

On behalf of the gTLD Registries Stakeholder Group (RySG), I am writing to ask ICANN staff to reconsider its current position on the Document Development and Drafting Pilot Program (the Program). It is our understanding that the Program will not be renewed in the FY18 Budget. As we articulated in our FY18 Community Request application (attached), **the RySG believes that the pilot Program was a clear success and deserves further funding in FY18.**

It's regrettable that few ICANN constituent groups availed themselves of the pilot Program. The RySG's experience was superb, and should serve as a "proof of concept" that justifies continuing the Program in FY18. Our Document Development and Drafting Research Assistant, Wim Degezelle, made a significant contribution in his role of drafting comments to complex public comments. His ability to research a topic, communicate with those in the RySG who may have some more in-depth knowledge of the issues/topics at hand, and then prepare and present salient observations and suggested comments has been of incredible benefit to the RySG. Wim's role facilitated participation by RySG members who don't use English as their first language, and better enabled engagement by smaller (or new) registry operators who have limited bandwidth, resources and/or knowledge that restrict their participation in issues that may have a direct impact on their operations. In fact, we saw a notable increase in participation by volunteers to partner (or even take a lead role) in developing and/or contributing to critical issues requiring formal comments by the RySG.

We would argue that the ICANN community also benefitted from the pilot Program since the RySG's public comments were made available to anyone who may be impacted by a particular issue, thus contributing to the multi-stakeholder model. As such, the community benefitted from the Program since it achieved its goals of evolving and further globalizing ICANN (by improving policy development and governance processes, structures and meetings to be more accountable, inclusive, efficient, effective and responsive); advanced organizational, technological and operational excellence (by helping develop a globally diverse culture of knowledge and expertise available to ICANN's Board, staff and stakeholders); promoted ICANN's role and multi-stakeholder approach (by empowering current and new stakeholders to fully participate in ICANN activities.); and developing and implementing a global public interest framework bounded by ICANN's mission.

The RySG appreciates that there are many competing demands for ICANN's relatively limited resources. We strongly believe, however, that the Program deserves funding in FY18. It has delivered results by providing demonstrable outputs of benefit to the RySG and the rest of the community. In fact, other constituent groups are aware of the RySG's excellent experience with the Program and planned to seek their own Assistant in FY18. Not including the Program in FY18 risks undermining ICANN's own goals which mirror the Program's. That clearly is not in anyone's interests.

Best, P

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