ICANN EBERO Services

Request for Proposal Overview

ICANN Global Domains Division
17 October 2018

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Introduction

About this Document

This document provides an overview of this Request for Proposal (RFP). It provides background and pertinent information regarding the requirements. The RFP itself is comprised of this as well as other documents that are hosted in the ICANN organization sourcing tool. Indications of interest are to be submitted by email to EBEROServices-rfp@icann.org by 16:00 UTC on 05 November 2018.

Complete proposals must be electronically submitted by 16:00 UTC on 03 December 2018 using the ICANN org sourcing tool, access to which will be granted after receipt of an indication of interest to the email address above.

Overview of the Internet Corporation for Assigned Names and Numbers (ICANN) Organization

The mission of the Internet Corporation for Assigned Names and Numbers (ICANN) is to help ensure a stable, secure and unified global Internet. 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. The ICANN org helps coordinate and support these unique identifiers across the world.

The ICANN org promotes competition and develops policy on the Internet's unique identifiers. The ICANN org has introduced over 1,200 new generic top-level domains, each of which is operated by a registry. In addition, as a function of the ICANN org's responsibility, it accredits domain name registrars, who facilitate the registration of Internet domain names for individuals and organizations (e.g. registrants).

See www.icann.org for more information.

Background

In conjunction with the development of the New gTLD Program, the ICANN org designed the Emergency Back-End Registry Operator (EBERO) program as a protection mechanism for domain name registrants, establishing EBERO service providers to be on standby in the event of a failure of a generic top-level domain (gTLD) registry operator.

Ensuring the successful transfer of a failed gTLD to an EBERO service provider aligns with the ICANN org's objective to support a healthy, stable, and resilient unique identifier ecosystem and is consistent with its Mission and Bylaws (Section 1.1) which provide, "ICANN coordinates the allocation and assignment of names in the root zone of the Domain Name System (DNS) and

coordinates the development and implementation of policies concerning the registration of second-level domain names in gTLDs."

ICANN org has operated the EBERO program for over five years. There are currently three EBERO service providers who have partnered with the ICANN org to provide 24/7 on-call, emergency services in the event of a gTLD registry operator failure. Over this period of time, the ICANN org has learned from shared experiences with the EBERO service providers and has worked to improve on the program and its processes.

Summary of Request

Since the original Request for Information (RFI) in 2011, the industry has significantly matured. The ICANN org seeks to align the requirements of an EBERO service provider with its understanding of the market for emergency back-end registry support services. Additionally, as part of its procurement policy to periodically review vendor contracts, the ICANN org is conducting an open RFP. This means that in addition to prospective new providers, the existing EBERO service providers will also be required to submit proposals in order to be eligible to continue as an EBERO service provider.

The primary objective of this RFP is to identify one or more providers suitable to support the ICANN org's ability to respond to and coordinate the emergency recovery of a gTLD registry. The ICANN org intends to identify one or more providers in regions where the largest number of New gTLD Program registries are currently based — Asia Pacific, European, and North American regions. Additional considerations include sharing a mutual responsibility to Internet users in their desire to ensuring the stability of the Internet.

Project Objective

The services provided as a part of the EBERO program are an integral component of ICANN org's commitment to ensuring the security and stability of the Internet and to allowing for an increased level of business continuity and protection to registrants. Should a gTLD registry operator fail to meet the uptime and performance requirements of the Registry Agreement, the EBERO program may intercede and perform an emergency transition to a contracted EBERO service provider.

As mentioned, the primary objective of this RFP is to identify one or more registry service providers suitable to support the ICANN org and its need to provide emergency back-up services for registries throughout the ICANN regions (https://meetings.icann.org/en/regions).

The ICANN org seeks to engage experienced and competent service providers to deliver 24/7 on-call support services with the ability to transition a gTLD to its own highly resilient and stable platform. An EBERO service provider is expected to provide a cost-effective standby program, maintain its own superior systems in preparation for a potential EBERO event, and provide registrar support for connections to its platform and demonstrable capabilities for business continuity and disaster recovery. Considering the efficiencies gained by the community within the past five years, ICANN anticipates proposals for this RFP to cost no greater than current fee expenditure.

Scope of Work

The EBERO services requested in this RFP align with the draft EBERO contract and the draft Common Transition Process (CTP) 3.0 contained in this RFP.

The requirements of an EBERO service provider include the following areas as described below:

Testing

- Demonstrate ongoing readiness to execute the CTP
- Perform CTP functions within the service level agreement (SLA) using a supplied data set

On-call and Standby Support for the EBERO Program

- Provide 24/7 on-call and standby support for ICANN staff
- Provide human-to-human communication after the activation of the provider's EBERO response team

Transition of Failed TLD(s) according to the Common Transition Process

- Perform the processes described in the CTP in order for a failed TLD to be restored in the EBERO provider's environment

EBERO Services (Critical Registry Functions) for Failed TLD(s)

- DNS resolution
- Domain Name Security Extensions (DNSSEC)
- Registration Data Directory Services (RDDS)
- Shared Registry System (SRS)
- Make data escrow deposits to an ICANN selected provider

Reporting

- Provide reports to the ICANN org as defined by the contract and CTP, but not limited to the following:

    - gTLD transaction reporting
    - gTLD activity reporting
    - Bulk Registration Data Access (BRDA) reporting
    - Zone file publishing

High-level Selection Criteria

The decision to select a provider or providers as an outcome of this RFP will be based on, but not limited to, the following selection criteria:

- Capability and infrastructure as a registry service provider

- Performance as a technical operator of registry services

- Responsiveness and flexibility to work with the specific requirements of ICANN org, including the ability to update services based upon periodic updates to requirements

- Financial valuation/pricing.

Requirements

In order to be considered, providers must be able to demonstrate their ability to meet the following, high-level requirements.

A more detailed list of requirements is available in the ICANN org sourcing tool:

- Ability to provide completed responses to questionnaire by the designated due date via the sourcing tool [access to be provided based on communication of intent to submit RFP]

- At least four years of experience in acting as a registry services (back-end) provider

- At least two secure, environmentally sound, geographically diverse facilities available to operate the EBERO services

- Ability to meet the requirements of the draft EBERO contract and draft CTP

- Confirmation of compliance with local, national, and international data privacy laws currently applicable to the provider and the ability to comply with privacy laws that may be applicable to the EBERO service provider

- Broad, flexible reporting capabilities, including, but not limited to submission of reports to the ICANN org via secure application program interface (API) to the ICANN org's system, as defined by the ICANN org

Project Timeline

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

Activity	Estimated/Due Dates
RFP published	17 Oct 2018
Participants indicate interest in submitting RFP proposal via email to EBEROServices-RFP@icann.org	05 Nov 2018 by 16:00 UTC
Participants submit signed Non-Disclosure Agreement via email to EBEROServices-RFP@icann.org	07 Nov 2018 by 16:00 UTC
Participants submit any questions to ICANN via the Q&A Board within the online sourcing tool	12 Nov 2018 by 16:00 UTC
ICANN responds to participant questions (via Q&A Board)	20 Nov 2018
Participant proposals due by	**03 Dec 2018 by 16:00 UTC**
Evaluation of responses	04 Dec 2018 to 21 Dec 2018
Final evaluations, contracting and award	02 Jan 2019 to 04 Feb 2019

Terms and Conditions

General Terms and Conditions

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

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

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

Discrepancies, Omissions and Additional Information

◉ Respondent is responsible for examining this RFP and all addenda. Failure to do so will be at the sole risk of the respondent. Should the respondent find discrepancies, omissions, unclear or ambiguous intent or meaning, or should any question arise concerning this RFP, the respondent must notify the ICANN org of such findings immediately in writing via e-mail no later than three days prior to the deadline for bid submissions. Should such matters

remain unresolved by the ICANN org, in writing, prior to the respondent's preparation of its proposal, such matters must be addressed in the respondent's proposal.

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

⊙ A respondent's proposal is presumed to represent its best efforts to respond to the RFP. Any significant inconsistency, if unexplained, raises a fundamental issue of the respondent's understanding of the nature and scope of the work required and of its ability to perform the contract as proposed and may be cause for rejection of the proposal. The burden of proof as to cost credibility rests with the respondent.

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

Assessment and Award

The ICANN org:

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

⊙ Determines if one or more respondents are awarded, the expectation is that the result will be a multi-year contract.

⊙ May request a respondent to provide further information or documentation to support respondent's proposal and its ability to provide the products and/or services contemplated by this RFP.

⊙ Is not obliged to accept the lowest-priced proposal. Price is only one of the determining factors for the successful award.

⊙ Will assess proposals based on compliant responses to the requirements set out in this RFP, 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 the products and/or services contemplated by this RFP and in the best interests of the ICANN org.

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

Helpful Links

Information about domain names and how registries and registrars fit in the industry:
https://www.icann.org/en/about/learning/beginners-guides/domain-names-beginners-guide-06dec10-en.

The 2017 Base Registry Agreement:
https://newgtlds.icann.org/sites/default/files/agreements/agreement-approved-31jul17-en.pdf

EBERO Program FAQs:
https://www.icann.org/resources/pages/faqs-2013-04-02-en