

Call for Generation Panels to develop Root Zone Label Generation Rules

ICANN is issuing a call for volunteer-based Generation Panels to be established under the “[Procedure to Develop and Maintain the Label Generation Rules for the Root Zone in Respect of IDNA Labels](#)” (Procedure). Generation Panels are community panels that will establish the rules that define, for a given script, which code points are acceptable for the root, which labels are variants of each other—and where variants exist—whether such variant labels may be delegated.

The Procedure defines a two-pass process for the creation of the IDN label generation rules for the Root Zone. The Generation Panels are community-based panels that have the task of proposing the Label Generation Rules (LGR) for the particular script used in each community. While their members require expertise in areas such as linguistics, IDNA, or DNS, the key feature of the Generation Panels is their make-up of volunteers from the community. Under the Procedure, the output of the Generation Panels is collected, reviewed, and integrated by the so-called “Integration Panel,” a small panel composed of general experts.

The purpose of the Root Zone LGR is to support the delegation of IDN TLDs in a stable and secure manner. It is therefore vital that any script represented by requested IDN TLDs be covered by the LGR. In order for that to happen, a Generation Panel for that script must first be formed to establish and propose the label generation rules for the given script to the Integration Panel.

ICANN is in the process of setting up the LGR Procedure and is issuing this call for volunteers to form or join Generation Panels. The full description of the work and responsibilities of a Generation Panel and its members are to be found in the procedure, and prospective volunteers are expected to be familiar with that document. The following highlights some important aspects of that information.

1 Generation Panel Roles

The following excerpts from the Procedure give some basic background on role, tasks, and composition of a Generation Panel.

“Each generation panel works on a subset of Unicode relevant to one writing system or a set of related writing systems. This work is broadly aligned along the script property of the Unicode code points in question, though it need not be restricted to a single script.”

1.1 Establishment

“In response to ... expressions of interest, or for any other reason ..., ICANN staff may establish a new generation panel. ICANN staff, in consultation with the users of the writing system or a set of related writing systems, and advised by the integration panel and other expert advisors, defines the initial scope of the generation panel and makes a public call for participation in the work of the panel. ICANN appoints a chair and may also appoint further members to the panel. With advice from the integration panel, ICANN staff will review whether the proposed generation panel, its composition and its scope meet the other requirements set forth here.”

Generation Panels may also be reconvened at some future time if required by the need to maintain or update the LGR.

1.2 Scope

“The scope of a generation panel is broadly aligned along the Unicode script property of the code points in question, though it need not always be restricted to a single script (see Section B.5.3.1). When generation panels are established, they are chartered to cover some section of the Unicode character repertoire, corresponding to the usual way of writing some language or group of languages.”

ICANN has received IDN TLD applications for a number of scripts, as part of the IDN ccTLD Fast Track Process and New gTLD Program. It is therefore expected to cover the following scripts in the first round of Generation Panel formation:

Arabic	Bengali
Hebrew	Devanagari
Chinese	Gujarati
Japanese	Gurmukhi
Korean	Sinhala
Cyrillic	Tamil
Greek	Telugu
Latin	Thai
Georgian	

This does not preclude the formation of additional panels for other scripts, if they meet the criteria set out in the Procedure and if sufficient volunteers are available.

For some scripts, Generation Panel establishment and work are essential because of the strong relation with other scripts, such as Cyrillic, Greek and Latin scripts. This relation makes it strongly advisable to consider each one of the scripts in the context of the two other scripts. Likewise, it would be highly desirable to consider Devanagari in the context of other structurally or historically related scripts of South Asia, as far as feasible.

2 Generation Panel Composition

2.1 Expertise

“All generation panels should have significant expertise in the writing system(s) concerned, but need have neither overall expertise in all of Unicode, nor expertise in any other writing system. Panels may be made mostly of volunteers interested in that portion of the potential repertoire. Panels should also have expertise in ICANN policy and process, or should engage advisors with such expertise.”

2.2 Diversity

“Generation panels need to have some diversity of participation in order to be useful. They must have sufficient numbers of participants [and] should be diverse in economic interest.... [however]

the work of these panels is concerned with technical issues and involves linguistic expertise, and is not “representative” in nature.

If it is impossible to get sufficient numbers of participants with sufficient diversity and expertise, that is evidence that the code points in question and the rules associated with them are too specialized to be included in the root zone. In that case, the generation panel must not be established.

The diversity of expertise required depends to some degree on the nature of the repertoire to be considered by the panel. For certain simple scripts, those lacking a large repertoire or other complicating factors, a minimum panel size of three might be sufficient. For repertoires encompassing many languages or presenting technical or linguistic challenges, additional panel members or advisers would be needed.”

Table 1: Suggested Generation Panel Composition

Position	Estimated Number of Volunteers	Summary Description
Generation Panel Chair	1	Contact person, coordinator, and official representative of the Generation Panel to ICANN and to the Integration Panel
Community Representatives	2 or more	Members with understanding of local culture, customs, and practices
Linguistic Expert	1-2, more in case of scripts used very diversely	Members with linguistic expertise in the specific languages/script, ideally with some knowledge in Unicode
Registry/ Registrar	1-2	Experts familiar with registry/registrar operations and standards in the given script
Policy Expert	1	Experts knowledgeable of ICANN’s bottom-up process and local registration policies
DNS/IDNA/ Unicode Expert	-	For smaller panels this may be represented by secondary expertise of other members or by an external advisor

External advisors may be called in to cover any expertise area not covered by the members of the panel. ICANN plans to have a number of advisors, both volunteer and paid, that Generation Panels may call upon as the need arises. These include experts in DNS, IDNA, linguistics, Unicode as well as in areas of administrative and policy expertise. Members of ICANN staff may also be able to act as advisors.

2.2.1 All Generation Panel Members and Chairs

Common Responsibilities:

- Research and provide input on issues in developing the panels' submissions.
- Participate in drafting work and other tasks.
- Vote on issues and submissions.
- Participate in regular (e.g., weekly) phone calls as determined by the panel Chair.
- Attend face-to-face meetings if necessary, as determined by the panel Chair.

Common Eligibility Requirements:

- Must not concurrently be a member of another Generation Panel or the Integration Panel.
- Experts desiring to work with multiple panels should consider becoming advisors.

2.2.2 Generation Panel Chair

Responsibilities:

- Lead and coordinate the Generation Panel to create and submit a proposed LGR according to its approved scope and the prescriptions of the Procedure.
- Create a work plan for review by the Integration Panel.
- Select additional members of the Generation Panel.
- Act as contact to ICANN and to the Integration Panel.
- Issue regular progress reports to ICANN and for publication.
- Organize workflow and set up calls and meetings.

Qualifications:

- Highly regarded and well known expert who can represent the script community in the Generation Panel, as demonstrated, for example, by a community endorsement.
- Have led or participated in similar activities, preferably IDN activities or IDN working groups.
- Have basic knowledge of technical and policy aspects of DNS and IDNs, including IDNA.

2.2.3 Community Representatives

Responsibilities:

- Articulate a set of community expectations/requirements for the LGR.

Qualifications:

- Experts with understanding of the languages/scripts, local culture, customs, and practices.
- Basic understanding of the technical issues.
- Highly regarded in the community, and preferably have participated in other initiatives on IDNs.

2.2.4 Linguistic Experts

Responsibilities:

- Help the Generation Panel develop a conservative, yet sufficient code point repertoire.
- Help determine the need, specification, and disposition for any code point variants.
- Ensure that any relevant linguistic aspects are taken into consideration.

Qualifications:

- Experts in the particular languages/scripts.
- Basic knowledge of IDNs and familiarity with Unicode.

2.2.5 Registry/Registrar Operations Experts

Responsibilities:

- Ensure that registry and registrar perspectives are taken into consideration.

Qualifications:

- Experts in operations (i.e., EPP, DNS, Whois) of registry/registrar.
- Operational experience in IDN management at registry/registrar level.

2.2.6 Policy Experts

Responsibilities:

- Address policy issues pertaining to the delegation of IDN variant TLDs, including issues pertaining to ICANN policy development process.

Qualifications:

- Active participants in ICANN policy development process.
- Have participated in at least one ICANN working group, preferably on IDN-related issues.

3 Schedule and anticipated time commitments

It is anticipated that the first Generation Panels will be formed at various times during the third calendar quarter of 2013. A tentative target date for a first Root Zone LGR is June 2014, but it is anticipated that some Generation Panels may take longer to prepare an initial submission. Their work would be reflected in a subsequent revision of the LGR.

The work of the Generation Panels may require some face-to-face meetings, funding for which must be secured by the members. In addition, regular, typically weekly telephone calls can be anticipated, with drafting work happening in between the meetings.

Appointments for Generation Panel Chairs are for a one-year period, with possible reappointment.

4 Selections and Recruitment Process

4.1 Statement of Interest

Interested experts are invited to submit a CV and an expression of interest statement demonstrating how they meet the qualifications for one or other of the positions in a Generation Panel.

Statements should indicate the script of the desired Generation Panel and should be sent to the following email address: idnvarianttlds@icann.org.

Statements can be submitted any time, but ICANN is interested in establishing Generation Panels for the scripts listed in Section 1.2 as early as possible.

4.2 Generation Panel Chairs

Generation Panels must represent the user community for a given script, while simultaneously being effective in generating technical proposals for the LGR for their script. As part of the recruitment process, ICANN will work with the relevant community or Generation Panel members, where they have been seated, to select and appoint qualified candidates for the position of Generation Panel chair.

4.3 Generation Panel Members

For all other volunteer members their statement of interest will be forwarded to the appropriate Generation Panel Chairs who will select volunteer members subject to the requirements for expertise and the diversity constraints defined in the Procedure. For example, diversity requirements include both diversity in economic interests and across the language or regional communities that share the script in question.

4.4 Community Submissions

Communities, with existing working groups for the purpose of determining the repertoire and variant rules for IDNs for the relevant script, are invited to contact ICANN to express their interest in establishing a Generation Panel, based in full or in part, on such existing groups. Note that the qualifications for prospective panel members, in particular those related to conflicts of interest or simultaneous membership, still apply.

4.5 Notifications

Volunteers will be notified when their interest statements have been received and be given information about further steps at that time.