Root Server System security.

ICANN ORG GOVERNANCE

- Evolution of unique identifier systems.
- ICANN’s long-term financial sustainability.

• **Performance metrics**

- Timely revision of the Strategic Plan and FY25–29 Operating and Financial Plan.
- Amount of funds transferred into the Reserve Fund, per the [Board resolution](#) for replenishment.
- Number of geopolitical issues impacting ICANN’s mission identified on time and successfully addressed.
- Number of additional stakeholders joining ICANN globally.
- Number of effective relationships with key actors in the global Internet ecosystem established.

RESOURCES

FUNCTIONAL ACTIVITY	FTE	Staff	Non-Staff	TOTAL
Board Activities	0	\$0.0	\$2.4	\$2.4

*In Millions USD
Full-Time Equivalent (FTE)*

CONSIDERATIONS

The following risks and considerations exist for the ICANN Board in its activities:

- Workload and competing priorities may slow down progress in key areas of work.
- Maintaining institutional knowledge is helped if there is stability in the Board’s composition over the long term.
- The ability to select and retain qualified and diverse Board members is dependent on factors such as available candidate pool, time commitments required, and compensation.
- Noticing trends affecting ICANN and proactively reviewing its strategic objectives is key to achieving positive outcomes. ICANN org’s annual trends assessment helps ensure ICANN navigates these changes effectively. ■

ICANN ORG GOVERNANCE

Office of the President and CEO

PURPOSE

The Office of the President and CEO provides support to the President and CEO, who has fiduciary responsibility for the organization. The goals of the President and CEO are achieved through work conducted by the ICANN organization.

OPERATING INITIATIVE CONTRIBUTIONS

The Office of the President and CEO supports all of ICANN’s ongoing operations and activities.

ACTIVITIES

The nature of the Office of the President and CEO is to provide ongoing support to the President and CEO to effectively manage ICANN org. The Office of the President and CEO includes three employees: two administrative support, and the President and CEO of ICANN.

In FY25, activities will include:

- Supporting the President and CEO in day-to-day activities, including travel and meetings arrangement and other administrative tasks.
- Providing strategic direction and support to the Executive Team to achieve organizational goals.
- Meeting regularly with Supporting Organization and Advisory Committee leadership and the ICANN Board to ensure ICANN org effectively implements policy.
- Ensuring the ICANN organization is accountable to the Board and community.

RESOURCES

FUNCTIONAL ACTIVITY	FTE	Staff	Non-Staff	TOTAL
Office of the President and CEO	3	\$1.8	\$0.1	\$1.9

*In Millions USD
Full-Time Equivalent (FTE)*

HOW PROGRESS IS TRACKED

Progress of the Office of the President and CEO is related to the progress made on the established [goals](#) of the President and CEO, some of which are multi-year and are approved by the ICANN Board. Additionally, the President and CEO and Executive Team provide [regular reports](#) to the Board and the community ahead of ICANN Public Meetings. ■

ICANN ORG GOVERNANCE

Governance Support

PURPOSE

The Governance Support function legally safeguards the ICANN organization and mitigates risk and regulatory impacts.

OPERATING INITIATIVE CONTRIBUTIONS

- Lead: Evolve and improve internal and external ethics policies.
- Support: Evolve and strengthen the ICANN community’s decision-making processes to ensure efficient and effective policymaking.
- Support: Promote and evolve the DNS through open and transparent processes that enable competition and open entry in Internet-related markets while ensuring the stability, security, and resiliency of the DNS.
- Support: Facilitate DNS ecosystem improvements.
- Support: Support the evolution and strengthening of Root Zone Management and the Root Server System.
- Support: Implement New gTLD subsequent auction proceeds as approved by Board.

ACTIVITIES

In FY25, activities will include:

- Litigation and Accountability Mechanisms support, such as maintaining litigation readiness, monitoring and managing ICANN litigation matters, and Accountability Mechanism proceedings.
- General legal internal support.
- Advice to senior management.
- Contractual support, such as contract review, analysis, recommendations, risk assessments, and amendments.
- Secretarial support to the Boards of ICANN and PTI, such as performing duties related to notices, meetings, corporate records, and implementation of Board and committee decisions.
- Service as Chief Data Protection Officer, with a focus on ICANN organization-level data to ensure ICANN’s internal data protection and privacy program is compliant and up-to-date.
- Support for anticipated implementation of Board-approved policy recommendations for the New gTLD Program: Next Round.
- Support for Registration Data Request Service to handle requests for access to nonpublic registration data related to generic top-level domains (gTLDs).

ICANN ORG GOVERNANCE

- Support for implementation of Board-approved recommendations from Specific and Holistic Reviews.
- Support for implementation of the ICANN Grant Program based on the Cross Community Working Group (CCWG) Auction Proceeds recommendations.
- Support the anticipated implementation of the Board-approved recommendations from the Root Server System Governance Working Group.
- Establishment of a contract management database.

HOW PROGRESS IS TRACKED

ICANN uses a combination of milestones, metrics, and reports to track Functional Activities. In FY25, the following milestones will be met:

- Achieving functional purpose within funding allowance.
- Sufficient contingency funds to address unforeseen legal events, which involves a thorough assessment of past trends, the current environment, and future projections to determine annual contingency fund amounts.

RESOURCES

FUNCTIONAL ACTIVITY	FTE	Staff	Non-Staff	TOTAL
Governance Support, Complaints Office and NomCom Support	23	\$8.1	\$3.7	\$11.8

*In Millions USD
Full-Time Equivalent (FTE)*

ICANN ORG GOVERNANCE

CONSIDERATIONS

The following risks and considerations exist for this functional activity and may impact its advancement:

- Changing landscape of privacy regulations.
- Outcomes related to litigation or general internal legal support depend on when the Legal team becomes involved in matters or issues.
- Providing advance notice of special projects or initiatives requiring legal services is crucial for ensuring that the budget and resources are available. Other functions are strongly encouraged to engage the Legal team as early as possible in the planning stages.
- Large-scale initiatives such as the New gTLD Program: Next Round require substantive support from the Governance Support function and require scaling to accommodate growth in other areas of the organization. For example, if 50 new employees or contracted staff are added across the ICANN organization to support the New gTLD Program: Next Round, additional legal support and guidance will be necessary to meet the increased organizational demand. Each function's proposals for adding new resources will affect the additional legal support required.
- Within programs such as the New gTLD Program: Next Round and the ICANN Grant Program, timing, quantity, and scale issues need to be considered. For example, supporting multiple requests for proposals that must be launched simultaneously or designing new processes. The undefined timing and scale of effort needed could impact the availability of legal resources.
- To provide meaningful legal support and guidance for program-related activities, it is important to emphasize the time and effort needed to prepare lawyers at all levels. This includes in-house lawyers as well as outside counsel. Such training is essential to ensure effective contributions to the program. ■

ICANN ORG GOVERNANCE

Nominating Committee Support

PURPOSE

The Nominating Committee Support function provides support and coordination for the ICANN Nominating Committee (NomCom), an independent committee responsible for appointing leadership positions to the ICANN Board, PTI Board, At-Large Advisory Committee, Country Code Names Supporting Organization, and Generic Names Supporting Organization. The NomCom acts on behalf of the interests of the global Internet community while operating within the scope of ICANN's mission and the Bylaws.

OPERATING INITIATIVE CONTRIBUTIONS

Support: Evolve and strengthen the ICANN Community's decision-making processes to ensure efficient and effective policymaking.

ACTIVITIES

In FY25, activities will include:

- **Systems Administration:** Configure systems and tools for NomCom use, such as the NomCom application system, web pages, and workspace.
- **Meeting Planning:** Plan and coordinate telephonic, face-to-face, and virtual NomCom meetings.
- **Meeting Support:** Facilitate the work of the NomCom, including maintaining process and procedures documents and agendas.
- **Training:** Utilize the current NomCom training program. Develop new training programs and tools for NomCom delegates as per the recommendation from the NomCom Review Implementation Working Group (NomComRIWG).
 - Produce content used in NomCom meetings.
- **Vendor Management:** Procuring, negotiating, contracting, and managing vendors in support of NomCom functions, including outside services which include, training, recruitment, due diligence, and leadership review services.
 - NomCom staff provide subject matter knowledge and support to the NomCom Standing Committee as required.
- **Review Recommendations:** Supporting the implementation of the NomCom org review recommendation.

HOW PROGRESS IS TRACKED

ICANN uses a combination of milestones, metrics, and reports to track Functional Activities. In FY25, the following metrics will be met:

- Number of face-to-face meetings supported.
- Number of telephonic or virtual meetings supported.
- Number of leadership positions filled.

ICANN ORG GOVERNANCE

RESOURCES

Resources for the NomCom Support functional activity are found in the [Governance Support](#) Functional Activity section.

CONSIDERATIONS

The following risks and considerations exist for this functional activity and may impact its advancement:

- Increased support activities stemming from NomComRIWG may exceed the capacity of existing resources.
- Ongoing NomCom operational costs may increase as a result of the NomComRIWG recommendations.
- Due to the short-term nature of NomCom leadership, ICANN org must be prepared to revise operating procedures and approach annually. ■

ICANN ORG GOVERNANCE

Complaints Office

PURPOSE

The Complaints Office enables ICANN org to transparently identify and resolve issues in one centralized location. The Complaints Office handles complaints regarding ICANN org that do not fall into an existing complaints mechanism, such as Contractual Compliance, Reconsideration process, Independent Review process or the Office of the Ombuds.

The Complaints Office reviews verifiable information to provide fact-based recommendations and resolutions. It strives to be open and transparent, responsive and accountable to all parties, and to make recommendations that are constructive and actionable. Above all, the Complaints Office upholds the highest standards of integrity in service of ICANN's mission.

OPERATING INITIATIVE CONTRIBUTIONS

No linked initiatives at this time. This supports ICANN's ongoing activities.

ACTIVITIES

In FY25, activities will include:

- Receive, research, analyze, and respond to submitted complaints.
- Report on activities of the office.
- Plan and implement, and communicate changes and updates to the Complaints Office function.
- Internal and external engagement.
- Implementing Board-approved recommendations from the Cross Community Working Group on Enhancing ICANN Accountability Work Stream 2 (CCWG-WS2), including:
 - Supporting Ombuds in helping differentiate services provided by the Complaints Office.

HOW PROGRESS IS TRACKED

ICANN uses a combination of milestones, metrics, and reports to track Functional Activities. The following measures will be used in FY25 for this functional activity:

- Number of complaints received.
- Number of complaints received in scope.
- Number of complaints resolved.

The Complaints Office provides an annual report of the year's complaints and resolutions included in the ICANN Annual Report.

ICANN ORG GOVERNANCE

RESOURCES

Resources for the Complaints Office are found in the [Governance Support](#) functional activity section.

CONSIDERATIONS

The following risks and considerations exist for this Functional Activity and may impact its advancement:

- Shifting to a centralized system for complaints depends on ICANN prioritization and resource availability.
- The function's limited staffing presents a risk that could result in delayed or stalled delivery on commitments.
- As awareness and visibility of the Complaints Office increase over time, there is a potential for a rapid escalation in the number of in-scope complaints. ■

ICANN ORG GOVERNANCE

Review Support and Implementation

PURPOSE

ICANN’s Bylaws-mandated reviews are a core mechanism for continuously enhancing the multistakeholder model. These improvements stem from the Board-approved recommendations made either by community-led review teams (Specific Reviews) or external independent reviewers (Organizational Reviews).

ICANN org provides functional support for these reviews through two key teams:

- The Review Support and Accountability (RSA) team within the Global Domain Services (GDS) function manages and supports Specific and Organizational Reviews, from their initiation to completion. It also facilitates process improvements.
- The Implementation Operations (IO) team in the Office of the Chief Financial Officer function oversees the implementation of non-policy recommendations approved by the Board. This includes outputs from Specific Reviews and community-led working groups like the Cross-Community Working Group (CCWG) on Enhancing ICANN Accountability Work Stream 2, New gTLD Auction Proceeds, and the Enhancing the Effectiveness of ICANN’s Multistakeholder Model project.

OPERATING INITIATIVE CONTRIBUTIONS

- Lead: Implement New gTLD auction proceeds recommendations as approved by the Board.
- Support: Evolve and strengthen the multistakeholder model to facilitate diverse and inclusive participation in policymaking.
- Support: Planning at ICANN.

ACTIVITIES

- Delivering on, and reporting on the implementation of Board-approved Specific Reviews and recommendations emerging from the Competition, Consumer Trust, and Consumer Choice (CCT), the third Accountability and Transparency Review (ATRT3), the second Registration Directory Service (RDS-WHOIS2), and second Security, Stability and Resiliency Review 2 (SSR2) recommendations, including:
 - Implementation of ATRT3 Recommendation 3.6 to evolve Organizational Reviews into a Continuous Improvement Program (CIP). This includes development of a CIP Framework in collaboration with the community by Q2 FY25.
 - Facilitating and supporting of the fourth Accountability and Transparency Review (ATRT4) subject to Board and community consideration of the timing. This multi-year work is included in the [“ICANN Interim President and CEO Goals for Fiscal Year 2024” as CEO Goal 11.](#)

ICANN ORG GOVERNANCE

- Facilitating improvements to the reviews process through the Lifecycle of Reviews Project. These activities include:
 - Supporting revisions to the Bylaws, as appropriate, and the Operating Standards for Specific Reviews.
 - Developing a process for continuously improving reviews to ensure the proper metrics and procedures are in place to enable the real-time evaluation of reviews effectiveness. This includes both the efficiency of the reviews process and the value of its outputs.
 - The outcomes from the Lifecycle of Reviews work will contribute to and support Operating Initiative 3, To Evolve and Strengthen the ICANN Multistakeholder Model to Facilitate Diverse and Inclusive Participation in Policymaking.
- Continuing to monitor and address dependencies associated with Specific Reviews recommendations pending Board consideration to prepare the Board to take action, as appropriate.
- Supporting prioritization activities and monitoring the status of recommendations ineligible for prioritization, including resolving dependencies where possible.
- Subject to the approval in FY24 of Bylaws amendments related to the NomCom2 Review recommendations, the NomCom Operating Procedures will be updated and the NomCom Standing Committee will be put in place in FY25-26. This multi-year work is included in the FY24 CEO Goal #11 on Community Reviews. **Note:** dependency on the community's ability to contribute within the outlined timeline is not within org's control.
- Continuing to oversee and complete the implementation of the Board-adopted recommendations from the Enhancing ICANN Accountability Work Stream 2.
- Advancing the [Enhancing the Effectiveness of ICANN's Multistakeholder Model](#) project through monitoring of the related/ identified activities/projects already in progress, and implementation of the new activities or projects, which could help fully address the issue areas.
- Completing the implementation of the ICANN Grant Program and supporting the program grant cycles. This program is the instrument through which ICANN org is going to distribute the auction proceeds funds.

HOW PROGRESS IS TRACKED

The specific metrics and milestones guiding the work will be:

- Board action on remaining Specific Reviews recommendations pending Board consideration, as appropriate.
- Production of quarterly reports on the status of Specific Reviews recommendations and implementation of Work Stream 2.
- Annual Review Implementation Report, in compliance with the ICANN Bylaws.
- Development of a draft Continuous Improvement Program framework by Q2 FY25.
- Lifecycle of Reviews: Update of the Operating Standards for Specific Reviews, in compliance with the ICANN Bylaws (Q1 FY25).
- Completion of NomCom2 Review Implementation and related Bylaws amendments.
- Start of the implementation of review process improvements from the Lifecycle of Reviews Project under the Lifecycle of Reviews Program.

ICANN ORG GOVERNANCE

- Completion of the Grant Program implementation and evaluation of the first grant cycle.
- Continue the community engagement to collect input on new issues that may affect the effectiveness of ICANN’s multistakeholder model.

RESOURCES

FUNCTIONAL ACTIVITY	FTE	Staff	Non-Staff	TOTAL
Review Support and Implementation Operations	10	\$2.3	\$0.1	\$2.5

*In Millions USD
Full-Time Equivalent (FTE)*

CONSIDERATIONS

The following elements may impact the progress of the work to implement the above mentioned activities:

- Bandwidth constraints or competing priorities of available staff resources who are subject-matter experts for internal and community efforts.
- Convergence of reviews-related projects and the community’s ability to participate effectively. ■

FUNCTIONAL ACTIVITIES

FY25

ICANN ORG SHARED SERVICES

- Planning
- Finance and Procurement
- Risk Management
- Grant Program
- Engineering and Information Technology
- Global Human Resources and Administrative Services
- Security Operations
- Board Operations
- ICANN Offices

ICANN ORG SHARED SERVICES

Planning

PURPOSE

The purpose of this function is to support the development, implementation, monitoring, and evolution of ICANN's planning activities to ensure that ICANN org is accountable to the public in its stewardship of ICANN's mission. The Planning function leads and coordinates all planning activities with the ICANN community, org, and Board.

The long-term objective of the Planning function is to continuously increase the organization's effectiveness through adequate planning and performance measurement. The Planning function also includes the economist function, which contributes to the strategic planning activities and analysis on economic trends. This role serves as a subject-matter expert and adviser on DNS market analysis, providing advisory and programmatic support throughout the organization by conducting research and analysis utilizing market and macroeconomic data.

OPERATING INITIATIVE CONTRIBUTIONS

- Lead: Planning at ICANN.

ACTIVITIES

- Lead ICANN's annual planning processes, including strategic outlook and strategic planning, operating planning, budgeting and progress reporting.
- Communicate and engage on the planning processes, timelines, and milestones with ICANN org, Board and community.
- Manage the development of all plans per ICANN Bylaws' requirements.
- Ensure alignment of regional and other planning programs and implementation efforts with ICANN plans.
- Manage progress reporting and measurement.
- Research and analysis.
- Advisory and programmatic support.
- Economic research and analysis.

HOW PROGRESS IS TRACKED

The following milestones will be used to track progress of this functional activity in FY25:

- Timely delivery of IANA FY25 Operating Plan and Budget and PTI FY25 Operating Plan and Budget per Bylaws requirements.
- Timely delivery of ICANN's Strategic Plan FY25 update (as needed), FY25–29 Operating and Financial Plan, and FY25 Operating Plan and Budget per Bylaws requirement.
- Further refine ICANN's strategic planning and operating planning processes.

ICANN ORG SHARED SERVICES

- Timely delivery of initial milestones for the development of ICANN’s Strategic Plan FY26–30, the FY26–30 Operating and Financial Plan, and FY26 Operating Plan and Budget to achieve the timeline per the Bylaws requirements.
- Report progress toward the achievement of ICANN’s Strategic and Operating Plans.
- Monitor global macroeconomic conditions, DNS marketplace, and Internet-related economic sectors.

RESOURCES

FUNCTIONAL ACTIVITY	FTE	Staff	Non-Staff	TOTAL
Planning	6	\$1.5	\$0.1	\$1.6

*In Millions USD
Full-Time Equivalent (FTE)*

CONSIDERATIONS

The following risks and considerations exist for this functional activity and may impact its advancement:

- Lack of sufficient time and process for the planning tools, including data collection and analysis, to facilitate org-wide prioritization and progress reporting can impact the efficiency and effectiveness of planning activities.
- Time for the community to engage and provide input into the development of the Five Year FY26–30 Strategic Plan Strategic and Operating Plan progress reporting can impact the efficiency and effectiveness of planning activity.
- Global macroeconomic and financial conditions are subject to change. Any assessment is done with base-level parameters and expectations. Unanticipated changes in the global economic environment can therefore render prior assessments and opinions outdated or invalid.
- Global macroeconomic factors may change priority areas, as the economic climate may prompt additional research needs for the organization. ■

ICANN ORG SHARED SERVICES

Finance and Procurement

PURPOSE

The Finance and Procurement function is the steward of ICANN's public funds, and a champion of financial accountability and transparency. It provides timely, accurate, and reliable financial and procurement services that support responsible decision-making.

OPERATING INITIATIVE CONTRIBUTIONS

- Lead: ICANN Reserves.
- Support: Improve the depth of understanding of the domain name marketplace drivers that impact ICANN's funding.
- Support: Planning at ICANN.
- Support: Implement New gTLD auction proceeds recommendations as approved by the Board.

ACTIVITIES

In FY25, activities will include all accounting, auditing, financial analysis, financial reporting, statutory reporting, taxes, payroll, billing and collections, insurance, treasury (including payments), procurement, and sourcing for ICANN operations, IANA functions, and Public Technical Identifiers, as applicable. Financial analysis specific to the New gTLD Program: Next Round will be a key focus area.

HOW PROGRESS IS TRACKED

ICANN uses a combination of milestones, metrics, and reports to track Functional Activities. The following measures will be used in FY25 for this Functional Activity:

- Continuous improvement of processes to gain efficiency and improve quality.
- Continuous improvement of financial analysis.
- Measurement and reports of service-level metrics.
- Volume and frequency of ICANN's Reserve Fund replenishment.
- Contribution to the Operating Initiative Planning at ICANN.

ICANN ORG SHARED SERVICES

RESOURCES

FUNCTIONAL ACTIVITY	FTE	Staff	Non-Staff	TOTAL
Finance and Procurement, and Risk Management	20	\$4.3	\$2.6	\$6.9

In Millions USD

Full-Time Equivalent (FTE)

CONSIDERATIONS

No new risks or considerations noted for FY25. ■

ICANN ORG SHARED SERVICES

Risk Management

PURPOSE

The role of the Risk Management function is to facilitate the identification and articulation of risks faced by ICANN so that the organization can make informed decisions about planning for and managing those risks. Through the established Risk Management Framework, the function focuses on developing a risk-aware culture that incorporates the risk framework into ICANN's activities and planning.

OPERATING INITIATIVE CONTRIBUTIONS

Support: Risk Management supports all operating initiatives.

ACTIVITIES

In FY25, activities will include:

- Maintain and enhance the risk identification and communication within the org and to the Board, including strategic risks and existential threat monitoring.
- Expand awareness of a risk-aware culture within the org through education and training.
- Review and strengthen organizational continuity planning.
- Include risk management planning with operational and strategic planning under the Office of the SVP, Planning, and CFO.
- Broader Risk Awareness Training: Functional risk awareness presentations, review of Function Risk Register, provide context and training to staff, including on the Risk Appetite Statement.
- Risk Management in Planning: Support achievement of the Strategic Plan and Operating and Financial Plan by leveraging the Risk Identification Management process.

HOW PROGRESS IS TRACKED

The following measures will be used in FY25 for this functional activity:

- Consistency of Risk Management process, such as risk identification, monitoring, and reporting.
- Training provided within the org.
- Appropriate risk management planning input into the operating and strategic planning process.

ICANN ORG SHARED SERVICES

RESOURCES

FY25 resources for risk management are found in the [Finance and Procurement](#) functional activity.

CONSIDERATIONS

The largest consideration for this functional activity in FY25 is the team's dependency on other functions and staff, who have many priorities. The function relies on Risk Liaisons from each function to actively participate in risk-management initiatives. ■

ICANN ORG SHARED SERVICES

Grant Program

PURPOSE

The Implementation Operations (IO) team in the Office of the Chief Financial Officer function is responsible for the implementation of Board-approved non-policy recommendations. This includes the implementation of recommendations from the Cross Community Working Group on Auction Proceeds (CCWG-AP), which form the foundation of the ICANN New gTLD Auction Proceeds, as well as the ICANN Grant Program. The Grant Program is the instrument through which ICANN org will distribute the proceeds from the auctions.

OPERATING INITIATIVE CONTRIBUTIONS

- Lead: Implement New gTLD auction proceeds recommendations as approved by the Board.

ACTIVITIES

- Completing the implementation design of the CCWG-AP recommendations.
- Producing an implementation report for each CCWG-AP recommendation as soon as it is complete and publishing it on the ICANN wiki page dedicated to the Grant Program.
- Contracting external vendors for the services to be outsourced.
- Developing the Grant Program, including its application cycles.
- Starting the disbursement of auction proceeds to successful applications.

HOW PROGRESS IS TRACKED

The specific metrics and milestones guiding the work will be:

- Implementation of the CCWG-AP recommendations.
- Launch of the first application cycle.
- Completion of the evaluation of the submitted applications within a five-month timeframe.
- Publication of metrics regarding the first cycle applicants and grantees, including their geographic distribution.

ICANN ORG SHARED SERVICES

RESOURCES

FUNCTIONAL ACTIVITY	FTE	Staff	Non-Staff	TOTAL
Grant Program	4	\$1.0	\$0.8	\$1.8

*In Millions USD
Full-Time Equivalent (FTE)*

CONSIDERATIONS

The progress of the activities may be influenced by:

- New elements emerging during the final phase of implementing the CCWG-AP recommendations.
- Number of applications submitted during the initial grant cycle.
- Potential delays in the selection and assessment of first-cycle applications.
- The potential need to look for new vendors for outsourced services. ■

ICANN ORG SHARED SERVICES

Engineering and Information Technology

PURPOSE

Engineering and Information Technology (E&IT) provides trusted technical expertise to support the global multistakeholder model and ICANN by:

- Building a sustainable and resilient team that is able to respond to organizational needs.
- Fostering trusted, transparent relationships with stakeholders through collaborative planning and data-driven decisions.
- Delivering secure, effective, and accessible services through innovation and persistence.

OPERATING INITIATIVE CONTRIBUTIONS

- Support: Evolve and strengthen the multistakeholder model to facilitate diverse and inclusive participation in policymaking.
- Support: Support the evolution and strengthening of Root Zone Management and the Root Server System.
- Support: Promote and evolve the DNS through open and transparent processes that enable competition and open entry in Internet-related markets while ensuring the stability, security, and resiliency of the DNS.

ACTIVITIES

In FY25, activities will include:

- Better position and prepare the E&IT function to deal with New gTLD Program: Next Round work.
- Better position and prepare the E&IT function to work on implementation of Board-approved recommendations from the Accountability and Transparency Review 3 (ATRT3), the Competition, Consumer Trust, and Consumer Choice (CCT) Review team, and the Cross-Community Working Group (CCWG) on Enhancing ICANN Accountability Work Stream 2.
- Proactively securing ICANN's digital services and systems.
- Helping ICANN deliver results by aligning E&IT developing capacity along the organization's long-term strategy.
- Enabling organizational effectiveness through efficient use of ICANN's digital services.
- Providing effective support to ICANN's international office strategy.
- Maintaining financial soundness and business continuity.
- Supporting all functions within ICANN org, Board, and community via end-user support, business analysis, custom application development, off-the-shelf software selection and support, infrastructure support, security monitoring, and network services.
- Continuing to emphasize portfolio management and platform-reduction mindset.
- Continuing work on tools for organizational capacity planning.

ICANN ORG SHARED SERVICES

- Investigating career development and promotional opportunities to improve retention, provide greater clarity to staff, and help identify resource gaps.
- Continue to work on moving from Capability Maturity Model Level 3 to Level 4.

HOW PROGRESS IS TRACKED

ICANN uses a combination of milestones, metrics, and reports to track Functional Activities. The following measures will be used in FY25 for this functional activity:

- Number of projects and services requested and completed every six months.
- Number of projects delayed or canceled in every six months.
- Evaluation of financial management through review of planned and actual budgets.
- Digital services availability.
- Universal Acceptance readiness.
- Completed phases of adoption and use of the National Institute of Standards and Technology Cybersecurity Framework.

RESOURCES

FUNCTIONAL ACTIVITY	FTE	Staff	Non-Staff	TOTAL
Engineering and Information Technology	64	\$15.9	\$16.3	\$32.2

*In Millions USD
Full-Time Equivalent (FTE)*

ICANN ORG SHARED SERVICES

CONSIDERATIONS

The following risks and considerations exist for this functional activity in FY25 and may impact its advancement:

- Completion of strategic projects depends on Board and community efforts.
- Finding a suitable offshore location for outsourced work is challenging.
- Geopolitical impacts on international office locations.
- Hiring and retaining staff remains challenging in the current economic climate.
- Staff may leave, but improvements in process documentation can reduce the time and resources required to onboard new staff. Initiatives offering career progression should be implemented to help retain staff.
- Business decisions may impact platform reduction efforts and lead to the need for additional staff.
- A lack of understanding of the function's capacity and capability can lead to unrealistic expectations.
- Fluid global data regulations could adversely affect roadmaps.
- Onboarding remote staff without in-person meetings is challenging and may impact their integration into the ICANN org culture. ■

ICANN ORG SHARED SERVICES

Global Human Resources and Administrative Services

PURPOSE

The primary purpose of Global Human Resources is to attract and retain top talent, and enable high performance for ICANN. This includes talent acquisition, onboarding and offboarding staff, administration of global compensation and benefit plans, performance management, employee relations, investigations, learning and development, employment policies and workplace compliance, global mobility and immigration, team member morale and engagement activities, Enterprise Resource Planning data integrity and reporting, and organizational planning and development.

The primary purpose of Administrative Services is to provide office administrative support and facilities management for ICANN org across all locations. This includes real estate/lease management, construction management, ergonomics program management, office security access controls management, and special events planning for employee morale activities/events.

OPERATING INITIATIVE CONTRIBUTIONS

- Support: Promote and evolve the DNS through open and transparent processes that enable competition and open entry in Internet-related markets while ensuring the stability, security, and resiliency of the DNS.
- Support: Implement New gTLD auction proceeds recommendations.
- Support: Planning at ICANN.

ACTIVITIES

In FY25, Global Human Resources activities will include:

- Maintaining staff engagement by sustaining organizational culture seamlessly between offices, regions, and remote and virtual working environments, while continuing to build diversity to best represent the community ICANN org serves.
- Ensuring appropriate staff (full-time and temporary) levels as needed for initiatives including support of technical platforms, implementation of Board-approved recommendations related to the New gTLD Program: Next Round, the Information Transparency Initiative, and more.
- Providing the internal programs necessary for leadership training and professional development of staff in order to retain talent.
- Continuing to maintain, grow and foster diversity, equity, and inclusion initiatives as a key component of staff engagement.
- Prioritizing staff engagement by reinforcing a culture centered on leadership, ownership, and accountability, empowering staff voice, and driving an inclusive and respectful culture within the organization.
- Continuing to provide support and guidance to managers and staff on using ICANN's Career Framework to conduct conversations around career path and development.
- Expanding the Talent Review process to continue to support staff growth, recognition, and development.

ICANN ORG SHARED SERVICES

In FY25, Administrative Services activities include:

- Maintaining appealing, collaborative workspaces within ICANN offices, promoting in-person activities while adhering to cost-conscious practices.
- Ensuring the readiness and safety of ICANN offices to effectively manage potential risks stemming from COVID-19 surges.

HOW PROGRESS IS TRACKED

ICANN uses a combination of milestones, metrics, and reports to track Functional Activities. The following measures will be used in FY25 for this functional activity:

- Global Human Resources
 - Evaluation of the annual staff engagement survey, which provides structured feedback from staff regarding their employment experience. The survey results allow the org to understand priority areas of focus to make meaningful improvements toward ensuring staff engagement across the organization.
- Administrative Services
 - Assessment of lease negotiations and working environment changes to ensure favorable outcomes that align with budgetary commitments.

RESOURCES

FUNCTIONAL ACTIVITY	FTE	Staff	Non-Staff	TOTAL
Global Human Resources and Administrative Services	23	\$5.1	\$1.4	\$6.5

*In Millions USD
Full-Time Equivalent (FTE)*

ICANN ORG SHARED SERVICES

CONSIDERATIONS

The following risks and considerations exist in FY25 for the Global Human Resources component:

- Attracting, retaining, and maintaining staff engagement in a more competitive labor market during economic recovery, and evolving societal expectations post-COVID-19 will require a comprehensive strategic approach to drive efficiency and mitigate cost impacts.
- The need to engage staff in increasingly dispersed locations poses challenges related to legal compliance, cultural differences, infrastructure, recruitment, and communication. A more defined strategy, rather than a reactive approach, is necessary, given the high workload and increased resourcing demands.
- Staff members are eager for development opportunities and require a better understanding of the currently available resources to take full advantage of career progression opportunities.

The following risks and considerations exist in FY25 for the Administrative Services component:

- Efficient office space utilization remains a concern due to continued low usage. ■

ICANN ORG SHARED SERVICES

Security Operations

PURPOSE

The purpose of Security Operations is to provide a safe and secure environment in which the community, Board, and org operate.

OPERATING INITIATIVE CONTRIBUTIONS

No linked initiatives at this time. This function supports ICANN's ongoing activities.

ACTIVITIES

In FY25, activities will include:

- **Event Security:** Provide on-site event health, safety, and security support to ICANN Public Meetings and other ICANN-hosted events in line with ICANN's COVID-19 Return to Normal Operations (RTNO) Framework and Implementation Plan – Travel and Events.
- **Travel Security:** Assess and support org and Board travel in line with ICANN's COVID-19 RTNO Framework and Implementation Plan – Travel and Events and ICANN's long-standing risk-driven travel security best practices.
- **Security Intelligence:** Regional security managers will continue to assess and understand the unique health, safety, and security risk landscapes of their regions.
- **Response Planning:** Conduct annual emergency and crisis-management training for staff and emergency response and crisis management teams.
- **Physical Security:** Maintain and optimize physical security procedures, processes, and protocols across ICANN's facilities.
- **Threat Management:** Detect, assess, mitigate, and respond to ICANN's internal and external security threats.
- **Knowledge Management:** Provide tailored, region-specific training to staff as well as org-wide core learning.

HOW PROGRESS IS TRACKED

ICANN org uses a combination of milestones and reports to ensure that initiatives advance. The following measures will be used in FY25 for this functional activity:

- ICANN events are safe, healthy, and secure with risks minimized through robust risk assessment and mitigation strategies, plans, procedures, and protocols in line with ICANN's COVID-19 Return to Normal Operations (RTNO) Framework and Implementation Plan – Travel and Events.
- Org travel is safe, healthy, and secure through a risk-driven assessment and approval process in line with ICANN's COVID-19 RTNO Framework and Implementation Plan – Travel and Events.
- Security Operations org structure optimizes regional alignment, global dispersion, local knowledge and diversity.

ICANN ORG SHARED SERVICES

- Promote a culture of security awareness to inform the org’s decision-makers and furnish staff with the tools and know-how to operate and travel safely and securely in a COVID-19 world and increasingly insecure threat landscape.
- Complete annual training for the Global Crisis Management Team and office Emergency Response Teams.

RESOURCES

FUNCTIONAL ACTIVITY	FTE	Staff	Non-Staff	TOTAL
Security Operations	5	\$1.2	\$0.9	\$2.1

*In Millions USD
Full-Time Equivalent (FTE)*

CONSIDERATIONS

The following risks and considerations exist in FY25 for this functional activity and may impact its advancement:

- ICANN’s mission and engagement require ICANN to send travelers to and host events within locations of highly variable risk profiles. These risks have increased in response to the global COVID-19 pandemic. In addition, many of these risks may be unknown at any given moment in time. As a result, ICANN may be required to conduct engagement in rapidly changing, higher-risk locations, requiring planning flexibility and increased and more costly Security Operations support. While Security Operations does not control where ICANN hosts events or travels, the team is still responsible for assessing risk and sufficiently supporting events and travel as safely and cost-effectively as possible.
- Security Operations will continue its efforts to develop and bolster an organizational culture of security awareness. This will both inform the decision-making of the organization’s key stakeholders and empower staff to proactively mitigate security risks and reduce the likelihood of safety incidents.
- Security Operations will continue to ensure that the org is sufficiently prepared to respond to and manage emerging threats and crises. ■

ICANN ORG SHARED SERVICES

Board Operations

PURPOSE

The purpose of this function is to support the ICANN and Public Technical Identifiers (PTI) Boards, and to serve as liaison between the ICANN Board and org. This includes coordinating with ICANN org to provide substantive content and logistical support to the ICANN Board, its committees, and subgroups. Additionally, this function facilitates the interaction between the Board and the community.

OPERATING INITIATIVE CONTRIBUTIONS

No linked initiatives at this time. This supports all of ICANN's operations and ongoing activities.

ACTIVITIES

In FY25, activities will include:

- **Content Management:** Supports the development of agendas for Board meetings and workshops; facilitates preparation and submission of org-wide materials for Board meetings, workshops, committees and other subgroup meetings; manages the publication of Board materials, Correspondence, and Public Comments submissions; and facilitates preparation for Board and stakeholder meetings.
- **Logistics Management:** Manages Board members' travels and expenses, manages vendors, manages and reports Board budget, and facilitates and organizes calls and meetings.
- **Training and Capacity Development:** Supports the Board training programs and tools, including Board members; onboarding, development, and mentorship programs.
- **Tools:** Support the development of IT tools aiming at facilitating the work of the Board and the preservation of the institutional memory (i.e., Board papers repository, Board pages on icann.org)
- **Chair Office management:** Provide dedicated administrative support for the Board Chair (agenda management, note-taking, speaking engagement support)
- **Board Communications and Engagement:** Support and facilitate the Board's communications and engagement efforts with the community as well as participation in other meetings, events, and speaking engagements.
- **Org Cross-functional Improvements Efforts:** Participates in cross-functional ICANN org teams and projects aimed at improving effectiveness and cost management.

△ The team does not anticipate any significant changes, but will pursue its operational excellence and team development efforts that focus on process improvements and tools enhancement. Additionally, one team member's role has been adjusted to focus on collaborating with Engineering & IT while also providing key administrative support to the Chair.

ICANN ORG SHARED SERVICES

HOW PROGRESS IS TRACKED

ICANN uses a combination of milestones and reports to ensure that initiatives advance. The following measures will be used in FY25 for this Functional Activity:

- Outcome Measurement:
 - Smooth operations of the Board activities (content, logistics, skills development, etc.) and continuous advancement of Board best practices.
 - Continuous advancement of org-wide support for the Board.
- Performance Measurement:
 - Content Management: Bylaws compliance, accountability and transparency metrics achievements.
 - Percent of Board materials ready prior to Board meetings.
 - Percent of Board Meeting agendas published prior to meeting, per ICANN Bylaws.
 - Logistic Management:
 - Number of trips booked for the Board.
 - Number of expense reports managed for the Board.
 - Training and capacity development:
 - Number of Board members completing the onboarding process.
 - Number of trainings attended by individual Board members.
 - Number of trainings attended by the full Board.
 - Improvements in Board skill sets.

RESOURCES

FUNCTIONAL ACTIVITY	FTE	Staff	Non-Staff	TOTAL
Board Operations	6	\$1.4	\$0.1	\$1.5

*In Millions USD
Full-Time Equivalent (FTE)*

ICANN ORG SHARED SERVICES

CONSIDERATIONS

The following risks and considerations exist in FY25 for this functional activity and may impact its advancement:

- The team works closely with ICANN org, including the Legal team, to deliver content to the Board and publish Board materials. However, this support depends on the workload and priorities of other functions responsible for preparing the initial drafts.
- The potential loss of institutional knowledge on the Board poses a risk and could negatively affect the Board's operational effectiveness, subsequently impacting ICANN org. The team's plan includes ongoing collaboration with the President and CEO and the General Counsel and Secretary to advance Board and committee manuals, enhance process documentation, provide training and development, and more. ■

ICANN ORG SHARED SERVICES

ICANN Offices

PURPOSE

ICANN offices are located around the world and work together to serve the global community. Brussels, Istanbul, Montevideo, and Singapore have detailed plans described in the Global Stakeholder Engagement section of the FY25 Operating Plan. Below is an overview of the non-staff administrative costs of running each office.

RESOURCES

FUNCTIONAL ACTIVITY	Non-Staff
ICANN Offices	\$6.4
Istanbul Regional Office	\$0.2
Brussels Regional Office	\$0.3
Singapore Regional Office	\$0.6
Montevideo Regional Office	\$0.0
Los Angeles Headquarters	\$4.4
Washington D.C. Regional Office	\$0.8
Geneva Regional Office	\$0.1

*In Millions USD
Full-Time Equivalent (FTE)*

FY25 EXPENSE BY SERVICE GROUP

► [Read the ICANN FY25 Expense By Service Group.](#)

ICANN FY25 BUDGET

► [Read the ICANN FY25 Budget.](#)

APPENDIX

- **Appendix A**
Operating Initiatives Supporting the Strategic Plan
- **Appendix B**
ICANN Rolling Five-Year Roadmap: Policy, Reviews, and Cross-Community Working Groups
- **Appendix C**
Recommendations Relating to Cross-Community Working Group on Enhancing ICANN Accountability Work Stream 2 and ICANN Reviews
- **Appendix D**
ICANN Security, Stability, and Resiliency (SSR) of the Internet Unique Identifiers

Appendix A: Operating Initiatives Supporting the Strategic Plan

Strategic Objectives	Strategic Goals	Operating Initiatives																
		Support the evolution and strengthening of Root Zone Management and the Root Server System. (OI-1)	Facilitate the DNS ecosystem improvements. (OI-2)	Evolve and strengthen the Multistakeholder Model to facilitate policymaking. (OI-3)	Evolve and strengthen the ICANN Community's decision-making processes to ensure efficient and effective policymaking. (OI-4)	Evolve and improve internal and external ethics policies. (OI-5)	Promote and evaluate the DNS through open and transparent processes that ensure the stability, security, and resiliency of the DNS. (OI-6)	Geopolitical monitoring, engagement, and mitigation. (OI-7)	[COMPLETED]: Improve the depth of market-driven funding of the domain name. (OI-8)	Implement New gTLD auction proceeds recommendations as approved by the Board. (OI-9)	Planning at ICANN (OI-10)	[COMPLETED]: ICANN Reserves (OI-11)						
Strengthen the security of the Domain Name System (DNS) and the DNS Root Server System.	Improve the shared responsibility for upholding the security and stability of the DNS by strengthening DNS coordination in partnership with relevant stakeholders (SG-1).	✓	✓															
	Strengthen DNS root server operations governance in coordination with the DNS root server operators (SG-2).	✓																
	Identify and mitigate security threats to the DNS through greater engagement with relevant hardware, software, and service vendors (SG-3).		✓															
	Increase the robustness of the DNS root zone key signing and distribution services and processes (SG-4).	✓	✓															
Improve the effectiveness of ICANN's multistakeholder model of governance .	Strengthen ICANN's bottom-up multistakeholder decision-making process and ensure that work gets done and policies are developed in an effective and timely manner (SG-5).			✓	✓													
	Support and grow active, informed, and effective stakeholder participation (SG-6).			✓		✓												
	Sustain and improve openness, inclusivity, accountability, and transparency (SG-7).			✓		✓												
Evolve the unique identifier systems in coordination and collaboration with relevant parties to continue to serve the needs of the global Internet user base.	Foster competition, consumer choice, and innovation in the Internet space by increasing awareness of, and encouraging readiness for Universal Acceptance, IDN implementation, and IPv6 (SG-8).							✓										
	Improve assessment of, and responsiveness to, new technologies which impact the security, stability, and resiliency of the Internet's unique identifier systems by greater engagement with relevant parties (SG-9).	✓	✓															
	Continue to deliver and enhance the IANA functions with operational excellence (SG-10).	✓																
	Support the continued evolution of the Internet's unique identifier systems with a new round of gTLDs that is responsibly funded, managed, risk-evaluated, and consistent with ICANN processes (SG-11).	✓							✓									
Address geopolitical issues impacting ICANN's mission to ensure a single, globally interoperable Internet.	Identify and address global challenges and opportunities within its remit by further developing early warning systems, such as ICANN org's Legislative and Regulatory Development Reports (SG-12).								✓									
	Continue to build alliances in the Internet ecosystem and beyond to raise awareness of and engage with global stakeholders about ICANN's mission and policy making (SG-13).									✓								
Ensure ICANN's long-term financial sustainability.	Implement a five-year Financial Plan that supports the five-year Operating Plan (SG-14).									✓	✓							
	Develop reliable and predictable funding projections (SG-15).									✓								
	Manage operations and their costs to optimize the effectiveness and efficiency of ICANN's activities (SG-16).										✓	✓	✓					
	Ensure that the level of ICANN reserves is continuously set, reached, and maintained consistent with the complexity and risks of the ICANN environment (SG-17).											✓	✓					

Appendix B:

ICANN Rolling Five-Year Roadmap: Policy, Reviews, and Cross-Community Working Groups

The rolling five-year roadmap includes activities related to policy, reviews, and cross-community working groups, each with estimated timelines. Work related to these activities will be continually prioritized and resourced. It is important to note that the timelines on this roadmap are indicative, tentative, and subject to update as work progresses.

The roadmap includes the implementation of Board-approved recommendations of the Cross-Community Working Group on ICANN Accountability Work Stream 2 and Organizational Review implementations. The timing of future Specific and Organizational Reviews may be affected by the [Board-approved recommendations](#) from the third Accountability and Transparency Review Team (ATRT3). It is anticipated that the timing of these future reviews will be deferred to allow the implementation of ATRT3 recommendations to progress. ICANN org will maintain quarterly updates on the the [Finance and Planning Community Wiki](#) to reflect the progress of implementing the Board-approved ATRT3 recommendations.

Read the [ICANN Rolling Five-Year Roadmap](#).

Appendix C:

Recommendations Relating to Cross-Community Working Group on Enhancing ICANN Accountability Work Stream 2 and ICANN Reviews

As of 1 December 2023

Appendix C offers a high-level compilation of updates on the status of Board-approved Specific Reviews recommendations. Additionally, it provides insights into the organization's and community's ongoing efforts to implement recommendations from Work Stream 2 of the Cross-Community Working Group on Enhancing ICANN Accountability (WS2). This overview reflects the org's commitment to implementing a multitude of Board-approved recommendations.

Appendix C: Recommendations Relating to Cross-Community Working Group on Enhancing ICANN Accountability Work Stream 2 and ICANN Reviews, Cont'd.

Enhancing ICANN Accountability: WS2 Progress			
Description	# of Recs in the Final Report	# of Recs Approved by the Board	Status of Recommendations
Cross-Community Working Group on Enhancing ICANN Accountability Work Stream 2 (WS2) ¹	116 ²	116 ³	See this page for information on the implementation status of WS2 recommendations.
Specific Reviews			
Description	# of Recs in the Final Report	# of Recs Approved by the Board	Information
Accountability and Transparency (ATRT) Review ⁴ (Section 4.6 (b) of ICANN Bylaws)	5 (15 components)	5 (15 components)	See this page for information on the implementation status of recommendations emerging from the third iteration of the ATRT Review.
Competition, Consumer Trust and Consumer Choice (CCT) Review ⁵ (Section 4.6 (d) of ICANN Bylaws)	35	17	See this page for information on the implementation status of CCT recommendations.
Registration Directory Service (RDS)-WHOIS Review ⁶ (Section 4.6 (e) of ICANN Bylaws)	22	15	See this page for information on the implementation status of recommendations emerging from the second iteration of the RDS Review.
Security, Stability and Resiliency (SSR) Review ⁷ (Section 4.6 (c) of ICANN Bylaws)	63	23	See this page for information on the implementation status of recommendations emerging from the second iteration of the SSR Review.

¹ WS2 references: [WS2 Final Report](#); [Board resolution](#) and [Implementation status](#).

² The total number of recommendations was refined at the conclusion of the implementation design to encompass 95 recommendations. This translates into a set of 58 recommendations the org owns, 30 recommendations the community owns, and seven recommendations co-owned by the org and community. See the [WS2 workspace](#) for more information.

³ The total number of recommendations was refined at the conclusion of the implementation design to encompass 95 recommendations. This translates into a set of 58 recommendations the org owns, 30 recommendations the community owns, and seven recommendations co-owned by the org and community. See the [WS2 workspace](#) for more information.

⁴ ATRT3 Review references: [ATRT3 Final Report](#); [November 2020 Board action](#); [Implementation status](#)

⁵ CCT Review references: [CCT Final Report](#); [March 2019 Board action](#); [October 2020 Board action](#)

⁶ RDS-WHOIS2 Review references: [RDS-WHOIS2 Final Report](#); [February 2020 Board action](#)

⁷ SSR2 Review references: [SSR2 Final Report](#); [July 2021 Board Action](#); [May 2022 Board action](#)

Appendix C: Recommendations Relating to Cross-Community Working Group on Enhancing ICANN Accountability Work Stream 2 and ICANN Reviews, Cont'd.

Organizational Reviews					
Description	# of Recs in the Final Report	# of Recs Approved by the Board	# of Recs Implementation Complete	# of Recs Implementation In Progress	# of Recs Implementation Not Started
At-Large2 Review ⁸	24	8	6	2 ⁹	0
NomCom2 Review ¹⁰	27	27	25	2 ¹¹	0
RSSAC2 Review ¹²	15	6	4	2 ¹³	0
SSAC2 Review ¹⁴	30	24	21	3 ¹⁵	0
ASO2 Review ¹⁶	18	18	18	0	0
ccNSO2 Review ¹⁷	15	15	13	2 ¹⁸	0

⁸At-Large2 Review references: [Board resolution](#); [Implementation completed](#); [Implementation Status reports](#)

⁹The two recommendations that are not yet fully implemented have dependencies that are outside of the At-Large control.

¹⁰NomCom2 Review references: [Board resolution \(March 2023\)](#) [Board resolution \(November 2019\)](#); [Board approved the implementation plan](#); [Implementation Status Reports: Final Implementation Report](#).

¹¹The NomCom2 review implementation was completed in [June 2022](#), as reported by the community. The related Board Resolution occurred in [March 2023](#), which initiated an ICANN Bylaws Amendment process.

¹²RSSAC2 Review references: [Board resolution](#); [Board approved the implementation plan](#); [Implementation Status Reports: Final Implementation Report](#).

¹³The RSSAC2 Review implementation was completed in [June 2022](#), as reported by the community. The corresponding Board Resolution was passed on [22 September 2022](#). Regarding the two recommendations that RSSAC says require collaboration with the Root Server System Governance Working Group for fulfillment, the Board has asked the RSSAC to provide periodic updates on the progress of their implementation. The RSSAC provided an update to the OEC via ICANN Correspondence between April-[June 2023](#).

¹⁴SSAC2 Review references: [Board Resolution](#); [Board Accepts Implementation Plan](#); [Implementation Status Reports](#); [Final Report](#).

¹⁵The three recommendations that are not yet fully implemented have dependencies that are outside of SSAC control.

¹⁶ASO2 Review references: [ASO2 Review](#) and [Completed implementation](#).

¹⁷ccNSO2 Review references: [Board Resolution to conclude the review](#); [Implementation Status Reports](#) and [Implementation Completed](#).

¹⁸The two recommendations that are not yet fully implemented have dependencies that are outside of the ccNSO control.

Appendix D:

ICANN Security, Stability, and Resiliency (SSR) of the Internet Unique Identifiers

The very idea of the secure, stable, and resilient operation of the Internet's unique identifier systems is built into [ICANN's mission](#). Commonly referred to as SSR, the essential elements of security, stability, and resiliency are paramount to the continued predictable manner in which the Internet currently operates. ICANN contributes to the overall SSR of the Internet via its management and stewardship of Internet unique identifier systems that fall within ICANN's remit. These identifiers include: the top-most level of the Domain Name System (DNS), Internet Protocol address and autonomous system number allocation to the Regional Internet Registries, and other unique Internet identifiers as identified by the Internet Engineering Task Force. When used in accordance with globally recognized standards, these identifiers create an environment in which a secure, stable, and resilient Internet infrastructure can exist.

ICANN's deep commitment to SSR underscores an approach to the concept that is holistic and interwoven into daily operations. In other words, every function of ICANN contributes to the overall SSR through its support of ICANN's mission. However, this appendix aims to articulate some of the specific areas that particularly focus on supporting the SSR of these unique Internet identifiers.

SSR Definitions

ICANN's [Acronyms and Terms](#) webpage and its [FY15–16 Identifier Systems Security, Stability and Resiliency Framework](#) define the SSR elements as:

- **Security:** the capacity to protect Internet identifier systems and prevent misuse.
- **Stability:** the capacity to ensure that Internet identifier systems operate as expected, and that users of these systems have confidence that the systems operate as expected or intended.
- **Resiliency:** the capacity of Internet identifier systems to effectively withstand, tolerate, or survive malicious attacks and other disruptive events without interruption or cessation of service.

SSR in Operating Initiatives

The FY25–29 Operating and Financial Plan includes the plans for SSR initiatives over the five-year period beginning 1 July 2025. These plans support activities within the following Operating Initiatives:

Operating Initiative	Scope of Work
<p>Support the evolution and strengthening of Root Zone Management and the Root Server System</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Supporting Governance Documents: The Office of the Chief Technology Officer (OCTO) and the Policy Development Support function aid the community-based Root Server System Governance Working Group in its implementation of two key documents: RSSAC037, titled “A Proposed Governance Model for the DNS Root Server System,” and RSSAC038, titled “RSSAC Advisory on a Proposed Governance Model for the DNS Root Server System.” Both were published on 15 June 2018. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ The OCTO team will support the eventual outcome of RSSAC037 and RSSAC038. • KSK Rollover Policy: This initiative involves leveraging lessons learned from the first root zone key signing key (KSK) rollover, defining and publishing a long-term root zone KSK Rollover Policy. This policy will guide subsequent rollovers. • Enhancements to Root Zone Management: Identify and implement features that enhance the Root Zone Management System (RZMS). These enhancements are geared toward improving operations while ensuring the accuracy, quality, and timeliness of business processes. • Meeting New Community Requirements: Develop technical and operational solutions that meet new community requirements. These requirements may arise from efforts such as the New Generic Top-Level Domain (gTLD) Program: Next Round and Internationalized Domain Names (IDNs) Policy Development Processes.
<p>Facilitate DNS ecosystem improvements</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Advocate and Promote Improvements to DNS Security Infrastructure <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ Advocate for developers to enable Domain Name System Security Extensions (DNSSEC), both signing and validation, by default. ◦ Advocate and support ICANN Domain Metrica, previously known as DNS-based Authentication of Named Entities (DANE) through community engagement, training, and collaboration with the technical standards communities. ◦ Support the community’s policy discussions related to combatting DNS abuse. • Technical Engagement and Capacity Development <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ Continue to improve and provide capacity development training on critical Internet technologies, such as DNSSEC and relevant applications like Domain Metrica, to enhance the security of the DNS ecosystem in alignment with ICANN’s technical responsibilities. ◦ Expand ICANN org’s technical training footprint through new course material and virtual lab environments. ◦ Continue expanding training programs focused on DNS ecosystem security, with the goal of actively involving Computer Emergency Readiness Teams worldwide, providing them with enhanced training opportunities and fostering collaboration. ◦ Continue to work with the community to develop and promote commonly agreed norms for a secure DNS ecosystem through projects such as the Knowledge-sharing and Instantiating Norms for DNS and Naming Security (KINDNS initiative). ◦ Evolve efforts to educate registry operators, registrars, and others about DNS security threats and approaches to measure, prevent, detect, and mitigate DNS security threats within their platforms. • Research <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ Continue to collect data, analyze, and publish fact-based, unbiased, objective information on how the DNS is used and abused. ◦ Research, report, and raise community awareness on emerging identifiers technologies and how they impact and compare with the DNS through the OCTO series of documents and other avenues of publication. ◦ Research the application of machine learning to improve the detection and understanding of abusive trends in DNS registrations. While the project commenced in FY23, it will require continued funding beyond FY25 to maintain the system’s functionality.

SSR Funding

The FY25–29 Financials include an allocation designated to support ICANN’s efforts to preserve and enhance the SSR of the Internet unique identifiers that ICANN manages, including the DNS, Root Server System governance, mitigation of DNS security threats, promotion and facilitation of DNSSEC deployment, the mitigation of name collisions, and DNS operations research.

[A binding Letter of Intent](#) (LOI) between ICANN and Verisign, executed in March 2020, outlines Verisign’s commitment to contribute a total of \$20M over five years for this purpose. In January 2021, Verisign provided the first installment of \$4 million. Given Verisign’s long standing role in the stewardship of the DNS, this additional funding reinforces a shared focus on security, stability, and resiliency for the Internet’s unique identifier systems, as stipulated in the LOI referenced above.

An example of how these funds may be used is the expansion of the ICANN Managed Root Server (IMRS). Expanding IMRS clusters yields dual benefits: on a global scale, it enhances the Root Server System infrastructure, and on a more localized level, it directly supports entities operating extensive networks. This includes Internet service providers, data service providers, domain name registries and registrars, as well as independent organizations committed to fortifying the stability and resilience of DNS infrastructures within specific geographic regions, encompassing countries and local areas.

Another key focus area is ICANN Domain Metrica, which represents the evolution of the ICANN Domain Abuse Activity Reporting (DAAR) system. This system is instrumental in studying and reporting on domain name registration and security threats across top-level domain registries. DAAR’s overarching purpose is to develop a robust, reliable, and reproducible methodology for analyzing security threat activity. Insights provided by DAAR empower the ICANN community to make informed policy decisions. The funding from the LOI has enabled ICANN to enhance the DAAR system into a more advanced measurement platform. This platform can validate various metrics, including those related to security threats, and present them to the community in a more accessible and actionable format. ICANN org envisioned Domain Metrica as a modular system, with one of its future modules aimed at proactively predicting security threats.

All initiatives and expenses related to SSR, including those supported by the LOI, will undergo continuous monitoring and reporting throughout the plan period. This monitoring will be conducted transparently to ensure complete accountability for the funds collected and utilized.



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