



Request for Proposal:
Pre-Delegation Testing Provider
for the new gTLD program

1 Introduction

1.1 About this Document

The Internet Corporation for Assigned Names & Numbers (ICANN) is seeking one or more Pre-Delegation Testing Providers for the new generic top-level domains (gTLD) program. By issuing this Request for Proposals (RFP), ICANN is requesting a response to the requirements of a *Pre-Delegation Testing Provider*, to assist ICANN in performing the Pre-Delegation Testing for new gTLDs.

The purpose of the Pre-Delegation Testing is to verify that the applicant has met its commitment to establish registry operations in accordance with the technical and operational criteria described in the gTLD Applicant Guidebook (AGB). Each applicant will be required to complete Pre-Delegation Testing as a prerequisite to delegation into the root zone.

The test elements cover both DNS server infrastructure and registry system operations. In many cases the applicant will perform the test elements as instructed and provide documentation of the results to ICANN to demonstrate satisfactory performance. The applicant's self-certification documentation will be audited by the Pre-Delegation Testing Provider. ICANN is seeking a provider:

- Capable of developing a *Pre-Delegation Testing Software*, which can be used to efficiently and accurately verify that the applicant is compliant with the technical standards described in the gTLD Applicant Guidebook.
- Capable of hosting the *Pre-Delegation Testing System*, operating and providing support for the *Pre-Delegation Testing Software*.
- Capable of providing the *Pre-Delegation Testing Service*, using the *Pre-Delegation Testing System* in combination with manual tests and review of applicants supplied information, to verify that the applicant has met its commitment to establish registry operations in accordance with the technical and operational criteria described in the gTLD Applicant Guidebook.
- With the ability to work within the guidelines established in this RFP. The response to this RFP should include your best offer to provide the software, system and services described within this document.
- Capable of providing these services to approximately 2000 applicants and performing the pre-delegation testing at a rate of 20 tests per week, with the ability to scale up to 100 tests per week if required.

1.2 Overview of ICANN

The mission of ICANN, pursuant to its bylaws, is to coordinate, at the overall level, the global Internet's systems of unique identifiers, and in particular to ensure the stable and secure operation of the Internet's unique identifier systems. In particular, ICANN:

- Coordinates the allocation and assignment of the three sets of unique identifiers for the Internet, which are
 - Domain names (forming a system referred to as DNS);
 - Internet Protocol (IP) addresses;
 - Autonomous System (AS) numbers; and
 - Protocol port and parameter numbers.
- Coordinates the operation and evolution of the DNS root name server system.
- Coordinates policy development reasonably and appropriately related to these technical functions.

ICANN is a non-profit organization dedicated to preserving the operational security and stability of the Internet; to promote competition; to achieve broad representation of global Internet communities; and to develop policy appropriate to its mission through bottom-up, consensus-based processes. See <http://www.icann.org> for more information.

1.3 Overview of the Initiative

New gTLDs have been in the forefront of ICANN's agenda since its creation. The New gTLD program will open up the top level of the Internet's namespace to foster diversity, encourage competition, and enhance the utility of the DNS.

Currently the namespace consists of over 20 gTLDs and over 200 ccTLDs operating on various models. Each of the gTLDs has a designated *registry operator* according to a Registry Agreement between the operator and ICANN. The registry operator is responsible for the technical operation of the TLD, including all of the names registered in that TLD. The gTLDs are served by over 900 ICANN accredited registrars, who interact with registrants to perform domain name registration and other related services.

The New gTLD program will create a means for prospective registry operators to apply for new gTLDs, and create new options for consumers in the market. The program has launched its first application round, and a diverse set of nearly 2000 applications for new gTLDs has been received, including Internationalized Domain Names (IDNs), creating significant potential for new uses and benefit to Internet users across the globe.

The program has its origins in carefully deliberated policy development work by the ICANN community. In October 2007, the Generic Names Supporting Organization (GNSO) – one of the groups that coordinate global Internet policy at ICANN – formally completed its policy development work on New gTLDs and approved a set of 19 policy recommendations. Representatives from a wide variety of stakeholder groups – governments, individuals, civil society, business and intellectual property constituencies, and the technology community – were engaged in discussions for more than 18 months on such questions as the demand, benefits and risks of New gTLDs, the selection criteria that should be applied, how gTLDs should be allocated, and the contractual conditions that should be required for New gTLD registries going forward. The culmination of this policy development process was a decision by the ICANN Board of Directors to adopt the community – developed policy in June 2008.

A thorough brief to the policy process and outcomes can be found at <http://gnso.icann.org/issues/new-gtlds>.

2 Objectives, Scope, and Requirements

2.1 Objectives

The *Pre-Delegation Testing Provider* will perform gTLD Pre-Delegation testing as described in section 5.2 of the *gTLD Applicant Guidebook* (AGB). This process includes the following steps for each applicant:

- Collect the required information from the applicant, including communicating with the applicant until the provided information is clear and complete
- Review and verify collected information
- Run automated technical compliance tests
- Review test results and applicant-provided documentation
- Compile report of test findings
- Submit results and collected information to ICANN

Pre-delegation Testing is expected to occur at an average rate of 20 applicants per week. ICANN is seeking to establish a 24-month contract with one or more Pre-Delegation Testing Providers (with option to extend), responsible for establishing a Pre-Delegation Testing Service and for conducting the testing of the applicants registry operations.

2.2 Scope

For clarity, the tasks of the *Pre-Delegation Testing Provider* are divided into three separate parts with different scope and timing requirements:

- *Pre-Delegation Testing Software* – the development of software for interacting with the applicant and performing automated test cases to verify technical standards compliance and reachability.
- *Pre-Delegation Testing System* – hosting, operation and support of the developed software.
- *Pre-Delegation Testing Service*–the execution of the pre-delegation testing process for each applicant, and reporting of the results back to ICANN.

2.2.1 Pre-Delegation Testing Software

The Pre-Delegation Testing Software is used for facilitating the interaction between the applicant and the Pre-Delegation Testing Provider, and to perform those technical tests which can be automated.

The software should present a standards-compliant web interface to the applicants, where they are able to submit the required information, check the status of their pending pre-delegation test and to retrieve the report after the test has been completed.

Through the software, the Pre-Delegation Testing Provider should be able to request additional information and keep track of the communication with the applicant. Upon request from ICANN, the Pre-Delegation Testing Provider should be able to report on status for an individual applicant, and provide ICANN with a report once the test has been finalized.

The Pre-Delegation Testing Software should be made available to ICANN in source code format. For the benefit of the Internet community, and to enable broad community review, the software developed under the contract may be published by ICANN as Open Source Software.

2.2.2 Pre-Delegation Testing System

The Pre-Delegation Testing Provider should supply an operational Pre-Delegation Testing System on ICANN's behalf.

The information gathered within the Pre-Delegation Testing System is the property of ICANN. The data within the system may be sensitive to others, and the Pre-Delegation Testing Provider should take such actions required to maintain the confidentiality and integrity of the data. The Pre-Delegation Testing Provider should also be able to supply a daily full disaster-recovery backup of the system in an agreed format and upload mechanism to ICANN.

A procedure to restore the Pre-Delegation Testing System from scratch should be provided.

2.2.3 Pre-Delegation Testing Service

Once the applicant has submitted the information and data required for the Pre-Delegation Testing, the Pre-Delegation Testing Provider agent will verify the collected data, execute automated technical compliance tests, review test results and any applicant-provided documentation. Should any tests fail, or additional information be required, the agent will report back and follow up with the applicant through the system before retesting or failing the test.

In addition to the tests and reviews which all applicants will undergo, ICANN may elect to perform on-site audit of an applicant, at the services delivery point of the registry or elsewhere as determined by ICANN. The Pre-Delegation Testing Provider should have the ability to perform these on-site audits globally within a reasonable notice time.

ICANN may also elect to have the Pre-Delegation Testing Provider verify the data escrow release process under the same conditions.

Once the tests and reviews have been completed, the agent will compile a report which will be made available to the applicant and also submitted to ICANN.

2.3 Requirements

2.3.1 Scheduling

The pre-delegation testing scheduling will be handled in the TLD Application System (TAS). Therefore, the pre-delegation testing provider will be required to accept a feed from the TAS database for the schedule of testing.

[R1] The Pre-Delegation Testing Provider should be able to receive a testing schedule from TAS. ICANN will provide the Pre-Delegation Testing Provider with applicable specifications of data format and communication protocols.

2.3.2 Data Collection & Communication of Results

The *Pre-Delegation Testing System* will be used for collecting the required information from the applicant. The applicants will be authenticated, directly or indirectly, via the TLD Application System (TAS).

[R2] The Pre-Delegation Testing Provider shall collect the following information from the applicant:

- All name server names and IPv4/IPv6 addresses to be used in serving the new TLD data;
- If using anycast, the list of names and IPv4/IPv6 unicast addresses allowing the identification of each individual server in the anycast sets;
- If IDN registrations will be supported, the complete IDN tables used in the registry system should be submitted in a machine-readable format suitable to be read programmatically. A format such as the model format described in Section 5 of RFC 4290 would be ideal. The format used by RFC 3743 is an acceptable alternative. For variant generation algorithms

that are more complex (such as those with contextual rules) and cannot be expressed using these table formats, an exception handling process, in which domains are to be tested manually, should be implemented;

- A valid trust anchor (in DS RR format) to be used at the time of testing for verification of DNSSEC capability;
- Two Registrar EPP credentials (username, password and/or any required client certificate and keys) to be used for testing the Registry EPP interface (including domain.transfer);
- One full and one incremental data escrow deposit sample;
- TLD DNSSEC Practice Statement (DPS);
- The executed agreement between the selected escrow agent and the applicant; and
- Self-certification documentation (in PDF format) including data on load capacity, latency and network reachability as described in section 5.2 of the AGB:
 - DNS Testing Report;
 - DNSSEC Testing Report;
 - Whois Testing Report; and
 - EPP Testing Report.

[R3] Information from the applicant should be collected online and, when applicable, in a machine-parsable form.

[R4] Information from the applicant should be collected using a web-based user interface (UI). The UI should conform to W3C XHTML 1.0 Strict (including the use of JavaScript), but may not use any web browser plugins (e.g. Java, Adobe Flash, Microsoft Silverlight).

[R5] All communications between the Pre-Delegation Testing System and the applicant should be encrypted and mutually authenticated.

[R6] All communications between the Pre-Delegation Testing System and the Pre-Delegation Testing Agent should be encrypted and mutually authenticated.

[R7] Applicants are to be authenticated using the TLD Application System (TAS), or authenticated via separate credentials communicated to the applicant via TAS. ICANN will provide the Pre-Delegation Testing Provider with an interface for verifying TAS credentials if required.

[R8] Test results and all the information collected from the applicants should be submitted to TLD Application System (TAS) in machine-readable format. ICANN will provide the Pre-Delegation Testing Provider with applicable specifications of data format and communication protocols.

2.3.3 Test Elements: DNS Infrastructure

The Pre-Delegation Testing Provider will execute automated Pre-Delegation DNS Tests using the parameters supplied by the applicant. All tests are to be performed over IPv4 and IPv6, to all name servers, from at least five points on the Internet. At least one probe node should be located in every ICANN region.

[R9] Test the applicant's DNS infrastructure for compliance with the requirements described in the gTLD Applicant Guidebook section 5.2.

[R10] Review the self-certification documents relating to the DNS infrastructure and verify compliance with the assertions made in the gTLD application in relation to system performance as described in specification 10 of the registry agreement.

2.3.4 Test Elements: Registry Systems

2.3.4.1 Whois

The Pre-Delegation Testing Provider will test the Whois service over port 43 (Whois) and 80/443 (HTTP/HTTPS), and verify the response format. All tests are to be performed over IPv4 and IPv6 from at least five points on the Internet. At least one probe node should be located in every ICANN region.

[R11] Test the applicant's Whois interface for compliance with the requirements described in the gTLD Applicant Guidebook section 5.2, including response format and review of the data mining detection and mitigation control functions.

[R12] Review the self-certification documents relating to the Whois interface and verify compliance with the assertions made in the gTLD application in relation to system performance as described in specification 10 of the registry agreement.

2.3.4.2 EPP

The Pre-Delegation Testing Provider will execute an *Extensible Provisioning Protocol* (EPP) test-case suite using registrar credentials supplied by the applicant. The tests include:

- IPv6 transport support (if supported by the registry)
- IPv6 DNS glue records handling
- DNSSEC support

All tests are to be performed over IPv4 and IPv6 from various points on the Internet.

[R13] Test the applicant's EPP interface for standards compliance with the requirements described in the gTLD Applicant Guidebook section 5.2, including the following commands:

- domain.create
- domain.renew
- domain.update
- domain.transfer
- domain.delete
- contact.create
- contact.delete
- host.create
- host.delete

[R14] The provider should use internal subordinated hosts to verify the correct handling of glue records.

[R15] The provider should verify DNSSEC support.

[R16] The provider should verify that EPP transform commands are propagated to the DNS and Whois servers of the applicant in less than 60 minutes.

[R17] Review the self-certification documents relating to the EPP interface and verify compliance with the assertions made in the gTLD application in relation to system performance as described in specification 10 of the registry agreement.

[R18] Review applicant's EPP extensions documentation and verify standards compliance with RFC 3735, and verify that any extensions are consistent with the gTLD contract.

2.3.4.3 IDN

The Pre-Delegation Testing Provider will verify the IDN table(s) used by the registry systems.

- [R19]** Verify the complete IDN tables(s) used by the registry system for compliance with the Guidelines for the Implementation of Internationalized Domain Names¹.
- [R20]** Verify the format is such as the model format described in Section 5 of RFC 4290. The format used by RFC 3743 is an acceptable alternative. For variant generation algorithms that are more complex (such as those with contextual rules) and cannot be expressed using these table formats, an exception handling process, in which domains are to be tested manually, should be implemented.

2.3.4.4 Data Escrow Deposit Format

The Pre-Delegation Testing Provider will validate the format of the data escrow deposit as provided by the applicant.

- [R21]** Validate the format of one full and one incremental data escrow deposit as provided by the applicant for compliance with the New gTLD Agreement specification 2 – *Data Escrow Requirements*.
- [R22]** Verify that the applicant's data escrow profile is in compliance with section 3 of the New gTLD Agreement specification 2 – *Data Escrow Requirements*.
- [R23]** Review the submitted escrow provider agreement and any self-certification documents related to data escrow, and verify compliance with the requirements stated by the New gTLD Agreement specification 2 – *Data Escrow Requirements*.
- [R24]** For each Data Escrow Service Provider contracted by gTLD applicants, verify that data can be released within 24 hours as stated by the New gTLD Agreement specification 2 – *Data Escrow Requirements*.

2.3.4.5 DNSSEC Trust Anchor

The Pre-Delegation Testing Provider will verify that the provided DNSSEC trust anchor chains correctly with the tested zone.

- [R25]** Verify that the provided DNSSEC trust anchor can be used to validate DNSSEC signatures in the test zone.

2.3.4.6 DNSSEC Practice Statement Review

The Pre-Delegation Testing Provider will verify that the DNSSEC Practices Statement adequately covers and explains relevant aspects of DNSSEC operations in the zone, and is consistent with the DNSSEC parameters being observed.

- [R26]** Review the submitted DNSSEC Practices Statement (DPS) and verify that it is describing critical security controls and procedures for key material storage, access and usage for its own keys and secure acceptance of registrants' public-key material, and that the DPS is following the format described in the IETF DPS Framework (currently in draft format, see <http://tools.ietf.org/html/draft-ietf-dnsop-dnssec-dps-framework>).

2.4 Required Capabilities & Experience

ICANN expects that respondents will, at a minimum, satisfy the following experience requirements:

- Possess an in-depth documented technical expertise in the EPP, DNS and Whois protocols.
- Demonstrated ability to test the DNS protocol.

- Demonstrated ability to implement and test the EPP (Extensible Provisioning Protocol) protocol.
- Familiarity with the challenges and pitfalls required to correctly implement support for IDN (International Domain Names).
- Knowledge of the DNSSEC Practice Statement framework.
- Capable of providing the Pre-Delegation Testing Service at a rate of 20 applicants per week, and with the ability to scale up to 100 applicants per week given four (4) weeks notice.

3 Required Response Items

3.1 Company Information and Background

[Q1] Respondents must provide the following information regarding the organization:

- a) Name
- b) Street Address
- c) City
- d) State, Province or Region
- e) Country of Corporate headquarters
- f) Postal code(s)
- g) Country of Incorporation, if different
- h) Phone
- i) Fax
- j) Website

[Q2] Please indicate if the organization is a subsidiary of any other company?

- a) If so, please indicate the parent company and how you are managed by the parent (actively or autonomously).

[Q3] Please indicate if you are an affiliate of (or have as a client) any ICANN accredited registrar, registry or other contracted party or have any ownership interest in any ICANN accredited registrar, registry or other contracted party with ICANN.

[Q4] Please indicate if you provide any advisory or consulting services to applicants or service providers participating in the New gTLD Program.

[Q5] Please list any subcontractors that are to be engaged for this contract.

[Q6] Please indicate that you and all your subcontractors (if any) agree to comply with the Code of Conduct and Conflict of Interest Guidelines for panelists contained in section 2.4.3 of the *gTLD Applicant Guidebook* (AGB).

3.2 Company Overview

[Q7] What characteristics most distinguish your organization from your competitors?

[Q8] Summarize the key points of the proposal including the benefits to the Internet community of engaging your organization.

3.3 Qualifications

[Q9] Provide an overview of the global resources of your organization, including an overview of where you have offices.

[Q10] Provide examples of any relevant project, industry participation, and publications that highlight your experience.

[Q11] Provide names, roles, responsibilities and resumes for each key team member engaged in delivering the related services.

3.4 Approach & Timing

[Q12] Describe how you will keep ICANN timely informed of any issues related to the delivering of the services described in this RFP.

[Q13] Describe the processes to be followed for system design, development and quality assurance.

[Q14] Describe how the organization will deliver the services for items listed in section 2.2 of this RFP, including its ability to scale. Please include:

- a) Name and description of any 3rd party organizations that will participate in the delivery of the services.

[Q15] Describe the process for determining and reporting any potential conflicts of interest between your organization and any entity or individual applying for a gTLD.

- a) Provide a conflict of interest assessment based on the current list of new gTLD applicants.

[Q16] Include a description of the approach used in delivering the functionality and services provided during the implementation period to meet the schedule requirements.

- a) Provide a high-level schedule describing when each of the three major phases will begin and when they end or be operational.
- b) Define the expected cycle time for each pre-delegation test.

[Q17] Describe your organization's process for hiring and training qualified Testing Service Agents.

- a) Provide examples of training and management oversight provided to Testing Service Agents.
- b) If remote agents are engaged, describe how the Testing Service Agents are supported, scheduled and managed.

3.5 Pre-Testing Testing Software and System

[Q18] Describe the technology platform used in the delivery of the services provided.

[Q19] Describe your software's server hardware and operating system requirements for central components and any remote testing components.

[Q20] List the language(s) used to implement your software.

[Q21] List all 3rd party software components that will be used by the software. Also list under what license these components are to be used.

[Q22] List all 3rd party services that will be used by the software.

[Q23] Describe how and from where (country and autonomous system number) you plan to perform the test from various points on the Internet.

3.6 Estimated Costs

The respondent should provide pricing for the following phases of the project given the stated requirements in this document and the assumptions listed below. Please also document any unlisted assumptions.

[Q24] Pre-Delegation Testing Software and System:

- a) Fixed price for the development of the Pre-Delegation Testing Software.
- b) Monthly fee for operation and support of the Pre-Delegation Testing System, including maintenance of the Pre-Delegation Testing Software, for a contract period of 24 months.
- c) An optional 12-month extension of the contract.

[Q25] Pre-Delegation Testing Service

- a) Per applicant fee for providing Pre-Delegation Testing Services for a contract period of 24 months, at the estimated rate of 20 applicants per week and with the ability to scale up to 100 applicants per week, four weeks after being requested by ICANN.
- b) An optional 12-month extension of the contract.

[Q26] The respondent should also provide pricing items for:

- a) An on-site audit at the services delivery point of the registry or elsewhere as determined by ICANN. It is expected that ICANN will require in the order of 30 tests throughout the contract period.
- b) A data Escrow Agent release process test. It is expected that ICANN will require in the order of 20 tests throughout the contract period.
- c) Audit of load test of DNS over both TCP and UDP.
- d) Audit of load test of the Whois service.
- e) Audit of load test of the EPP service.

It is expected that ICANN will require in the order of 30 tests throughout the contract period.

4 Instructions to Respondents

4.1 Definition of Respondent

Respondent means any person or firm receiving this RFP or submitting a proposal in response to this RFP.

4.2 Timeline

The following preliminary dates have been established as milestones for this RFP. ICANN reserves the right to modify or change this timeline in its absolute discretion.

November 7, 2012	Vendors' questions to be submitted to ICANN
November 12, 2012	ICANN providing answers to vendors' questions
November 20, 2012	Deadline for submission of proposals
December 5, 2012	Anticipated Contract Award
December, 2012	Provider to begin implementation project
January 21, 2013	Implementation plan and specifications to be reviewed by ICANN
February 4, 2013	Test-case design to be reviewed by ICANN
March 12, 2013	ICANN to begin Pre-Delegation Testing Service acceptance testing
March 18-22, 2013	Pilot registry testing
March 25, 2013	Pre-Delegation Testing Provider to be ready for production

4.3 Submission of Proposals

Proposals shall be prepared and submitted in the number, form and format requested by this RFP. Your written proposal should include responses to each of the attached RFP questions. For ease of evaluation, please limit your response to no more than twenty (20) pages, plus necessary appendices, including team resumes.

Please arrange to have an electronic copy delivered to ICANN via email to pre-delegation-testing-bid@icann.org by 23.59 UTC on November 20, 2012.

4.4 Discrepancies, Omissions and Additional Information

Respondent is responsible for examining this RFP and all addenda. Failure to do so will be at the sole risk of Respondent. Should Respondent find discrepancies, omissions, unclear or ambiguous intent or meaning, or should any question arise concerning this RFP, Respondent must notify ICANN of such findings immediately in writing via email no later than November 7, 2012 to pre-delegation-testing-bid@icann.org.

Should such matters remain unresolved by ICANN prior to Respondent's preparation of its proposal, such matters must be addressed in Respondent's proposal.

ICANN is not responsible for oral statements made by its employees, agents, or representatives concerning this RFP. If Respondent requires additional information, Respondent must request that the issuer of this RFP furnish such information in writing (see section 4.5).

A Respondent's proposal is presumed to represent its best efforts to respond to the RFP. Any significant inconsistency, accuracy, or omission of information required in making a determination of a suppliers ability to perform the services requested, in ICANN's sole determination, raises a fundamental issue of the Respondent's understanding of the nature and scope of the work required

and of its ability to perform the contract as proposed and may be cause for rejection of the proposal. The burden of proof as to cost credibility rests with the Respondent.

If necessary, supplemental information to this RFP will be provided to all prospective Respondents receiving this RFP. All supplemental information issued by ICANN will form part of this RFP. ICANN is not responsible for any failure by prospective Respondents to receive supplemental information.

4.5 Vendor Questions Regarding the RFP

All questions regarding the RFP must be submitted via email to the following address: pre-delegation-testing-bid@icann.org, and received no later than November 7, 2012. No individual response will be provided to vendors participating in this RFP. Questions may be published and responded to by ICANN in its sole discretion. If published publicly, no identifying vendor information shall be presented in ICANN's reply. Similar vendor questions and ICANN's corresponding answers will be modified to provide a single, vendor neutral response by November 12, 2012, and will be provided to all vendors participating in this RFP process.

4.6 Receipt and Opening of the Proposal

Proposals in PDF format will be received by ICANN at the email address shown above until the date and time shown herein. Proposals will be reviewed only by ICANN personnel and consultants as required to complete the evaluation of the Respondent's responses. Failure to deliver a response by the required date may disqualify a Respondent from participating.

4.7 ICANN Questions for the Respondent after receipt of the RFP response

Throughout the RFP process, ICANN in its sole discretion may contact a Respondent with clarifying technical or business questions about their RFP response. All responses by the Respondent must be submitted via email.

4.8 Proposal Evaluation

ICANN will evaluate Respondent's proposal and other pertinent information to arrive at an award decision. Respondent's entire proposal will be reviewed for responsiveness to the RFP and for clarity and conciseness of the information presented. ICANN will review the information presented to determine which supplier best meets the evaluation criteria.

4.9 Selection of the Pre-Delegation Testing Provider

Respondent's proposal will be evaluated by a Selection Committee, using a comprehensive set of criteria. The proposal will be evaluated on the basis of its technical, management and cost merits after a review of all aspects of each category in relationship to the requirements of this RFP. The ultimate basis for the selection will be in the absolute discretion of ICANN.

A partial list of the evaluation criteria follows:

- Is the Respondent's proposed solution capable of meeting the objectives and requirements set forth in this RFP?
- Has the Respondent clearly demonstrated the fee structure to ensure a cost-efficient model?
- Are the Respondent's experience and capabilities clearly stated in the proposal?
- Does the Respondent have the operational experience necessary to deliver the described services?
- Is the response clear and does it address the functional requirements provided?
- Has the Respondent demonstrated an ability to scale as necessary?
- Is the requested proposal complete and in the format requested?

Proposals are required to be valid for a minimum of one hundred twenty (120) days following the deadline for submission of the proposal. A proposal may not be modified, withdrawn or canceled by the Respondent for a 120-day period following the deadline for submission of the proposal. The Respondent so agrees to this condition by submission of the proposal.

In addition to the information provided in the vendor's response to this RFP, ICANN may request individual supplier presentations and site visits by ICANN staff or consultants to the vendor as a part of the evaluation.

5 Terms and Conditions

5.1 General Terms and Conditions

Submission of a proposal shall constitute Respondent's acknowledgment and acceptance of all the specifications, requirements and terms and conditions in this RFP.

All costs of preparing and submitting its proposal, responding to or providing any other assistance to ICANN in connection with this RFP will be borne by the Respondent.

All submitted proposals including any supporting materials or documentation will become the property of ICANN. If Respondent's proposal contains any proprietary information which should not be disclosed or used by ICANN other than for the purposes of evaluating the proposal, that information should be marked with appropriate confidentiality markings.

5.2 Assessment and Award

ICANN reserves the right, without penalty and at its discretion, to accept or reject any proposal, withdraw this RFP, make no award, to waive or permit the correction of any informality or irregularity and to disregard any non-conforming or conditional proposal.

ICANN is not obliged to accept the lowest priced proposal. Although critical, price is only one of the determining factors for the successful award.

ICANN reserves the right to enter into contractual negotiations and if necessary, modify any terms and conditions of a final contract with the Respondent whose proposal offers the best value to ICANN.

5.3 Disclaimer

This RFP shall not be construed in any manner to create an obligation on the part of ICANN to enter into any contract, or to serve as a basis for any claim whatsoever for reimbursement of costs for efforts expended in responding to this RFP. The scope of this RFP may be revised at the sole option of ICANN at any time. ICANN shall not be obligated by any proposals or by any statements or representations, whether oral or written, that may be made by ICANN, except as provided for in a final approved signed agreement. ICANN shall be held free from any liability resulting from the use or implied use of the information submitted in any proposal.