Call for Expression of Interest

ICANN's Emergency Assistance Program for Continued Internet Access

1   Invitation to Submit an Expression of Interest

The purpose of this call for Expressions of Interest (EOI) is to identify eligible organizations that lead projects to provide Internet access and recovery for local populations during emergencies and disasters. As emergencies arise where ICANN could provide support, and subject to availability of funds, the ICANN organization (org) will coordinate with the selected organization(s) to identify if a monetary contribution would be appropriate in the specific instance.

This call is part of ICANN's newly established Emergency Assistance Program for Continued Internet Access.

Organizations that wish to participate in this EOI should submit the EOI form and supporting documentation via email to emergency.assistance@icann.org by 23:59 UTC on 27 March 2023. Proposals must be submitted in English.

Any questions or requests for additional information should be sent to emergency.assistance@icann.org by 23:59 UTC 3 March 2023. ICANN responses will be made available on icann.org before the deadline for EOI submissions.

Organizations will be informed of the outcome of their submissions via email to the contact information provided in their submission.

More information on background, requirements, selection criteria, and terms and conditions are provided below.

2   About ICANN

ICANN's mission is to ensure the stable and secure operation of the Internet's unique identifier systems. To reach another person on the Internet, you have to type an address into your computer - a name or a number. That address has to be unique so computers know where to find each other. ICANN helps coordinate and support these unique identifiers across the world.

3 About the Emergency Assistance Program for Continued Internet Access

The Emergency Assistance Program for Continued Internet Access is established to positively impact the security, stability, and resiliency of the Internet and management of the unique identifiers by making funds available to maintain accessibility when operators or other relevant actors might otherwise not have the resources to do so.

The concept for this ongoing program dates back to March 2022, when the ICANN Board of Directors directed ICANN org to provide a $1 million contribution for continued Internet access during the emergency in Ukraine, and to evaluate whether and how ICANN could consider similar contributions in the future. Levering experience from the contribution for continued Internet access in Ukraine, ICANN launched the Emergency Assistance Program for Continued Internet Access.

Program Details
- Total annual contributions will not exceed USD$1,000,000.
- Program administration will be in English.
- ICANN will select third-party emergency support organization(s) identified through the EOI process based upon the specific crisis/emergency situation.
- Contributions will be disbursed according to established milestones to ensure accountability and protections against misuse of resources by funded third-party emergency support organizations.
- Funds must be used for the purposes specified in the terms of any contribution distributed by ICANN.
- Recipient organizations will be required to document use of funds in accordance with the terms of the contribution as a condition of receiving and retaining funding and subject to audit by or on behalf of ICANN.
- Recipient organizations will be required to provide information and documentation as necessary in order to ensure ongoing compliance with the U.S. sanctions and other applicable trade laws and regulations.
- Processes will be in place to evaluate and quantify the impact of contributions using evidence-based evaluation methodology.
- ICANN org will ensure adequate/appropriate transparency to the community and the public on the process and status of usage of the proceeds.
- ICANN org will consider disbursing contributions across geographies, as appropriate.
- Successful applicants will enter into a master service agreement developed by ICANN that will govern the terms of any specific contribution.

Qualifying emergency events
- Large-scale[1] natural or man-made disasters that have resulted in disruptions to Internet access.
- Eligible events may be new or protracted crises.

4   Requirements

Organization must be able to demonstrate its ability to meet the following program requirements:

1. Eligible organizations shall be: (a) United States organizations recognized by the Internal Revenue Service as described in section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code; (b) non-US organizations that demonstrate to ICANN's sole satisfaction the ability to obtain an equivalent determination to those organizations in clause (a); or (c) Intergovernmental Organization (IGOs) established pursuant to a treaty
2. Demonstrated ability to use contributions in a method that is consistent with ICANN's mission
3. Demonstrated experience implementing successful projects to provide Internet accessibility in emergencies in multiple regions around the globe
4. Demonstrated experience coordinating with the relevant authorities, humanitarian agencies, civil society organizations, and private-sector actors as appropriate
5. Demonstrated ability to meet tight timelines and provide periodic status updates, frequency to be determined
6. Demonstrated ability to communicate effectively (verbally and in writing) in English
7. The applicant organization, its subcontractors and their respective directors, trustees, officers, and managers (collectively, the "Organization") are not the subject of any U.S. sanctions or other applicable trade laws and regulations that would prohibit ICANN from engaging in dealings with the Organization
8. As necessary, provide information regarding the Organization sufficient for ICANN to verify ownership and control
9. Accurate, timely and complete response to information requests from ICANN for diligence purposes (failure to respond to ICANN's satisfaction by the date specified in the request may disqualify an organization from consideration for any contribution)

5   High Level Selection Criteria

The decision to select any organization as an outcome of this EOI will be based on, but not limited to, the following selection criteria:

1. Ability to meet all program requirements in Section 4 of this EOI
2. Global experience and outreach

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[1] According to the U.N. Office for Disaster Risk Reduction Relief, a large-scale disaster is a type of disaster affecting a society that requires national or international assistance.

3. Financial health
4. Capability and experience, including qualifications and expertise in:
    a. Providing Internet accessibility in emergency situations
    b. Coordinating with the relevant authorities, humanitarian agencies, civil society organizations, and private-sector actors as appropriate
    c. Providing support to relevant stakeholders for the Internet's Identifier Systems that are jeopardized in emergency situations[2]
5. Proposed framework for future emergencies
6. Flexibility
7. Compliance with ICANN's conflicts of interest policy

6 EOI Timeline

The following dates have been established as milestones for this EOI. ICANN reserves the right to modify or change this timeline at any time as necessary.

Activity	Estimated Dates
EOI published	21 February 2023
Submission of clarifying questions to ICANN	**3 March 2023 by 23:59 UTC**
ICANN responds to clarifying questions	**17 March 2023**
Submissions due by	**27 March 2023 by 23:59 UTC**
Notice of ICANN's decision	28 April 2023

7 Terms and Conditions

General Terms and Conditions

1. Responses shall constitute each respondent's acknowledgment and acceptance of all the specifications, requirements and terms and conditions in this EOI.

2. All costs of preparing and submitting its response, or providing any other assistance to ICANN in connection with this EOI will be borne by the respondent.

3. All submitted responses, including any supporting materials or documentation, will become the property of ICANN. If the respondent's documentation contains any proprietary information that 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.

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[2] Emergency support includes, but is not limited to, mitigation of risk and repairs to root server infrastructure, Internet exchange points, and ccTLD technical or operational infrastructure.

Discrepancies, Omissions and Additional Information

1. Respondent is responsible for examining this EOI and all addenda. Failure to do so will be at the sole risk of the respondent. Should respondent find discrepancies, omissions, unclear or ambiguous intent or meaning, or should any question arise concerning the EOI, respondent must notify ICANN of such findings immediately in writing via e-mail no later than ten (10) days prior to the deadline for submissions. Should such matters remain unresolved by ICANN, in writing, prior to respondent's preparation of its proposal, such matters must be addressed in respondent's proposal.

2. ICANN is not responsible for oral statements made by its employees, agents, or representatives concerning this EOI. If respondent requires additional information, respondent must request that the issuer of this EOI furnish such information in writing.

3. A respondent's EOI is presumed to represent its best efforts to respond to this call for expression of interest. Any significant inconsistency, if unexplained, may be cause for rejection of the proposal. The burden of proof as to cost credibility rests with the respondent.

4. If necessary, supplemental information to this call for EOI will be provided on www.icann.org/public-responsibility/emergency-assistance-program. All supplemental information issued by ICANN will form part of this EOI. ICANN is not responsible for any failure by prospective respondents to access supplemental information.

Assessment and Award

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

2. ICANN may request a respondent to provide further information or documentation to support the respondent's documentation.

3. ICANN will assess proposals based on compliant responses to the requirements set out in this Call for EOI, responses to questions related to those requirements, any further issued clarifications (if any), and consideration of any other issues or evidence relevant to the respondent's ability to successfully provide and implement support in emergency situations contemplated by this EOI and in the best interests of ICANN.

4. ICANN reserves the right to enter into contractual negotiations, and, if necessary, modify any terms and conditions of a final contract with the respondent(s) whose responses offer the best value to ICANN.