

NEW gTLD PROGRAM: NEXT ROUND

# A More Inclusive Internet: New Generic Top-Level Domains



# Agenda

- 01 Introduction to the Internet and the Domain Name System (DNS)
- 02 Internationalized Domain Names and Universal Acceptance
- 03 Building A More Inclusive Internet through New Generic Top-Level Domains

- 04 New gTLD Applicant Support Program
- 05 Registry Service Provider Evaluation Program
- 06 Timeline and Resources
- 07 Q & A

# The Internet is a Global Network of Networks



# How Do We Navigate the Internet?



IP addresses are hard for people to remember

- IPv4: 192.0.43.7
- IPv6: 2001:0db8:ac10:fe01:0000



People easily remember words.

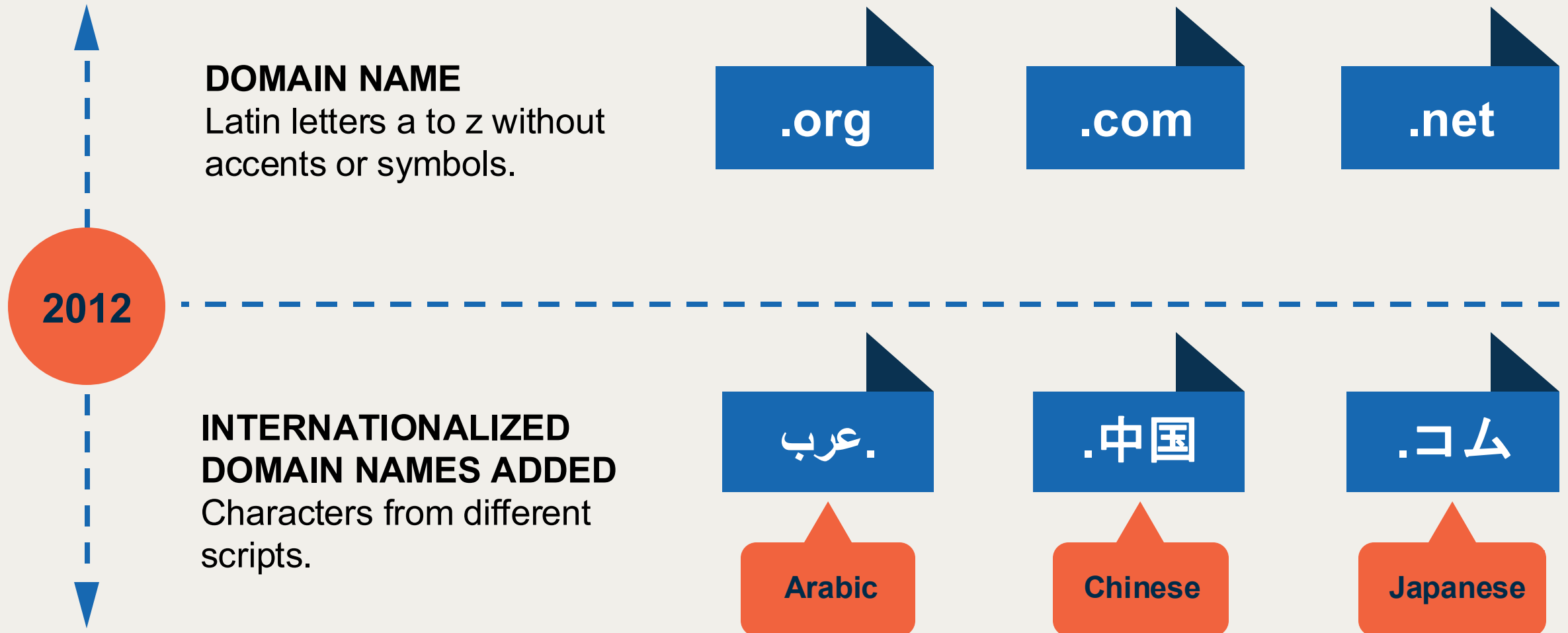
**www.icann.org = 192.0.43.7**

# What is a Domain Name?

www.icann.org

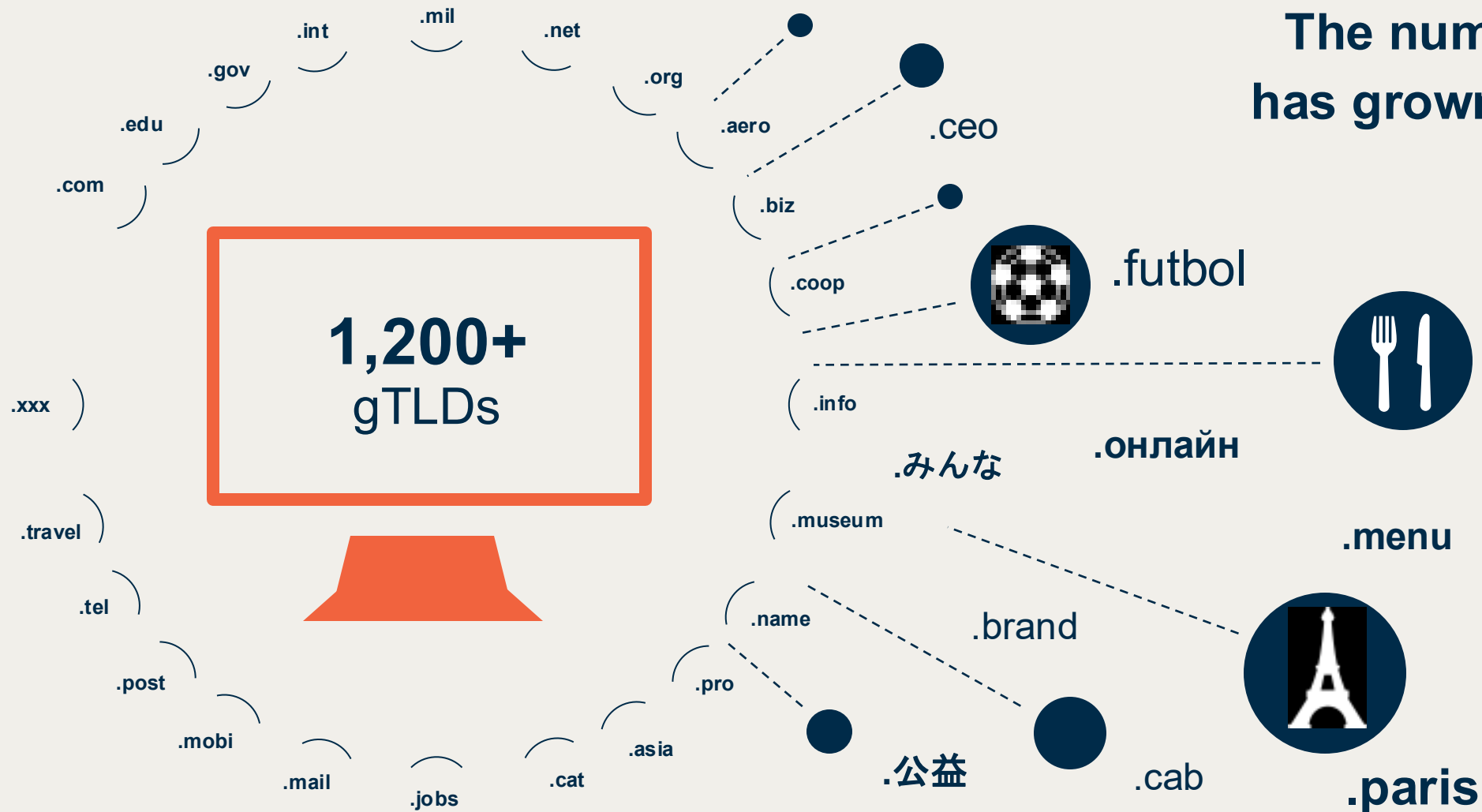
  
Top-Level Domain

# What Are Top-Level Domains (TLDs)?





# Expansion of the DNS



The number of gTLDs has grown to over 1,200.

# Building a More Inclusive Internet

The ICANN community is working to make the Internet more globally usable via...



Universal Acceptance – The technical necessity that ensures that all valid domain names and email addresses can be used by all Internet-enabled applications, devices, and systems.

- *Legacy applications and systems should be updated.*



Internationalized Domain Names – Domain names represented by characters other than Latin-based or ASCII characters (a through z).



**Everyone should be able to use the Internet using a domain name and email address that fits their language or culture.**



**NEW gTLD PROGRAM:** NEXT ROUND

# The New gTLD Program: Next Round

# New Domain Names, New Uses

▶ Serve diverse cultural, geographic, language, and professional communities.

▶ Provide communities and organizations opportunity to create their own space online.

▶ Build trust in and awareness of a brand.

▶ Manage and secure your online presence.

## EXAMPLES:

Industry-specific:

**.photography**

**.rugby**

**.bank**

Creative tools:

**playlist.new**

**doc.new**

Location-based:

**.durban**

**.nyc**

Script-based:

**.网址**

**.شبكة**

Brands:

**.google**

**.apple**

Online identity:

**.blog**

# gTLD Opportunities

gTLDs can be tailored for audiences based on:



Businesses and brands



Communities and cultures



Geographies  
(e.g., cities and regions)



Governments – local and national  
- and IGOs



Targeted  
customers or  
memberships



Users of diverse  
scripts

# Benefits of Operating a gTLD



# Becoming a Registry Operator



Applying for a gTLD means you are applying to operate a piece of the Internet (a registry).



A registry supports all the domains registered under a particular gTLD.

## A Registry Operator:

- ▶ Sets the requirements for the gTLD.
- ▶ Determines which second-level domains (the characters to the left of the dot) can be registered, and by whom.

# Financial and Technical Considerations

New gTLD Program: Next Round expected evaluation fee: **US \$227,000**

In addition to:

- + Standard operational fees included in the Registry Agreement signed with ICANN
- + Ongoing financial and technical obligations

\*Fees subject to change

\*\*Exceptions may apply for eligible applicants



Applying for a new gTLD requires significant financial and technical resources.



All new gTLD applicants must be able to demonstrate the operational, technical, and financial capacities necessary to operate a registry and comply with contractual requirements.

# Responsibilities of Registry Operators



## Registry operators:

- Maintain master database of all domain names registered in the TLD.
- Generate the "zone file" that allows computers to route Internet traffic to and from TLDs anywhere in the world.



## Responsibilities include:

- Manage requirements detailed in the Registry Agreement and ICANN policies.
- Convert domain names into IP addresses to enable routing of Internet traffic.
- Operate the technical aspects of the TLD.



# Next Round: Applicant Support Program (ASP)

# Criteria for Applicant Support

To be eligible for assistance through the Applicant Support Program, applicants must demonstrate:

- ✓ General business due diligence
- ✓ Public responsibility due diligence
- ✓ Financial need
- ✓ Financial viability
- ✓ Eligible entity status

# Applicant Support Program

Applying for a gTLD is expensive and may be out of reach for many. The Applicant Support Program makes applying for a new gTLD more accessible to entities that are unable to because of financial and other resource constraints.

**Candidates must be one of these types of entities:**



Nonprofit,  
nongovernmental, and  
charitable organizations



Intergovernmental  
organizations



Indigenous/tribal  
peoples' organizations



Micro and small  
businesses that are  
social enterprises or  
that operate in a less-  
developed economy

# Applicant Support Portfolio

The Applicant Support Program provides a range of financial and nonfinancial assistance to qualified, eligible entities.



## Financial Support

- ▶ A 75-85% reduction in applicable gTLD evaluation fees
- ▶ Bid credit
- ▶ Reduced/waived base registry operator fees



## Nonfinancial Support

- ▶ Training materials: applying for a gTLD, becoming a Registry Operator
- ▶ Capacity Development/ Mentorship Program
- ▶ Access to an Applicant Counselor
- ▶ List of volunteer professional service providers

# Evaluating Support Applicants

## PHASE 1

### General business due diligence, including:

- ▶ Legal compliance check.
- ▶ Confirming that all required documentation has been submitted.
- ▶ Confirming the applicant meets eligibility criteria for New gTLD Program: Next Round.
- ▶ Background screening and cybersquatting history check.



**Applicants that do not pass the general business due-diligence pre-screening will not be considered for Phase 2 evaluation.**

# Evaluating Support Applicants

## PHASE 2

Evaluations conducted by third-party vendor managing a Support Applicant Review Panel:

▶ **Public responsibility due diligence:**

- Applicant does not trade in, produce, or promote an industry/string contrary to generally accepted legal norms of morality and public order.
- Applicant is not affiliated with an existing ICANN gTLD registry.

▶ **Financial need:**

- Applicant could not afford to apply to the New gTLD Program without financial hardship.

▶ **Financial viability:**

- Applicant demonstrates plan to cover remaining discounted portion of the base gTLD application fee and submits required deposit.



**Applicant is an eligible entity.**

## What Happens Next?

1

**All new gTLD applicants** – supported or not – are required to submit a completed application for a new gTLD.

2

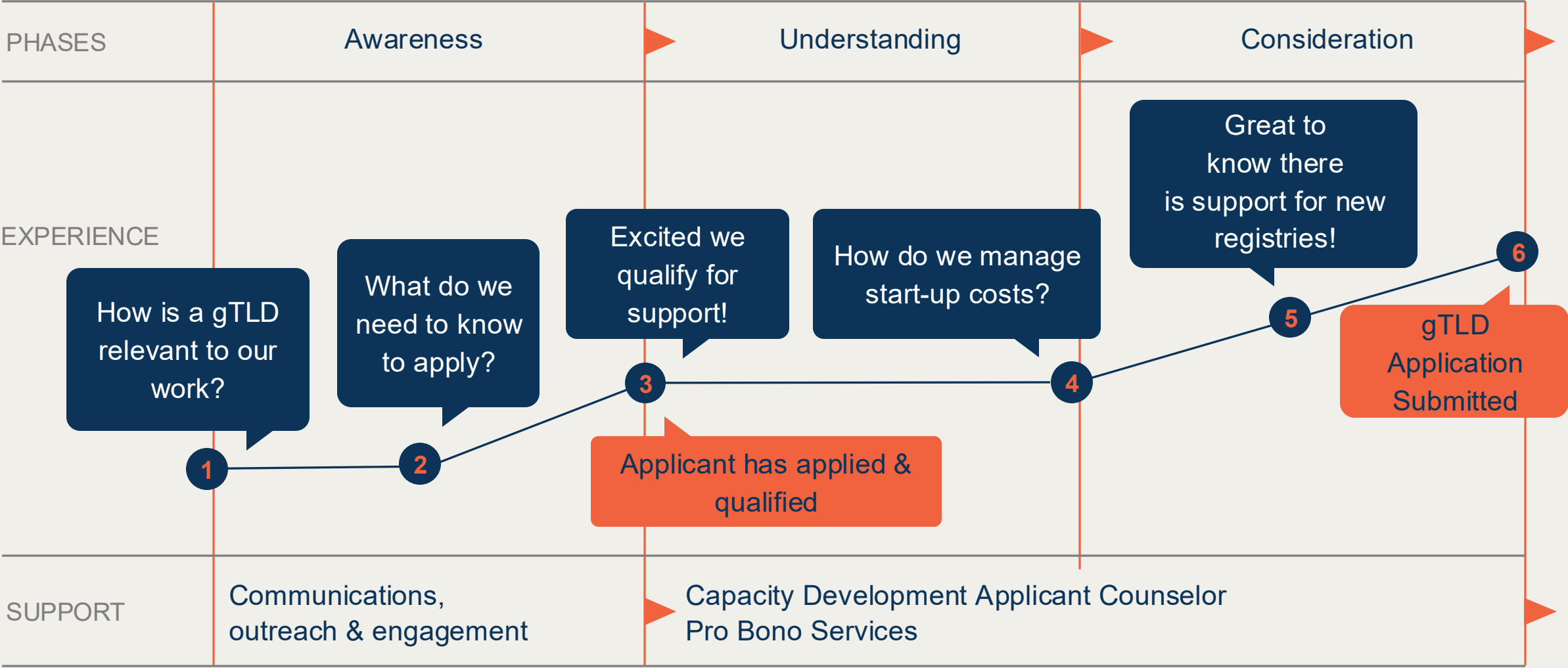
**Requires demonstration** of technical, operational, and financial capabilities needed to operate a gTLD.

3

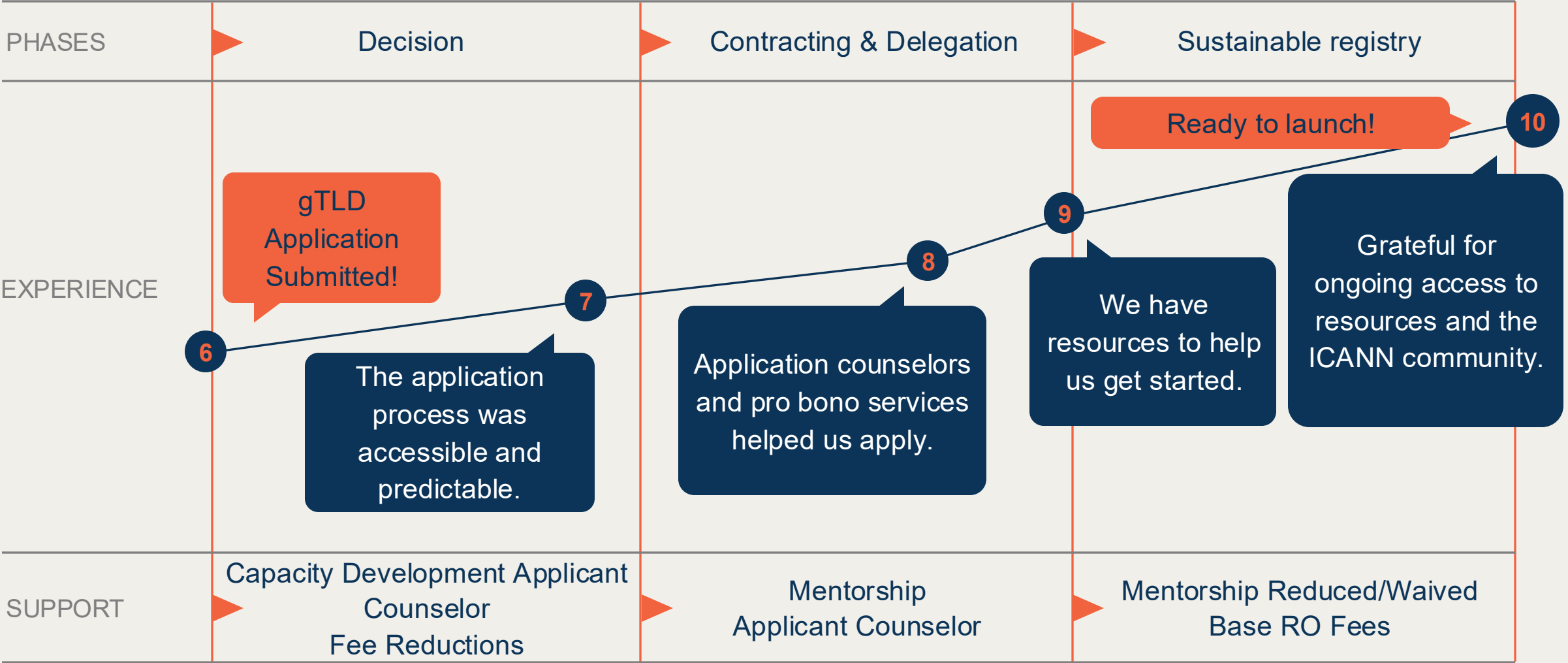
**There are also measures** in place to deter abuse of the program, outlined in the Applicant Support Program Handbook.



# A Supported Applicant's Journey



# A Supported Applicant's Journey



# Key Dates

NOV 2024

DEC 2025

APRIL 2026

Q3 2026



Applicant  
Support Program  
Application  
Submission

Application  
submission period  
for ASP (**19 Nov 2024 - 19  
Nov 2025**)



Applicant  
Guidebook

The Applicant Guidebook is a critical  
resource for the program and is estimated  
to be available in **December 2025**



gTLD Application  
Submission

Application submission period  
for new gTLDs expected to  
open in **April 2026**

# **Next Round: Registry Service Provider (RSP) Evaluation Program**

# Registry Service Provider Evaluation Program

- RSPs play an important role in the DNS ecosystem, including supporting technical operations and providing services to registry operators for TLDs.
- All new gTLD applicants are required to use evaluated RSPs.
- The evaluation of RSPs is an important part of ICANN's mission to help ensure a stable, secure, resilient Internet.
- RSP evaluation is intended to reduce cost and time required for evaluating new gTLDs by separating the evaluation of the technical aspects of operating a gTLD from the application for the gTLD label.
- Organizations may apply to be one of each type of RSP:
  - Main (EPP, RDAP, Data Escrow)
  - DNS (DNS Service)
  - DNSSEC (DNSSEC Signing)
  - Proxy (Registration Validation per Applicable Law with Proxy)

# Registry Service Provider Evaluation Program

- All gTLD applications undergo a technical screening and technical testing.
- Technical screening consists of a review to ensure that:
  - All mandatory questions have been answered;
  - Required supporting documents have been provided in the proper format(s); and
  - All answers have been reviewed for relevance to the questions.
- Technical testing requires RSP applicants to demonstrate the capacity to operate a functional RSP:
  - Technical tests will use Registry System Testing v2.0.
  - RST v2.0 streamlines the RST process by implementing only automated tests and providing a fully-automated, API-driven workflow.
  - Registry operators interact with RST v2.0 through an API in a self-testing design, eliminating the need for human intervention.

# RSPs and the New gTLD Program



**Prior to and during the gTLD evaluation process, the following will be made available on the RSP website:**

- Names and contact information of the evaluated RSPs
- Pre-approved additional registry services including the service description
- Pre-approved IDN tables



**Each evaluated RSP will receive a list of gTLD applicants that selected them.**

ICANN org will share any additional registry services selected by the gTLD applicant with the Main RSP.

Each evaluated RSP must confirm which gTLD applications it will support and has enough capacity for.

gTLD applicants will be notified if the evaluated RSP they select is unwilling to provide RSP support.



# Next Round: Timeline and Resources

# New gTLD Program: Next Round Implementation Timeline

## New gTLD Program: Next Round Application

### Submission Period:

- Expected to open April 2026 for 12-15 weeks.

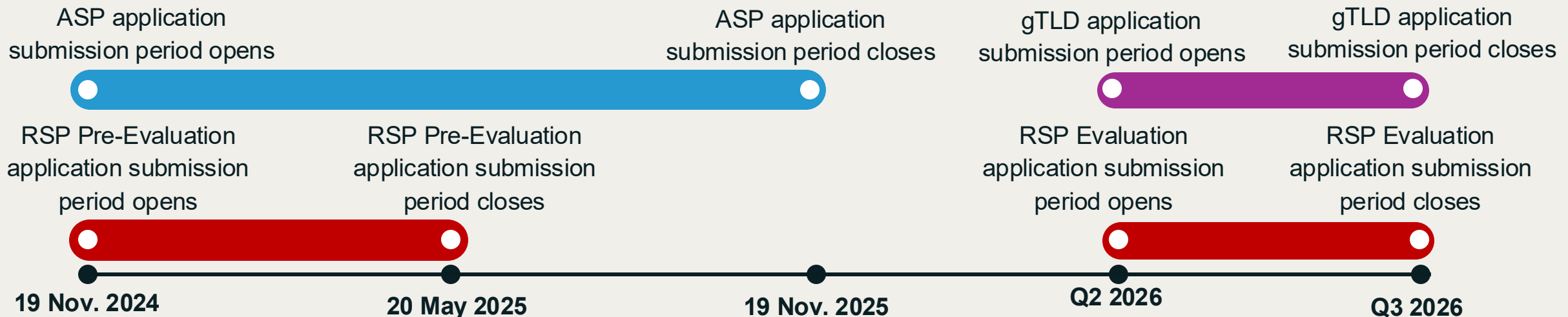
### Applicant Support Program (ASP) Application Submission Period:

- Opens 19 Nov. 2024; Closes 19 Nov. 2025

## Registry Service Provider (RSP) Evaluation Program

### Application Submission Period:

- Pre-Evaluation period opens 19 Nov. 2024; Closes 20 May 2025
- Another Evaluation period opens and closes during the gTLD application submission periods



Dates are subject to change.

# New gTLD Program: Next Round Resources

- New gTLD Program: Next Round website: <https://newgtldprogram.icann.org/>
- [Frequently Asked Questions](#) (FAQs)
- [Program News and Announcements](#)
- ICANN [Engagement Calendar](#)
- ICANN News Subscription [link](#)



To view the hyperlinks in normal view, right click on the link and click “Link > Open Link”

# New gTLD Program in YOUR Language



- A no-cost, on-demand translation process to make **Next Round outreach materials** available in languages beyond the ICANN languages (Arabic, Chinese, English, French, Russian, Spanish).
- Relies on artificial intelligence and neural machine translation technologies and volunteer review.
- Visit the New gTLD Program In YOUR Language [WiKi page](#) for more information and to participate.



**Q&A**



One World, One Internet

gTLD

# Thank You.

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