Dear [Name],

This letter has been sent to you by the co-chairs of the ICANN Cross-Community Working Group on new gTLD Auction Proceeds (CCWG AP). Via this letter, the CCWG AP requests your assistance in helping inform its deliberations by tapping into your knowledge and expertise in the area of soliciting applications for funding of projects, how communications and evaluations of proposals are conducted, and how measurement mechanisms are established. We understand that ICANN is a unique organization and may not be familiar to your organization, or to you. To facilitate your engagement with the CCWG AP, the background in Annex A may be informative.

The CCWG AP has proposed a number of questions (see Annex C and D) which it invites your input to. This is not a request for proprietary information from you or the firm or entity you represent, only your participation as an informal expert to offer suggestions 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 informational conversation to help advance the CCWG-AP's considerations of options, by learning from others' experiences.

We do recognize that the preparation of your responses may take some time. Nonetheless, 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 on the CCWG AP's wiki space: https://community.icann.org/x/yJXDAw. Depending on the answers to your questions, a staff member from the ICANN organization might contact you for additional information.

Due to ICANN's unique status, we are particularly sensitive to both potential conflicts of interest and perceived conflicts of interest, thus, if you are interested in participating, we ask that you consider and provide a declaration of interest based on the questions identified in Annex B. Any declared interests will be identified on the record, for purposes of transparency, during your conversation with the community working group.

[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

ANNEX A

What is ICANN?

ICANN is a not-for-profit public-benefit corporation with participants from all over the world dedicated to keeping the Internet secure, stable and interoperable. It promotes competition and develops policy on the Internet's unique identifiers. Through its coordination role of the Internet's naming system, it does have an important impact on the expansion and evolution of the Internet. ICANN is headquartered in Los Angeles but its operations are global.

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.
Read more: www.icann.org

What is the ICANN Cross-Community Working Group on new gTLD Auction Proceeds?

The CCWG AP was tasked to propose the mechanism that should be developed in order to allocate the new gTLD Auction Proceeds. A new generic Top-Level Domain Program within ICANN was developed to increase competition and choice in the domain name space. Hundreds of new strings have been delegated and continue to be added to the domain name system. ICANN's New Generic Top-Level Domain (gTLD) Program established auctions as a mechanism of last resort to resolve the competition sets between identical or similar terms (strings) for new gTLDs – known as string contention. Most string contentions (approximately 90% of sets scheduled for auction) have been resolved through other means before reaching an auction conducted using ICANN's authorized auction service provider, Power Auctions LLC. However, it was recognized from the outset that significant funds could accrue as a result of several successful auctions conducted by ICANN. Following the ICANN Board's commitment to do so, the auction 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. The total net proceeds to date are $233.5 million USD. Details of the proceeds can be found here:
https://newgtlds.icann.org/en/applicants/auctions/proceeds. The total amount of funding resulting from auctions, will not be known until all relevant applications have resolved contention.

About the CCWG AP's recommendations

As you review the questions and consider your responses, it is important to note that the CCWG AP's recommendations must take into account the following:

- 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:

    o *A New ICANN Proceeds Allocation Department is created as part of ICANN, the organisation (ICANN Org)* - This department would be part of ICANN Org and take full responsibility for solicitation and evaluation of proposals, and disbursement process.
    o *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).
    o *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
    o *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.

ANNEX B

Conflict of Interest Declaration

If you are interested in participating in the Cross Community Working Group on new gTLD Auction Proceeds (CCWG AP), 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 CWWG.

You are kindly invited to answer the following questions, and to send your response to **gnso-secs@icann.org**.

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?

ANNEX C

[Insert questions specifically earmarked for expert]

Annex D

- [Insert full set of questions]