

CR - New gTLD Applicant Support Program
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Karla Valente:

Good morning everyone. My name is Karla Valente and I'm Director of gTLD Registry Programs, and one of the many people that work on the Applicant Support Program. So here today we also have Michele Jourdan. Michele Jourdan is responsible for the new gTLD Communications and also the Applicant Support Communications, along with the Communications Team. Kurt Pritz could not be here with us today, and he apologizes for that. We are going to take questions at the end of the session, including questions from the remote participants.

So today we are going to take a look at the program background and overview of how it works, and the different elements of the program, and we will give you information of where you can find additional resources.

The program - what does it do? So this program actually was launched in January, along with the new gTLD Program. However, work about that started for some time ago. It actually started with a Board resolution that dated back at the Nairobi meeting at ICANN - that was March 2010, and all that Board resolution said was that ICANN Stakeholder Community should develop a sustainable approach to providing support to applicants requiring assistance in applying for and operating new gTLDs.

As a result of that resolution there was a working group formed with members from the GNSO and the ALAC, and since April 2010, this working group has provided us with the foundation of the framework for what we have on this implementation today.

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Not 100% of the elements of the final recommendation from the JAS Working Group are present in the implementation for various reasons, and one of that was timing, but the foundation of it is there.

The program was finally approved by the Board in December 2011, so as you can see, you know, putting together some of the final details to be able to offer that to the public, there was not that much time to do so.

So the goal of the program - what does the program do? It exists to serve the global public interest by ensuring that we have accessibility to win competition within the new gTLD Program from all parts of the world.

So we assist potential applicants with financial and non-financial support, and I will tell you what elements of financial support we have here. There are three aspects to the program - all three major elements of this Applicant Support Program. One is the *pro bono* of third-party services. What does that mean? It means that ICANN created in September 19, 2011 - because of a Board resolution that asked for it - we created a way for applicants that are seeking support and organizations around the world that are offering support to find each other.

So nowadays, if you're an organization that has your own maybe technical, or legal, or language, or process operations assistance, and you want to offer to applicants seeking support, what you do is you go to our Applicant Support website and there is a form that you need to fill out and we confirm with you that this is a legitimate request, and then your name of your organization's name and contact information appears in a directory.

The same process happens if you are an applicant seeking support. If you're an applicant seeking support, you can say, "I am from such and such country, and I'm seeking support maybe with technical infrastructure financial etc.," and then an organization might contact you. One thing that I want to make clear about this third-party *pro bono* service is that what ICANN's role is, is really to facilitate the parties to find each other.

Now organizations that are offering support might have their own criteria on how and to whom they are offering support, and this is the part that we are not involved in; we are really a facilitator of the different parties to find each other.

Second aspect of this program that also came from a Board resolution in 2011 is financial assistance. And the Board resolution - what it did was to dedicate a \$2 million fund to that program, to be allocated for qualifying applicants that are seeking financial assistance, and I'm going to talk about that a little bit more later. An Applicant Support Fund - and this is one of the things that is still under consideration of whether or not on how ICANN can actually raise additional funding to the seed money - the \$2 million that the Board already set aside - whether or not how we could maybe have additional funds that would benefit the qualifying applicants. So here is just this explanation that I already gave you about third-party *pro bono* services.

The financial assistance - so the \$2 million - what would we do with \$2 million was the question. Two million dollars is a finite number, and we don't know how many applicants are going to seek assistance, so what we decided to do is that we would have a fee decreased to a certain number of applicants. So right now because of the \$2 million, we have 14 financial assistance applicants that could qualify for that fund.

So what it happens is they have a fee reduction, and the fee that they end up paying is \$47,000 instead of the full \$185,000. So once the applicant registers in TAS, which is the gTLD application system - the same one that is used for the new gTLD Program - they pay the \$5,000 and they indicate in the system, yes, I want to be considered for financial assistance and once the system says okay, then the applicant is asked to pay \$42,000. So it's the \$5,000 for TAS, that is nonrefundable, and the additional \$42,000, and that's what makes up the \$47,000. And then once the applicant does that, you know, it's going to go through the regular new gTLD evaluation and also through special applicant support of financial assistance evaluation.

In order to do this financial assistance evaluation, like in many other applicants of the new gTLD Program, we are going to have an independent Review Panel, and this is called SARP, one of the many acronyms we use. Independent Support Applicant Review Panel, is going to look at all of the applications received for financial support and not only verify whether or not they qualify for support, but also rank them because there's a points system that is allocated.

And here it's probably hard to see, but you can see that slide, not only on our side, but also on the handbook. It kind of explains to you what process does the applicant or the elements that this applicant process goes through, so just high-level.

The first step is what you see on the left which is the application registration. Again, we use the TAS, which is the same tool that all of the applicants for the new gTLD Program use, and once you go into TAS, make sure you do not lose the or waste the deadline which is March 29. That is the deadline for the registration in TAS.

If you do not register by March 29, you're not going to be able to launch your application by the deadline of the application period, which is April 12. So there are two important deadlines - the deadline to register in TAS to make sure that you have a user ID, and then you can still continue your application, submit the documents and everything until April 12.

Once you are inside TAS there's going to be a place in which you have to indicate that you are seeking financial assistance and then agree to the terms and conditions to that specific path that is going to be taken. You're going to have your registration confirmed and then you have to follow all the steps, like pay the \$5,000 and follow all of the steps that you are going to be instructed into TAS.

Once the application of TAS or the registration in TAS ends, you will be asked to pay the additional \$42,000. And how you pay the \$42,000 - all of that is explained in the Applicant Guidebook.

Now there are two important documents that you always have to take in mind. One is the Financial Assistance document, which is called New gTLD Financial Assistance Handbook that was published on our site and is available in several languages. And this is the handbook that explains to you specifically the elements of the financial assistance, the criteria and the process that it goes for financial assistance.

In addition to that, you also need to follow and be knowledgeable of all of the criteria and requirements that you see in the Applicant Guidebook, the New gTLD Applicant Guidebook. All of the rules that you see on the New gTLD Applicant Guidebook apply to whoever is asking for financial assistance. The only difference is that the candidates for financial assistance have some additional documentation and an additional review that they go through. All of the rest that applies to the new gTLD Program applies to those candidates as well.

So you're going to follow the process, and you're also going to follow the different timelines that you see in the Applicant Guidebook, which means that the deadlines for, as I said, for TAS registration, the deadline for submitting your application - on May 1 is the review date as communications calls it, and this is the day where we are going to publicly announce to everyone who's applying for what, and some aspects of the application will be made public, and this is an important thing for you to keep in mind.

Once you apply for the financial assistance - you are indicating to TAS, yes I want that path - you are going to see two documents for you to download that you have to fill out. One of the documents has non-confidential information. What that means is that this information is going to be made public, so not only for the panel, but also to everyone around the world.

Then there's a separate document - and we did that to try to, you know, help you - not to confuse the elements that are public and non-public. This additional document that says confidential information - this is information that we are not going to be made public and those are for the Review Panel's eyes only.

This Review Panel, we are still searching for members for the Review Panel, and I'm going to talk about that a little bit later. But this Review Panel is independent, and they are going to be looking at those two documents that you submit. So you fill out, you transform them into PDF and you upload it back in TAS, and in addition to those two documents you can also submit any supporting documentation that you feel make your case strong and you indicate it in those documents, and this is what the Review Panel is going to receive.

In addition to that, the review panel can also have access to other elements of the application, right, because you also will apply for the New gTLD Program independently, with all the documents and information that is required by the Applicant Guidebook. So make sure that you know that this applicant support or this financial assistance application has to stand alone, and then you also have the New gTLD Application that you have to make a strong case. Make those separate, make those strong and standalone applications.

The Review Panel, in addition to having information also from elements of the New gTLD Application, will have access to the public comments. As you well know; all of the applicants will be subject to public comments. So once we have all the names of applicants and strings, everybody around the world can go and comment on specific application and TLD. So the Review Panels will have access to that.

I mentioned very briefly the timeline and the best way to look at or think about the timeline for the financial assistance, is to think about the timeline for the New gTLD Program. Those timelines are aligned to make it easier for the applicants, and also to make it more coherent also for the New gTLD Program evaluation panels and they were aligned also in a way that we would not delay any other applicant, or we would not delay or extend any other path of the actual step of the actual New gTLD Program. So those are fairly aligned, so pay attention to the deadlines.

If there's a specific deadline that applies only to the financial assistance program - and there is one I'm going to tell you a little bit later - we are going to make that clear to you.

And before I go ahead, another thing that is important. So in addition to using the TAS system, you know, in addition to having the information on the website, the financial assistance candidates should also use our customer support service.

Our customer support service, the email addresses that you see for customer support and the process etc., applies to that program the same way. If you have any specific question about your application, or about the program, please feel free to send your question to the customer support. Because we are in the middle of the application window, depending on the nature of your question, I might not be able to answer, but customer support can help you with specifics of your application.

Qualification criteria - so the foundation of the main elements of the qualification criteria were inspired by the final report that was produced by this JAS, or Join Applicant Support Working Group that I mentioned to you at the beginning of the session. But there are three critical elements that somebody seeking financial assistance has to keep in mind. 1) It has to make a case for the public interest benefits, and how we interpret that and the scoring is on the handbook. The second has to demonstrate financial need, and again the details about that and the scoring is outlined on the guidebook; and it has to demonstrate the financial capabilities.

Now, we have provided as much information as possible to allow you to put together your application, but there is an element of subjectivity that is given to the Review Panel to interpret your application. Important note - and this is a very, very, very important note, which is if you apply for financial assistance and you do not meet the threshold criteria - and what is the threshold criteria? Again, if you look at the qualification criteria, there's a minimum points that you must earn. If you do not meet this threshold criteria, your application will be excluded from the entire New gTLD Program. And this is a very important

thing to take into account, because this really means that you cannot proceed with your new gTLD, even if you end up raising funds in a different way.

One of the reasons, or the reason why this is implemented this way, is to avoid gaming, and we were very careful about considering that when we added it to the program.

So let me talk a little bit about the Support Applicant Review Panel. And I really need your help for that specific element of the program because we are still until the end of this month recruiting members for this Review Panel.

We have issued a document asking for interested parties to come and submit an application for being part of this panel. There are certain qualities that we are looking at in those individuals and the EOI has the information of what qualities we are looking at. And what you need to do is basically to submit your application *via* email, and all this information - the exact email is on the EOI, so you submit your application. You have to answer a number of questions and these questions are not only to assess whether or not you have the criteria qualifications that we are looking at, but also that there's no conflict of interest.

All of the rules that apply to the New gTLD Program in terms of conflict of interest, and are outlined in the guidebook apply to the financial support programs, or the Applicant Support Program, and apply to the SARP members. We have standardized this to the best that we can.

So this panel is an independent volunteer panel, and again, the level of expertise that we are, or the kind of expertise that we are looking at is have you experienced working with developing economies serving public interests, granting awards. Those outside of the community are encouraged to participate, so it's not only somebody that is part of the ICANN Stakeholder Groups, or the ICANN community, or active participant; others are, you know encouraged to participate, so if you know of those individuals, please feel free to pass on the information. And if you have difficulties finding the information on the site, let me know, write to customer support and we will send you the information. Again the deadline for that is at the end of this month, I believe March 31.

This is a volunteer panel; they are going to work, so they will take all the experience that they have and they are going to work based on the criteria and the points that we have allocated, and they will not only evaluate the applicants based on the points, but they will also rank the applicants, because as you recall from the beginning of the presentation, we have \$2 million to allocate therefore only 14 candidates will be able to benefit at this time on this round for the financial assistance. The decisions also are final, so there's no appeal process on that specific decision.

So here we have on the recruiting SARP members slide, we have a little bit more information on how this is going to work. So we announced that in January; last time I heard, we had about 10, 12 candidates. We're still waiting until the end of the month to see how many candidates we are going to get.

The exact number of candidates will depend on basically two things. One is whether or not they qualify based on the criteria that we have and; at this point we will also know how many applicants we have for financial assistance support. So this is going to be helpful for us to determine the final number of SARP members that we are going to need.

Until the 31st of March apply, we are going to select the members in April. We are going to train the members. As I said before, this is a volunteer panel, but we are going to pay expenses for travelling and other things that are needed to be able to perform the job and do the training, etc.

The evaluation or the time commitment that we are going to have is from June to November 2012. We expect three hours to five hours a week. It's hard to say right now because we don't know the number or the volume of applicants that we are going to have for that specific program, but there is going to be some time commitment for a short period of time that we are asking of those members.

So for the fund, this is a slide that again repeats what I said before - the \$2 million will serve 14 qualifying candidates chosen by the SARP, and we are still looking into whether or not we can have and how we can have third-party

contributions to the \$2 million seed money that the Board allocated for that specific need.

On this slide - customer service - you have some high level information on, okay, so if you look at general program questions, you access the New gTLD pages on the New gTLD micro site - there is a specific place that you can find all the information about the Applicant Support Program, and announcements and updates about the SARP and everything, you will find there.

If you're either seeking third-party support, or you are an organization or individual, offering third-party support, please take a look at our directory, and the third-party *pro bono* support and donation pages. There's a specific email that you can write to and there's a form that you need to fill out, and for SARP contact, so here is SARP-eoi@icann.org. This is where you should submit expression of interest in participating in the SARP.

And again there's a set of questions that you have to answer. Please follow the form in order to have your candidacy accepted. More information and links, so there's a number of links and documents that are posted on our site, that give you in-depth detail about this Applicant Support Program and how it works, and what we are asking the community here is to please help us to spread the word. Please help us to make entities available of this financial assistance program, and please help us to identify strong qualifying SARP members. We need a strong Review Panel, and we're getting there, but the more help we get, the better chances we have of having a great panel there.

And now I'm going to pass the microphone to Michele Jourdan who is part of our Communications Team and can tell you more about what efforts are being done in relation to this program. Thank you.

Michele Jourdan:

Hello, so I'll tell you a little bit about communications. One thing I wanted to point out before I even start is that when we communicate about the Applicant Support Program, it's impossible to communicate about it without independent of the New gTLD Program. So all of the outreach that we've been doing about

the New gTLD Program in general, we've incorporated the Applicant Support Program into all of those communications efforts.

So we've basically been communicating about the program, primarily in four different ways. One is through an online ad campaign; one is through a social media; another traditional media, and then also with live events. So I'll go through each of those.

So I'll start with the online ad campaign. So we ran a Google ad campaign; ran it for seven weeks - an example of the ad is right there. There were six different ads - all of them the call to action and all of the ads were to drive people back to the microsite to learn more.

On the micro-site we have a specific banner on the homepage, guiding people more to the Applicant Support Program web pages. The applicant support web pages have also been up on the micro-site since September, so we've been really trying to push this. There was also, along with the Google ad campaign, a specific campaign - banner ad campaign - targeting chief marketing officers in developing economies. The ads ran in 145 developing countries, and 35 of those countries were defined as lowest income. We opted to not run the ads in North America to really focus our outreach in the developing economies.

So together with the Google ad campaign and the targeted CMO campaign, it resulted in about 22,000 to 23,000 visitors from 136 different countries going to the New gTLD website to learn more information.

So social media, both Facebook and Twitter, we do regular updates on our Facebook page. We have put an update on there about the SARP recruiting. We have put an update on there about the Twibbon campaign, which I'll talk to you in a moment. We tweet about five to eight times per day and during the week, and about four times on the weekend. Our Twitter followers have grown from 8,000 in October to about 45,000 followers from all over the world.

The biggest increase in Twitter followers we found were from Jakarta, Nairobi, Istanbul, Lima and Cairo. So we're really trying to reach the developing economies to raise awareness about this program.

And then we recently launched this Twibbon campaign and we have a QR code which you've probably seen posted on the wall around here, which is specifically for the Applicant Support Program. A Twibbon is the little symbol that you see right there next to the bullet. It's a graphic that you update your Facebook or Twitter profile picture, and it basically serves as a visual representation of your support of the program.

And then the QR code is something that you can print out and you can give to friends or acquaintances, or whoever you think would benefit from learning more about the program, and it's scanable with a Smart phone and when it's scanned, it will take the person who scanned directly to the Applicant Support Program web pages.

Then with global press, we've had over 10,000 global news articles about the program, and about 2,500 of those came from developing economies. It's important to note that this number does not take into account blogs that were written about the program and really only account for the established news entities, established press outlets.

Of the 25,000 articles from the developing economies spread out from the different regions, there are over 1,000 that came from Asia Pacific; about 650 that came from Latin America and the Caribbean; about 600 from Eastern Europe and Central Asia; the Middle East and North America had about 68; Sub-Saharan and Africa about 150. And then we received coverage from high profile news outlet, such as the BBC, NBC, Reuters - places like that.

And then with live events, we had 59 live events that spanned all five of ICANN's geographic regions. They were held in 40 different countries - 20 of those countries were defined by the World Bank as lower, middle income or low income, and more specifically some of the countries were Egypt, India, Indonesia, Kenya, Nepal, Pakistan, Rwanda, Senegal and the Ukraine.

We had a number of spokespeople communicating about the program. We had Board members, staff members and community members, and through the live events we were able to reach over 14,000 people across all five regions.

Program materials that we have available - if you go to the New gTLD micro-site and you click on the “About” tab, there’s a section that says “Current Program Materials,” and there we have all sorts of different fact sheets and presentations and other tools that anyone can take out to their community and help spread the word.

We have an Applicant Support Program fact sheet that’s available in several different languages. We have an Applicant Support Program presentation that’s available in different languages. We have recently done a podcast on the Applicant Support Program - those are specific to the program - and then generally we have other communications, tools about the gTLD program overall. So those tools are a great way for you guys to take and share with your communities to help people learn more about the program. So that is what I have.

Karla Valente:

Thank you, Michele. Before we go to Q and A, there’s one thing, one point that is very important and I did not do in the presentation. I would like to go back to it, which is the different scenarios that the applicant support financial group can go through. So as I said \$2 million would be allocated to the 14 candidates that the candidates will be determined by the SARP. So those candidates will receive the additional fee, right? They don’t have to pay more than the \$47,000 that they paid - the rest of the fee is waived. However, this is all that this financial assistance does.

Other fees that are part of the New gTLD Program, might be part of the New gTLD Program, are not going to be affected, which means that if this particular applicant has to go through extended evaluations, has to face an objection process, has to go through auction, or any other process that is outlined in the

applicant guidebook and has fees associated with it, those fees are the responsibility of the applicant to pay. So this is an important note to make.

The second is what if we have more than 14 candidates and qualifying candidates. What happens to those that just didn't make the rank, the 14 rank? What happens to those is that we're going to give them two options and a period of time to fulfill those options.

One is they can pay the remainder of the fee and continue in the New gTLD Program. So the remainder of the fee is going to be \$138,000, so they have a period of time to pay that and then continue as any other applicant. Or they may choose to withhold, or withdraw from the application, and in this case they will receive a refund.

Additional refunds you'll see in the handbook. So there is a table that shows you at what point there is a refund. And there is also a staggered fee that qualifying applicants can pay - the ones that didn't make it for the 14, they can make in order to pay \$138,000. And of course there is the unfortunate scenario of the financial systems candidate that did not qualify, did not meet the threshold, then this candidate, you know has to be careful, because they might be disqualified from the New gTLD Program.

So I think this is what I had to say and we are accepting questions now. The first person on the question, we have Rafik, and then the gentlemen over there. Please speak slowly and close to the microphone so our remote participants can hear you.

Rafik Dammak:

Thank you Karla, it's Rafik Dammak which happens to be the Co-Chair of the Support Applicant Working Group. I have some questions about the communication. So in the first slide I saw that you targeted the CMO, which I can assume it to mean that you are targeting marketing people in some companies. Why the JAS Working Group discussed that we should not support .brand? And also I have a question about global press. Does it include only the

support applicant, or it's about communication, it's about the New gTLD Program as a whole?

Michele Jourdan: So yeah, the global press. It's difficult to parse out exactly all the articles that are specifically about the applicants support program from those that are more generally about the New gTLD Program overall. I can't tell you the breakdown of numbers for that.

Rafik Dammak: Because it's big numbers so it can be confusing. There is a specific mention of the support applicant makes more than just to say 2,500 articles. The CMO.

Michele Jourdan: Could you repeat the first question, sorry.

Rafik Dammak: When you target CMO, I think I can assume that you are targeting companies, corporate, while the JAS Working Group, we discussed a lot that we should not support .brand.

Michele Jourdan: You said that you should not support .brand. Oh, okay. When we ran the Google ad campaigns, it wasn't an ad campaign specifically for the Applicant Support Program; it was for the New gTLD Program overall. So like I mentioned before, it's hard to raise awareness about the Applicant Support Program without explaining to new people what the New gTLD Program is, so it's a combined effort.

Yaovi Atohoun: Thank you my name is Yaovi Atohoun. I have four short questions. The first one is that you said it might be possible that the \$2 million - we can have more

money than the \$2 million. My question is - when can we have the information if it's possible, if we can have... this fund can be more than \$2 million - that is the first question. When can we know that it's possible?

The second question is that I want to know if the two evaluations are being done at the same time because we have the people, the applicants that are seeking for support, and then we have the application itself. So, I want to know the timeline for the application itself - their support will be ending in November, but the application itself I want to know the period. And if you go to the TAS website one of your page, where you have a table, where all the documents are available. I know that you have a link there saying that you can go to the archive to see the recent documents, so we will appreciate if you could make it possible to have also the document available in all the languages in that table - that can help a lot.

And then about the outreach - you named some countries where you have been like Kenya, Egypt, but my suggestion is that if you can see some TV, maybe that global, that in Africa, I don't know, I don't want to name one of them - that can have a program and that we are sure it should hit the maximum of people, that is one suggestion. Thank you.

Michele Jourdan:

So one of the questions was the people who are applying for financial support, kind of the timeline how it's going to go. So when people apply for financial support, those applications will be evaluated in conjunction with initial evaluation, so that's how that's going to work. What was the next question?

Yaovi Atohoun:

You say it might be possible that this amount of \$2 million will be increased, so when can we know?

Karla Valente:

We don't at this point, so we will make the information available as soon as we have some information, but we don't at this point.

Michele Jourdan: Having the translated versions of the guidebook on the Applicant Guidebook page - that was one of the questions?

Yaovi Atohoun: The particular page that has a table. You have a page that has a table, so if you can update this page.

Michele Jourdan: I get that it's kind of confusing; it looks like translated versions aren't there, so we recently added the full Applicant Guidebook. The first row in that table is for the full Applicant Guidebook. The current version, there are a couple of languages that are available for the current version, and for the languages where the previous version is the only translated version we have yet. Those are posted in there too, and so you need to be sure to look at the date, so it's been updated to try and make it easier.

Karla Valente: I'm going to take one remote participation question, and then go back to the audience. So Rudy asks, "Does that mean that the list of those special candidates are going to be listed before the 12th of April?"

The answer is no. The whole world is going to know who applied for the New gTLD Program and financial assistance only on May 1. The details of how much information is going to be given about the applicants - we're sorting that out and we will make that available soon. But May 1 is what we call the review date; before that we are not going to talk about who is applying for what. Thank you. The gentlemen over there and then I'll go to the other side of the room.

Male: Good morning my name is (Inaudible). From the slides you presented on, I think slides 9 and 10, where you have the qualification type criteria, and then the

10 - that is an important note. The important note there where you say if you do not meet the threshold, you run the risk of being excluded from the entire program. I think that seems to be unfair since this threshold you are referring to from slide 9 is actually referring just to the national support. Okay, you are talking about people who qualify for financial support, all this criteria that is listed here, except there's some other features of this threshold that are not here. It seems unfair to say somebody who didn't qualify for the threshold for national support will now be thrown out of the entire... when in another slide before then - slide 7 - you had up shown 10b where the person could be thrown back in to say if he does qualify for the gTLD, it could pay the balance. I don't know if you get what I'm saying.

Karla Valente:

I'm sorry - there was some noise in the back. Would you repeat just the last part? What I understood that you commented so far - I'm going to repeat to you to make sure - is that you believe that this rule about candidates that do not meet the threshold are disqualified from the entire New gTLD Program, you don't believe it's fair - that's what I heard - and then there was the last part that I'm sorry I missed.

Male:

Yes, I said because of these criteria for the threshold you are referring to strictly applies for financial support. It doesn't say anything about qualifying for a gTLD domain, so throwing the person out of the entire process seems unfair when in this diagram you have on slide, you actually have an option on 10b where the person can be thrown back in if they do qualify for gTLD and then they could make up the balance if they can afford it. I think that's what it should be, and not say you are throwing the person out of the entire process.

Karla Valente:

Yes, thank you for your comment. So, yes, I understand your concerns. If a candidate doesn't meet the threshold, I just want to be clear that they are going

to receive a \$42,000 fee that they paid, and that it's not the \$47,000, because the \$5,000 that was for the TAS registration fee is nonrefundable for any party using TAS, but I understand your concern. Thank you. This gentlemen behind you.

Male: Thank you very much. My question is about the evaluation. I've read the expression of interest and you've certainly done your homework in requesting very eye-level evaluators, so congratulations on that. On the other hand I was wondering - you really need a lot of independence, and what would motivate volunteer to give up \$800 or \$1,200 dollars a day evaluation job for the World Bank or the World Environment Fund and to come and do it for ICANN?

Karla Valente: It's hard for me to comment on motivation of individuals. I certainly volunteer...

Male: Let me rephrase the question. How are you going to insure that the autonomous, the independence of the evaluators if you they're not being paid?

Karla Valente: If they are not? I'm sorry the last...?

Male: If they're not being paid.

Karla Valente: Oh, I see, so we have some rules in terms of conflict of interest and we are going to have an understanding with those volunteers, or those review panelists. We're going to very carefully look at the information that they provide about their qualifications and about conflict of interest, and select very carefully. So

there's also some requirements for reporting the statements of interest that whoever is doing it should be very careful in following. Thank you.

Andrew Mack:

My name is Andrew Mack and I was one of the JAS members and one of the people working on the committee throughout. First of all, Karla, thank you very much for your service throughout all of the time that we worked

Three points based on the last three comments that were made. To the question from the question from behind me, I agree with you. I think it's going to be extremely difficult to get the kind of quality of people that we're looking for to serve on the SARP with no compensation. It's something about which there were some disagreements in the JAS Group.

My biggest concern with that is that it's exceptionally difficult if we wish to get good people from emerging markets themselves to do this. It's a smaller pool of people; they are better compensated; they have a lot of responsibilities in their own countries and we're basically asking them to come offline, I hope that that's something that we can revisit, if not soon then in the next round, so thought number one.

Thought no. two - the idea of kicking people out of the process if they fail, was not one of the JAS Group's recommendations. That was something that was changed afterwards. I also agree with you - we wanted very much to limit gaming, but that I think seems like a sanction that is more than is necessary, and again may adversely affect people from emerging markets.

And in the last thing about communications- you've put up an awful lot of large numbers, but I really am concerned that very little of that was specific to the JAS Program, and specific to the kind of markets that we're trying so desperately to reach. You mentioned a hundred articles in all of Africa or whatever it was. I recognize that it's difficult to get out there, but I think we needed to do and really still need to do dramatically more, and dramatically better, and specifically about the JAS program. Without it, we may end up

failing for lack of knowledge in the field. There are a tremendous number of people that are out there. The other thing about it that was mentioned with the focus on marketing officers - we had a lot of discussion in the JAS about communities and reaching out to marketing officers just isn't going to get those people. Thank you.

Karla Valente:

Thank you very much. So there are three important comments, three important takeaways that I see. One is the rule about being kicked off of the program in case an applicant doesn't have the threshold. The second is the non-compensation of the SARP volunteers issue and the third is communication efforts.

For the first two, at least, what I urge you to do is we have a public comment, a public forum today, so if you have an opportunity, please voice your concerns directly to the Board and to the rest of the community, and ask them for some kind of action, offer them some kind of options.

We have the pleasure here to have Sebastien Bachollet who from the Board and was heavily involved, not only in the past years of the development of the foundation for this program, but the implementation itself. And I thank Sebastian for being here with us today so we have one Board member that is closely listening to your concerns, but please bring them to the public forum if you can.

Also, if you have any communications, suggestions, considering the timeframe that we are in, please come talk to Michele. We have a strong communications team they are around here. Please comment and offer your suggestions. I'm going to take one remote participation question and then go back to.... So I'm going to take one remote participant, Tijani and the gentlemen in the back.

So from the remote participation, we have a question. "Can we apply for a *pro bono* support and at the same time be a SARP volunteer?" So we have conflict of interest rules and people need to carefully review that and see how that

situation applies. We need to be very careful with the conflict of interest rules, and we will be very careful in selecting our candidates.

We expect to do for disclosure. The other thing that I want you to keep in mind is that in terms of SARP members, we are not going to have only one SARP team that is going to review all the applications. We are going to have teams and we can always double check some of the things, if and as needed. So, Tijani, Avri and then the gentlemen in the back, thank you.

Tijani Ben Jemaa:

Thank you, Karla. Tijani Ben Jemaa, member of the JAS Group. Andrew said that it is unfair to kick off people who doesn't meet the criteria from the process. I disagree with him, but if this argument is valid we have to apply it also for people who qualify, but are not funded because of lack of money. If you give them the opportunity to pay the rest of the money and they do, that means that they are able to pay, and so they are gaming also. So, I don't think that we have to give them this opportunity, or we can give them this opportunity only to show that they are gaming, and then we would have to kick them off from the process.

Karla Valente:

I'm sorry, Tijani, because there was horrible noise on the back. So, let me tell you what I heard so far. What I heard is what you're saying it was again about the threshold and being out of the program overall? That was the issue, or was the issue about giving people the opportunity to pay the remainder \$138,000.

Okay, so there is a situation. I'm just going to explain the scenario for those of the remote participation that might not have heard. So there is a situation in which we can have qualifying candidates that are not the 14, that are qualifying at the threshold and what we are giving those candidates is the opportunity to continue into the program if they pay the remainder \$138,000, right?

We discussed that in our implementation process, and one of the reasoning behind allowing that was that we would then allow the candidates because the program was launched in January and people are still fund raising. They are still

trying to get other means of money, so we would give these qualifying candidates an additional time opportunity to fund raise. That was the reasoning behind that rule.

Tijani Ben Jemaa:

Okay, that was my first point, but also for this point. If they have the opportunity of the possibility to raise money, even after that—that means that they don't need to be funded.

I'm going to the second point which is a very important point, a very big concern for me. Andrew said that the outreach was not focused on the Applicant Support Program. I said that in the developing countries outreach wasn't done even for the program of the New gTLDs, and the communication that is done now online is good, but it is not enough at all. We need events, attendant events with a lot of noise to make people aware and to advise them about the opportunity they have with this support, with this Applicant Support Program. So we still have time if we want to do, but we have to do it very, very fast. Thank you.

Karla Valente:

Thank you, Tijani. I just want to make one comment on something you said. You said that if people were not able to raise the money until now, they are more likely not going to be able to raise on the additional time given. I had several community members, several parties that, you know, commented on the fact that in order to get funds, or apply for some funding, they needed to have an official launch of the program - some of those things were made conditional. So we launched on January 12, and you know, so I am hoping that this is the case and that increases their chances of getting funding because of that condition. Thank you,

Can I have Avri, and then there was a gentleman in the back that I don't see anymore. I have Avri first and then you - is that okay?

Avri Doria:

Just two questions, Avri Doria, and I was a member of the Applicant Support Group and I'm currently Chair of the At Large group that's sort of following and helping with this, and I have two questions that I'm still not clear on. One - in terms of selection of the SARP, to what extent and how will the community be involved in selecting those members?

And the second question - I understand that it's impossible to answer the gentleman's question about what additional money there will be into this fund, but can you give me an indication about what's happening in terms of how and when extra fundraising efforts, the foundation it was called for by both applicant support and the GAC. What, when, how is that happening? Thank you.

Karla Valente:

Thank you Avri, so for the second question, we are looking into it – ICANN is actively going, and everybody is looking into it and I do not have specifics for you right now, and as soon as we have it we will let the community, and of course, the ones that are closely involved to the program know as soon as possible. So this is still being looked at.

The first question was about community involvement. So before I answer that, a lot of people ask me about the different groups and different sub-groups that are involved, so I just want to clarify how this works. We had the JAS Working Group. The JAS Working Group was chartered by the GNSO and ALAC, and we have several members that... even independent members that were part of this JAS Working Group.

Then we also had an ALAC Group that works on new gTLDs, then we asked the JAS Working Group if they could point some members to create a sub-group because there was a large number of people, so could we have a number of people from the JAS Working Group, an X number that could work with the Board Special Committee on that issue and with staff to develop this implementation plan.

So remember, the program was approved by the Board in December 2011, so we quickly had to put together the smaller group made of staff, a set of Board members, and a set from the JAS Working Group that are kind of working on the implementation details. And what we are hoping for is to have this group, you know, helping us in the SARP selection, training and some additional things that still need to be done. So there's this sub-group of the JAS Working Group, plus the Board members, plus staff. Does that answer your questions, Avri?

Avri Doria: Yes, it did and that's what I was hoping to hear you actually to say out loud to this group. Thank you.

Karla Valente: I'm always pleased to see if I answer something you're hoping for. There was a gentleman in the back, thank you for waiting.

Male: This is (Inaudible) from Pakistan. I have one suggestion regarding the gTLD program communication. This suggestion is that as per your presentation, you are most regarded community who are using the internet. But in the world, the community who are not using the internet is more than the internet community. So this is my suggestion I can give to the gTLD that they maybe focus to cover the mode of communication to the non-internet users through organizing a workshop and seminars in the countries in the world, especially in the developing countries.

This is my suggestion regarding the communication of the gTLD programs. This is my one question and observations regarding the gTLD application evolution fee. Still the gTLD evolution fee is higher and not affordable for the community who are living in the developing countries.

Like you said, you see the Costa Rica, the currency conversion as compared to the dollar, there is \$1.00 equal to 500 Costa Rican colons. If you can work this

money in the lower income countries, it's a huge amount. I fear that maybe your gTLD program has negligently impacted due to these factors. So I suggest that instead of your applications support program which is only for the few applicants, you may reduce this fee to support more and more applicants, the whole applicants instead of a few applicants. Thank you.

Karla Valente:

Thank you for your comments. So there were two parts to it - one was a comment related to the overall fee and the fact that we have now \$2 million that only would serve 14 candidates, and we should find ways to expand that, and this is a point well taken. The Board, the staff - everybody is aware of that and we are looking into ways to do it. Thank you for that.

The second comment was for more effective ways to communicate, maybe for not internet users. Did I get that one right? Yeah, for non-internet users and I can give that to Michele.

Michele Jourdan:

The suggestion was to coordinate workshops and things of that nature in the developing economies and that is a good idea.

Karla Valente:

Thank you. Please.

Female:

The focus on serving underserved geographic areas - I'm wondering if the applicants have... one might be tempted to put in a geographic term into one's gTLD application, but I wonder if there's been any sort of communication or training with respect to the GAC early warning process and the possibility if there's a geographic term that's used that there could be governments interested in that geographic term or expressing an objection to exclusive use of a geographic term.

Karla Valente:

I think I got most of it, but probably not all. So you're talking specifically about a kind of application that has to do with geographic terms, and all of the rules that we have in relation to geographic terms outlined in the Applicant Guidebook, and whoever is seeking financial assistance has to follow all of the rules from the Applicant Guidebook. So in certain cases there has to be some support from local governments and this documentation has to be provided in the application of the New gTLD Program.

Now that said; there's some criteria. So in the handbook for the financial assistance, you will see information not only who qualifies, but you will also see information on who does not qualify. And a purely government agencies applying for financial assistance - if the applicant is a clearly government agency - this was one of the applicants that were not being considered for financial assistance, but I think it was the first one that you were asking for. Now we have to follow all of the rules from the Applicant Guidebook. Thank you. Anyone else? And we don't have anything else from the remote participants? We have one more question, yes.

Male:

One of the big unanswered questions that we have is whether or not this is going to touch people who are not in ASCII script, and I'm wondering where you are right now. Do we anticipate any IDN applications? Have we gotten any indication that there will be any, and if not, what can we do to reach out to that population which is substantially underserved and in some ways doubly disadvantaged, if you will?

Karla Valente:

I'm very lucky that I don't know anything about the applications at this point, and we are not allowed to talk about applications. We had community members talking about IDNs for the longest time. So, I personally expect that we might

have IDN applicants because this was one of the interests that the community had, but we don't know anything about applicants.

Male: Has this been mentioned in the communications?

Karla Valente: Oh, in communications. So something specific to reach out to IDN potential applicants and financial assistance seekers, right? Okay.

Michele Jourdan: Well, in raising awareness in the developing economies, a lot of those places, they have non-Latin languages, so it's kind of built into the outreach that we've been doing to reach those people. We haven't specifically said anything specifically about IDN, but it is in the program.

Karla Valente: Thank you all very much for attending this session, again I'm going to remind you there's a public forum today, so some of your concerns please raise in the public forum. Michele and I are going to be here for another couple of minutes if you want to come and talk to us. Thank you again and have a great week.

[End of Transcript]