

NEW gTLD PROGRAM: NEXT ROUND

gTLD

Subsequent Procedures Implementation Review Team

Meeting #83a

2024-10-30 | 21:00-22:00 UTC



Agenda

1. Welcome and SOI Update
- 2. Community Priority Evaluation**
3. Upcoming IRT Meetings
4. AOB

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Community Priority Evaluation

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CPE Criteria Comparison (High-Level)

2012 Criteria	Points	Preliminary 2026 Criteria	Points
Criterion 1: Community Establishment	4	Criterion 1: Community Establishment	4
Delineation (Delineation, Organized, Pre-Existing)	2	Organization	2
Extension (Size, Longevity)	2	Engagement	1
–	–	Awareness	1
Criterion 2: Nexus	4	Criterion 2: Nexus	4
Nexus	3	Nexus	4
Uniqueness	1	-	-
Criterion 3: Registration Policies	4	Criterion 3: Registration Policies	2
Eligibility	1	Eligibility	1
Name Selection	1	Name Selection	1
Content and Use	1	-	-
Enforcement	1	-	-
Criterion 4: Community Endorsement	4	Criterion 4: Community Endorsement	4
Support	2	Support & Opposition	4
Opposition	2	-	-
TOTAL POINTS 2012 ROUND	16	TOTAL POINTS 2026 ROUND	14

Overview of Updates to CPE Criteria: Criterion 1 (1 / 2)

2012 Criteria	Definition	Changes	Rationale for Changes
Community Establishment (4 points)			
A. Delineation (2 points)	“Clearly delineated, organized, and pre-existing community”	Removed / Replaced with Criteria related to Organization, Engagement, and Awareness (next slide)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Focus on delineation was detrimental to non-formal communities; related to IG 34.2 (accommodate non-formal communities) ● Pre-existing sub-criterion removed because no longer applicable. Based on IG 34.3 (“the beginning of the then current application submission period”), the pre-existing criterion becomes less meaningful / potentially moot
B. Extension (2 points)	“Community of considerable size and longevity”	Removed	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● The concept of size is relative and factually based. Relates to IG 34.20: (“determination of what is non-negligible [size] must be relative to the size of the community”) ● Because of changes to “pre-existing”, how long a community has existed does not play a role in the requirements and therefore should not be scored for points. The concept of longevity is subjective and difficult to prove.

Overview of Updates to CPE Criteria: Criterion 1 (2 / 2)

Preliminary 2026 Criteria	Definition	Key Points for New Criterion
Community Establishment (4 points)		
A. Organization (2 points)	The defined community must have relevant organizing bodies. This can be achieved either by having one primary organizing body that represents or administers the entire community, or by having separate organizing bodies relevant to each specific member category within the community.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Based on IG 34.9, focus is now on the existence of organizing bodies as a more flexible indicator of how a community is structured.
B. Engagement (1 point)	The community demonstrates active and consistent efforts to engage and connect with its members. This includes documented practices of providing support, sharing information, addressing specific needs, and fostering relationships within the community.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Engagement is an indicator of activeness of community; should be some interaction between organizing body(ies)/applicant and members.
C. Awareness (1 point)	Community members demonstrate an awareness of the defined community as well as its various sub-groups or segments. This awareness reflects the cohesion within the community as a whole.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> An applicant should be able to show that its community as defined is aware of its own existence. This may be evident by interaction or explicit statement of cohesion.

Overview of Updates to CPE Criteria: Criterion 2 (1 / 2)

2012 Criteria	Definition	Changes	Rationale for Changes
Nexus (4 points)			
A. Nexus (3 points)	“The string matches the name of the community or is a well-known short-form or abbreviation of the community”	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Combined concept of “Nexus” and “Uniqueness” to focus on how well the string “matches” the community name • Similar to 2012, more points are awarded if the string is an (exact) match of the community name 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Focus on the idea of “match”--an applicant’s string should clearly be related to the community • The concept of uniqueness is already closely tied with linguistic “match” • During the 2012 round, “Uniqueness” was contingent upon getting points on “Nexus”, which made it more difficult to obtain. Related to no “double-counting” concept as indicated in IG 34.10
B. Uniqueness (1 point)	“String has no other significant meaning beyond identifying the community described in the application”	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Removed / Combined with Nexus (above) 	

Overview of Updates to CPE Criteria: Criterion 2 (2 / 2)

Preliminary 2026 Criteria	Definition	Key Points for New Criterion
Nexus (4 points)		
Nexus	<p>String matches the name of the community or is a well-known short-form or abbreviation of the community and has no other meaning or connotation beyond identifying the community or community members described in the application. General public would associate the string with the defined community. (4 points)</p> <p>String identifies the community by closely describing the community or the community members. String may have a meaning or connotation beyond the defined community, but the general public would not associate the string with that meaning or connotation. (2 points)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Less focus on “overreach” or “underreach”. Instead, scoring should focus on the meaning of the string and what the general public might understand from that term. This is related to IG 34.8: “[panel] should be examining whether this is a term that the public in general associates with this community as opposed to another meaning.”

NEW gTLD PROGRAM: NEXT ROUND**Overview of Updates to CPE Criteria: Criterion 3 (1 / 2)**

2012 Criteria	Definition	Changes	Rationale for Changes
Registration Policies (4 points)			
A. Eligibility (1 point)	“Eligibility restricted to community members.”	Essentially unchanged, except the inclusion of “defined” in “Eligibility is restricted to defined community members.”	n/a
B. Name Selection (1 point)	“Policies include name selection rules consistent with the articulated community-based purpose of the applied-for gTLD.”	No change	n/a
C. Content & Use (1 point)	“Policies include rules for content and use consistent with the articulated community-based purpose of the applied-for gTLD.”	Removed	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> These will be reviewed as part of review of community registration policies proposed for inclusion in the applicable RA (see Topic 9). Per 8 June 2024 Board resolution directing that ICANN should exclude from the Next Round RAs any RVCs and other comparable registry commitments that restrict content in gTLDs
D. Enforcement (1 point)	“Policies include specific enforcement measures (e.g. investigation practices, penalties, takedown procedures) constituting a coherent set with appropriate appeal mechanisms.”	Removed	

Overview of Updates to CPE Criteria: Criterion 3 (2 / 2)

Preliminary 2026 Criteria	Definition	Key Points for New Criterion
Registration Policies (2 points)		
A. Eligibility (1 point)	Eligibility is restricted to defined community members.	No changes
B. Name Selection (1 point)	Policies include name selection rules that are fully consistent with the articulated community-based purpose of the applied-for gTLD.	No changes

Overview of Updates to CPE Criteria: Criterion 4 (1 / 2)

2012 Criteria	Definition	Changes	Rationale for Changes
Community Endorsement (4 points)			
Support (2 points)	“Applicant is, or has documented support from, the recognized community institution(s)/ member organization(s) or has otherwise documented authority to represent the community.”	Support and Opposition have been combined to be scored together.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The scoring was combined to create balance according to Recommendation 34.19: “Letters of opposition... must be considered in balance with documented support for the application.”
Opposition (2 points)	“No opposition of relevance”		

Overview of Updates to CPE Criteria: Criterion 4 (2 / 2)

Preliminary 2026 Criteria	Definition	Key Points for New Criterion
Community Endorsement (4 points)		
<p>Support & Opposition</p>	<p>The applicant is the organizing body with the authority, as granted/recognized by community members, to represent the community. OR, the applicant has demonstrated support with clear rationale from the organizing body(ies) from the defined community. The applicant does not have any relevant opposition. (4 points)</p> <p>The applicant has demonstrated majority support with clear rationale from the defined community. However, the applicant does have relevant minority opposition with clear rationale. (2 points)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Full points are achieved only when there is full demonstrated support and no opposition. • No points are given if there is majority opposition or no majority support. • 4 points are given according to IG 34.9: “other considerations may be taken into account in scoring for this criterion if multiple organizations represent a community”. • “Majority” and “minority” is determined as per IG 34.20: “the determination of what is non-negligible [size] must be relative to the size of the community that that applicant is proproing [sic] to serve”

Overview of Scoring for Community Endorsement

The following table provides a breakdown of how different scenarios of support vs. opposition would be scored. Note that points are only achieved with “majority support” as this is a key indicator of an applicant’s qualification to achieve priority.

Support	Opposition	Scenario	Points
Majority support	No opposition	Majority support with no opposition	4
Majority support	Minority opposition	Majority support with minority opposition	2
Minority support	No opposition	Minority support with no opposition	0
Minority support	Minority opposition	Minority support with minority opposition	0
Minority support	Majority opposition	Minority support with majority opposition	0
No support	No opposition	No support and no opposition	0
No support	Minority opposition	No support with minority opposition	0
No support	Majority opposition	No support with majority opposition	0

Next Steps

- ICANN org will take feedback from today and will prepare a draft of the proposed AGB language for review at ICANN81

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Upcoming IRT Meetings

#	Date	Time UTC	Topic	Wiki
84	31-Oct-24	12:00-14:00	31. Objections	https://community.icann.org/x/MoAUFg
85	05-Nov-24	12:30-14:30	35. Auctions .brand String Change Approach with Replacement Strings	https://community.icann.org/x/DYAUFg
87	09-Nov-24	06:00-07:00	36. Base Registry Agreement	https://community.icann.org/x/64DKFQ
88	09-Nov-24	07:30-09:00	36. Base Registry Agreement	https://community.icann.org/x/8oDKFQ
89	09-Nov-24	10:15-11:30	35: Auctions	https://community.icann.org/x/AIHKFQ
8	11-Nov-24	10.15:-11:30	<i>IDN Sub-Track</i>	https://community.icann.org/x/L4ADFg
90	13-Nov-24	13:30-14:30	CPE	https://community.icann.org/x/GYADFg
91	14-Nov-24	06:00-07:00	Outreach and Engagement	https://community.icann.org/x/IIADFg
93	21-Nov-24	05:00-06:00		https://community.icann.org/x/ZwEiFg

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Annex

CPE

Background Information

CPE Panel Procedures

- Panel = Core Team + Evaluators
- Core Team
 - Project Manager: oversees the Community Priority Evaluation project,
 - Project Coordinator: in charge of the day-to-day management of the project and provides guidance to the independent evaluators
 - Other senior staff members, including The Economist Intelligence Unit's Executive Editor and Global Director of Public Policy.
- Each application was assessed by seven individuals: two independent evaluators, and the core team, which comprises five people
- [Procedure Document](#)

SubPro Outputs for Topic 34: Community Applications

Implementation Guideline F from the 2007 policy is affirmed with modification under Topic 35: Auctions: Mechanisms of Last Resort / Private Resolution of Contention Sets.
Implementation Guideline F is also relevant to this topic.

Affirmation with Modification 34.1: The Working Group affirms the continued prioritization of applications in contention sets that have passed Community Priority Evaluation (CPE). The Working Group further affirm Implementation Guideline H* from the 2007 policy, with one small modification: “Where an applicant lays any claim that the TLD is intended to support a particular community such as a sponsored TLD, or any other TLD intended for a specified community, that claim will be taken on trust with the following exceptions: (i) the claim relates to a string that is also subject to another application and the claim to support a community is being used to gain priority for the application; and (ii) a formal objection process is initiated. Under exception (ii), an expert panel will apply the process, guidelines, and definitions set forth in IG P.” This modified text removes the following sentence under (ii) in order to be consistent with 2012 implementation: “Under these exceptions, Staff Evaluators will devise criteria and procedures to investigate the claim.”

SubPro Outputs

Implementation Guidance 34.2: In the 2012 Applicant Guidebook, the following text is included under definitions for Criterion 1-A Delineation, “Delineation” relates to the membership of a community, where a clear and straightforward membership definition scores high, while an unclear, dispersed or unbound definition scores low.” The corresponding Evaluation Guidelines from the 2012 round include a non-exhaustive list of “elements of straight-forward member definitions.” This list should continue to include elements applicable to economic communities with a formal membership structure, but it should also include elements applicable to communities that are not economic in nature, including linguistic and cultural communities, that have clear and straight-forward membership definition. The term “member” in this context should be interpreted broadly enough to include communities that do not have “card carrying” members. Further, the Evaluation Guidelines should include provisions that allow communities which are not economic in nature (and which therefore may not have clear and straight-forward membership structure) with an equal opportunity to score a full 2 points on the Delineation Criterion, as well as an opportunity to score a single point if some but not all elements of this criterion are met.

Implementation Guidance 34.3: In the 2012 Applicant Guidebook, the following text is included under Definitions for CPE Criterion 1-A Delineation: “Notably, as “community” is used throughout the application, there should be: . . . (b) some understanding of the community’s existence prior to September 2007 (when the new gTLD policy recommendations were completed)..” and ““Pre-existing” means that a community has been active as such since before the new gTLD policy recommendations were completed in September 2007.” The corresponding section of the CPE Evaluation Guidelines states, “The following questions must be scored when evaluating the application: . . . Has the community been active since at least September 2007?” For subsequent procedures, references to “September 2007” should be changed to “the beginning of the then current application submission period.”

SubPro Outputs

Implementation Guidance 34.4: In the 2012 Applicant Guidebook, in order to succeed in a Community Priority Evaluation, Criterion 1-A stated that a community should have the requisite “awareness and recognition” among its members (“Delineation”). The Working Group recommends that this criterion must take into consideration the views of the relevant community-related experts, especially in cases where recognition of the community is not measurable (eg., where such recognition is prevented by national law).

Implementation Guidance 34.5: In the 2012 Applicant Guidebook, the following text is included under Definitions for CPE Criterion 1-A Delineation: “Organized” implies that there is at least one entity mainly dedicated to the community, with documented evidence of community activities.” The interpretation in the Evaluation Guidelines of the term “mainly” should make clear that it is possible for more than one entity to administer and/or represent a community. The Guidelines should further make clear that an organization that represents a community should be treated on equal footing with one that administers a community.

SubPro Outputs

Implementation Guidance 34.6: In the 2012 Applicant Guidebook, text regarding CPE Criterion 2-A Nexus includes guidance on scoring in relation to the criterion. Corresponding text included in the Evaluation Guidelines should be more specific and clear regarding scoring to eliminate any ambiguity in interpretation. The Working Group suggests the following text to include in the Evaluation Guidelines: “With respect to “Nexus”, for a score of 3, the essential aspect is that the applied-for string matches the name of the community. Where an exact match is not established but the applied for string is established as commonly known by others as a well-known short-form or abbreviation of the community, it will also be eligible for a score of 3. Where the applied-for string does not match the name of the community or is not a well-known short-form or abbreviation of the community, it may score a 2 if it identifies the community - i.e. closely describes either the community or a reasonably understood boundary of the community members, without overreaching substantially beyond the community. An applied-for string which identified the community but over-reaches substantially into a community will score a zero.”

Implementation Guidance 34.7: In the 2012 Applicant Guidebook, text regarding CPE Criterion 2-B Uniqueness includes the following definition: “ “Identify” means that the applied for string closely describes the community or the community members, without over-reaching substantially beyond the community.” The corresponding Evaluation Guidelines should make clear that there are two distinct paths to establish if an applied for string identifies the community: 1. describing the community OR 2. describing the community members. The Guidelines should explicitly state that these paths are not interconnected or contingent on one another.

SubPro Outputs

Implementation Guidance 34.8: The Evaluation Guidelines regarding Criterion 2-B Uniqueness should make clear that evaluators should not be making a qualitative assessment of whether a term is the most appropriate or descriptive term for a given community compared to other possible terms. **Instead, they should be examining whether this is a term that the public in general associates with this community as opposed to another meaning.**

Implementation Guidance 34.9: CPE Evaluation Guidelines regarding scoring for Criterion 4-A Support should **make clear that it is not assumed for the purposes of scoring that only a single organization will serve as the representative for an entire community and that other considerations may be taken into account in scoring** for this criterion if multiple organizations represent a community.

Implementation Guidance 34.10: The following text included in the 2012 Applicant Guidebook Section 4.2.3 Community Priority Evaluation Criteria should **also be incorporated into the CPE Evaluation Guidelines:** “The sequence of the criteria reflects the order in which they will be assessed by the panel. The utmost care has been taken to avoid any “double-counting” - any negative aspect found in assessing an application for one criterion should only be counted there and should not affect the assessment for other criteria.”

Implementation Guidance 34.11: The Working Group urges the Implementation Review Team to consider 1. **Changing the passing score for achieving community priority status from a numerical score to a percentage of the total number of possible points and 2. Lowering the threshold for achieving community-based status from the 87.5% of the total available evaluation points (14 out of 16 points) as was the case in the 2012 round to 75-80%** of the total available points.

SubPro Outputs

Recommendation 34.12: The process to develop evaluation and selection criteria that will be used to choose a Community Priority Evaluation Provider (CPE Provider) must include mechanisms to ensure appropriate feedback from the ICANN community. In addition, any terms included in the contract between ICANN org and the CPE Provider regarding the CPE process must be subject to public comment.

Recommendation 34.13: The Community Priority Evaluation (CPE) process must be efficient, transparent and predictable.

Implementation Guidance 34.14: To support predictability, the CPE guidelines, or as amended, should be considered a part of the policy adopted by the Working Group.

Implementation Guidance 34.15: ICANN org should examine ways to make the CPE process more efficient in terms of costs and timing.

Recommendation 34.16: All Community Priority Evaluation procedures (including any supplemental dispute provider rules) must be developed and published before the opening of the application submission period and must be readily and publicly available.

SubPro Outputs

Recommendation 34.17: Evaluators must continue to be able to send Clarifying Questions to CPE applicants but further, must be able to engage in written dialogue with them as well.

Recommendation 34.18: Evaluators must be able to issue Clarifying Questions, or utilize similar methods to address potential issues, to those who submit letters of opposition to community-based applications.

Recommendation 34.19: Letters of opposition to a community-based application, if any, must be considered in balance with documented support for the application.

Implementation Guidance 34.20: The 2012 Applicant Guidebook includes the following text regarding scoring for CPE Criterion 4-B Opposition: “Opposition: 2= No opposition of relevance; 1= Relevant opposition from one group of nonnegligible size; 0= Relevant opposition from two or more groups of non-negligible size.” In listing considerations for determining whether an organization is of “non-negligible size,” the Evaluation Guidelines should include text indicating that the determination of what is non-negligible must be relative to the size of the community that that applicant is proponent to serve.

SubPro Outputs

Recommendation 34.21: If the Community Priority Evaluation Panel conducts independent research while evaluating an application, **limitations on this research and additional requirements must apply.** The Working Group recommends including the following text in the Applicant Guidebook: “The Community Priority Evaluation Panel may perform independent research deemed necessary to evaluate the application (the “Limited Research”), provided, however, that the evaluator shall disclose the results of such Limited Research to the applicant and the applicant shall have an opportunity to respond. **The applicant shall be provided 30 days to respond before the evaluation decision is rendered. When conducting any such Limited Research, panelists are cautioned not to assume an advocacy role either for or against the applicant or application.**”

Implementation Guideline 34.22: To support transparency, **if the Community Priority Evaluation Panel relied on research for the decision it should be cited and a link to the information provided.**