

PRSP Pre-ICANN77 Briefing

Includes Status Update for the Next Round of New gTLDs

Policy Research and Stakeholder Programs (PRSP)

Global Domains and Strategy (GDS)
26 May 2023



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1 Introduction

The Policy Research and Stakeholder Programs (PRSP) is part of ICANN's Global Domains and Strategy (GDS) function. Its scope includes enabling informed participation in the ICANN multistakeholder model and helping to foster secure, stable, and universal operation of Internationalized Domain Names (IDNs) and email addresses for Internet users around the world. PRSP also supports the implementation of consensus policy recommendations for generic top-level domains (gTLDs). Our remit includes the implementation of the next round of the New gTLD Program, including drafting the Applicant Guidebook with the assistance of the Implementation Review Team (IRT), and including ICANN org's operational readiness for the Next Round.

This PRSP briefing provides status updates and progress reporting on the various community-facing projects that the PRSP team supports, all in preparation for discussions during the upcoming ICANN77 meeting. The pre-ICANN meeting briefings are a valuable resource for the community and help to increase visibility and accountability for the multiple projects the PRSP team supports and leads.

In its [resolution](#) on 16 March 2023, the Board directed ICANN org to "publish a report on the progress and status of implementation until the opening of the next application round of the New gTLD Program, at least two weeks prior to the start of each ICANN Public Meeting, starting with the ICANN77 Public Meeting." This update is included here and will be delivered as part of this PRSP Briefing prior to every ICANN meeting. Links to previous PRSP Pre-ICANN meeting briefings can be found [here](#).

Feedback on this document is encouraged so that the PRSP team can improve briefings for future meetings. Do not hesitate to reach out to any of the PRSP team members either in person in Washington, D.C., or via email at prsp-team@icann.org. We look forward to engaging with the community and hope to see you at ICANN77.

Karen Lentz
VP, Policy Research and Stakeholder Programs

Note on GNSO Policy Briefing: This briefing was inspired by a similar briefing published regularly by the GNSO before every ICANN Meeting. The GNSO Policy Support Team has developed this publicly available GNSO Policy Briefing to help community members prepare for ICANN77. It provides an overview of the status of the GNSO PDP working groups and teams, as well as information about other GNSO policy-related activities, including PDP Implementation Review Teams (IRTs). The document includes links for additional background reading to help readers prepare for ICANN77. You can read the GNSO Policy Briefing: ICANN77 Edition [here](#).

2 New gTLD Program Next Round Implementation Update

On 16 March 2023, the ICANN Board adopted the majority of the Final Report outputs and directed ICANN org to take the necessary next steps to open the next round of new gTLDs. (Board Resolutions [2023.03.16.04 – 2023.03.16.15](#))

The resolutions noted four interdependent implementation work streams: Work Stream 1 (WS1) Policy Implementation, Work Stream 2 (WS2) Program Design, Work Stream 3 (WS3) Infrastructure Development, and Work Stream 4 (WS4) Operationalization. The work captured within these work streams will require completion before opening the next round of new gTLDs.

Work Streams:

- WS1, Policy Implementation: Implementation Review Team (IRT) and the development of the Applicant Guidebook.
- WS2, Program Design: Development of the internal processes and procedures with respect to the application lifecycle.
- WS3, Infrastructure Development: Development of the Systems and Tools in support of the program.
- WS4, Operationalization: Operationalizing the program in preparation to opening the application window.

The Board requested that ICANN org deliver an implementation plan for these four work streams to the Board no later than 1 August 2023. The Board stated that the implementation plan requires the satisfactory completion of the four following deliverables by the last day of the ICANN77 Public Meeting (15 June 2023):

1. A plan and timeline as agreed upon by the ICANN Board and the GNSO Council for consideration and resolution of all Outputs contained in [Section B of the Scorecard](#).
2. A working methodology and IRT work plan and timeline as agreed upon by ICANN org and the GNSO Council.
3. A GNSO Council project plan and timeline for policy work, or an alternate path, on how to handle closed generics for the next round of new gTLDs.
4. A project plan from the GNSO Internationalized Domain Names (IDNs) Expedited Policy Development Process (EPDP) Working Group (WG) identifying all charter questions that will impact the next Applicant Guidebook, along with considerations to ensure a consistent solution on IDN Variant TLDs with the ccPDP4 on IDN ccTLDs (in accordance with prior Board [Resolution 2019.03.14.09](#)), and a timeline by when the IDNs EPDP WG will deliver relevant recommendations to the GNSO Council.

Additionally, the Board directed org to deliver “relevant information regarding the work necessary to complete the Program Design, Infrastructure Development, and Operationalization streams” of work at ICANN77. This deliverable will be shared with the Board and the community in the form of an Implementation Planning for the next Round of new gTLDs: Program Design, Infrastructure Development, and Operationalization for Work Streams 2-4.

Lastly, the Board directed org to publish an implementation update two weeks prior to each ICANN Public Meeting. This section is intended to report on the status and progress of the

implementation work to date. ICANN org will continue to publish implementation updates two weeks prior to each ICANN Public Meeting, up to the opening of the next application round of the New gTLD Program.

Summary of ICANN77 Org Deliverables

- Next Round Implementation Status Update (two weeks prior to the meeting)
- WS1: Implementation Review Team (IRT) methodology, work plan and timeline
- Implementation Planning for the next Round of new gTLDs: Program Design, Infrastructure Development, and Operationalization for Work Streams 2-4

Summary of ICANN77 Board and Community Deliverables

- Plan and timeline as agreed upon by the ICANN Board and the GNSO Council for consideration and resolution of all pending recommendations.
- GNSO Council project plan and timeline for closed generics, and IDN EPDP.

After ICANN77, expected deliverables from ICANN org include the Next Round Implementation Plan for Work Streams 1-4, which are due on 1 August 2023, based on the satisfactory completion of the above listed dependencies. ICANN org will also prepare and submit additional requests for funding required by the program beyond 31 October 2023 to the Board Finance Committee (BFC).

ICANN org will publish the next Implementation Status Report two weeks prior to ICANN78.

2.1 Program Level Overview

Since ICANN76, ICANN org has continued to support the Board in the development of a plan and timeline toward the consideration and resolution of the pending recommendations. At the direction of the Board, via its 16 March 2023 resolution, ICANN org has been developing the IRT workplan and timeline, as well as the Implementation Planning for the next Round of new gTLDs: Program Design, Infrastructure Development, and Operationalization for Work Streams 2-4. The Implementation Planning for the next Round of new gTLDs: Program Design, Infrastructure Development, and Operationalization is based on a working model that acts as an evolution of the working models described in the Operational Design Assessment (ODA). ICANN org used these Working Model parameters in the development of the IRT workplan and timeline, as well as the Implementation Planning for the next Round of new gTLDs: Program Design, Infrastructure Development, and Operationalization for Work Streams 2-4. ICANN org's work leading to ICANN77 has progressed over the course of the past few weeks in preparation for the Board direction on next steps. The communications and outreach strategy has been developed and the campaign launches in June 2023.

The next section provides a relevant work stream overview of development of work to date.

2.2 Work Stream 1: Policy Implementation

What is it?

Policy implementation involves the execution of policy recommendations and the development of processes based on the outputs from the [Final Report on the new gTLD Subsequent Procedures Policy Development Process](#) (Final Report) in cooperation with the Implementation Review Team (IRT) and other stakeholders.

What has occurred since ICANN76?

- IRT work methodology and composition has been agreed on with the Council.
- [IRT Statement of Participation](#) has been published.
- [IRT call for volunteers](#) announcement published (5 April 2023), [comprehensive list of IRT members](#) can be found on the community workspace wiki.
- [Initial IRT meeting](#) held on 16 May 2023.
- [IRT mailing list](#) created.
- [The New Generic Top-Level Domains Program: Next Round](#) web page was established.
- [Email](#) sent to Service Organizations, Advisory Committees, Stakeholder Groups, and Constituencies regarding the appointment of representatives and alternates to the SubPro IRT (6 April 2023).
- [IRT community workspace Wiki](#) published.

What is the deliverable for ICANN77?

- IRT Methodology, workplan, and timeline

2.3 Work Stream 2: Program Design

What is it?

Program Design focuses on the development of internal program processes based on Final Report recommendations and policy implementation outcomes. After developing the business requirements from the finalized policy language (i.e., Applicant Guidebook language) created in Work Stream 1, internal business processes are created. This includes high-level internal processes for the application lifecycle, detailed process blueprints that incorporate stakeholder input, and specifications for systems and tool development.

What has occurred since ICANN76?

- Developed methodology to identify and develop processes. Work continues on developing procedures.
- Created inventory and initial assessment of program processes.
- Completed internal mapping document of Final Report topics, program processes, and systems.
- Identified resource needs for Business Process Development.

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- Initiated activity to fill open Business Process staff positions and engage with vendors to provide augmented staff.
 - Supported proof of concept workshops with the E&IT vendor.

2.4 Work Stream 3: Infrastructure Development

What is it?

Infrastructure Development is the development of new systems, tools, and capabilities needed within ICANN org to deliver the required services for the Next Round of the New gTLD Program. This stage focuses on building the technological infrastructure to support the Next Round. A large portion of the processing is expected to be manual and the creation of tools to support this work is also a part of this work stream.

What has occurred since ICANN76?

- Developed methodology to create specifications for systems and tool development. Work continues on developing procedures.
- GDS and E&IT created a mapping document between processes and systems as a baseline for planning.
- E&IT initiated a proof-of-concept engagement with Ignyte (an Appian vendor) to test the platform's capability.
- E&IT and GDS held several workshops and meetings to develop a preliminary application system with results expected in mid to late June 2023.
- A second vendor will be engaged to test another platform, potentially in May 2023.

2.5 Work Stream 4: Operationalization

What is it?

Operationalization involves developing procedures for new processes and services, updating existing services, and hiring and training staff in preparation for moving to the Application Processing and Ongoing Operations Phase of the Next Round. This stage focuses on making the program functional and efficient.

What has occurred since ICANN76?

- Drafted proposed methodology to create operations procedures, obtain and train resources, and test operations prior to launch of the program.
- Most of the work in this work stream, such as creating process procedures, hiring resources, training staff and vendors, and conducting operational program tests, will occur later in the program once processes and systems are developed. As such, information provided may change as actual implementation work progresses.

2.6 Work Stream 2-4: Deliverable for ICANN77

- The Implementation Planning for the next Round of new gTLDs: Program Design, Infrastructure Development, and Operationalization describing the work is expected to build the procedures, obtain, and train the operational resources, and test the operation of the New gTLD Program Next Round. This deliverable will list the assumptions and constraints that factor into completion of this work stream, including any dependencies that may affect completion.

2.7 Other Relevant Information and Links

- [The New Generic Top-Level Domains Program: Next Round web page](#) was established
- [New gTLD Program Next Round News web page](#)
- [SubPro Operational Design Assessment \(ODA\)](#)
 - See also [the Community Webinar on the SubPro ODA](#)
- [Final Report](#) on the new gTLD Subsequent Procedures Policy Development Process
- [IRT community workspace Wiki](#)

3 What to Expect During ICANN77 Regarding SubPro

SubPro-related session details for ICANN77:

New gTLD Program Next Round Update (Prep Week)

Wednesday, 31 May 2023

12:30 - 13:30 EDT (16:30-17:30 UTC)

<https://sched.co/1N5ZM>

GNSO Council SubPro Day Zero Session

Sunday, 11 June 2023

09:00-12:15 EDT (13:00-16:15 UTC) and 13:45-17:00 EDT (17:45-21:00 UTC)

[Agenda Wiki Page](#)

Joint Session: ALAC, GAC, and GNSO Facilitated Dialogue on Closed Generics (1 of 2)*

Monday, 12 June 2023

09:00-10:15 EDT (13:00-14:15 UTC)

<https://sched.co/1NMtm>

At-large Policy Session 1: A User Perspective: The Next gTLD Application Window

Monday, 12 June 2023

13:45-15:00 EDT (17:45-19:00 UTC)

<https://sched.co/1NMv2>

GNSO: IDN EPDP Working Session (1 of 4)*

Monday, 12 June 2023

13:45-15:00 EDT (17:45-19:00 UTC)

<https://sched.co/1NMwg>

GDS: New gTLD Program, Next Round Implementation Status Recap and Q&A

Monday, 12 June 2023

15:30-17:00 EDT (19:30-21:00 UTC)

<https://sched.co/1NMwy>

Joint Session: ALAC, GAC, and GNSO Facilitated Dialogue on Closed Generics (2 of 2)*

Tuesday, 13 June 2023

10:45-12:15 EDT (14:45-16:15 UTC)

<https://sched.co/1NMty>

GNSO Guidance Process for Applicant Support Working Group*

Tuesday, 13 June 2023

15:30-17:00 EDT (19:30-21:00 UTC)

<https://sched.co/1NMtv>

GNSO: IDN EPDP Working Session (2 of 4)*

Tuesday, 13 June 2023

15:30-17:00 EDT (17:30-21:00 UTC)

<https://sched.co/1NMwk>

GDS: Subsequent Procedures IRT

Wednesday, 14 June 2023

09:00-10:15 EDT (13:00-14:15 UTC)

<https://sched.co/1NMu8>

GNSO: IDN EPDP Working Session (3 of 4)*

Wednesday, 14 June 2023

10:45-12:15 EDT (14:45-16:15 UTC)

<https://sched.co/1NMwn>

GNSO Council Meeting

Wednesday, 14 June

13:45-15:45 EDT (17:45-19:45 UTC)

<https://sched.co/1NMuA>

[Agenda Wiki Page](#)

At-Large Policy Session 3: Unfinished Business - The Challenges of Auctions

Wednesday, 14 June 2023

15:30-17:00 EDT (19:30-21:00 UTC)

<https://sched.co/1NMvC>

GNSO: IDN EPDP Working Session (4 of 4)*

Thursday, 15 June 2023

09:00-10:15 EDT (13:00-14:15 UTC)

<https://sched.co/1NMuE>

* - Please note that sessions marked with an asterisk represent processes that are dependencies for the launch of the next round of new gTLDs.

4 EPDP Phase 1 Implementation

Session details for ICANN77:

GDS: Registration Data Policy IRT
10:45-12:15 EDT (14:45-16:15 UTC)
Wednesday, 14 June 2023
<https://sched.co/1NMu5>

What to expect on this project during ICANN77

On 14 June 2023, the Implementation Review Team (IRT) will conduct a session at ICANN77. The session will provide an overview of ongoing work and the implementation plan on the proposed [ICANN Registration Data Policy](#) based on the Expedited Policy Development Process (EPDP) Phase 1 and Phase 2 Priority 2 recommendations. The policy documentation describes the requirements for processing registration data for ICANN-accredited registrars and gTLD registry operators (ROs) that have an agreement with ICANN.

What is the status of this project? What has occurred since ICANN76?

ICANN org has worked with the volunteer IRT to formulate an implementation plan and completed drafting of the gTLD Registration Data Policy. A Public Comment period for the Registration Data Policy Implementation Plan was opened on [24 August 2022](#) and was closed on 5 December 2022. The [Public Comment Report](#) was published on 20 January 2023. On 1 May 2023, ICANN org published [ICANN org Review of Public Comments](#) as an addendum to the Public Comment Report.

The draft gTLD Registration Data Policy encompasses 34 policy recommendations from three ICANN Board Resolutions over three years:

- EPDP Phase 1: [Board Resolution](#) in May 2019 (29 recommendations)
- EPDP Phase 2: [Board Resolution](#) in June 2021 (4 recommendations)
- Supplemental Recommendation 12: [Board Resolution](#) in February 2022 (1 recommendation)

The implementation plan includes:

- Draft policy language for Registration Data Policy
- Revisions to 20 [impacted policies and procedures](#)
- A new policy advisory to replace the [existing advisory](#)
- An updated RDAP Profile

This policy will replace the [Interim Registration Data Policy](#) that has been in effect since 20 May 2019 and requires contracted parties to continue to implement measures consistent with the [Temporary Specification for gTLD Registration Data \(Temp Spec\)](#) as a result of GDPR.

Project timeline - upcoming milestones and completion date

ICANN org is currently in the process of reviewing and considering the input received from the Public Comment proceeding and will work with the IRT to discuss any updates as needed. Once

the policy language and implementation plan has been finalized, ICANN's contracted parties will be notified of implementation and compliance deadlines.

ICANN org has designed an implementation timeline to publish the policy, which is currently undergoing review by the ICANN implementation team and the IRT in light of public comments, in August 2023.

What is the topic/background?

The [Temporary Specification for gTLD Registration Data](#) (TempSpec), which modified existing requirements in the Registrar Accreditation Agreement (RAA) and Registry Agreement (RA) to comply with the European Union's General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR), was adopted by the ICANN Board on 17 May 2018. Following Board adoption, an EPDP was initiated on the Temp Spec to determine if it could become an ICANN consensus policy as is, or with modifications.

In advance of the 15 May 2019 Board [resolution](#) on the [Final Report](#) submitted by the EPDP Team, ICANN org designed the following three stages of the policy implementation:

- Stage 1: Effective 20 May 2019, ICANN org published [Interim Registration Data Policy for gTLDs](#) which requires the contracted parties to continue to implement measures consistent with the Temporary Specification for gTLD Registration Data, as adopted by the Board on 17 May 2018.
- Stage 2: This stage will begin after ICANN org publishes a Registration Data Policy as a Consensus Policy and formally notifies the contracted parties. During this stage, contracted parties may implement the Interim Policy, the Registration Data Policy, or elements of both, as they prepare for the effective date of the Registration Data Policy. The timing of this milestone is to be determined.
- Stage 3: Contracted parties must comply with the Registration Data Policy as of its effective date, which the Expedited Policy Development Process (EPDP) Team on the Temporary Specification for gTLD Registration Data recommended to be 29 February 2020.

The Interim Policy, effective as of 20 May 2019, requires contracted parties to continue to implement measures consistent with the [Temporary Specification for gTLD Registration Data](#), which expired on 25 May 2019.

Further information

For further information, please consult the [Consensus Policy Implementation Framework](#) page on ICANN.org or contact dennis.chang@icann.org or globalsupport@icann.org. You can also read a blog by Theresa Swinehart for more insight, [here](#).

5 RPM Phase 1 Implementation

Session details for ICANN77:

GDS: Rights Protection Mechanisms IRT

Thursday, 15 June 2023

09:00-10:15 EDT (13:00-14:15 UTC)

<https://sched.co/1NMwy>

What to expect on this project during ICANN77

At ICANN77, the Rights Protection Mechanisms (RPM) Implementation Review Team (IRT) will hold a session in hybrid mode. The Implementation Project Team (IPT) will continue working with the IRT toward implementing the recommendations in the first implementation category identified below.

What is the status of this project? What has occurred since ICANN76?

The IRT is assisting ICANN org in the implementation of the policy recommendations from the Phase 1 work of the Policy Development Process (PDP) Working Group on the Review of All RPMs in All gTLDs. Note that this project incorporates a phased approach that allows for straightforward-to-implement recommendations to be implemented first, with recommendations with more significant complexity and timing considerations to be implemented sequentially according to level of effort.

Since ICANN76, the Implementation Team met to review proposed changes to the RPM-related procedural documents as well to discuss how to address several open items concerning the outputs in the first implementation category.

Project timeline - upcoming milestones and completion date

Based on the RPM IRT Phase 1 [Implementation Plan](#), ICANN org estimates that implementing the 15 recommendations in the first group, which have been identified as the most straightforward-to-implement as they involve updating existing procedural documents, will require a minimum of five to six months. Implementing the remaining recommendations is estimated to take a minimum of one year due to their complexity and the need to involve multiple stakeholders. Since the implementation team first convened in the last quarter of 2022, implementation is projected to be completed in the third quarter of 2024.

What is the topic/background?

On 18 February 2016, the GNSO Council [resolved](#) to initiate a two-phased PDP to review all existing RPMs in all gTLDs. The Final Report issued by the PDP Working Group is the culmination of over four years of work from Phase 1, assessing the effectiveness of the relevant RPMs established as safeguards in the 2012 New gTLD Program. These RPMs are: the Trademark Post-Delegation Dispute Resolution Procedure (TM-PDDRP); Sunrise and Trademark Claims services offered through the Trademark Clearinghouse (TMCH); and the URS dispute resolution procedure.

The Working Group finalized its recommendations and submitted its Phase 1 Final Report to the GNSO Council on 24 November 2020. In January 2021, the GNSO Council unanimously [approved](#) the [Final Report](#), containing thirty-five (35) final recommendations from the Phase 1 work of the PDP Working Group on the Review of All RPMs in All gTLDs. Pursuant to the ICANN [Bylaws](#), the GNSO Council transmitted the recommendations to the ICANN Board and a Bylaws-mandated Public Comment proceeding concerning the Phase 1 Final Report was conducted (from 7 April 2021 to 21 May 2021).

On 16 January 2022, the ICANN Board [adopted](#) all thirty-five (35) final Phase 1 PDP recommendations as documented in the PDP Working Group's Phase 1 Final Report. On 16 January 2022, the Board [adopted](#) the policy recommendations from the Phase 1 PDP and directed a tiered approach for the work based on timing, staffing, and resourcing needed for implementation of the recommendations. In adopting the recommendations, the Board [noted](#) that implementation of the recommendations could be divided into several categories. These implementation categories are:

- Recommendations that call for updates to existing operational practices or documentation concerning the RPMs where no substantial resources are required for implementation - a total number of sixteen (16) recommendations.
- Recommendations to maintain the status quo (i.e., maintaining the Phase 1 RPMs as implemented for the 2012 New gTLD Program) - a total number of nine (9) recommendations.
- Recommendations that require substantial resourcing, and involvement of multiple stakeholders to implement - a total number of six (6) recommendations; and
- Recommendations affecting subsequent round(s) of new gTLDs - a total number of four (4) recommendations.

The IRT is assisting ICANN org in implementing the recommendations in the first and third implementation categories identified above. Implementation of the remaining recommendations from the Phase 1 Final Report will be integrated into the implementation work related to the subsequent round of new gTLDs.

For more information, including regarding past meetings, please consult the [RPM IRT Wiki page](#).

6 Universal Acceptance and UA Day

Session details for ICANN77 (Prep Week):

Universal Acceptance Community Update

Tuesday, 30 May 2023

12:30-13:30 EDT (16:30-17:30 UTC)

<https://sched.co/1N5Z7>

New TLDs Need Digital Inclusion – UA-Readiness is Just the Beginning (hosted by ICANN org’s GSE Function)

Tuesday, 13 June 2023

13:45-15:00 EDT (17:45-19:00 UTC)

<https://sched.co/1NMx5>

Universal Acceptance (UA) ensures all valid domain names and email addresses, regardless of script, language, or character length, can be equally used by all Internet-enabled applications, devices, and systems. Achieving UA is only possible through the joint efforts and cooperation of various stakeholders, including, but not limited, to:

- Technology enablers and developers
- Email software and service providers and email system administrators
- Top-level domain registries and registrars
- Academia
- Government policymakers

ICANN org collaborates with the community, including the Universal Acceptance Steering Group (UASG), to organize capacity building events on UA and to promote UA adoption by these stakeholders globally.

UA Day

The first-ever global UA Day was [announced](#), inviting communities to hold events on and around on 28 March 2023. The UA Day events intended to rally local, regional, and global communities and organizations to spread UA awareness and to encourage UA adoption with key stakeholders.

Organized by the volunteer-led UASG in collaboration with global partners, regional and local organizations, and ICANN, more than 50 UA Day events were held in more than 40 countries and territories from February through May, with 20 of these events occurring the week of 28 March 2023. The global events consisted of UA training, awareness, and strategy sessions. More details at <https://UniversalAcceptance.day>.

Universal Acceptance Steering Group elections

The UASG is a volunteer community-led group, supported by ICANN org, promoting the adoption of UA globally. The UASG holds elections for its chair and vice-chairs every two years. Each chair and vice chair can hold a maximum of two terms as per the UASG [charter](#). The UASG held its 2023 elections in March and April. Anil Kumar Jain was elected as Chair and

Haixin Duan, Nabil Benamar and Nitin Walia elected as Vice Chairs. More information on the new leadership team is available at <https://uasg.tech/about/people/>.

To learn more about UA, visit uasg.tech and follow the UASG on [Twitter](#), [Facebook](#), and [LinkedIn](#).

UA as part of the Coalition for Digital Africa

Universities in Africa [launched](#) the adoption of UA as part of the Coalition for Digital Africa initiative in April during a ceremony organized with the Association of African Universities (AAU) in Accra, Ghana. The project will collaborate with the AAU to update websites and email services of AAU member universities, as well as integrate UA in their curricula of relevant technical degree programs.

The Coalition for Digital Africa is an ICANN initiative designed to bring together organizations and people that can directly impact the expansion and strength of the Internet in Africa. The goal of the initiative is to build the necessary Internet infrastructure to support the development of Africa's digital economy by promoting innovation and advancing Africa's digital transformation through the expansion of local content and encouraging entrepreneurial efforts. This will be done by collaborating on projects that will directly benefit the African continent, and in which values and unique missions of the organizations in the coalition are aligned.

What to expect on this project during ICANN77

During the ICANN77 Prep Week session, the new UASG leadership team will be introduced. The UASG will also present the work it is conducting and plans moving forward. A more detailed report of UA Day events will also be presented. For more information on UA Day and organized events, please visit <https://UniversalAcceptance.day>.

7 Other Ongoing Work

7.1 Operating Model Study

ICANN org published a Request for Proposal in March 2022 to perform a global study focused on operating models, user requirements, and other factors related to running a TLD in the Internet's DNS. The goal of the study is to provide evidence-based information related to possible operating models, opportunities, and partnerships for TLDs that may benefit diversity and innovation in the gTLD space. The results should help the ICANN org and community understand what information is most important to consider in developing rules and procedures for the next gTLD round to support diversity and innovation in the DNS while maintaining DNS security, stability, and resilience.

In August 2022, ICANN org selected Analysys Mason to conduct the study, and the project started in September 2022. Analysys Mason is currently in the report drafting phase of the project. ICANN org expects the project to conclude by Q3 2023.

The [Request for Proposal: Top-Level Domain Operating Model Study](#) page provides more details about the scope and methods of the study.

7.2 UA-Readiness Survey Reports

ICANN is working with stakeholders around the world to achieve a multilingual and inclusive Internet through UA, which ensures that all valid domain names and email addresses – regardless of language, script, or character length (e.g., .pф, .ভারত, .photography) – are accepted equally by all Internet-enabled applications, devices, and systems.

On 27 March 2023, ICANN org released the survey reports on the UA-readiness of two key categories of stakeholders.

- [Universal Acceptance \(UA\) Readiness Survey Report – Contracted Parties and Registry Service Providers](#)
- [Universal Acceptance \(UA\) Readiness Survey Report – ccTLDs](#)

Overall, the results are encouraging. Most of the contracted parties, RSPs, and ccTLD managers who responded to the survey are UA-ready or partially UA-ready.

ICANN plans to consider the results of both surveys when updating its UA strategy and will share details of the surveys with relevant UA working groups. The results underscore that while much progress has been made in adopting UA by these stakeholders, more work is needed to achieve a truly global, multilingual Internet. ICANN remains committed to providing solutions for stakeholders, including ongoing training on a variety of UA-related topics. Recently, ICANN published the [UA Roadmap for Domain Name Registry and Registrar Systems](#), which proposes how to test and update these systems for UA-readiness for the benefit of TLD registries and registrars.

To learn more about UA, visit <https://www.icann.org/ua>.

7.3 Reference Label Generation Rules

Based on the script user community input through the Root Zone Label Generation Rules ([RZ-LGR](#)) project, ICANN org develops reference LGRs for the second level. These reference LGRs are vetted for security and stability by the community, and TLD registry operators can use them when they develop IDN tables under their TLDs.

Reference LGRs for an additional seven scripts (Armenian, Cyrillic, Greek, Japanese, Korean, Latin, and Myanmar) and other updates were open for [Public Comment](#) until March 2023. After the Public Comment proceeding, 54 reference LGRs have been published:

- **31 language-based LGRs:** Arabic, Belarusian, Bosnian (Cyrillic), Bosnian (Latin), Bulgarian, Chinese, Danish, English, Finnish, French, German, Hebrew, Hindi, Hungarian, Icelandic, Italian, Japanese, Korean, Latvian, Lithuanian, Macedonian, Montenegrin, Norwegian, Polish, Portuguese, Russian, Serbian, Spanish, Swedish, Thai, and Ukrainian.
- **23 script-based LGRs:** Arabic, Armenian, Bangla (Bengali), Cyrillic, Devanagari, Ethiopic, Georgian, Greek, Gujarati, Gurmukhi, Hebrew, Japanese (Hiragana, Katakana, Kanji[Han]), Kannada, Korean (Hangul, Hanja [Han]), Khmer, Lao, Latin, Malayalam, Myanmar, Oriya, Sinhala, Tamil, and Telugu.

7.4 IDN Implementation Guidelines

IDN Implementation Guidelines apply to second-level IDN registration policies and practices under TLDs. They are contractually binding through most gTLD Registry Agreements (RA) and the 2013 Registrar Accreditation Agreement (RAA). They are also recommended through the IDN ccTLD Fast Track Process.

[Version 4](#) of the IDN Implementation Guidelines was finalized by a community-based [IDN Implementation Working Group](#). These guidelines were presented to the ICANN Board for consideration in 2019, but deferred based on the [request](#) of the GNSO.

Following further discussion with GNSO, on 22 September 2022, the ICANN Board [approved](#) IDN Guidelines version 4.0, except for the deferred guidelines 6a, 11, 12, 13, 18 and associated additional notes, and directed that these be published as IDN Guidelines version 4.1 and implemented.

The [Guidelines version 4.1](#) was published on 11 November 2022. ICANN org is working on analyzing the guidelines for implementation and will communicate the effective date to relevant parties for implementation after the analysis.

7.5 IDN Table Update Project and IDN Table Review

As part of improvements to the IDN table review process, ICANN org has published the Evaluating Unicode Script for Use in IDNs Report for [Public Comment](#). The Registries Stakeholder Group (RySG) provided feedback that the Limited Use and Excluded scripts should be supported to make sure the communities using these scripts are not excluded from the Internet.

ICANN org is working with the RySG on the best approach to review an IDN table of which the Reference LGR is not yet available, especially for limited use and excluded scripts as categorized by the Unicode Standard.

What is the topic/background?

The IDN Table Update project was initiated to make the IDN table review process consistent, transparent, and efficient for registry operators as [raised](#) by the RySG. ICANN org has been updating its [processes](#) to leverage [Reference Label Generation Rules \(LGRs\)](#) with the [IDN Table Review Tool](#). ICANN org also took steps to ensure the IANA repository accurately reflects all of the contractually approved IDN tables for gTLDs and identified those IDN tables which may need to be updated due to security or stability concerns, based on the latest guidance from the script and technical communities.

In 2022, ICANN org communicated the issues found to the relevant RSPs and is collaboratively working with ROs and RSPs to address these issues.

IDN Table Operation

In addition to the IDN Table Update project, ICANN org continued to review IDN tables submitted by ROs and RSPs. From ICANN76 to the end of April 2023, ICANN org has reviewed 4 IDN tables used across 10 TLDs via the RSP IDN Service process.

7.6 Operational Design Phase (ODP) Community Consultation

As established in the [Operational Design Phase \(ODP\) Process Paper](#), ICANN org will conduct a community consultation to ensure that the ODP operates effectively and fulfills the needs of the ICANN Board, community, and org. Topics to be explored in this community consultation will include, but are not limited to:

- Scoping of the ODP
- Content and utility of the ODA
- Interactions with GNSO Council and Liaison

Preliminary data collection for this project began in March 2023 with the recording and analysis of feedback gathered at ICANN76. This feedback, along with analysis of other ICANN org data, will inform the design of a voluntary survey that is anticipated to be made available to all stakeholders in the ICANN community in August 2023. Findings from this survey will be summarized in a final report and published for Public Comment. This community consultation will be part of the ongoing review and improvement efforts of the ODP process.

7.7 Competition, Consumer Choice and Consumer Trust (CCT) Review Team Recommendation Implementation (Contracted Parties Survey)

In 2016 the CCT review team assessed the degree to which the New gTLD Program promoted consumer trust, choice, and increased competition in the DNS. The review team also reviewed the effectiveness of safeguards put in place to mitigate possible issues arising from the New gTLD Program. Five [CCTRT Final Report](#) recommendations call on ICANN org to survey contracted parties for the data necessary to further assess the impact and effectiveness of safeguards. ICANN org is in the process of designing a voluntary pilot survey to gather this requested data.

To ensure the most meaningful and useful data can be collected from this survey, ICANN org will consult with contracted parties in late Q2, early Q3 2023 to gather feedback on survey design. This consultation will inform the development of the voluntary pilot survey, which is anticipated to be administered in Q3 2023. Once the survey is complete, results and participation rates in the survey will be reviewed to assess whether data brings valuable insights to ICANN org and the community, and whether the survey should be run at regular intervals. The anticipated completion date is Q4 2023.



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