
Applicant Freedom of Expression

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1. Applicant Freedom of Expression

ICANN respects the freedom of expression rights of applicants that are protected under internationally recognized principles of law. Examples of these legal rights that are internationally recognized include, but are not limited to, rights defined in the Paris Convention for the Protection of Industrial Property, the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights.

Applicants can apply for any available gTLD other than those restricted based on technical standards, pre-established reserved name lists, and other restrictions and prohibitions detailed in the AGB. Applicants should be mindful of limitations to free expression [\[hyperlink to LPI section\]](#) when submitting an application as detailed in the AGB. Applications are subject to an evaluation and objection process [\[hyperlink\]](#) as described in the AGB and will be unsuccessful should an applied-for string be found to violate applicable laws or other rights, requirements or prohibitions specified in the AGB. The evaluation of applications, including decisions on objections, will be performed by independent third party vendors who will take into account freedom of expression considerations together with other relevant factors. Please see the relevant sections of this guidebook for more information on the evaluation [\[hyperlink\]](#) and dispute resolution process. [\[hyperlink\]](#).

Annex: Relevant Recommendations

Affirmation 10.1:

The Working Group affirms Principle G from the 2007 policy, which states: “The string evaluation process must not infringe the applicant’s freedom of expression rights that are protected under internationally recognized principles of law.”

The Working Group further affirms Recommendation 3: “Strings must not infringe the existing legal rights of others that are recognized or enforceable under generally accepted and internationally recognized principles of law. Examples of these legal rights that are internationally recognized include, but are not limited to, rights defined in the Paris Convention for the Protection of Industrial Property (in particular trademark rights), the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (in particular freedom of speech rights).”