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# Different TLD Types

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# 1. Different TLD Types

## 1.1 Information regarding Different Application Types

Certain application types may require differential treatment according to the nature of the application, string, or applicant. An applicant may find differing requirements/processing steps based on the application type for:

- **Application Questions:** Does an application type require the applicant to answer specialized questions in their application?
- **Prioritization:** Does an application type receive priority in the prioritization draw (e.g., IDNs)?
- **Evaluation:** Does the nature, focus, or goal of an application require a specialized evaluation?
- **Contention:** Does an application type have specialized contention procedures?
- **Contracting:** Are some application types exempt from certain provisions? Alternatively, are some application types required to include specialized provisions in their agreements?
- **Fees:** Does an application type require the applicant to pay additional evaluation or application fees?

Applicants should review the information in this section to understand the potential for differing requirements for different application types.<sup>1</sup>

## 1.2. Application Types

The table below provides an overview of the application types as well as the areas in which there may be differing requirements:

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<sup>1</sup> Note that there may also be different requirements for application change requests, including what types of application designations can or cannot be changed. Refer to [Section 1.3](#) below for more information as well as [Module/Section XX](#) for full details regarding application change requests.

Table X.X Overview of Application Types and Key Differences in Handling

gTLD Type	Application, String, or Applicant	Processing Prioritization <sup>2</sup>	Contention	Additional Contract Schedules	Additional Fees
<a href="#">General</a>	N/A	Standard	Standard	N/A	None
<a href="#">Community</a>	Application	Standard	May elect CPE	Spec 12	If CPE Performed
<a href="#">Geographic Name</a>	String	Standard	Standard	None	None
<a href="#">Reserved Name</a>	String	Standard	Standard	None	None
<a href="#">.BRAND</a>	Application	Standard	Standard Late string change	Spec 13	None
<a href="#">IDN</a>	String	Priority	Standard	None	None
<a href="#">Variant of Existing gTLD</a>	Application	Priority	Standard	(New RA which includes Spec 14)	<= 4 variants: None > 4 variants: Yes
<a href="#">Primary (IDN)+ Variant of New gTLD</a>	Application	Priority	Standard	Spec 14	<= 4 variants: None > 4 variants: Yes
<a href="#">Cat 1 Safeguard</a>	String	Standard	Standard	Additional PICs, as applicable, in Spec 11	None
<a href="#">Government/IGO Applicant</a>	Applicant	Standard	Standard	Alternate Provisions	None

<sup>2</sup> This refers to “prioritization” as it relates to Application Processing (for example, priority in the order of processing during evaluation). Refer to [Module/Section XX](#) for more information.

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<a href="#">Applicant Support Applicant</a> <sup>3</sup>	Applicant	Standard	Eligible for Bid Credit	Additional Provisions	None
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<sup>3</sup> Note that applicants applying for Applicant Support are subject to the requirements and evaluations of the Applicant Support Program, which are separate from the requirements and evaluations of the New gTLD Program. See the Applicant Support Handbook for more information.

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## 1.2.1 General Applications

A general application is one that does not fall into one of the application types defined in 1.2.2 and is subject to the standard set of requirements defined throughout this Applicant Guidebook.

## 1.2.2 Specialized Applications

Specialized applications are those that may have different requirements based on the application (for example, an application for a community-based gTLD), string (for example, an IDN), or applicant type (for example, an IGO or Applicant Support applicant). This section provides an overview of these types of applications. Note that it is possible that one or more designations may be applicable to an application (for example, an application could be simultaneously an IDN, community-based gTLD, and geographic names application or an IDN .BRAND application).

### 1.2.2.1 Applications for Community-Based TLDs

At the time of application, an applicant may wish to designate an applied-for gTLD string as community-based. An applicant that elects to designate its applied-for gTLD string as community-based (hereinafter, a “community gTLD string”) must propose to operate the community gTLD string for the benefit of a clearly delineated community [see CPE]. Applicants submitting an application for a community gTLD string will be subject to additional requirements in the following areas of the application lifecycle:

- **Application Questions:** The applicant must answer additional questions regarding the community represented by the applied-for community gTLD string.<sup>4</sup> Refer to [Module/Section XX](#) for more information.
- **Evaluation:** [Evaluation of community registration policies proposed for the operation of an applied-for community gTLD string will occur during Initial Evaluation]. Refer to [Module/Section Public Interest Commitments/Registry Voluntary Commitments XX](#) for more information.
- **Contention:** If in contention with other applications for the same string, the applicant may elect to participate in Community Priority Evaluation (CPE Section XX) and potentially an ICANN Auction. Refer to [Module/Section XX String Contention Procedures](#) for more information.

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<sup>4</sup> Note that an application change request to change the community status of an application will not be allowed. Please see [Module/Section XX](#) for more information regarding allowable change requests.

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- **Contracting:** The applicant must enumerate its community registration policies in Specification 12 of its Registry Agreement. Refer to [Module/Section XX Contracting](#) for more information. See also Section 1.2.2.1.2 below concerning the evaluation of community registration policies.
  - **Fees:** Should an applicant opt to participate in CPE, the applicant must pay an additional evaluation fee which can be recouped should the application prevail in CPE. Refer to [Module/Section XX Fees](#) for more information.

### 1.2.2.1.2. Evaluation of Community Registration Policies

ICANN will evaluate all community registration policies proposed by applicants for community gTLDs during Initial Evaluation. This is to align with ICANN's approach to evaluating all supplemental commitments proposed by applicants using a uniform framework. More information about this framework is available in [[Section XX Public Interest Commitments/Registry Voluntary Commitments.](#)] In order to be considered during the Community Priority Evaluation, proposed community registration policies must be evaluated during Initial Evaluation (before the Community Priority Evaluation, if this occurs) to ensure that the commitments can be agreed between the applicant and ICANN. If such commitments cannot be agreed, they will not be considered during the Community Priority Evaluation process.

Any applicant designating its application as community-based will, if the application is approved, be required to include in Specification 12 of the applicable Registry Agreement the community registration policies it has agreed upon with ICANN during Initial Evaluation. This is true even if there are no contending applicants. See [Module/Section XX](#) for more information on Community Priority evaluation and Topic 9 –PIC/RVCs/Community Registration Policies.

### 1.2.2.2 Applications for Geographic Names

An applicant may designate its application as a geographic name.<sup>5</sup> It is the applicant's responsibility to: identify whether its applied-for gTLD string falls into any of the defined geographic names categories ([see Module/section XX](#)); to identify and consult with the relevant governments or public authorities; and, to identify which level of government support is required. However, as part of initial string evaluation,<sup>6</sup> ICANN will review all applications to determine whether an applied-for string is a geographic name as described later in this section. In such cases, an applicant that did not self-designate as a geographic name, but is later identified as such by ICANN, will still be subject to the additional requirements for a geographic name, and can expect to find differing requirements in the following areas of the application lifecycle:

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<sup>5</sup> Refer to [Module/section XX](#) for a full list of categories of strings that would qualify as geographic names.

<sup>6</sup> Refer to [Module/section XX](#) for an explanation of string evaluations.

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- **Application Questions:** The applicant will be asked additional questions regarding the geographic name for which it is applying. Refer to [Module/Section Application Processing](#) for more information.
  - **Evaluation:** The applicant for a geographic name must submit documentation of support or non-objection from the relevant government entity. A Geographic Names Panel (GNP) will determine whether the applied-for string represents a geographic name, and verify the relevance and authenticity of the supporting documentation where necessary. Refer to [Module/Section Geographic Names Evaluation](#) for more information.

### 1.2.2.3 Applications for Reserved Names

All applied-for gTLD strings are compared with both the Reserved and Blocked Names lists. While “blocked names” cannot be applied for, eligible entities may apply for a “reserved name” as defined in [Module/Section Blocked and Reserved Names](#).<sup>7</sup> For example if the Red Cross Red Crescent (RCRC) (or an authorized Member organization) may wish to apply for a name that is currently on the reserved list. To apply for such a name, the applicant must follow the process defined in [Section XXXX Exception Process to Apply for a Reserved Name](#). Applicants submitting applications for a reserved name can expect to find differing requirements in the following areas of the application lifecycle:

- **Application Questions:** The applicant will be asked additional questions regarding the reserved name for which it is applying. Refer to [Module/Section Application Processing](#) for more information.
- **Evaluation:** The applicant for a reserved name must submit documentation of Certification of Incorporation and letter from parent organization as well as documentation of support or non-objection including a signed letter, if applicable. Refer to [Module/Section Evaluation Procedures](#) for more information.

### 1.2.2.4 Applications for Exclusive Use

#### 1.2.2.4.1 Applications for .BRAND TLDs

Applicants will have the ability to self-designate an application as a .BRAND TLD. This application type allows a business or corporation to use their company or brand name as a TLD.

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<sup>7</sup> The section details an exception process, which allows for applicants to apply for a name from the Reserved Names list. This process applies exclusively to Red Cross Red Crescent (RCRC), International Olympic Committee (IOC), and International Governmental Organization (IGO) - International Non-Governmental Organizations (INGO) Names.

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<sup>8</sup> A .BRAND TLD is a string that is identical to the textual elements (e.g., a name, word, or phrase) of a registered trademark valid under applicable law<sup>9</sup>, and which the applicant intends to operate as a .BRAND TLD.<sup>10</sup> Applicants submitting applications for a .BRAND TLD can expect to find differing requirements in the following areas of the application lifecycle:

- **Application Questions:** The applicant will be asked additional questions regarding the application for which it is applying as a .BRAND TLD (e.g., their brand/trademark). Refer to [Module/Section XX Application Processing](#) for more information.
- **Evaluation:** An application for a .BRAND TLD will be reviewed to determine eligibility for obtaining .BRAND TLD status.<sup>11</sup> Refer to [Module/Section XX Evaluation Procedures](#) for more information.
- **Contention:** If in contention with other applicants for the same applied-for string, applicants for .BRAND TLDs may have the opportunity to request a change to their applied-for string to resolve the contention. Refer to [Module/Section String Contention Procedures](#) for more information.<sup>12</sup>
- **Contracting:** If eligible, Specification 13 would be included in its Registry Agreement for execution.<sup>13</sup> Refer to [Module/Section Contracting](#) for more information.

#### 1.2.2.4.2 Applications for Exclusive Use TLDs

Applicants will have the ability to self-designate an application as an Exclusive Use TLD. This application type allows a business or corporation to use a non-generic term for its exclusive use as a TLD. Applicants submitting applications for an Exclusive Use TLD can expect to find differing requirements in the following areas of the application lifecycle:

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<sup>8</sup> For reference, see Specification 13 9.3(i) of the April 2023 version of Base Specification 13 for more information concerning .BRAND TLDs and requirements:

<https://itp.cdn.icann.org/en/files/registry-agreements/base-registry-agreement-specification-13-30-04-2023-en.pdf>.

<sup>9</sup> Note that in cases of contention with other applicants, a .BRAND TLD may have the opportunity to change its string to add a descriptor to the domain name, in which case the domain name may no longer be an exact match to the textual elements of a registered trademark. See [Module/Section XX Application Change Requests](#).

<sup>10</sup> Note it is not always the case that a string that matches a brand name will be operated as a .BRAND. It is possible that an applicant applies for a string, which matches a brand name, not intending to operate as a .BRAND.

<sup>11</sup> In some cases, an applicant for a .BRAND TLD may obtain a Code of Conduct (Specification 9) Exemption but not be eligible for Specification 13. See this FAQ for more information on Specification 9: <https://newgtlds.icann.org/sites/default/files/faqs-18mar14-en.pdf>.

<sup>12</sup> See also [Module/Section XX](#) regarding application change requests for eligibility and evaluation requirements.

<sup>13</sup> As noted above, eligible applicants may also apply for a Code of Conduct (Specification 9) exemption. See this FAQ for more information: <https://newgtlds.icann.org/sites/default/files/faqs-18mar14-en.pdf>.

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- **Application Questions:** The applicant will be asked additional questions regarding the application for which it is applying as an Exclusive Use TLD. Refer to [Module/Section XX Application Processing](#) for more information.
  - **Evaluation:** An application for an Exclusive Use TLD will be reviewed to determine eligibility for obtaining Exclusive Use TLD status.<sup>14</sup> Refer to [Module/Section XX Evaluation Procedures](#) for more information.
  - **Contracting:** If eligible, an Exception to the Code of Conduct would be included in its Registry Agreement for execution.<sup>15</sup> Refer to [Module/Section Contracting](#) for more information.

### 1.2.2.5 Applications for Internationalized Domain Name TLDs

Applicants will have the ability to apply for IDNs, which are an integral part and core focus of the New gTLD Program. Applications for IDNs must comply with the requirements defined in [Module/Section XX, Internationalized Domain Names and](#) can expect to find differing requirements in the following areas of the application lifecycle:

- **Prioritization:** Subject to the limits and requirements identified in [Module/Section Application Queuing](#), applications for IDNs may be given priority in processing over applications for non-IDN strings.

### 1.2.2.6 Applications for Variants of Existing TLDs

A “variant TLD” is a string that is a variant of a primary label. Existing Registry Operators will have the opportunity to apply for variants of existing TLDs.<sup>16</sup> Applications for variants of existing TLDs must comply with the requirements defined in [Module/Section IDNs](#), and can expect to find differing requirements in the following areas of the application lifecycle:

- **Application Questions:** The applicant will be asked additional questions regarding the variant TLD for which it is applying. Refer to [Module/Section Application Processing](#) for more information.
- **Prioritization:** Subject to the limits and requirements identified in [Module/Section Application Queuing](#), applications for variants may be given priority in processing over applications for non-IDN strings.

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<sup>14</sup> In some cases, an applicant for a BRAND TLD may obtain a Code of Conduct (Specification 9) Exemption but not be eligible for Specification 13. See this FAQ for more information on Specification 9: <https://newgtlds.icann.org/sites/default/files/faqs-18mar14-en.pdf>.

<sup>15</sup> As noted above, eligible applicants may also apply for a Code of Conduct (Specification 9) exemption. See this FAQ for more information: <https://newgtlds.icann.org/sites/default/files/faqs-18mar14-en.pdf>.

<sup>16</sup> Applicants will also have the opportunity to apply for variants of “new” IDN TLDs. See Section 1.2.2.7.

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- **Evaluation:** An applicant for a variant of an existing gTLD will be subject to review by a panel and will be expected to provide justification in its application for why the variant is needed (e.g., explanation of how the primary and variant labels are considered the same)<sup>17</sup>. Additional requirements may apply such as using the same RSP for the variant registry as the primary registry. Refer to [Module/Section Application Processing and Module/Section Evaluation Procedures](#) for more information.
  - **Contracting:** [\[Specification XX\]](#) will be added to the Registry Agreement for execution. Refer to [Module/Section Contracting](#) for more information.
  - **Fees:** Existing registry operators that are applying for variants of existing TLDs only will have the base application fee waived for up to four variants<sup>18</sup>; applications for more than four variants may incur additional fees. Refer to [Module/Section Fees](#) for more information.<sup>19</sup>

### 1.2.2.7 Applications for New IDN TLD including one or more Variants

Applicants will have the opportunity to apply for a new IDN TLD (“primary TLD”) plus its variants. Applications for new IDN TLDs and its variants must comply with the requirements defined in [Module/Section IDNs](#) and can expect to find differing requirements in the following areas of the application lifecycle:

- **Application Questions:** The applicant will be asked additional questions regarding the IDN TLD and its variants for which it is applying. Refer to [Module/Section Application Processing](#) for more information.
- **Prioritization:** Subject to the limits and requirements identified in [Module/Section Application Queuing](#), applications for IDN TLDs including variants may be given priority in processing over applications for non-IDN strings.
- **Evaluation:** An applicant for a new IDN TLD and its variants will be subject to review by a panel and will be expected to provide justification in its application for why the variant is needed (e.g., explanation of how the primary and variant labels are considered the same).<sup>20</sup> Additional requirements may apply such as using the same RSP for the variant

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<sup>17</sup> See Recommendation 3.5 of the Phase 1 Final Report on the Internationalized Domain Names Expedited Policy Development Process: <https://gns0.icann.org/sites/default/files/policy/2023/correspondence/epdp-idns2-leadership-team-et-al-to-gns0-council-et-al-08nov23-en.pdf>.

<sup>18</sup> *Ibid.* See Recommendations 3.11 and 3.12. The total number of variants that can be applied for is based upon the calculation in the RZ-LGR.

<sup>19</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>20</sup> *Ibid.* See Recommendation 3.5.

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registry as the primary registry, and the TLD Types are the same across primary and variants. Refer to [Module/Section, Evaluation](#) for more information.

- **Contracting:** [\[Specification TBD\]](#) will be added to the Registry Agreement for execution. Refer to [Module/Section Contracting](#) for more information.
- **Fees:** New applicants applying for a primary string plus its variants will not incur additional application fees beyond the base fee for up to four variants; applications for the primary string plus more than four variants will incur additional fees. Refer to [Module/Section Fees](#) for more information.<sup>21</sup>

### 1.2.2.8 Applications for Category 1 Safeguard TLDs

As part of initial string evaluation, ICANN will determine if an applied-for string is a Category 1 Safeguard TLD.<sup>22</sup> These are TLDs “that are linked to regulated or professional sectors” (for example, .BROKER, .DENTIST) as well as “consumer protection, sensitive strings, and regulated markets” (for example, .KIDS, .ECO, .CREDIT).<sup>23</sup> Applicants can expect to find differing requirements in the following areas of the application lifecycle:

- **Application Questions:** The applicant will be asked additional questions regarding the appropriateness of Safeguards during application.
- **Evaluation:** All applied-for strings will be subject to ICANN evaluation for the potential application of Safeguards.
- **Contracting:** Category 1 TLDs require the use of one of three levels of safeguards, which must be incorporated into a registry operator’s Registry Agreement:
  - Regulated Sectors/Open Entry Requirements in Multiple Jurisdictions
  - Highly Regulated Sectors/Closed Entry Requirements in Multiple Jurisdictions
  - Special Safeguards Required

Refer to [Module/Section String Evaluations and Module/Section Contracting](#) for more information.

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<sup>21</sup>See:

<https://gns0.icann.org/sites/default/files/policy/2023/correspondence/epdp-idns2-leadership-team-et-al-to-gns0-council-et-al-08nov23-en.pdf> .

<sup>22</sup> An applicant may also wish to self-designate as a Category 1 string if it believes the applied-for string falls into one of the identified categories.

<sup>23</sup> See: GAC ICANN46 Beijing Communique

(<https://gac.icann.org/content/Migrated/icann46-beijing-communique?version=1&modificationDate=1365666376000&api=v2>).

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## 1.2.2.9 Applications from Intergovernmental Organizations or Governmental Entities

An application from intergovernmental organizations (IGOs)<sup>24</sup> or governmental entities<sup>25</sup> will be accepted. Such applicants should take into account the requirements for geographic names defined in [Module/Section Geographic Names Evaluation](#) as well as requirements for reserved names as defined in [Module/Section XX Blocked and Reserved Names](#). These applicants can expect to find differing requirements in the following areas of the application lifecycle:

- **Application Questions:** Such entities may be asked additional questions regarding their particular organization. Refer to [Module/Section XX Application Processing](#) for more information.
- **Evaluation:** Such entities will be required to provide documentation to verify their status as an Intergovernmental or Governmental organization, as applicable. Refer to [Module/Section Evaluation Procedures](#), [Module/Section Geographic Names Evaluation](#), and [Module/Section Blocked and Reserved Names](#) for more information.
- **Contracting:** “Special Provision Relating to Intergovernmental Organizations or Governmental Entities” will be included in the applicant’s Registry Agreement for execution. Refer to [Module/Section XX Contracting](#) for more information.

## 1.2.2.10 Applications from Applicants Eligible for Applicant Support

Prior to the opening of the current round, eligible applicants have participated in the Applicant Support Program and been evaluated based upon the criteria set forth in the Applicant Support Handbook. An application for Applicant Support is separate and different from an application for a new gTLD. Applicants that obtain Applicant Support should refer to the requirements and eligibility criteria for a new gTLD application, as defined in this Applicant Guidebook.

Applicants eligible for Applicant Support can expect to find differing requirements in the following areas of the application lifecycle:

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<sup>24</sup> An IGO is an organization composed primarily of sovereign states, or of other intergovernmental organizations. IGOs are established by treaty or other agreement that acts as a charter creating the group. Examples include the United Nations, the World Bank, or the European Union. Source: Union of International Associations, <https://uia.org/faq/yb3>.

<sup>25</sup> [Typically defined as a national government or any department, agency, or subdivision thereof with the relevant authority.]

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- **Contention:** Applicant support applicants that participate in an ICANN Auction will be provided a bid-credit. Refer to [Module/Section String Contention Procedures](#) for more information.
  - **Contracting:** If an applicant that has been successful in obtaining applicant support prevails in an auction, the applicant will be restricted from assigning the Registry Agreement, and/or from any Change of Control for a period of no less than three (3) years. Refer to [Module/Section Contracting](#) for more information.
  - **Fees:** An applicant qualifying for Applicant Support will pay a reduced gTLD application fee. Refer to [Module/Section Fees](#) as well as the [Applicant Support Program Handbook](#) for more information.

### 1.2.3 Other Applications

As defined in the SubPro Final Report, Recommendation 4.2, “[o]ther than the types listed in Recommendation 4.1, creating additional application types must only be done under exceptional circumstances. Creating additional application types, string types, or applicant types must be done solely when differential treatment is warranted and is NOT intended to validate or invalidate any other differences in applications.”

## 1.3 Changing Application Types

In some cases, an applicant may wish to change its application type. This may or may not be permitted, based on the application type. For example, an applicant will not be permitted to change a community TLD designation. Please refer to [Module/Section Application Change Requests](#) for more information regarding which changes to an application and/or string type may be permitted.

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## 2. TLD String Types

Regardless of Applicant, certain strings will trigger specific processing and evaluation procedures. Each applied-for string will be evaluated to determine which of the following classifications are applicable. In most cases the applicant will be able to self-assert string type during application and will be prompted for the appropriate responsive material.

### 2.1 Geographic Names Requiring Government Support

The following types of applied-for strings are considered geographic names and must be accompanied by documentation of support or non-objection from the relevant governments or public authorities:

1. An application for any string that is a representation, in any language, of the capital city name of any country or territory listed in the ISO 3166-1 standard.
2. An application for a city name, where the applicant declares that it intends to use the gTLD for purposes associated with the city name. City names present challenges because city names may also be generic terms or brand names, and in many cases city names are not unique. Unlike other types of geographic names, there are no established lists that can be used as objective references in the evaluation process. Thus, city names are not universally protected. However, the process does provide a means for cities and applicants to work together where desired. An application for a city name will be subject to the geographic names requirements (i.e., will require documentation of support or non-objection from the relevant governments or public authorities) if:
  - (a) It is clear from applicant statements within the application that the applicant will use the TLD primarily for purposes associated with the city name; and
  - (b) The applied-for string is a city name as listed on official city documents.
3. An application for any string that is an exact match of a sub-national place name, such as a county, province, or state, listed in the ISO 3166-2 standard.
4. An application for a string listed as a UNESCO region or appearing on the “Composition of macro geographical (continental) regions, geographical sub-regions, and selected economic

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and other groupings” list or the “Standard country or area codes for statistical use (M49).” The current link for this resource is <https://unstats.un.org/unsd/methodology/m49>.

In the case of an application for a string appearing on either of the lists above, documentation of support will be required from at least 60% of the respective national governments in the region, and there may be no more than one written statement of objection to the application from relevant governments in the region and/or public authorities associated with the continent or the region.

Where the 60% rule is applied, and there are common regions on both lists, the regional composition contained in the “Composition of macro geographical (continental) regions, geographical sub-regions, and selected economic and other groupings” takes precedence. An applied-for gTLD string that falls into any of 1 through 4 listed above is considered to represent a geographic name. In the event of any doubt, it is in the applicant’s interest to consult with relevant governments and public authorities and enlist their support or non-objection prior to submission of the application, in order to preclude possible objections and pre-address any ambiguities concerning the string and applicable requirements. Strings that include but do not match a geographic name (as defined in this section) will not be considered geographic names, and therefore will not require documentation of government support in the evaluation process.

For each application, the Geographic Names Panel will determine which governments are relevant based on the inputs of the applicant, governments, and its own research and analysis. In the event that there is more than one relevant government or public authority for the applied-for gTLD string, the applicant must provide documentation of support or non-objection from all the relevant governments or public authorities. It is anticipated that this may apply to the case of a sub-national place name. It is the applicant’s responsibility to:

- identify whether its applied-for gTLD string falls into any of the above categories; and
- identify and consult with the relevant governments or public authorities; and
- identify which level of government support is required. Note: the level of government and which administrative agency is responsible for the filing of letters of support or non-objection is a matter for each national administration to determine. Applicants should consult within the relevant jurisdiction to determine the appropriate level of support. The requirement to include documentation of support for certain applications does not preclude or exempt applications from being the subject of objections on community grounds (refer to **XX**), under which applications may be rejected based on objections showing substantial opposition from the targeted community.

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## 2.1.1 Documentation Requirements

The documentation of support or non-objection should include a signed letter from the relevant government or public authority. Understanding that this will differ across the respective jurisdictions, the letter could be signed by the minister with the portfolio responsible for domain name administration, ICT, foreign affairs, or the Office of the Prime Minister or President of the relevant jurisdiction; or a senior representative of the agency or department responsible for domain name administration, ICT, foreign affairs, or the Office of the Prime Minister. To assist the applicant in determining who the relevant government or public authority may be for a potential geographic name, the applicant may wish to consult with the relevant Governmental Advisory Committee (GAC) representative.

The letter must clearly express the government's or public authority's support for or non-objection to the applicant's application and demonstrate the government's or public authority's understanding of the string being requested and its intended use. The letter should also demonstrate the government's or public authority's understanding that the string is being sought through the gTLD application process and that the applicant is willing to accept the conditions under which the string will be available, i.e., entry into a registry agreement with ICANN requiring compliance with consensus policies and payment of fees. (See [XX](#) for a discussion of the obligations of a gTLD registry operator.)

[A sample letter of support is available here](#)

Applicants and governments may conduct discussions concerning government support for an application at any time. Applicants are encouraged to begin such discussions at the earliest possible stage, and enable governments to follow the processes that may be necessary to consider, approve, and generate a letter of support or non-objection.

It is important to note that a government or public authority is under no obligation to provide documentation of support or non-objection in response to a request by an applicant. It is also possible that a government may withdraw its support for an application at a later time, including after the new gTLD has been delegated, if the registry operator has deviated from the conditions of original support or non-objection. Applicants should be aware that ICANN has committed to governments that, in the event of a dispute between a government (or public authority) and a registry operator that submitted documentation of support from that government or public authority, ICANN will comply with a legally binding order from a court in the jurisdiction of the government or public authority that has given support to an application.

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## 2.1.2 Evaluation Procedure for Geographic Names

A Geographic Names Panel (GNP) will determine whether each applied-for gTLD string represents a geographic name, and verify the relevance and authenticity of the supporting documentation where necessary. The GNP will review all applications received, not only those where the applicant has noted its applied-for gTLD string as a geographic name. For any application where the GNP determines that the applied-for gTLD string is a country or territory name (as defined in this module), the application will not pass the Geographic Names Evaluation and will be denied. No additional evaluations will be available. For any application where the GNP determines that the applied-for gTLD string is not a geographic name requiring government support (as described in this module), the application will pass the Geographic Names Evaluation with no additional steps required. For any application where the GNP determines that the applied-for gTLD string is a geographic name requiring government support, the GNP will confirm that the applicant has provided the required documentation from the relevant governments or public authorities, and that the communication from the government or public authority is legitimate and contains the required content. ICANN may confirm the authenticity of the communication by consulting with the relevant diplomatic authorities or members of ICANN's Governmental Advisory Committee for the government or public authority concerned on the competent authority and appropriate point of contact within their administration for communications. The GNP may communicate with the signing entity of the letter to confirm their intent and their understanding of the terms on which the support for an application is given. In cases where an applicant has not provided the required documentation, the applicant will be contacted and notified of the requirement, and given a limited time frame to provide the documentation. If the applicant is able to provide the documentation before the close of the Initial Evaluation period, and the documentation is found to meet the requirements, the applicant will pass the Geographic Names Evaluation. If not, the applicant will have additional time to obtain the required documentation; however, if the applicant has not produced the required documentation by the required date (at least 90 calendar days from the date of notice), the application will be considered incomplete and will be ineligible for further review. The applicant may reapply in subsequent application rounds, if desired, subject to the fees and requirements of the specific application rounds.

If there is more than one application for a string representing a certain geographic name as described in this section, and the applications have requisite government approvals, the applications will be suspended pending resolution by the applicants. If the applicants have not reached a resolution by either the date of the end of the application round (as announced by ICANN), or the date on which ICANN opens a subsequent application round, whichever comes first, the applications will be rejected and applicable refunds will be available to applicants according to the conditions described **XX**. However, in the event that a contention set is

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composed of multiple applications with documentation of support from the same government or public authority, the applications will proceed through the contention resolution procedures described in [XX](#) when requested by the government or public authority providing the documentation. If an application for a string representing a geographic name is in a contention set with applications for similar strings that have not been identified as geographical names, the string contention will be resolved using the string contention procedures described in [XX](#).

## 2.2 IDN TLD

In addition to all other relevant applicant and string evaluation procedures, applications for strings that are IDNs (per IDNA2008 (RFCs 5890-5895)) are considered IDN TLD applications and (1) must be compliant with all relevant technical and policy requirements; and (2) may receive priority processing order subject to [XX](#).

## 2.3 Blocked and Reserved Names

Blocked names cannot be applied for. Eligible entities may apply for a Reserved name as defined in [Module/Section Blocked and Reserved Names](#).

## 2.4 Strings subject to Category 1 Safeguards

In addition to all other relevant applicant and string evaluation procedures, applications for all strings will be reviewed for applicability to additional Safeguards subject to [XX](#).

## 2.5 Standard

All applied-for Strings are subject to DNS Stability evaluation described in section [XX](#).