

NEW gTLD PROGRAM: 2026 ROUND

Geographic Names

What is a geographic name gTLD?

A generic top-level domain and its allocatable variant label(s) is a geographic name if it meets any of these criteria: It is the name (in any language) of a capital city of any country or territory listed in the ISO3166-1 standard; it is the name of a city or region where the applicant declares that it intends to use the gTLD for purposes associated with that name; it is an exact match of a sub-national place name such as a county, province, or state listed in the ISO3166-2 standard; or of a name listed as a [UNESCO region](#) or appearing on the [UN Geographic Regions section M49](#). Note that each category has different qualifications; applicants should refer to the Applicant Guidebook for details.

RESOURCES

[Applicant Guidebook Module 7.5](#)

[Applicant Guidebook Appendix 2](#)

[New gTLD Program: 2026 Round Resources](#)

What documentation is required to apply for a geographic name?

Any established legal entity, such as a corporation, organization, or institution, can apply for a geographic name gTLD. Applicants that wish to apply for a geographic name gTLD must provide the documented support or non-objection of the relevant governments and public authorities.

The documentation must:

- Be dated no more than 18 months prior to the application submission;
- Clearly express the support or non-objection of the relevant government or public authority to the specific application;
- Demonstrate the government or public entity's understanding of the string being requested and its intended use.

Failure to demonstrate support or non-objection from the government or public authority will result in an application being denied by the Geographic Names Panel (GNP).

How are Geographic Name applications evaluated?

A GNP selected by ICANN will evaluate every string to determine whether it is a protected geographic name. If the string is determined to be a geographic name, the GNP will review the inputs by the applicant, governments, and conduct its own research and analysis, to confirm that the applicant has provided the required documentation, that the communication from that government or public authority is legitimate, and that it contains the required content.

- **Pass example:** A geographic name application that has passed evaluation and is not in contention with any other string, regardless of the gTLD type, can then be delegated.
- **Fail example:** Any application for a string that represents a geographic name but is not supported by the relevant authority for that city or region will not pass geographic evaluation.
- **Contention Resolution:** If multiple identical or confusingly similar strings pass evaluation, regardless of what gTLD type those strings represent, all applications will move to contention resolution.