

Supplemental Report
NCDNHC Evaluation Team
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Contents:

I. INTRODUCTION

II. GENERAL RESPONSES TO COMMENTS

III. SUMMARY OF SCORING CHANGES

IV. SPECIFIC RESPONSES TO APPLICANTS' COMMENTS

I. INTRODUCTION

For better or worse, ICANN has chosen to reassign .org using a comparative proposal or “beauty contest” method. Given that method, the need for an iterative review process that incorporates feedback should be obvious. We welcome the comments on our initial evaluation from the applicants and the public and, in the spirit of distributed intelligence typical of the Internet, recognize that an open review by many minds can produce a better result than a closed process limited to a few.

We are not at all surprised that our initial report contained stray mistakes or debatable items, ranging from typographical errors to an inadvertent failure to give certain ideas their due weight in a score. The NCDNHC evaluation team had to assess a huge amount of material in a very short time, and collaborate entirely in a virtual form. The purpose of this stage of the process is to identify and correct any errors or omissions. We also recognize that such a feedback process invites special pleading by applicants and exaggerated claims of bias and unfairness by those ranked poorly in our initial evaluation.

This supplemental report separates the signal from the noise. We are confident that the ICANN Board will be able to distinguish between errors and oversights that need correction on the one hand, and arbitrary calls for special treatment designed to increase a particular applicant's ranking.

In this document, the “Supplemental Report,” we respond to the comments and explain why the NCDNHC evaluation team agreed to change, or not change, its scores or methods. All changes agreed to here are incorporated in the “Final Report,” which is simply the corrected version of the original evaluation report. *Our understanding is that only the Final Report and Supplemental Report will have standing in the Board's selection of a new .org registry.*

II. GENERAL OBSERVATIONS

In response to [comments from John Klensin](#) that “ICANN is under some obligation to explain the combination of a decision to treat org as an open-registration domain with the aspects of the evaluation and selection process that seem to stress non-profit or non-commercial activities,” we refer to the [DNSO policy consensus](#) and the deliberations of

the [Names Council .Org Task Force](#) that underlay the drafting of the RFP. An extensive and clear explanation is provided there.

We also note that concepts such as “differentiation,” “responsiveness to the noncommercial Internet community” and “support from noncommercial .org registrants” involve human factors and as such require human judgments. ICANN management’s approach to this problem was to ask the noncommercial community representatives within ICANN to evaluate these factors and use their assessments as benchmarks. The independence of the NCDNHC from ICANN management and the bidders, and its grounding in noncommercial Internet users with significant knowledge of the .org reassignment process, is unquestioned by any commentator. We did not see any better methods proposed. The idea that, e.g., commercial consulting firms remote from noncommercial DNS users and the history and processes of ICANN are in a better position to evaluate “responsiveness to the noncommercial community” or support among noncommercial domain name registrants seems self-evidently wrong.

Overall, our evaluation criteria were directly derived from the Request for Proposals (RFP) and the DNSO policy consensus. Some applicants with low scores attempted to characterize our criteria as new or arbitrary, but in all cases there is a close relationship between the criteria and the published RFP.

Differentiation

The wording of the Final Report has been modified to include the exact language defining this criterion in the RFP. We show quite clearly in the Final Report how all 6 of our scoring elements are grounded in the DNSO policy consensus and the staff RFP. Moreover, all of these aspects of differentiation are distinct and separable; an applicant might do well on one aspect and poorly on another. That is why we think it valid and important to score them separately.

The argument (Neustar) that these criteria were weighted to prejudice commercial applications vis-à-vis noncommercial applicants is obviously false. In the initial report, the top two ranked applicants in the Differentiation criterion were commercial firms, and three of the top four were commercial firms. (In our Final report, three of the top three are commercial applicants, and 4 of the top 5 are commercial.)

Good Works as a Measure of Responsiveness to the Noncommercial Community

Some argument about evaluation criteria centered on inclusion of “good works” as a scoring element. We carefully considered the role of “good works” in the initial report and revisited whether it should be eliminated after receiving comments. Several members of the evaluation team initially wanted to eliminate it as a factor. We eventually reached a unanimous consensus that it *should* be included. There is support for it in both the DNSO consensus policy that formed the basis of the RFP, and in the RFP itself.

The DNSO consensus policy specifically addressed the issue of “good works” and said that it was:

permitted, provided that the registry operation itself is adequately sustained and that the additional purposes bear some relationship to Internet use, administration and policy. For example, applicants are encouraged to propose methods of supporting and assisting non-commercial participants in the ICANN process. Uses intended only to subsidize other activities of the organization or its subsidiaries, activities that are not subject to oversight and management by the .org governance arrangements, should not be considered.

Note that this language did not *require* applicants to perform “good works” but it did “encourage” them to use .org revenues to support and assist noncommercial participants in the ICANN process. As a direct derivative of that policy dialogue, the ICANN staff-drafted RFP noted in Criterion 5 that:

The successor operator's policies and practices should strive to be responsive to and supportive of the noncommercial Internet user community...

Good works can clearly be considered a form of “supportiveness,” although in that case the good works should be targeted at the “noncommercial Internet user community.” The RFP also noted that:

ICANN expects that additional considerations in the evaluation and selection of proposals may be suggested by analysis and comparison of the proposals received.

Such language provides a basis for taking into account use of surplus funds, because several proposals put a major emphasis on their use of .org revenues for “good works.” Thus, “analysis and comparison of the proposals received” suggests taking subsidies into account. However, as noted in the original report some members of the Board did not look favorably upon the idea of using revenues from .org to subsidize good works. Therefore we decided to retain it as a scoring item but lowered its weighting to one half. Obviously, in making a selection any Board member is free to discount this factor entirely if they wish.

Public Support

Some applicants (Organic Names, GNR) questioned whether any assessment of public support is desirable or possible. In this case, the applicants may have failed to read the RFP. Not only were applicants told that demonstrations of support would be a factor, the RFP indicated in no uncertain terms what kind of supporters would be most valued:

Demonstrated support among registrants in the .org TLD, particularly those actually using .org domain names for noncommercial purposes, will be a factor in evaluation of the proposals.

Please note the word ‘*demonstrated*’ before ‘support.’ Anyone can *claim* support of various “communities,” and it is not difficult to develop relationships with a handful of organizations or people drawn from selected communities. We took the RFP to mean that support actually had to manifest itself in the process, either as letters of endorsements in

the proposals or on the public comment board, and that the support should be as widespread as possible. Thus, retroactive complaints that such demonstrations are meaningless or unrepresentative are complaints about the RFP and not about our evaluation.

Our specific method of scoring public support, predictably, attracted criticism from applicants who ranked poorly and went unquestioned by applicants who came out on top. One criticism, however, deserves special attention: GNR complained that counting all ISOC support letters as one Class A is inconsistent with our stated principle of demoting Class A's to Class B's when the endorser has an economic stake in the outcome. (We note that we used a similar method in counting UIA/Diveritas' support). This is a legitimate and reasonable point, but the unique circumstances surrounding ISOC's expressions of support made this solution the only fair way to arrive at a ranking. It is clearly not right to count all ISOC-member letters as Class B's. That would greatly overstate ISOC's support. Reclassification tremendously reduced ISOC's public support score, relative to what it would have been had the individual endorsements been counted as Class B's. The alternative would be to disregard all the ISOC letters. That did not seem fair to any of the evaluation team members. Most of the letters are real, and are grounded in the Internet community worldwide. Many ISOC chapters around the world are independently managed, and the level of support ISOC received from them was significant. Since the RFP did not specify exactly how support was supposed to be "demonstrated," it does not seem right to penalize an applicant who utilized a method of demonstrating support that did not clearly distinguish between internal and external supporters. Neither GNR nor any other applicant proposed an alternative method that could be applied uniformly to all applicants.

What should not get lost in the noise is that there is a very clear difference between the three proposals ranked in the first tier (IMS/ISC, Unity Registry, and Internet Society) and those ranked in the second and third tiers. Nothing we have read in any of the comments undermines the conclusion that a qualitative difference exists. So while the comments have led to some marginal adjustments they have not affected the top tier, nor have they convinced us that the method employed was inappropriate.

Typographical errors.

The original report contained two typographical errors. The typos occurred on page 14, Table 2, "Responsiveness and Governance Rankings." Unfortunately the typos were numbers: GNR's score for "Relationship with community" was shown as "5" when it was really "4." Internet Society's score on "Input/Governance" was shown as "3" when it was really a 2. This made it appear as if the calculation of final scores was wrong. But the calculations, and the rankings based on them, were correct. The numbers shown in the "Score" column were based on a spreadsheet that was independent of the document, and this spreadsheet had the correct numbers. Thus, the typos did not affect rankings or results in any way. This error – and its absence of any effect on the results – was pointed out within hours of the release of the report, on the NCDNHC list.

Methods of Finalizing Rankings

The original report contained two distinct methods for arriving at a summary, overall ranking. We also considered not providing a final ranking at all, because such summaries sometimes serve as substitutes for assessment of the overall report, and we believe that in any fair selection process Board members should read the entire evaluation. The comments we received reinforce our (initially somewhat shaky) conviction that it is best to employ both methods (or perhaps none at all). Both overall rankings should be considered as decision support information by the ICANN Board. The board should decide for itself how to interpret them. In general, the “normalized” method flattens out the public support criteria and makes the geographic diversity of the supporters much more important than the “average ranking” method. As in any summary, both methods *lose significant amounts of information* relative to viewing each of the rankings by individual criteria (Differentiation, Responsiveness, and Public Support) and reading the complete report. We urge the Board and all others to read the entire Final Report and not just the attempt to come up with a unified ranking at the end.

III. SUMMARY OF SCORING CHANGES

The following scoring changes were made based on our review of comments:

Differentiation

DotOrg Foundation: up from 0 to 2 on “Unrestricted”

DotOrg Foundation: up from 3 to 4 on “Registrars”

Neustar: down from 5 to 4 on “Defensive”

GNR: up from 0 to 2 on “Registrars”

UIA/Diversitas: up from 0 to 2 on “Market research”

Responsiveness

.Org Foundation: up from 2 to 5 on “Post-bid responsiveness”

.Org Foundation: up from 2 to 5 on “Input/Governance”

RegisterOrg: up from 0 to 2 in “Services targeted at community”

RegisterOrg: up from 2 to 5 on “Good works”

Public Support

DotOrg Foundation: add one Class B to Public Support

Neustar: upgrade ASAE from Class B to Class A

UIA/Diversitas: add one Class A and two Class B endorsements

Scoring representation changes due to typographical errors:

Responsiveness

ISOC/Afilias: down from 3 to 2 in “Input/Governance”

GNR: down from 5 to 4 in “Relationship to community”

IV. DETAILED RESPONSES TO APPLICANTS' COMMENTS

DotOrg Foundation (DOF)

Market research

DOF claim to have relied extensively on Register.com's market research. But their reliance on this research, even its existence, was not mentioned in the proposal at all (See DOF questions C27, C35 or C38). The evaluation team is not clairvoyant and cannot give applicants credit for something that is not in a proposal. Nor do we feel it is appropriate to recognize retroactively claims about what the proposal was "based on" when the proposal itself does not make any reference to it. We must rely on the record. We note that unlike other applicants who evinced no market research, we did give DOF a score of 2 for market research because of the quality of their comments about how they would conduct market research in the future. We therefore leave this score unchanged.

Validation

In response to the Evaluation team's report questioning the need for a linkage between validation services and the registry, DOF asserts that "the registry is the cornerstone for creating a more effective validation system," and that the registry offers the validation service provider "the best and most cost effective way of expanding its draw of noncommercial registrants." The first argument merely reinforces our concerns about the potential conflict between openness and registry-based validation, and the second argument is not backed up by any facts; e.g., from market research. We have, however, raised DOF's score in the "Unrestricted" element from 0 to 2. While we still believe that linking validation to the registry represents a risk to .org's unrestricted character and to free competition in the validation market, the applicant did strongly reiterate their desire to keep validation voluntary. The raised scoring also makes it more consistent with UIA's scoring, which also promised to institute validation.

Defensive registration and IP Searching: While DOF attempts to reassure us about the intent of mentioning an IP-based searching system and attempts to downplay its significance, we must base our evaluation on what was put into the proposal, and what that reflects about the priorities and concerns of the applicant. We leave this score unchanged.

Registrars: We are convinced by DOF's comments that we under-rated the scope of their activities with registrars. We have upgraded their score from a 3 to a 4.

Responsiveness/Governance: DOF correctly notes that language in the report was not in accord with the actual ranking. The statement that ISOC and DOF were tied reflects tentative scoring in an earlier version of the report and should have been removed from the report we released. That mistake has been removed in the final version.

Public Support

DotOrg wants a higher geographic diversity score because 3 of its endorsing organizations are alleged to be "international organizations." Habitat Canada, as its name

suggests, is the Canadian chapter of Habitat for Humanity, not an international organization. CanadaHelps is, as the name suggests, a Canadian organization that sends aid overseas. The other two organizations are US-based organizations whose members are composed overwhelmingly of other US-based organizations. DOF's support is confined exclusively to North America. DOF claims that eGrants, WorldReach and Habitat for Humanity Canada are Class A. The first two organizations are not listed as endorsers (there is an endorsement from ePhilanthropy), the third has a .ca domain name and not a .org domain name. The Evaluation team noted, independently of comments by DOF, that we had overlooked a Class B endorsement from the IT and Internet Association, Lebanon. This is a commercial organization with no .org name as far as we can tell, so it was given Class B status.

Neustar

Neustar's main theme is that we were prejudiced in favor of a nonprofit/ noncommercial applicant. This is easy to refute. The bidders break down as follows (using question C41, application for the VeriSign endowment, as the criterion of "commercial" vs. "noncommercial" applicants):

<i>Nonprofits</i>	<i>For Profits</i>
ISOC/PIR	Unity Registry
IMS/ISC	Neustar
UIA/Diversitas	RegisterOrg
DotOrg Found	Organic Names
.Org Found	GNR*
SWITCH	

*GNR says it "will form a nonprofit entity" that will apply for the endowment, but GNR itself is a commercial enterprise and would not be eligible. Whether an entity it formed later would be eligible is also open to serious question.

Please note the following facts about the original report:

- Our overall top-ranked applicant, Unity Registry, is a for-profit entity.
- The applicants we ranked the *lowest* were more likely to be noncommercial. There were two non-profits (.Org Foundation and SWITCH) and only one for-profit (Organic Names) in the bottom tier of the "average ranking" method. Using the "normalized ranking" method, there were 3 nonprofits (SWITCH, .Org Foundation, and DotOrg Foundation) and 2 for-profits (Organic Names and RegisterOrg) in the bottom tier.
- Three of the top four applicants in the Differentiation criterion are commercial companies.
- The first and second-ranked proposals in the Responsiveness/Governance criterion were for-profit companies.
- If the final rankings of profits and nonprofits are averaged, for-profit firms on average were ranked higher using Method 1, and there was no difference in the averages using Method 2. In our first method of integrating the rankings, the average rank of for-profit applicants was 5.4, slightly better than the average rank of 6 for

nonprofits. Using the “normalized” method, the noncommercial applicants’ average rank was still 6, exactly the same as the average rank of commercial proposals.

This factual, objective evidence decisively refutes the existence of any bias in favor of noncommercial applicants.

Inconsistency in the way ISOC and Neustar were scored on governance.

Neustar points out that we verbally praised certain aspects of their governance arrangements and verbally panned ISOC and yet they ended up with the same score on that component: 3. In reality, ISOC *was* given a lower score (2) but a typographical error put a 3 where there should have been a 2. ISOC’s total score and rankings reflected the 2 score rather than the 3 score, as noted earlier.

Classification of support letters.

Neustar’s discussion of this issue is tendentious and misleading. We did not make any mistakes about whether organizations had .org names or not. (E.g., we noted in our report that Stargazer Foundation had an .org name, although Neustar asserts the opposite.) There was no “penalty” for form letters – no endorsement for any applicant was downgraded because it was based on a form letter. All of Neustar’s letters that were classified as Class B were downgraded for the simple reason that the letters *did not endorse the Neustar proposal*. They endorsed the general idea of a policy council that would reflect the views of noncommercial .org name holders. It is disingenuous of Neustar to ask the Board to count noncommercial organizations as endorsers of their bid when those organizations were never asked to endorse it and the letters express support for a policy council representative of noncommercial interests, a general concept that exists in other proposals. In order to be sure about this, we sent verification letters attempting to clarify the ambiguity about the status of these endorsements to half a dozen of the Neustar endorsers. Only one of them replied, a response rate that is in itself a telling indication of the vaporware quality of Neustar’s support. The relevant part of that one reply letter is reproduced here:

1. We were supporting the concept of a global advisory council only.
2. We wouldn't be able to make that determination, based on our limited knowledge of the other proposals, and never intended to endorse any particular proposal.

Regards,
John Thomas
Independent Sector

Given the clear statement above that the organization “never intended to endorse any particular proposal” our decision to count all of Neustar’s letters as Class B endorsements can be considered an act of significant generosity. Arguably, they could have been discounted altogether. One other bidder (GNR) has complained about counting them at all.

Neustar notes that the organization “We Save Our World,” the existence of which we were unable to verify, actually has a domain name. We thank Neustar for providing us with a domain name for this small organization, because it was not cited in the

endorsement message and we searched for the organization extensively and found nothing. There is indeed a Whois record, and from this record it is apparent that it is a one-man operation. However, the domain name does not resolve, so it is impossible to verify whether this one-person organization actually does anything. Based on that, the Evaluation Team decided not to count the organization as a Class A endorsement.

We note that the American Society of Association Executives, in addition to sending in one of the semi-endorsement letters incorporated in Neustar's proposal, has filed comments on the public message board independently of Neustar. This new message goes on at length about the need for representation of noncommercial interests in the management of .org, and specifically singles out the Neustar bid because of its Global Policy Council proposal, although it does seem to stop short of explicitly endorsing the bid as a whole. Because of this initiative, we have upgraded ASAE's classification from B to A.

Finally, Neustar produces a list of five organizations (Personal Communications Industry Association, Hong Kong-China Foundation, Far East Memorial Group, Association of Chinese Scientists, and SRI International) for which it claims endorsements. However, no endorsement letters from these organizations are contained in the proposal and none appear on the public comment board. The only place the names of these organizations can be found is in a "list of noncommercial organizations NeuStar contacted during outreach and research activities." (Neustar proposal at C36). We have seen some excessive claims of support during this process, but we are frankly astounded by the concept that responding to a market research survey constitutes an endorsement.

Good Works.

Neustar argues against considering good works as a factor at all. We disagree, see the discussion above.

Inconsistent Scoring of Defensive Registrations.

Neustar notes in its discussion of innovation that it proposed an "Enhanced Whois" service to facilitate intellectual property searches of the .org registry database. We did overlook this and appreciate Neustar's bringing it to our attention. Our opinion is that such services are an attempt to commercially exploit defensive and duplicative registrations. Since we docked DotOrg Foundation for a similar proposal, in the interests of consistency we have reduced Neustar's score in the "defensive registration" component by one point (from 5 to 4).

.Org Foundation

Post-bid Responsiveness

This response points out an error we made, but attempts to inflate a minor oversight into a challenge to the entire report. The evaluation team overlooked .Org's response to a question on the public message board. This resulted in a score of 2 on "post bid responsiveness." We have corrected the error and given them a 5 on post-bid responsiveness. We note that the correction does not change .Org's ranking, either in Criterion 5 or in the overall rankings.

Input/Governance

A more serious oversight was pointed out both by .Org Foundation's response comments and independently by a NCDNHC member. Apparently, a majority of the .Org Foundation's Board would be elected by .org registrants under the .Org Foundation bylaws. The language describing this governance structure in the proposal was more than a little murky, which accounts for why they were not credited with a higher score in Input/Governance the first time around. We still have some doubts about when and how this election would occur. An additional concern is that .Org Foundation, as a totally new creation of a Seattle businessman, has no track record that would make us completely confident that such a commitment would be carried out. However, since they have (potentially) proposed a governance form that would give .org registrants significant representation on the Board, we have raised their score on that element from 2 to 5.

Innovative services and Registrar relations

The report clearly noted that new and innovative services were of interest in our part of the evaluation only insofar as they are of special interest to noncommercial registrants. Better handling of deleted names, for example, may be a very good technical feature of the .Org Foundation proposal, but it is an "innovation" that has no special significance to noncommercial .org name holders nor does it differentiate .org domains from other domains.

RegisterOrg

Defensive Registrations.

RegisterOrg complains about their zero score on defensive registration. They got that score because no techniques to combat defensive and duplicative registrations were mentioned in the "differentiation" section of the proposal, nor was there any specific discussion of the problem. We believe in the sincerity and credibility of RegisterOrg's commitment to market to noncommercial registrants, but that commitment is not equivalent to attacking the problem of defensive registrations. The same score of 0 was given to Switch, IMS/ISC, and .Org Foundation, who all failed to discuss it as well. As noted before, we can only score based on what is in the proposal.

Innovation.

RegisterOrg believes that its Community Portal is a form of "innovation" and hence they should not get a 0 on that component in the Differentiation score. However, by "innovation" in the Differentiation discussion we meant **technical** forms of innovation, such as the thick registry, verification technologies, open source software and software innovations proposed by some applicants. Service innovations or services especially tailored for noncommercial markets were counted as "Services tailored to the noncommercial community" under criterion 5 (Responsiveness). But RegisterOrg was scored 0 on "Services tailored to the noncommercial community" under Criterion 5, too. We now view this as an oversight and have raised its score from 0 to 2 in that category. RegisterOrg receives a relatively low score because we view portals and other more passive forms of service as less impressive than many of the services proposed by other applicants.

Good works.

RegisterOrg has clarified its relationship to Benton and OSI and makes a strong case that the \$2.5 million they are giving deserves a better ranking than ISOC and IMS/ISC in the “good works” category. We have increased their score on this dimension from 2 to 5.

Public support

RegisterOrg complain that they got a zero for public support. In fact, they got 0.8. All four of its endorsing organizations were classified as Class B endorsements, which are scored at 1/5 of a point each. The simple fact is that this applicant got only four organizations to endorse its bid, and two of them stand to gain millions of dollars if RegisterOrg wins the bid. No amount of spin is going to increase its ranking given these facts. Regarding geographic diversity, RegisterOrg argues that OSI is an “international organization” and therefore their rating in that area should go up. We agree that OSI’s operations are international in scope but our scoring was deliberately structured to give higher scores to applicants who could demonstrate support from diverse entities headquartered in different locations. Gaining the support of the secretariat of one organization, no matter how international, should not be considered “geographically diverse.”

Global Name RegistryCounting support letters.

GNR’s complaints about the public support criterion were noted earlier. We reiterate that their’s is a complaint about the RFP and not about our evaluation. The simple fact, which no amount of haggling over detail can obscure, is that there are clear distinctions in the level of “demonstrated public support” shown by GNR and the first-tier applicants. GNR went out and got the support of a handful of organizations by promising them a share of revenues from .org services. IMS/ISC, Unity Registry, and Internet Society demonstrated widespread support for their proposals among diverse people and organizations.

Innovation

Like RegisterOrg, GNR complain that they got a 0 for “innovation” under differentiation. Once again, by innovation we meant *technical* innovation that would differentiate the domain. New services were included under “services targeted at community” under “Responsiveness.” GNR got a high score there (4/6).

Registrars

GNR argues that we did not take sufficient account of their registrar “road show” and related activities for registrars. We agree and have raised their score from 0 to 2.

Marketing

GNR complains that “our marketing and positioning initiatives were not given fair consideration.” This is a bizarre statement. GNR received 5 out of 5 for market research and 4 out of 5 for positioning. No other applicant received a higher combined score on these two components of the evaluation.

UIA/DiversitasPublic support.

UIA still tries to argue that all of its member organizations should be counted as “endorsements,” even though few of them actually submitted endorsements. We considered and rejected this argument in the initial report and reject it now. We accommodated UIA’s legitimate claims to standing in this community by classifying itself as a Class A endorsement, a special dispensation. UIA observes that we missed IDRC Canada and London School of Economics Programme on Civil Society, both of which would be Class B endorsements (do not hold .org names). We have added them in the Final Report. The Evaluation team also noticed, on its own initiative, that the table only credited UIA with 4 Class A endorsements whereas it was the team’s intent to credit it with 5.

Relationship with Community

UIA says its background and experience with noncommercial organizations was “rejected as a relevant factor” in our evaluation. This is not true. They were scored a 3 in the “Relationship with Community” component of Criterion 5. The moderate score reflects our feeling that its background and experience, while relevant and significant, are moderated somewhat by the fact that operating a domain name registry in a software-driven, Internet environment is a form of relationship in which they have little experience. By way of contrast, Unity Registry partner Poptel has significant relationships in the technical/online environment with noncommercial organizations.

Responsiveness and Governance

UIA claims that they “made a commitment” to set up a representative governance structure. This “commitment” is purely rhetorical and contains no specific governance structure. Our initial report made it very clear that vague promises would be scored much lower than specific plans. Applicants who took this criterion seriously, such as GNR and Unity Registry, went to great lengths to define specific programs, structures and methods. It would be a travesty to score a few sentences containing promises the same as those plans.

Market research

UIA displays some analysis of their member organizations’ website TLD. This was not immediately apparent from their formal proposal but we agreed to upgrade their score on this element from 0 to 2. The “low” 2 score is based on the fact that the research is confined to its own members and not to the .org population as a whole, and does not seem to have contributed significantly to the marketing practices proposed.

SWITCHSurplus Funds

SWITCH notes that they do not believe in use of surplus funds to promote good causes. Several members of the evaluation team were quite sympathetic to this argument, and initially argued for not including this as a factor. But we ultimately reached the consensus that it should be included, although weighted lower, based on the ideas stated in the first section above.

Dominance by US members

SWITCH expresses concerns about dominance of the process by US interests. We recognize that the requirement of working in the English language to some extent privileged the USA participants of the NCDNHC team when it comes to writing reports. However, all non-US Evaluation Team members will attest that the rankings and scorings of the NCDNHC team were not biased by national origins, and we note that our top-ranked proposal is a partnership of European and Australian firms.

Post-bid responsiveness

SWITCH complains that they did not know who the people asking questions in the public forum were. We agree that the relationships, web sites and committee appointments surrounding ICANN processes can be confusing; however, had Switch committed itself more strongly to monitoring the activities of the noncommercial community within ICANN and developed closer ties to them it would have had a better idea of what was happening.

Organic Names

Having submitted what was in our estimation the overall worst proposal, Organic Names returns the favor and argues that we are incompetent. We encourage the Board to put our analysis side by side with Organic Names' response and decide for themselves.

Organic claims that it was "not invited" to make a presentation at Bucharest and was "not asked any questions." Both assertions are false. The invitation to make a presentation to the NCDNHC members at Bucharest was publicized on the public listserver of the Noncommercial constituency. All applicants had equal access to that invitation and relied entirely on that invitation. If Organic Names failed to monitor the NCDNHC list, it only corroborates their lack of interest in the noncommercial community that is active within ICANN. And if Organic is unconcerned with and unresponsive to noncommercial domain name registrants who are readily available to them because of their activity within ICANN, it is difficult to believe that they would be responsive to and concerned about any other noncommercial domain name registrants, except perhaps as revenue sources.