Appendix A - sTLD Selection Criteria (RFP)

SPONSORSHIP INFORMATION

A. Definition of Sponsored TLD Community

The proposed sTLD must address the needs and interests of a clearly defined community (the Sponsored TLD Community), which can benefit from the establishment of a TLD operating in a policy formulation environment in which the community would participate.

Applicants must demonstrate that the Sponsored TLD Community is:

- Precisely defined, so it can readily be determined which persons or entities make up that community; and
- Comprised of persons that have needs and interests in common but which are differentiated from those of the general global Internet community.

B. Evidence of support from the Sponsoring Organization

Applicants must:

- Provide evidence of support for your application from your sponsoring organization; and,
- Provide the name and contact information within the sponsoring organization

C. Appropriateness of the Sponsoring Organization and the policy formulation environment

Applicants must provide an explanation of the Sponsoring Organization's policy-formulation procedures demonstrating:

- Operates primarily in the interests of the Sponsored TLD Community;
- Has a clearly defined delegated policy-formulation role and is appropriate to the needs of the Sponsored TLD Community; and
- Has defined mechanisms to ensure that approved policies are primarily in the interests of the Sponsored TLD Community and the public interest.

The scope of delegation of the policy formulation role need not be (and is not) uniform for all sTLDs, but is tailored to meet the particular needs of the defined Sponsored TLD Community and the characteristics of the policy formulation environment.

D. Level of support from the Community

A key requirement of a sTLD proposal is that it demonstrates broad-based support from the community it is intended to represent.

Applicants must demonstrate that there is:

- Evidence of broad-based support from the Sponsored TLD Community for the sTLD, for the Sponsoring Organization, and for the proposed policy-formulation process; and
- An outreach program that illustrates the Sponsoring Organization's capacity to represent a wide range of interests within the community.

BUSINESS PLAN INFORMATION

Part C - Business Plan and Part D - Financial Model are the two key areas where detailed information needs to be provided by applicants. Part C - Business Plan must demonstrate the applicant's methodology for introducing a new sTLD and the ability of the organization to implement a robust and appropriately resourced organization. Part D – Financial Model requires applicants to outline the financial, technical and operational capabilities of the organization.

A. Part C - Business Plan

The business plan needs to include, at a minimum, the following elements:

a) Staffing including key personnel and operational capability

b) Marketing plan

c) Registrar arrangements

d) Fee structure

e) Technical resources

f) Uniqueness of application

g) Engagement with and commitment to the Sponsoring Organisation

B. Part D - Financial Model

In Part D - Financial Model, the associated spreadsheet must be used to complete the financial proposal in addition to the provision of detailed cost justifications.

TECHNICAL STANDARDS

A. Evidence of ability to ensure stable registry operation

The overarching concern in the introduction of any new TLD is to ensure that it does not affect the stability and integrity of the domain name system (DNS). It is important to

ensure that the new registry will perform reliably and continuously. In addition, it must operate in compliance with current and future technical standards. Provisions must be made to ensure continuity of operation in the face of any business or other catastrophic failure of the registry operator, where the registry operator is no longer able to fulfill its obligations to provide registry operations services.

Applicants must demonstrate in Part E - Technical Specification that the applicant has access to adequate resources and has developed adequate plans to ensure that the registry will be operated reliably and continuously, with adequate provision to protect against operational failure.

B. Evidence of ability to ensure that the registry conforms with best practice technical standards for registry operations

Applicants must demonstrate that the registry will operate at a performance level commensurate with existing gTLD standards. Applicants can use existing ICANN registry accreditation standards as a guide to minimum standards.

C. Evidence of a full range of registry services

Registrants and ICANN-accredited registrars depend on reliable and comprehensive registry services. Applicants must demonstrate that they can provide:

- A full range of essential services, with consideration being given to additional, diversified services appropriate to the sTLD's charter; and
- High-quality services offered at reasonable cost.

D. Assurance of continuity of registry operation in the event of business failure of the proposed registry

Applicants must provide for adequate assurance of continuity of registry operations in the event of business failure of the proposed registry. Although provision for escrow of registry data is required, that in itself does not satisfy the requirement. The applicant must either:

in addition to regular escrow of registry data with ICANN, satisfy expectations of continuity by providing a detailed and satisfactory business plan;

or

present a realistic and satisfactory alternative for ensuring continuity of registry operation in the event of business failure of the proposed registry. This requirement can, for example, be met if the applicant demonstrates commitment from an existing registry operator with whom ICANN already has an agreement. The existing registry operator must be operating at a high level of performance, in addition to stating that it will assume responsibility for the operation of the sTLD registry in the event of business failure.

COMMUNITY VALUE

A. Addition of new value to the Internet name space

Applicants must demonstrate the value that will be added to the Internet name space by launching the proposed sTLD by considering the following objectives:

Name value

A top-level sTLD name must be of broad significance and must establish clear and lasting value. The name must be appropriate to the defined community. Applicants must demonstrate that their proposal:

- Categorizes a broad and lasting field of human, institutional, or social endeavor or activity;
- Represents an endeavor or activity that has importance across multiple geographic regions;
- Has lasting value; and
- Is appropriate to the scope of the proposed Sponsored TLD Community

Enhanced diversity of the Internet name space

The proposed new sTLD must create a new and clearly differentiated space, and satisfy needs that cannot be readily met through the existing TLDs. One purpose of creating new TLDs is to enhance competition in registry services and applicants must demonstrate that their proposal:

- Is clearly differentiated from existing TLDs;
- Meets needs that cannot reasonably be met in existing TLDs at the second level;
- Attracts new supplier and user communities to the Internet and delivers choice to end users; and
- Enhances competition in domain-name registration services, including competition with existing TLD registries.

Enrichment of broad global communities

One of the reasons for launching new sTLDs is to introduce sTLDs with broad geographic and demographic impact.

Significant consideration will be given to sTLDs that serve larger user communities and attract a greater number of registrants. Consideration will also be given to those proposed sTLDs whose charters have relatively broader functional scope.

B. Protecting the rights of others

New sTLD registries will be responsible for creating policies and practices that minimize abusive registration activities and other activities that affect the legal rights of others.

sTLD registries are required to implement safeguards against allowing unqualified registrations, and to ensure compliance with other ICANN policies designed to protect the rights of others.

C. Assurance of charter-compliant registrations and avoidance of abusive registration practices

Operators of sTLDs must implement safeguards to ensure that non-compliant applicants cannot register domain names. Applicants must demonstrate that their proposals address and include precise measures that:

Discourage registration of domain names that infringe intellectual property rights;

- Ensure that only charter-compliant persons or entities (that is, legitimate members of the Sponsored TLD Community) are able to register domain names in the proposed new sTLD;
- Reserve specific names to prevent inappropriate name registrations;
- Minimize abusive registrations;
- Comply with applicable trademark and anti-cybersquatting legislation; and
- Provide protections (other than exceptions that may be applicable during the start-up period) for famous name and trademark owners.

D. Assurance of adequate dispute-resolution mechanisms

All gTLD registries must adhere to the ICANN Uniform Dispute Resolution Policy (UDRP). Particular dispute resolution mechanisms are implemented to support situations such as priority of acceptance of applicants in competition for the same name during start-up periods.

Applicants must demonstrate that their proposal will:

- Implement the ICANN UDRP; and
- Where applicable, supplement the UDRP with policies or procedures that apply to the particular characteristics of the sTLD.

E. Provision of ICANN-policy compliant WHOIS service

All existing gTLD registries must provide accessible WHOIS database services to give legitimate information about registrants for purposes that comply with ICANN policies.

Applicants must include an explanation of how they plan to develop and implement a complete, up-to-date, reliable, and accessible WHOIS database of all registrations in the sTLD. The WHOIS database must also be compliant with ICANN policies. The

implementation of such WHOIS policies must comply with emerging ICANN privacy policies in this area, if and when they become approved.