

# Call for Community Experts to Define Requirements for Internationalized Registration Data and Corresponding Data Model

## 1. Overview

As part of the process to implement the internationalized registration data recommendations of the ICANN WHOIS review team as [adopted](#) by the ICANN Board, ICANN seeks volunteers who are community representatives with expertise in linguistics, IDNA, policy and registry/registrar operations to participate in a working group to determine appropriate Internationalized Domain Name registration data requirements for WHOIS and the corresponding data model for gTLD registries.

Interested experts are invited to submit their résumé and an expression of interest statement demonstrating how they meet the qualifications for one or several of the expertise areas. This call for volunteers document describes the type of expertise needed, as well as the process for selecting members.

Applications should be sent to [whois-rt-12@icann.org](mailto:whois-rt-12@icann.org) no later than 16 August 2013.

## 2. Background

Domain Name Registration Data (aka WHOIS data) – refers to the information that individuals or organizations (“registrants”) submit when they register a domain name. Domain name registrars or registry operators collect these data, and some of the data is made available for public display or for use by applications. The data elements that registrants must submit to ICANN Accredited Generic Top Level Domain (gTLD) registrars (and accurately maintain), are specified in the ICANN Registrar Accreditation Agreement (RAA). For Country Code Top Level Domains (ccTLDs), the operators of these TLD registries define their own data elements or follow their country’s policy regarding the request and display of registration information.

Much of the currently accessible domain name registration data (DNRD) is encoded free form in US-ASCII. This legacy condition is convenient for WHOIS service users who are sufficiently familiar with languages that can be submitted and displayed in US-ASCII to be able to use ASCII script to submit DNRD and make and receive WHOIS queries using that script. However, these data are less useful to the WHOIS service users who are only familiar with languages that require character set support other than US-ASCII for correct submission or display. It is important to note that the latter (under-served) community is likely to continue to grow and now appears likely to outnumber the former in a matter of years [1].

The WHOIS Policy review team, formed as a result of the Affirmation of Commitments (AoC), assessed “the extent to which the WHOIS policy is effective and its implementation meets the legitimate needs of law enforcement and promotes consumer trust.” In its final report, it highlights the need to define requirements, data models and evaluate solutions for internationalized registration data, with following recommendations:

“ICANN should task a working group within six months of publication of this report, to determine appropriate internationalized domain name registration data requirements and evaluate available solutions; at a minimum, the data requirements should apply to all new gTLDs, and the working group should consider ways to encourage consistency of approach across the gTLD and (on a voluntary basis) ccTLD space; working group should report within a year.

The final data model, including (any) requirements for the translation or transliteration of the registration data, should be incorporated in relevant Registrar & Registry agreements within 6 months of Board adoption of working group’s recommendations, or put explicit placeholders in the new gTLD program agreements, & in existing agreements when they come up for renewal.” [2]

Last November, the ICANN Board adopted an Action Plan [3] in response to the WHOIS Review Team’s Final Report, that instructs Staff to implement these recommendations.

At a high level, ICANN needs to define the following requirements for internationalized registration data.

Submission –

- 1) Whether to allow users to submit internationalized registration data?
- 2) If users are allowed to submit internationalized registration data, what languages or scripts are registrars or registry operators expected to support?
- 3) If users are allowed to submit internationalized registration data, whether to require that users submit corresponding US-ASCII versions of the internationalized contact data?
- 4) If users are required to submit US-ASCII versions of the internationalized registration data, are users expected to submit a translated version, a transliterated version, or a transcribed version, or “either” (providing there is a convention or method to distinguish between the two)?
- 5) If users are required to submit US-ASCII versions of the internationalized registration data and the user is unfamiliar with or unable to submit such a transformation, are registrars or registry operators expected to provide assistance (and if so, how would such assistance be manifested?)

## 2. Working Group Deliverables

The working group is expected to:

- Determine the requirements for internationalized registration data
- Produce a data model for the IRD that matches the requirement

In doing so the working group is expected to build on the previous community efforts on this issue, most notably:

- SSAC-GNSO Final Report on Internationalized Registration Data [PDF, 641KB]
- SAC 054: SSAC Report on Domain Name Registration Data Model [PDF, 575KB]

The WG outcome will go through a public comment process to ensure broad community input is received. The final product will then form the basis for further policy development and/or contractual discussions in this area, as may be appropriate.

## 3. Relationship with GNSO PDP on Translation and Transliteration of Contact Information

At its meeting on 13 June 2013, the GNSO Council initiated a Policy Development Process (PDP) on the translation and transliteration of contact information. The WG is expected to address the following issues:

- Whether it is desirable to translate contact information to a single common language or transliterate contact information to a single common script.
- Who should decide who should bear the burden translating contact information to a single common language or transliterating contact information to a single common script.

The expert working group will not address these issues raised in the GNSO PDP, and will create placeholders in the final product pending the completion of the PDP.

## 4. Relationship with ICANN Expert Working Group on Next Generation Registration Data Directory Services

The Expert Working Group on gTLD Directory Services (EWG) was formed by ICANN's CEO at the request of ICANN's Board, to help resolve the nearly decade-long deadlock within the ICANN community on how to replace the current WHOIS system. Recently, the EWG published its [initial report](#) and recommended a framework for Aggregated Registration Data Directory Service (ARDS). The ARDS serves as an aggregated repository that contains a non-authoritative copy of all of the collected data elements, and provides access to cached registration data that is copied from gTLD registries and maintained through frequent periodic updates.

The EWG's initial report confirms that its proposed model needs to accommodate the display of registration data in multiple languages, scripts & character sets. It also notes that additional analysis is needed by IDN experts to define these requirements. This working group's work on the data model for internationalized registration data would also complement and provide more details to the ADRS, if it is implemented.

## 5. Working Group Composition

Successful completion of the project depends on having team members with the right skills. Therefore ICANN, through its Supporting Organizations and Advisory Committees, and through its contacts with the international Internet community, is soliciting the participation of community volunteers.

The working group is comprised of the following: linguistic experts, IDNA experts, policy experts, and registry/registrar operations experts as follows:

**Table 1: Summary of Experts needed in the IDN Variant Panel for each Case Study**

<b>Area of Expertise</b>	<b>Estimated Number of Experts</b>	<b>Summary Description</b>
Linguistics / Unicode	4-6	Linguistic experts in the specific languages/script, ideally with some knowledge in Unicode. We are seeking experts knowledgeable of at least the following scripts: Arabic, Han, Devanagari, Latin, Cyrillic and Greek
Registry/Registrar Operations	2-3	gTLD and ccTLD experts familiar with registry/registrar operations and standards with WHOIS and EPP
Policy	1-2	Experts knowledgeable of ICANN's current WHOIS policy and contractual

		obligations
IDNA	1	Experts knowledgeable in protocol-level technical details of IDNA

## 6. Selection and Recruitment Process for Working Group Members

- Interested experts are invited to submit a résumé and an expression of interest statement demonstrating how they meet the qualifications for one or other of the expertise areas in a specific case study.
- Applications should be sent to [whois-rt-12@icann.org](mailto:whois-rt-12@icann.org) no later than 16 August 2013.

## 7. References

1. Internet Corporation for Assigned Names and Numbers . “*Final Report of Internationalized Registration Data Working Group*”, 2012. Available at <http://gnso.icann.org/en/issues/ird/final-report-ird-wg-07may12-en.pdf>
2. Internet Corporation for Assigned Names and Numbers. “*WHOIS Policy Review Team Final Report*”, 2012. Available at <http://www.icann.org/en/about/aoc-review/whois/final-report-11may12-en.pdf>
3. Internet Corporation for Assigned Names and Numbers. “Action Plan to Address WHOIS Policy Review Team Report Recommendations.” 2012. Available at: <http://www.icann.org/en/groups/board/documents/briefing-materials-1-08nov12-en.pdf>