

Operating Initiatives



2.2 Operating Initiatives

Operating initiatives describe how ICANN org 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 below) have been completed and any ongoing activities will be incorporated into the respective functional activity.

The 11 operating initiatives are:

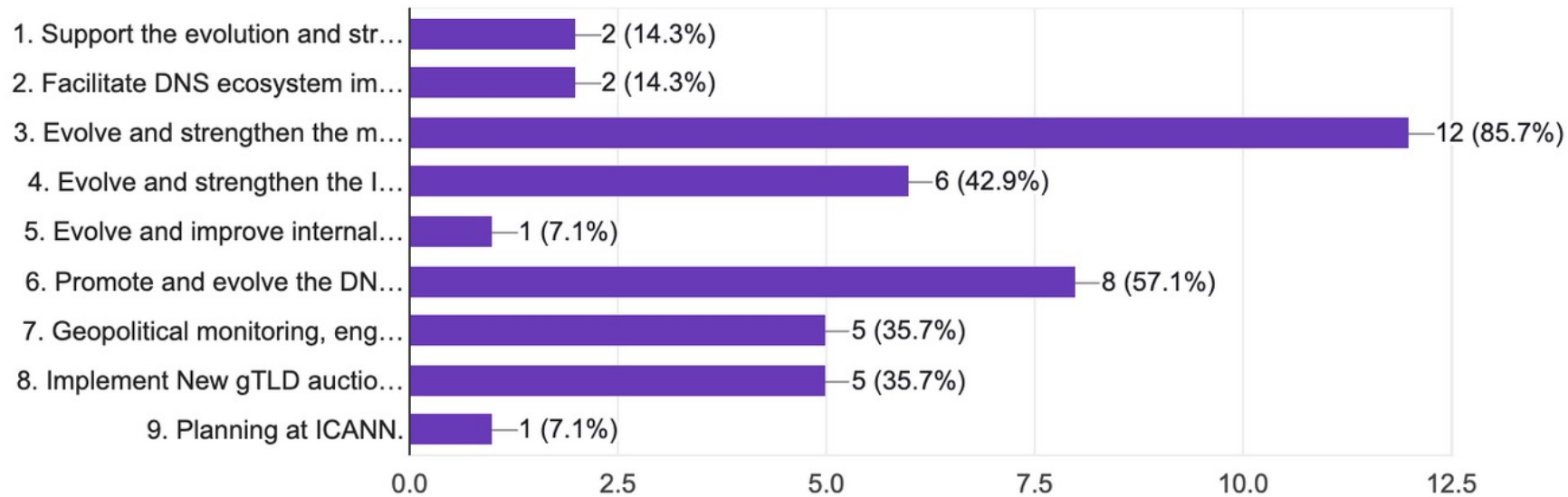
1. Support the evolution and strengthening of root zone management and the Root Server System (RSS)
2. Facilitate the DNS Ecosystem Improvements
3. Evolve and strengthen the multistakeholder model to facilitate diverse and inclusive participation in policymaking
4. Evolve and strengthen the ICANN community's 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 Market 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*).

Operating Initiatives – At Large priorities



Please kindly select the **top 3 priorities** from the following **9 Priorities of the FY25 ICANN Operating Plan and Budget** .

14 responses



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

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.

Enhancing MSM

Policy development accelerator program


Pilot Holistic Review

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

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). ■



Policy development
accelerator program

Pilot Holistic Review

2 – 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.

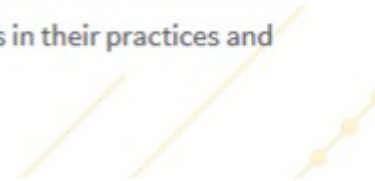
This initiative monitors project work in anticipation of the launch of the New gTLD Program: Next Round. It does so by adhering to Board-approved community-developed policy recommendations for future rounds and by leveraging insights gained from the implementation of the 2012 round and subsequent reviews 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.

2 – 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

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.



3 – 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.](#)