



85 | COMMUNITY
FORUM



2026 Round Community Applicant Journey and Q&A

11 March 16:30-17:30

Welcome Message

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Readiness Content Disclaimer

The authoritative source for all information about New gTLD Program: 2026 Round rules, evaluations, restrictions, processes, and systems is the English version of the [New gTLD Program: 2026 Round Applicant Guidebook](#). All New gTLD Program: 2026 Round readiness and training content is supplementary to the Applicant Guidebook, and has been developed to provide a high-level summary of key topic areas of interest to prospective applicants and the broader ICANN community. In case of discrepancy, the Applicant Guidebook prevails.



New to the gTLD Program?

ICANN85 attendees **who are new to the New gTLD Program** are encouraged to review the foundation webinars below to build knowledge of the program. The webinars provide context for ICANN85 sessions.

	Introduction the 2026 Round	2026 Round applicant Journey Overview
LINKS	Recording and Presentation	Recording and Presentation
AUDIENCE	All prospective gTLD applicants.	All prospective gTLD applicants.
DESCRIPTION	Foundational information for anyone interested in learning about the New gTLD Program: 2026 Round. The course is designed to equip those who are brand new to the New gTLD Program: 2026 Round to understand everything from generic top-level domains and strings, to the purpose of each stage of the applicant journey.	End-to-end view of 2026 Round application processing stages and milestones. The course creates context for ICANN Community stakeholders and applicants to understand the requirements of the application process, and the role(s) different groups play throughout.

New gTLD Program Sessions at [ICANN85](#)

New gTLD Program sessions at ICANN85 provide a **detailed view of the Application Submission process** and the **TLD Application Management System**, as well as sessions for **specific audiences (RSPs)** and **applicant types**. All times are in local time (IST).

ICANN85 SESSIONS

TOPICS:

AUDIENCE:

SAT 7 March
16:30-17:30

Registry Service Provider (RSP) Evaluation Program

Prospective applicants to the RSP Program

SUN 8 March
16:30-17:30

IDN and Variant Applicant Journeys with Q&A

Prospective IDN and Variant gTLD applicants

MON 9 March
13:15-14:30

Application Submission Overview (PLENARY)

Prospective applicants to the New gTLD Program

MON 9-March
16:30-17:30

.Brand Applicant Journey with Q&A

Prospective .brand gTLD applicants

ICANN85 SESSIONS

TOPICS:

AUDIENCE:

TUES 10 March
13:15-14:30

TAMS Introduction & Demo (PLENARY)

Prospective applicants to the RSP Program

TUE 10-March
16:30-17:30

Geographic Names and Reserve Name Applicant Journeys

Prospective geographic names and reserved names gTLD applicants

WED 11-March
16:30-17:30

Community Applicant Journey with Q&A

Prospective community gTLD applicants

THU 12-March
09:00-10:00

Wrap up and Open Q&A

All prospective gTLD applicants

Agenda

01

Community Applicant Journey

Highlight unique aspects of the application process including requirements, application questions, community input, contention set resolution options, evaluations, and contract requirements.

02

PICs, RVCs, and Community Registration Policies

Introduction to Registry Agreement commitment types with a focus on community registration policies.

03

Resources and Support

Available to interested parties and potential applicants

Session Objectives:

By the end of this session, participants should be able to:

- Understand the unique requirements of applying for a Community gTLD.
- Identify and prepare responses to application question specific to Community gTLDs.
- Understand registry agreement commitment types.
- Identify 2026 Round Applicant Guidebook content to reference for detailed information.



2026 Round Application Types

Application Type determines relevant preparation, application questions, conditional applications and fees, prioritization order, contention resolution options and contract requirement.

General Applications

.link

A general gTLD application does not fall into one of the specialized categories and is subject to a standard set of defined requirements

Specialized Application Types

.Brand

.nike

Community

.eco

Geographic Name

.paris

Reserved Name

.redcross

Variant

شبكة (gTLD)
شبكة (variant)

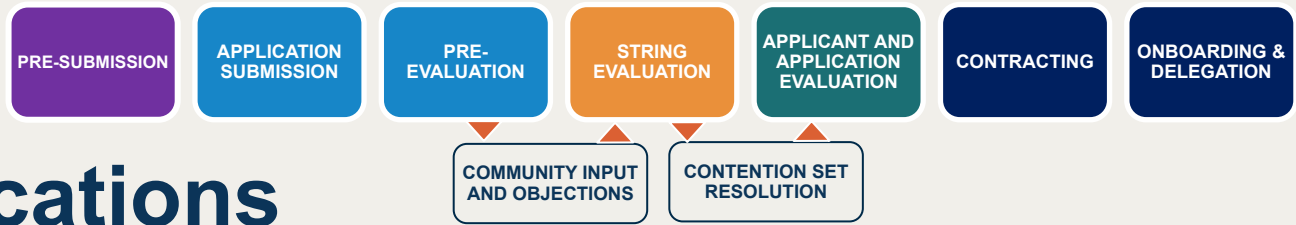
Internationalized Domain Name (IDN)

.例子 (.example)

Community gTLD Applications

Background

- The concept of a **community TLD** stems from new gTLD policy recommendations from 2007. It was then codified in the 2012 AGB.
- Neither the 2007 policy recommendations nor SubPro Policy provide a definition of “community.” Providing such a definition has been viewed as potentially limiting.
- If successful in its application, community registration policies are incorporated into **Specification 12** of the registry agreement.



Community gTLD Applications

Description

- Any applicant may designate its application as a Community Application.
- In general, an applicant for a Community gTLD is expected to:
 - Demonstrate a relationship with an organized community.
 - Have applied for a gTLD string that is strongly and specifically related to the identified community.
 - Have proposed dedicated registration policies in its proposed gTLD, commensurate with the purposes of the identified community.
 - Have had its application endorsed in writing by one or more established institutions representing the identified community.
- These applications must follow criteria for the **Registry Commitments Evaluation** and have the option to participate in the **Community Priority Evaluation** process to resolve contention with other applications.

02

Community Applicant Journey

✓ Highlight unique aspects of the application process including requirements, application questions, community input, contention set resolution options, evaluations and contract requirements

Application Submission

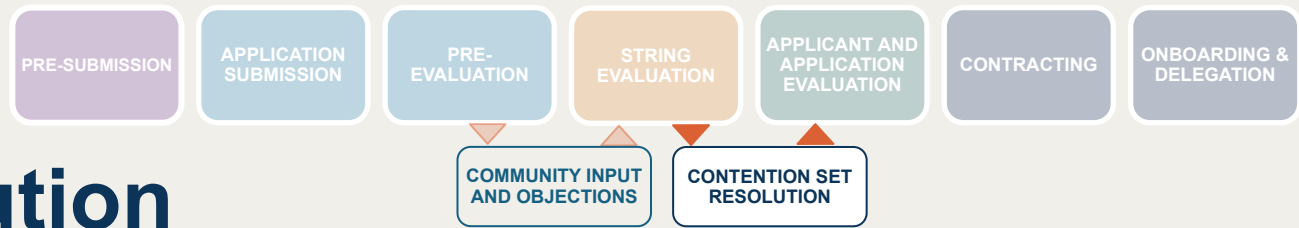


Application Questions

- [Question Set 7, Questions 131-157](#) are required for Community applications.
- The answers to these questions will be evaluated if the applicant is in contention and elects to participate in Community Priority Evaluation (see [Contention Set Resolution](#)).

Unique Documents Required

- Applicants must have their applications endorsed in writing by one or more established institutions representing the identified community.



Contention Set Resolution

Community Priority Evaluation (CPE)

- CPE is a means to **resolve contention that's only available to community applicants**.
- Evaluation conducted by a third party determines whether the application fulfills the CPE criteria and should receive **priority in the contention set**.
- Applicants designating their applications as community-based are **required to respond to a set of questions in the application form** to provide relevant information about their community, which will be used if they are in contention and elect to participate in CPE.
- An applicant that submits a community-based application **can but is not required to participate** in CPE.

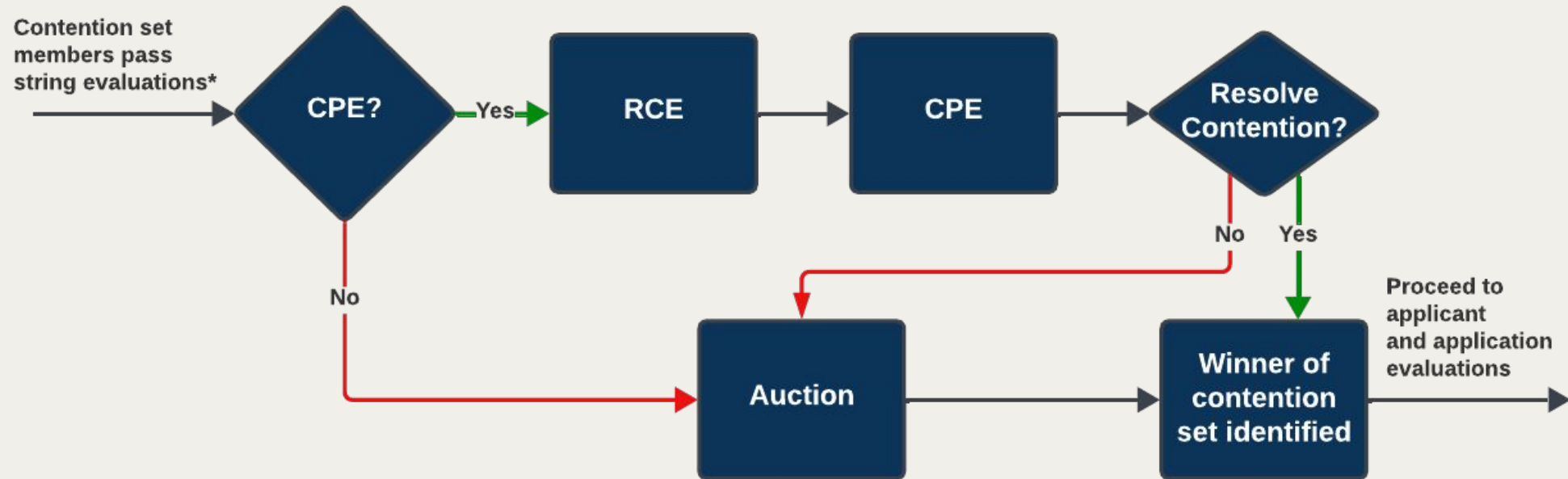
Prerequisites

Occurs after string evaluation has been completed, objections and appeals resolved, string evaluation challenges completed, and all relevant change requests closed with no pending accountability mechanisms. Applicants must also complete Registry Commitments Evaluation prior to participating in CPE.

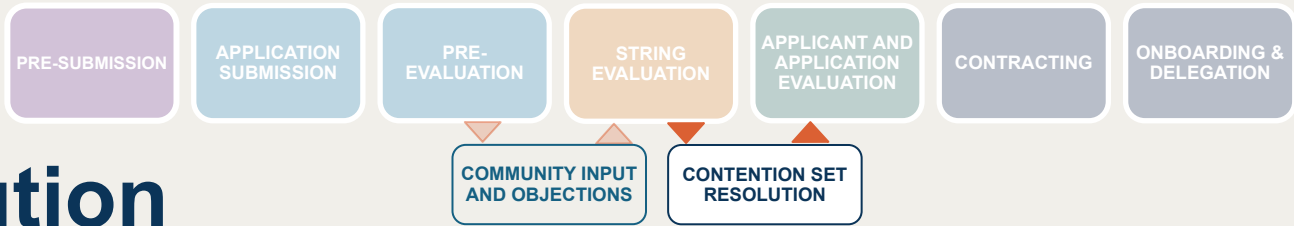
Fees: USD 50,000-80,000

Contention Set Resolution

CPE Process



*Eligible .Brand TLD applicants in contention will have the option to request a .Brand String Change



Contention Set Resolution

CPE Eligibility Criteria

- **Community Establishment (5.4.8.1)**

- Applicant must demonstrate a relationship with an organized community, as well as show how that identified community engages with its members; awareness of the identified community among members; the established presence and external awareness of the identified community; and that the identified community has longevity.

- **Nexus between proposed string and community (5.4.8.2)**

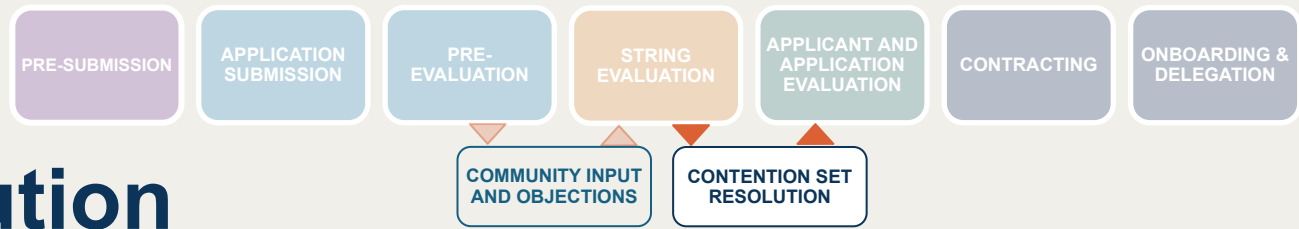
- Applicant has applied for a gTLD string that strongly and specifically relates to the identified community.

- **Registration Policies (5.4.8.3)**

- Applicant has proposed dedicated registration policies for registrants in its proposed gTLD, commensurate with the purpose of the identified community.

- **Community Endorsement (5.4.8.4)**

- Applicant has its application(s) endorsed in writing by one or more established institutions representing the identified community.



Contention Set Resolution

Possible CPE Outcomes

- **Successful CPE:**

- Scenario 1: An applicant that is successful in a CPE evaluation will get priority in the contention set and come out as the prevailing applicant (4.4.5).

- **Failed CPE:**

- Scenario 2: If an applicant fails CPE and there is no other community applicant participating in CPE, then the contention set goes to an ICANN New gTLD Auction.
- Scenario 3: If an applicant fails CPE and there is another CPE applicant in the same contention set, then the successful community applicant prevails and the set is resolved.

- **Multiple Successful Community Applicants:**

- Scenario 4: All community applicants proceed to an ICANN New gTLD Auction.

02

PICs, RVCs, Community Registration Policies

- ✓ **Introduction to Registry Agreement Commitment Types with a focus on registry voluntary commitments and public interest commitments**

Registry Commitments Evaluation

COMMUNITY INPUT
AND OBJECTIONSCONTENTION SET
RESOLUTION

What is it?

Evaluation of Registry Agreement Community Registration Policies to ensure they are enforceable under the ICANN Bylaws and can be included in the RA as contractual obligations.

Fee:

USD 15,000 (deducted from CPE fee)



Required



Conditional



Optional

Application and String Type:



Standard



.Brand



Geographic



Community



Reserved



IDN



Variant

Eligible for Extended Evaluation?



Yes



No or N/A

Eligible for Challenge?



Yes



No or N/A

When It Occurs

- Typically during **Application Evaluation** before contracting; may happen earlier if an RVC or Community Registration Policy is on the **critical path** for the application to proceed.
- Initiated after the **fixed, one-time payment** for RCE is received by ICANN.
- Estimated to take **2-3 months**, absent exceptional circumstances.

How It Works

- Must meet **five criteria**. In particular, anything that **restricts content** in the applied-for gTLD string would require ICANN to enforce a registry's compliance with content restrictions and will not be approved.
- Evaluation will **NOT** determine whether proposed commitments have addressed **third-party concerns**.
- ICANN and applicant may **negotiate** to reach agreement on proposed contractual language.

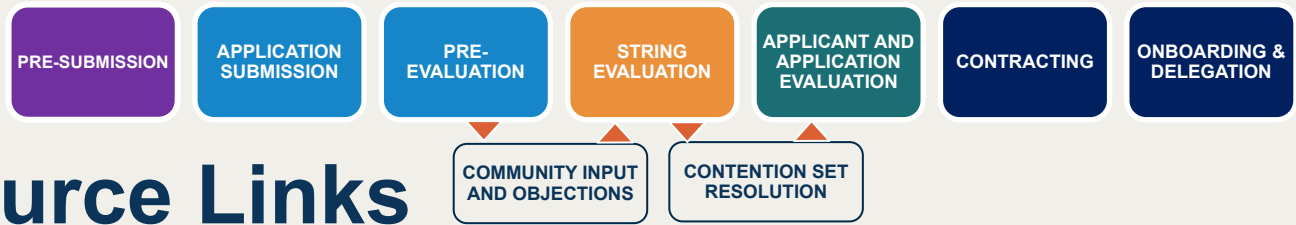
Different Registry Agreement Commitment Types

Mandatory Public Interest Commitments (6.8.1)	Safeguard Public Interest Commitments (6.8.2)	Registry Voluntary Commitments (6.8.3)	Community Registration Policies (6.8.4)
Uniform commitments to protect registrants and Internet users broadly	Standardized commitments to promote public interests in high-risk gTLDs	Customized commitments to overcome third-party concerns (e.g., objection, GAC Advice) or provide additional safeguards	Customized conditions upon Community-based gTLD registrants concerning eligibility, naming selection, etc.
All gTLDs must have	gTLDs classified in four risk-based groups must have	Any gTLD applicant has the option to propose	All Community-based gTLDs must have
Automatically included in each RA, Specification 11	All applicants to answer questions subject to Safeguard Assessment; applicable Safeguard PICs to be included in applicable RA, Spec 11	Any applicant to submit RVC subject to Registry Commitments Evaluation (RCE); approved ones to be included in applicable RA, Spec 11	All Community-based gTLD applicants to submit Comm Reg Policies subject to RCE; approved ones to be included in applicable RA, Spec 12 (and be considered for scoring in CPE)

03

Resources and Next Steps

- ✓ Resources and support available to interested parties and potential applicants



Community gTLD Resource Links

AGB Links

- [Appendix 1, Question Set 7, Questions 131-157](#)
- [5.4 Community Priority Evaluation](#)
- [5.4.8 CPE Criteria](#)
- [Table 3-2 Conditional Evaluations and Fees](#)
- [7.8.3.2 Registry Commitments Evaluation](#)
- [7.8.3.3 Registry Commitments Evaluation Criteria](#)

Website CPE resources:

- [Application Types: Frequently Asked Questions](#)
- [Topic Overview: gTLD Application Types](#)

Key Applicant Resources

New gTLD Program: 2026 Round Applicant Guidebook

- The authoritative document outlining the rules and procedures of the 2026 Round.

New gTLD Program: 2026 Round Website

- Source of 2026 Round news, announcements, information, and resources.

ICANN Learn

- eLearning courses to build knowledge of ICANN and the DNS Industry.

Applicant Readiness Pathway

- Curated learning resources organized by phases and learning outcomes (coming soon)

2026 Round FAQs

- Frequently asked questions, organized by category.

ICANN Global Support

- Dedicated ICANN team available to answer inquiries and provide support throughout the application process. globalsupport@icann.org

New gTLD Program Webinars

- Register for future webinars, or access recordings of past events.

NEW gTLD PROGRAM: 2026 ROUND

Question and Answer



Q&A

Submit further questions to: globalsupport@icann.org

Where to Direct Questions

General Program Questions

- Open public forums (ICANN meetings, webinars)
- Refer to New gTLD Program resources, including the AGB
- Email: globalsupport@icann.org

Application-Specific Questions

- After an application has been submitted, applicants may use the **Create Inquiry** button in TAMS.



Important: ICANN staff members have been directed not to field questions from individual applicants – whether by email, social media messaging, or in-person – in the interest of fairness, transparency, and equal access for all program participants.

Evaluation Survey

We kindly request you to take a few minutes to complete this brief feedback form.

A large, dark blue speech bubble with a white outline, pointing downwards and to the right. It is set against a light purple circular background. The word "Survey" is written in white, bold, sans-serif font inside the bubble.

Survey

gTLD

Thank you for your participation.

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