

Request for Expression of Interest for ICANN Support Applicant Review Panel (SARP) Members

February 3, 2012

*** Deadline for responses is March 31, 2012**

1. Introduction

1.1. The Internet Corporation for Assigned Names and Numbers (ICANN) is an internationally recognized, non-profit public benefit corporation responsible for the technical management and coordination of the Internet's Domain Name System (DNS). ICANN is dedicated to preserving the operational stability of the Internet; to promoting competition; to achieving broad representation of global Internet communities; and to developing policy appropriate to its mission through bottom-up, consensus-based processes.

In June 2011, ICANN approved a program to introduce new generic Top-Level Domains (gTLDs) into the DNS. Currently there are 22 "generic" TLDs such as .COM and .ORG, but soon there might be hundreds. The program's goals include enhancing competition and consumer choice, and enabling the benefits of innovation via the introduction of new gTLDs, including both new ASCII and internationalized domain name (IDN) top-level domains.

The Applicant Support Program (<http://newgtlds.icann.org/en/applicants/candidate-support>), conceptualized by ICANN volunteers through the Joint Applicant Support Working Group, seeks to serve the global public interest by ensuring worldwide accessibility to, and competition within, the new gTLD Program. This program offers selected candidates the opportunity to pay a reduced evaluation fee of USD 47,000 instead of the full evaluation fee of USD 185,000.

Applicant Support Program applications will be evaluated against established criteria by an independent panel of volunteer expert evaluators: the Support Application Review Panel (SARP).

2. Objectives

2.1. This solicitation seeks statements of interest from candidates to volunteer as panelists on the SARP. Selected SARP Members will evaluate and score applications to the Applicant Support Program. These positions are voluntary and SARP Members will not be compensated for their service, however, travel and other expenses will be reimbursed.

3. Exercise Scope

3.1 The role of the SARP is to evaluate Support Program applications against the established public interest, financial capabilities and financial need criteria – but not to weigh relative merits of overall gTLD applications. The SARP will evaluate all Support Program applications and come to agreement on how each application scores relative to the criteria. The scoring of the three main criteria will be based on information provided in the Applicant Support application. The SARP may also rely on the new gTLD Application, public comments, and independent research to reach informed scoring decisions. Only SARP members would vote on the scoring of applicants. The SARP will conduct its work in teams; each with a diversity of expertise.

3.2 ICANN is seeking volunteers from both the ICANN community and outside experts who are knowledgeable about the new gTLD process, potential gaming patterns and the general needs and

capabilities of likely Support Program applicants. Selections will be made to ensure geographic diversity among the panel members. Evaluators should be balanced in their knowledge, experience and geographic representation and collectively capable of reviewing and scoring applications against all criteria, and of selecting the candidates who most merit financial support. Candidates with qualifications across multiple designated categories below and areas of expertise are especially encouraged to apply.

The SARP (as a whole) will need to have expertise in these areas:

- Running a small business
- Operating in developing economies
- Serving in the public interest
- Financial experience or expertise to analyze business plans, particularly coming from developing economies
- Knowledge of domain names (or the domain name industry)
- Experience managing a domain name registry service
- Awarding grants

The SARP should be comprised of panelists from each of the following groups:

- ICANN's
 - Generic Names Supporting Organization (GNSO) community
 - At-Large volunteers
 - Other Supporting Organizations (SO's) and Advisory Committees (AC's)
- Independent experts

The actual number of SARP members will be based on the expected number of applications for financial support. SARP members will include both voting members and non-voting independent experts, to be chosen among SARP candidates and independently by ICANN. There will be a chairperson for the SARP who will be selected from among the SARP Members.

3.3. The timeline for the SARP to form and operate is expected to run from March-November 2012:

- **31 March 2012:** SARP applications due;
- **Early April 2012:** Applications are reviewed and SARP notified of selection;
- **Late April 2012** - SARP training period starts;
- **May-October 2012:** SARP review of support applications;
- **November 2012:** SARP informs ICANN of its decisions.

Once the SARP is identified, members will be required to participate in an online training module during the month of April, which will provide guidance on the gTLD program overall and on the Support Program criteria and scoring system. The SARP will also receive a briefing from appropriate ICANN community members to help identify possible gaming scenarios. Members who do not complete this training would not be able to serve.

Time commitment: SARP Members must be able to commit a certain amount of time to review the Support Program applications both independently and during SARP virtual meetings and conference calls. The total amount of time will depend on the number of applications received. However, it is estimated that it will range from 2-3 hours per week for initial evaluation training in April, and 3-5 hours per week to review applications over the next six months, plus time for a bi-weekly virtual meeting. SARP Members might be required to attend a final day-long review meeting, which may be in-person or virtual, to agree on final award candidates.

3.4 Independence and Conflicts of Interest

Independence of the SARP is important, and ICANN will work to ensure integrity of the process. SARP Members will conduct themselves as impartial professionals throughout the application process. Conflicts of interest, either self-declared or perceived, will be governed by standard rules of procedure that would require recusal or withdrawal from the SARP. For a fuller description of ICANN's policies towards possible conflicts of interests with panelists, please note section 2.4.3 of the Applicant Guidebook (<http://newgtlds.icann.org/en/applicants/agb>).

4. Submission of Expression of Interest

4.1. Interested candidates should submit a resume/CV and a written expression of interest that provides answers to the following questions:

1. What is your current (or most recent) vocation, employer, and volunteer position? Please describe the nature of your responsibilities. Add other recent experience if it would be helpful in this accomplishing the goals of this program.
2. To ensure the panel as a whole has the requisite geographical diversity, describe work / experience in locations other than your present location.
3. Are you able to dedicate the amount of volunteer time needed?
4. Will you undertake necessary training to review applications from gTLD applicants seeking support?
5. If necessary, would you be able to travel for up to 5 working days if required?
6. What best describes your relationship to ICANN: a participant of the GNSO community, an SO and/or AC, an at-large member of the ICANN community, or an outside expert? Please explain.
7. Would you be willing to be a consulting expert without voting rights if you are unable to commit the full time needed for participation?
8. What experience or expertise, if any, do you have in the following subjects? Particularly describe work in developing economies:
 - running a small business;
 - operating in developing economies;
 - serving in the public interest;
 - financial or business planning;
 - providing a domain name registry service; and/or
 - awarding grants? Please explain.
9. Please describe any specific subject matter expertise relevant to the gTLD program and/or the Applicant Support Program requirement of evaluating financial need and benefit to the public interest.
10. Will you agree to sign a Non Disclosure Agreement and Conflict of Interest Declaration?
11. Certain types of experience would be helpful to the SARP in performance of its duties. Have you had any financial ownership, senior management/leadership/operational position in a registry, served as a registrar or hold a position with any entity with which ICANN has a transaction, contract or other arrangement? If so, please explain.
12. Conflicts: ICANN intends to help those with potential conflicts to clarify the nature of any potential conflict and, if possible, mitigate it so that the panel member can perform her/his task freely and

effectively. Please describe any arrangement or agreement between you and any other group, constituency or person(s) that would be affected by your possible nomination or selection as a SARP Member. Examples might be relationships with potential gTLD applicants, advisors to those applicants and ICANN policy development volunteers.

4.2. **Deadline:** Responses should be submitted by email to sarp-eoi@icann.org, by 31 March 2012 23:59 UTC. A confirmation email will be sent for each Expression of Interest received.

Useful References:

- Applicant Support Program: <http://newgtlds.icann.org/en/applicants/candidate-support>
- New gTLD Financial Assistance Handbook: newgtlds.icann.org/en/applicants/candidate-support/financial-assistance-handbook-11jan12-en.pdf
- Basic informational materials about the New gTLD program: <http://newgtlds.icann.org/en/about/program/materials>
- New gTLD Applicant Guidebook: newgtlds.icann.org/en/applicants/agb/guidebook-full-11jan12-en.pdf
- About ICANN: <http://www.icann.org/en/about/>