

Dear [Name],

I'm writing you on behalf of a special working group that was created inside of the Internet Corporation for Assigned Names and Numbers (ICANN) which has been tasked to develop a proposal for a new funding mechanism for funds that were received as the result of an auction during a domain name extension program. ICANN is headquartered in Los Angeles but its operations are global.

These auctions took place in the context of the new generic top-level domain (new gTLD) program. These funds currently stand at over 233 million USD. The auction proceeds are considered a single revenue source – although a limited number of auctions may still take place, once all the remaining contentions are resolved (which may include auctions) no further auctions are expected to take place following that.

The working group would like to request your assistance in helping inform its deliberations by tapping into your knowledge and expertise in this area. To this end, the working group has developed a number of questions (see annex A) which it would like you to provide your input on.

We are not seeking proprietary information from you or the firm or entity you represent, only your guidance from experience. This is also not an interview or opportunity to present a service proposal on how you or your affiliated entity can serve ICANN in the future. This is a request for you to volunteer some time to take part in this conversation.

While ICANN is a unique organization, we hope that as you provide us some general inputs, you will not have to focus a lot on the specifics of ICANN.

As you review the questions and consider your responses, it is important to take into account that:

- The eventual recommendations should not endanger ICANN's 501(c)(3) tax exempt, public charity status. ICANN must act exclusively in service to its charitable purpose, and as limited by its Mission (see <https://www.icann.org/resources/pages/governance/bylaws-en/#article1>). Maintaining adherence to Mission is important from source (ICANN) to destination (end recipient), no matter what type of tool (foundation, committee, etc.) is used to make decisions on providing a portion of the proceeds to end recipients. If you are interested to read more about the legal and fiduciary requirements associated with this tax exempt status, please see [here](#).
- The working group has come up with 4 different possible mechanisms that could be considered:
 - *A New ICANN Proceeds Allocation Department is created as part of ICANN Org - This department would be part of ICANN Org and take full responsibility for solicitation and evaluation of proposals, and disbursement process.*

- *New ICANN Proceeds Allocation Department Created as part of ICANN Org which would work in collaboration with an existing charitable organization(s)* - Responsibilities for solicitation and evaluation of proposals, and disbursement process would be split between the newly created department and the existing charitable organization(s).
- *A new structure would be created (e.g. ICANN foundation)* - A new structure would be created separate of ICANN Org which would be responsible for solicitation and evaluation of proposals, and disbursement process
- *An established entity/entities (e.g. foundation or fund) are used (ICANN would organize the oversight of processes to ensure mission and fiduciary duties are met)* - An established entity / entities (e.g. foundation or fund) would be responsible for solicitation and evaluation of proposals, and disbursement process.

The working group has identified a set of questions for each of these scenarios (see full list of questions attached), but should there be other options that the working group should consider, you are encouraged to share that feedback.

We do recognize that the preparation of your responses may take some time, but we hope you are willing to assist us in this effort. If at all possible we would like to ask you to provide your feedback by [date] to allow the working group to make progress on its recommendations. Do note that all responses are expected to be publicly posted.

If you are interested in participating, we ask that you consider and provide a declaration of interest based on the questions identified below. Any declared interests will be identified on the record, for purposes of transparency, during your conversation with the community working group.

The questions are:

1. Do you, or an entity that you represent, hope to assist ICANN/serve as a grant-making organization in the future in relation to the auction proceeds?
2. Are you, or an entity that you represent, interested in applying for a portion of the auction proceeds.
3. Are you, or an entity that you represent, an advisor to other potential applicants interested in applying for some of the auction proceeds? If no, do you anticipate that you/the entity you represent, may serve in this advisory capacity in the future?
4. Are you, or an entity that you represent, interested in serving as a consultant to ICANN in designing/implementing the selected structures?
5. Are you, or an entity that you represent, a part of ICANN's community, and if so, will you be representing that position as part of your conversation with the auction proceeds group?

Depending on the answers to your questions, a staff member from the ICANN organization might contact you for additional information.

[For experts to be invited for calls – In order to allow for the working group to ask follow-up and/or clarifying questions, we would also like to invite you to join us for one of our meetings via conference call. We would like to schedule a call either during the week of [TBC] so we would appreciate if you could advise us on your availability. Due to its global spread, the working group usually convenes at 14.00 UTC, but we are happy to accommodate a time / date that suits you best. These conversations will be recorded and the recordings made publicly available.].

On behalf of the working group, we would like to thank you in advance for considering our request. Please do not hesitate to reach out to us should you have any further questions.

Best regards,

Erika Mann & Ching Chiao
Co-Chairs of the new gTLD Auction Proceeds Cross Community Working Group

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About the Internet Corporation for Assigned Names and Numbers:

To reach another person on the Internet you have to type an address into your computer -- a name or a number. That address must be unique so computers know where to find each other. ICANN coordinates these unique identifiers across the world. Without that coordination, we wouldn't have one global Internet. In more technical terms, the Internet Corporation for Assigned Names and Numbers (ICANN) helps coordinate the Internet Assigned Numbers Authority (IANA) functions, which are key technical services critical to the continued operations of the Internet's underlying address book, the Domain Name System (DNS). The IANA functions include: (1) the coordination of the assignment of technical protocol parameters including the management of the address and routing parameter area (ARPA) top-level domain; (2) the administration of certain responsibilities associated with Internet DNS root zone management such as generic (gTLD) and country code (ccTLD) Top-Level Domains; (3) the allocation of Internet numbering resources; and (4) other services.

About the new gTLD Auction Proceeds Cross-Community Working

The New Generic Top-Level Domain (gTLD) Program established auctions as a last resort to resolve the competition sets between identical or similar terms (strings) for new gTLDs – known as string contention. 90% of contention sets scheduled for auction have been resolved through other means before reaching an auction conducted by Power Auctions LLC, ICANN's authorized auction service provider. However, it was recognized from the outset that significant funds could accrue as a result of several successful auctions. The proceeds derived from such auctions have been reserved and earmarked within ICANN until such time as the ICANN Board authorizes a plan for the appropriate use of the funds. These proceeds are to be considered as an exceptional, one-time source of revenue.

All the ICANN Supporting Organizations (SOs) and Advisory Committees (ACs) have chartered a CCWG to propose the mechanism to allocate the new gTLD Auction Proceeds. Following approval by the Chartering Organizations, the CCWG will submit its proposal(s) to the ICANN Board for consideration.

Annex A – [Insert questions specifically earmarked for expert]

Annex B – [Insert full set of questions]