

nameshop

Subject: Response to the ICANN Letter dated 1 May 2026: Request to Block Automated Refunds, Institute Safeguards, and Expedite Delegation of .Internet

Dear Theresa Swinehart, Board Chair Tripti Sinha, and CEO Kurtis Lindqvist,

I recently became aware of a letter addressed to me from Theresa Swinehart, dated 1 May 2026. Curiously, this letter was neither sent to my email nor notified to me via the ICANN applicant portal; rather, it was brought to my attention by a community member who shared the public link with me following recent media coverage.

I am writing to respond directly to the assertions made in that letter and to reiterate Nameshop's steadfast position regarding the .Internet application.

1. Rejection of the May 15 Withdrawal Deadline and Request to Block Refunds

The May 1 letter offers Nameshop one "final opportunity" to initiate a withdrawal process by 15 May 2026 to receive a refund, stating that failure to do so will result in forfeiting our eligibility for that refund.

Please take this as formal notice that Nameshop politely but firmly declines to withdraw the application. As stated in our formal request on April 14, we explicitly ask ICANN to block and permanently pause the automated refund process for this application. We fully accept the forfeiture of refund eligibility. As we have maintained for over a decade, this pursuit is not about recovering an application fee; it is about securing the .Internet string to fulfill our legally binding public interest commitments.

2. The Danger of Artificial Contention in a Subsequent Round

The letter once again suggests that Nameshop consider applying for .Internet in a subsequent round. As we have repeatedly emphasized, pushing this specific application into the 2026 round is materially unfair.

The .Internet string has been publicly revealed, openly discussed, and uncontested for 12 years. If .Internet is thrown open, it will inevitably trigger **Artificial Contention**. This artificial contention arises both by a) the absence of application process safeguards, and b) by unfairly forcing Nameshop to reapply for .Internet, an application which has already suffered 12 years of delays.

While the ICANN Registry and Registrar ecosystem is largely composed of fair actors, some opportunistic actors or gainsayers, having monitored the value and history of this string, could be incentivized to submit competing applications. We urgently request that ICANN institute immediate procedural safeguards against this artificial contention to protect an applicant that has engaged in good faith since 2012.

3. Deviations in Transparency and Notification Protocols

I must also formally note the highly irregular manner in which this May 1 communication was published. It is a deviation from ICANN's established conventions to publish a letter of this nature without first seeking the applicant's permission or providing direct email/portal notification.

Furthermore, the publication of this letter on the Correspondence page selectively links back to Christine Willett's letter from 2019, while conspicuously omitting Nameshop's comprehensive 45-page rebuttal to that letter submitted on June 23, 2019 and another dated July 31, 2017. By omitting our response and breaking the characteristic transparency of publishing our communications since October 2021, ICANN is creating an incomplete public record that distracts from the substantive, 12-year public interest arguments detailed in our April 14 letter. **This selective transparency obscures Nameshop's application history and substantive arguments, resulting in the Community and the press being misled into perceiving the application in a factually incorrect light.**

4. Addressing the Artificial Bottleneck to Strengthen Trust

The assertion that there are "simply no further avenues to delegation" is an artificial bottleneck created by corporate rigidity and a lack of due process, rather than a reflection of the application's merits or Nameshop's extensive public interest commitments.

We respectfully ask ICANN to address this procedural bottleneck with the fairness and urgency it requires. Finding an equitable avenue to evaluate and delegate an uncontested application from the 2012 round, fortified with a wealth of public-interest-focused commitments, does not weaken ICANN's rules; rather, resolving this anomaly gracefully will profoundly strengthen the global community's trust, and the applicant's trust, in ICANN's fairness as a global, multistakeholder organization.

We remain fully prepared to provide further information on our significant public interest commitments to facilitate the timely delegation of .Internet. For your ease of reference, I have attached our April 25, 2019 response and our June 23, 2019 comprehensive summary, which were conspicuously omitted from your recent publication.

Nameshop also formally requests, and conveys its express consent, to publish this correspondence and its attachments on the ICANN website without delay in the interest of transparency and fairness.

Thank you for your time, fairness, and consideration.

Respectfully,
Sivasubramanian Muthusamy
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