



AL-ALAC-ST-0326-01-00-EN

ORIGINAL: English

DATE: 4 May 2026

STATUS: Ratified

**AT-LARGE ADVISORY COMMITTEE**  
**ALAC Statement on the Draft Evaluation Guide**  
**for Community Priority Evaluation (CPE)**

**Preamble**

On 24 March 2026, the Public Comment proceeding opened for the Draft Evaluation Guide for Community Priority Evaluation (CPE). An At-Large workspace was created in preparation for this Public Comment submission. The At-Large Consolidated Policy Working Group reviewed the Draft Evaluation Guide for Community Priority Evaluation and decided it would be in the interest of end user communities to develop and submit an ALAC Public Comment Statement.

|                                                  |          |
|--------------------------------------------------|----------|
| <b>Preamble.....</b>                             | <b>1</b> |
| <b>Ratification Record.....</b>                  | <b>1</b> |
| <b>ALAC and At-Large Community Comments.....</b> | <b>2</b> |
| <b>Conclusion.....</b>                           | <b>3</b> |

**Ratification Record**

On 24 March 2026, the Public Comment proceeding opened for the Draft Evaluation Guide for Community Priority Evaluation. On 01 April 2026, the Consolidated Policy Working Group (CPWG) discussed the comments for an ALAC statement. The CPWG decided it would be in the interest of end user communities to develop and submit an ALAC statement for this Public Comment proceeding. David Inem, Nkoro Essang Nkoro, and Shadrack Inusah volunteered to draft the initial ALAC statement for CPWG consideration and ALAC endorsement.

On 08 April 2026, a draft statement was shared with the CPWG for review and input. This draft statement was discussed on 15 April 2026 and again on 22 April 2026. On 23 April 2026, the draft ALAC statement was finalized. The ALAC Chair, Jonathan Zuck, requested that the statement be ratified by the ALAC before submission to the ICANN Public Comment feature.

**ALAC Statement on the Draft Evaluation Guide for Community Priority Evaluation (CPE)**  
**AL-ALAC-ST-0326-01-00-EN**

On 04 May 2026, staff confirmed the online vote resulted in the ALAC endorsing the statement with 14 out of 15 votes in favor. 0 votes against, and 0 abstentions. Please note 93% of ALAC members participated in the poll. The ALAC members who participated in the poll are: Adebunmi Akinbo, Aftab Siddiqui, Aziz Hilali, Claire Craig, Eunice Alejandra Perez Coello, Emilia Zalewska-Czajczynska, Hannah Frank, Jonathan Zuck, Judith Hellerstein, Justine Chew, Kathleen Scoggin, Natalie Tercova, Raihanath Gbadamassi, Satish Babu. You may view the results here:

| The ALAC has been asked to vote on the Draft Evaluation Guide for Community Priority Evaluation (CPE) |                                                                                     |       |                                                        |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------|--------------------------------------------------------|
| Total Voters:15                                                                                       |                                                                                     |       |                                                        |
| Choice 🗳️                                                                                             | View Raw Votes 🗳️                                                                   | Votes | Percentage 🗳️                                          |
| Yes                                                                                                   |  | 14    | <div><div style="width: 100.00%;"></div></div> 100.00% |
| No                                                                                                    |  | 0     | <div><div style="width: 0.00%;"></div></div> 0.00%     |
| Abstain                                                                                               |  | 0     | <div><div style="width: 0.00%;"></div></div> 0.00%     |

## ALAC and At-Large Community Comments

The At-Large Advisory Committee (ALAC) and the At-Large community appreciate the opportunity to provide input on the Draft Vendor Evaluation Guide for Community Priority Evaluation (CPE).

We welcome the effort to provide clear guidance for how CPE will be conducted in the New gTLD Program: 2026 NextRound. At this stage, which is focused on implementation, we appreciate that the Evaluation Guide must strictly follow the rules already set out in Section 5.4 of the [Applicant Guidebook \(AGB\) published on 16 December 2025](#). The Guide should therefore not introduce new interpretations, scoring thresholds, or requirements, but should instead help evaluators apply the existing rules in a clear, consistent, and predictable way.

Overall, we find the guide to be well structured and aligned with the AGB. It clearly explains the evaluation criteria, scoring system, and process steps, and it highlights the importance of fairness, transparency, and evidence-based decision-making. However, we wish to offer some feedback that we believe would improve the use of this draft Guide.

1. For clarity, we recommend using either the term “vendor” or “provider” throughout the document for consistency instead of using them interchangeably.
2. As transparency and accountability are essential to building trust in the CPE process, we welcome the requirement for evaluators to provide clear and detailed rationales for their scores and decisions. This is especially important because, even with guidance and scoring rules, different panels may still reach different conclusions. Clear rationales will help ensure that decisions are understandable, consistent, and can be constructively reviewed if challenged.
3. We also recommend that clear instructions be included to guide evaluators in managing scenarios involving conflicting evidence, especially cases that fall near the decision threshold (i.e. borderline determinations). Evaluators should be encouraged to use the Clarifying Question

mechanism if they find sections in any Community application with insufficient or incomplete descriptions.

4. Finally, we recommend improving clarity around the overall CPE process, whether provided within this draft Guide or as another addendum to the AGB. Information should be included on the process by which applicants are to submit challenges to CPE determinations to the Provider. Indications of clear and realistic timelines to each key step in the CPE process would also help. These aspects are important and would greatly benefit applicants' appreciation of the entire CPE process.

## **Conclusion**

Overall, the At-Large Advisory Committee (ALAC) and the At-Large community consider the draft Guide to be aligned with the AGB. However, we hope that this draft Guide will be further improved by taking our feedback into account.