

*Note: The module incorporates recommendations and implementation guidance from IDN EPDP WG Phase 1 Report. The report is not yet considered by the ICANN Board.*

# Internationalized Domain Names (IDNs)

## 1. Rules for IDN gTLDs and Their Variant gTLDs

An applied-for IDN gTLD must comply with [IDNA2008](#) (RFCs 5890-5895) or its successor(s). The IDN gTLD must also comply with the applicable version of Root Zone Label Generation Rules (RZ-LGR; see [Section x: Root Zone Label Generation Rules](#)).

An IDN gTLD can be represented in Unicode characters (called U-label) and its equivalent ASCII mapping prefixed by “xn--” (called A-label) as per IDNA2008. Applied-for IDN gTLDs (in U-label format) must be longer than a single character. As an exception, single-character IDN gTLDs (in U-label format) may be applied for only in Han script<sup>1</sup>, which is used in the Chinese, Japanese, and Korean languages. In addition, an IDN gTLD (in A-label format, which is represented in ASCII, including the prefix “xn--”) must adhere to the DNS requirements for ASCII gTLDs (see details in [Section x: DNS requirements](#)).

The RZ-LGR must also be the sole source to calculate the variant gTLDs and their disposition values (allocatable or blocked) for all existing gTLDs and all applied-for primary gTLD.

The LGR Tool made available by ICANN at <https://lgrtool.icann.org/> can be used to determine allocatable variant gTLDs for a primary gTLD.

## 2. Application Submission

An applied-for IDN gTLD that conforms to the mandatory string requirements, including IDNA 2008, as well as the RZ-LGR, can be submitted through the new gTLD application submission system. Where the initial algorithmic check deems an applied-for gTLD as “invalid” or “blocked” (where the applied-for string is a variant gTLD), such application for a non-conforming string may be accepted by application submission system but the applicant will be warned of its potential disqualification.

### 2.1. Application Submission of New Primary IDN gTLD and its Variant gTLDs

An applicant can apply for a new primary IDN gTLD along with one or more of its allocatable variant gTLDs. Any variant gTLD can only be allocated to the same entity as the primary IDN gTLD. There is no upper limit on how many allocatable variant gTLDs can be applied-for from

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<sup>1</sup> Exception is allowed for Han script as it is an ideographic script where a single character may have a meaning.

the set generated using the RZ-LGR. An application for an allocatable variant gTLD cannot precede an application for its primary gTLD. A primary IDN gTLD and any of its allocatable variant gTLDs being applied for in the same round must be submitted through one application.

Once the primary gTLD is applied-for, it cannot be changed, except for a brand gTLD application<sup>2</sup> whose applied-for primary string has been placed in contention.

After submission of an application, the applicant is allowed to withdraw an applied-for variant gTLD from that application, but is not allowed to add any other allocatable variant gTLD that was not originally applied-for in that application. However, after submission of an application, in case the applicant withdraws the applied-for primary IDN gTLD, all its variant gTLDs will also be withdrawn.

All variant gTLDs must have the same back-end registry service provider as the applied-for primary IDN gTLD when delegated.

## 2.2. Application Submission of Variant gTLDs of Existing gTLDs

An applicant can apply for variant gTLDs of an existing IDN gTLD if and only if it is the same entity as the registry operator for the already existing gTLD. There is no upper limit on how many allocatable variant gTLDs of an existing IDN gTLD can be applied-for from the set generated using the RZ-LGR. An applicant for allocatable variant gTLDs of an existing IDN gTLD must submit these in one application.

After submission of an application, the applicant is allowed to withdraw an applied-for variant gTLD from that application, but is not allowed to add any other allocatable variant gTLD that was not originally applied-for in that application.

All variant gTLDs must have the same back-end registry service provider as the existing IDN gTLD when delegated.

## 3. Initial Evaluation

### 3.1. Prioritization of Processing of Variant gTLDs of Existing IDN gTLDs

As a one-time exception in the upcoming application round, applications for allocatable variant gTLDs of existing IDN gTLDs from the 2012 round will receive priority in processing order ahead of all other new gTLD applicants, including the IDN gTLD applicants that elect to participate in the prioritization draw (see [\[Section x on Prioritization\]](#)).

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<sup>2</sup> Based on IDN EPDP recommendation 3.25.

### 3.2. Multiple Applicants for the Same IDN gTLD or its Variant gTLD

In case different applicants apply for IDN gTLDs from the same variant-string-set, then such applications will be placed in contention, and only one applicant will be selected through the process (see [\[Section x: Contention Resolution\]](#)).

In case a different applicant applies for an allocatable variant gTLD of an existing gTLD, then such application will be rejected.

### 3.3. Justification of Variant gTLDs and its Evaluation

An applicant seeking one or more allocatable variant gTLDs of an applied-for primary IDN gTLD or existing IDN gTLD will describe the justification for the need of each variant gTLD being applied-for. A justification will be provided by the applicant for each applied-for variant gTLD which will be evaluated by a panel on a general standard of reasonableness based on the following criteria, in the context of the applied-for primary IDN gTLD or existing IDN gTLD:

1. The meaning or intended meaning (for non-dictionary words) of each of the applied-for variant gTLD is the same, based on sources included.
2. The variant gTLD is considered the same by the intended user community.
3. The benefits and the user communities who will benefit from the introduction of the applied-for variant gTLD.
4. Steps the applicant will take to minimize the operational and management complexities of the variant gTLD and resulting variant domain names that impact registrars, resellers and/or registrants.

The applicant must pass each criterion for each applied-for variant gTLD to proceed to the next stage of the application process. The evaluation outcome of any one applied-for variant gTLD will not impact the evaluation outcome of any other applied-for variant gTLD in the application (including the primary applied-for IDN gTLD).

The applicant will also be required to demonstrate its ability to manage the applied-for allocatable variant gTLD(s) along with the applied-for primary IDN gTLD or the existing IDN gTLD from both a technical and operational perspective.

### 3.4. Additional Application Requirements for Variant gTLDs

An applied-for allocatable variant gTLD will be subject to the same application requirements and evaluation criteria as the associated primary applied-for IDN gTLD or existing IDN gTLD. Specifically, the same documentation requirements apply to both the primary applied-for IDN gTLD and its applied-for allocatable variant gTLD(s). With respect to the three non-standard application types of gTLDs, this means that:

- An applicant for a Community-based gTLD and its allocatable variant gTLDs(s) is required to submit a written endorsement of its applied-for primary gTLD and applied-for allocatable variant gTLDs from established institution(s) representing the community that the applicant has named. ([see Section x: community based gTLD])
- An applicant for a Geographic Name gTLD and its allocatable variant gTLDs is required to submit documentation of support or non-objection to its applied-for primary gTLD and applied-for allocatable variant gTLD(s) from relevant governments or public authorities ([see Section x: Geographic Name gTLD]).
- An applicant for a .Brand gTLD and its allocatable variant gTLDs is required to submit proof that its applied-for primary gTLD and applied-for allocatable variant gTLD(s) are identical to registered trademarks owned and used by the registry operator or its affiliate ([see Section x: .Brand gTLD]).

### 3.5. Application for Variant gTLDs of Reserved Names

Only the organizations on the Reserved Name List (see [Section x: Reserved Names]) are allowed to apply for the allocatable variant gTLD(s) of their reserved string(s) at the top-level. Such an application for an allocatable variant gTLD(s) of a reserved string cannot precede an application for the reserved string, which serves as the primary gTLD for generating the variant gTLDs.

### 3.6. Additional Dependence of Variant gTLDs

All variant gTLDs are dependent on their primary gTLD for application evaluation. In case a primary applied-for IDN gTLD is disqualified, the associated variant gTLDs will also be disqualified and the entire application cannot proceed.

However, if an allocatable variant gTLD is disqualified, though it cannot proceed, but the corresponding applied-for primary gTLD or any remaining variant gTLDs can proceed.