

Registry Service Provider Eligibility

Eligibility Criteria for the Registry Service Provider (RSP)
Evaluation Program

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Version 1.0



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1. Introduction

This document is an addendum to the [Registry Service Provider \(RSP\) Handbook](#), and describes the eligibility criteria for RSP applicants to the RSP Evaluation Program of the New gTLD Program: Next Round.

ICANN has designed the New gTLD Program to provide registrant protections. In addition to technical evaluation, registry service testing, and other criteria designed to ensure the technical competence of Registry Service Providers, ICANN has established a set of non-technical eligibility criteria to protect the public interest in the operation of critical Internet resources.

RSP applicants will undergo background screening to verify their compliance with these eligibility criteria, and ICANN reserves the right to deny an otherwise qualified applicant based on any information identified during background screening.

2. Background Screening Process

The background screening process for RSP applicants is described in the [RSP Handbook](#). As described in the RSP Handbook, the RSP Portal requires applicants to provide information on the legal establishment of the applying entity, as well as to identify the directors, officers, partners, persons of significant influence, and major shareholders of that entity. “Major shareholders” shall be those holding at least 15% of shares.

Background screening will be conducted at both the organizational and individual levels to confirm eligibility and assess risk. Information may vary based on the accessibility of data and local data protection laws. ICANN may take into account information received from any source if it is relevant to the eligibility criteria and in compliance with local data protection laws.

ICANN, in compliance with local laws and regulations, will perform background screening to ensure the applicant meets the eligibility criteria described below. The eligibility criteria are aligned with the “crimes of trust” standard sometimes used in the banking and finance industry. ICANN reserves the right to reject any applicant, even if the applicant is otherwise qualified, based on information uncovered during the background screening process.

In the absence of exceptional circumstances, applicant organizations with or including any individual not meeting the eligibility criteria listed below will be disqualified from the program.

3. Publicly Traded Corporations

Applying entities that are publicly traded corporations listed and in good standing on any of the world's largest 25 stock exchanges (as listed by the World Federation of Exchanges) may undergo a more limited background screening (see Section 2 for background screening criteria). The largest 25 will be based on the domestic market capitalization reported at the end of the most recent calendar year prior to launching each round.¹

Before an entity is listed on an exchange, it must undergo significant due diligence including an investigation by the exchange, regulators, and investment banks. As a publicly listed corporation, an entity is subject to ongoing scrutiny from shareholders, analysts, regulators, and exchanges and these requirements are expected to meet or exceed the due diligence and criminal history screening performed (as described in Section 2).

4. Eligibility Criteria

- Applicant organizations and individuals named within the RSP Portal must be in good corporate standing under their applicable laws and regulations.
- Applicant organizations or any of the individuals named within the RSP Portal must confirm that they are free and absent of:
 - Convictions of any crime related to financial or corporate governance activities, or judgements by a court to have committed fraud or breach of fiduciary duty, or subject of a judicial determination that is the substantive equivalent of any of these within the last 10 years.
 - Disciplinary actions by any government or industry regulatory body for conduct involving dishonesty or misuse of funds of others within the last 10 years.
 - Convictions of any willful tax-related fraud or willful evasion of tax liabilities within the last 10 years.
 - Convictions of perjury, forswearing, failing to cooperate with a law enforcement investigation, or making false statements to a law enforcement agency or representative within the last 10 years.
 - Convictions of any crime involving the use of computers, telephony systems, telecommunications, or the Internet to facilitate the commission of crimes;
 - Convictions of any crime involving the use of a weapon, force, or the threat of force;
 - Convictions of any violent or sexual offense victimizing children, the elderly, or individuals with disabilities;

¹ See <https://focus.world-exchanges.org/issue/may-2024/market-statistics>

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- Convictions within the last 10 years of the illegal sale, manufacture, or distribution of pharmaceutical drugs, or convicted or successfully extradited for any offense described in Article 3 of the United Nations Convention Against Illicit Traffic in Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances of 1988.
 - *Note: A past conviction for an offense that is no longer a criminal offense in the jurisdiction at the time of application shall not be considered.*
 - Convictions or having been successfully extradited for any offense described in the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime (all Protocols);
 - Convictions of aiding, abetting, facilitating, enabling, conspiring to commit, any of the listed crimes above; and
 - Entrance of a guilty plea as part of a plea agreement or has a court case in any jurisdiction with a disposition of Adjudicated Guilty or Adjudication Withheld (or regional equivalents) within the respective timeframes listed above for any of the listed crimes.
 - Systematic or repetitive engagement in cybersquatting, as defined in the Uniform Domain Name Dispute Resolution Policy (UDRP), Anti-cybersquatting Consumer Protection Act (ACPA), or other equivalent legislation, or was engaged in reverse domain name hijacking under the UDRP, or bad faith or reckless disregard under the ACPA or equivalent legislation. Three or more such decisions with one occurring in the last four years will generally be considered to constitute a systematic or repetitive engagement in cybersquatting.
 - Involved in any administrative or other legal proceeding in which allegations of intellectual property infringement relating to registration or use of a domain name have been made against the applicant or any of the individuals named in the Organizational Account Record respectively, within the last 10 years.

5. Applicant Onboarding Questions

An RSP applicant must also answer the following questions in the RSP Portal in relation to the eligibility criteria:

Information provided below must be provided in compliance with applicable laws and regulations.

1. Confirm to have read and understood the eligibility criteria and declare that neither the applicant nor any of the individuals named within the Organizational Account Record are subject to any of the above criteria that could impede eligibility.

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2. Confirm that neither the applicant nor any of the individuals named within the Organizational Account Record have been subject to any decisions indicating that the applicant or individual named in the Organizational Account Record was engaged in cybersquatting, as defined in the Uniform Domain Name Dispute Resolution Policy (UDRP), Anti-cybersquatting Consumer Protection Act (ACPA), or other equivalent legislation, or was engaged in reverse domain name hijacking under the UDRP or bad faith or reckless disregard under the ACPA or equivalent legislation within the last ten years. If you are unable to confirm, please provide an explanation.

Note related to question 2 above: Three or more such decisions with one occurring in the last four years will generally be considered to constitute a pattern.

2. Confirm that neither the applicant nor any of the individuals named in the Organizational Account Record has been involved in any administrative or other legal proceeding in which allegations of intellectual property infringement relating to registration or use of a domain name have been made against the applicant or any of the individuals named in the RSP Portal respectively within the last 10 years. If you are unable to confirm, please provide an explanation.

6. Updates to the Eligibility Criteria

Changes to the information provided in this addendum will be governed under the same framework for predictability, transparency, and fair processes and procedures as defined in the [RSP Handbook](#).



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