

APPLICATION GUIDELINES FOR ACCREDITATION AS SGNIC'S REGISTRAR

1 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 Singapore Network Information Centre Private Limited ("**SGNIC**") is the national registry of .sg domain names in Singapore. As the registry, SGNIC operates and controls the .sg top-level Internet domain name system and administers the registration of second-level domain names under the top-level domain of .sg, third-level domain names under the second-levels of .com.sg, .net.sg, .org.sg, .edu.sg, .gov.sg, .per.sg and other domains which SGNIC may from time to time introduce or recognise in Singapore. SGNIC has appointed and accredited a number of registrars for the applications for the registration of domain names and its related services in Singapore.
- 1.2 To ensure that domain name registration services remain efficient and effective, SGNIC implemented a Shared Registry System (i.e. the Registry-Registrar System) to allow competition in registration services through multiple registrars. These registrars provide registration services for the domain name holders to register and maintain their domain names with the registry maintained by SGNIC. To ensure that only competent, reliable and credible entities are accepted to act as registrars, SGNIC implements a scheme to accredit such registrars.

2. GENERAL POLICY IN REGISTERING DOMAIN NAMES UNDER '.SG' DOMAIN

Registrars accredited by SGNIC are authorised to provide domain names registration under the Singapore name space (i.e. .sg) in one or more of the categories, as accredited by SGNIC. They are required to enter into the Registrar Accreditation Agreement ("RAA") with SGNIC and to abide by such policies and guidelines pertaining to the registration of '.sg' domain names as may be published by SGNIC from time to time.

3 REGISTRAR ACCREDITATION SCHEME

3.1 Application

- 3.1.1 Each applicant is required to demonstrate its capabilities and competencies to perform the services of a domain name registrar by providing the information as specified in the attached application form ("Annex").
- 3.1.2 There is no deadline for applications for accreditation and applicants may submit their applications at any time as they deem fit.

3.2 Responsibilities and Scope of Service of Registrar

- 3.2.1 The responsibilities of accredited registrars are as stated in the RAA. In summary, these responsibilities include the following:
- i. Accepting and processing registrant applications for registration;
 - ii. Operating domain name systems including hosting of name servers and any other support facilities/applications;
 - iii. Performing the function of registration, modification, transfer, deletion, the transactions and requirements for renewals and expirations of domains names;
 - iv. Ensuring the confidentiality and security of registration information;
 - v. Performing customer support functions including billing their customers (i.e. domain name holders) for the services rendered in domain name registration and maintenance;
 - vi. Maintaining a reliable data backup system;
 - vii. Fulfilling their obligations to both their customers (i.e. domain name holders) and the registry (i.e. SGNIC) in all circumstances;

- viii. Undertaking to implement the Dispute Resolution Policy adopted by SGNIC in respect of disputes in domain name registration; and
- ix. Any other responsibilities as may be agreed between the accredited registrars and SGNIC.

3.2.2 Registrars must also undertake to offer, among the full suite of services, registration and billing services as a basic stand-alone package to meet the needs of registrants who prefer to have other entities provide technical support for their domain names.

3.3 Number of Registrars

SGNIC intends to promote a competitive environment for domain name registrations. Accredited registrars will be allowed to handle one or more domains to the extent as accredited by SGNIC. To facilitate competition, no limit will be imposed on the number of registrars which may be accredited.

3.4 Accreditation Criteria for Registrars

Applicants have to meet certain criteria before they can be accepted for consideration, which include as follows:

- (a) **Business capability:** Each applicant must submit a business plan on how it can efficiently, accurately, and securely handle registration services. Applicants that are Singapore registered business entities must establish that they have maintained a minimum working capital of S\$50,000 for a period of two years preceding the date of application for accreditation and must maintain such minimum working capital throughout the period of accreditation. Applicants that are not Singapore registered business entities must be ICANN accredited registrars, must establish that they have maintained a minimum working capital of S\$50,000 for a period of two years preceding the date of application for accreditation, and must maintain such minimum working capital throughout the period of accreditation.
- (b) **Prior experience:** Each applicant must have at least six (6) months prior experience in domain name registration and management either as a reseller of a current registrar of SGNIC or as a registrar of other gTLDs/ccTLDs.
- (c) **Technical capability:** Each applicant must demonstrate how it can accommodate all of the archival database requirements for registrars. This includes the provision of daily back-up and archives to protect against loss of registration and customer data. In addition, each applicant must submit a detailed plan of the security system in creating and maintaining database in respect of the registration of domain names.
- (d) **Organisational capability:** Each applicant must show its capability to provide prompt service to registrants for their registration needs as well as other registration obligations and must in particular undertake to provide customer and technical support.

3.5 Performance Bond

3.5.1 Applicants should note that notwithstanding them having satisfied any other requirements, SGNIC may in its sole and absolute discretion direct an applicant to furnish a performance bond of S\$30,000 in the form of a banker's guarantee if SGNIC accepts the applicant as an accredited registrar. The performance bond is to ensure that the company has sufficient financial backing and would be able to fulfill the commitments specified in the Registrar Accreditation Agreement. Additionally, SGNIC reserves the right to increase the value of the performance bond at its sole and absolute discretion.

3.5.2 Specifically, a registrar's banker's guarantee may be called upon by SGNIC to cover any cost incurred in handling domain name registrations of registrants who are left with no registrar if the registrar concerned goes out of business or loses its accreditation by SGNIC. In these

instances, SGNIC may specify an interim period during which it will facilitate registrants in finding new registrars or making other arrangements to host their domain names.

3.6 Fees and Accreditation Duration

- 3.6.1 An application fee of S\$1,070 (inclusive of the prevailing rate of Goods and Services Tax ("GST")) will be payable by each applicant. Successful applicants will additionally be required to pay an accreditation fee of S\$4,815 (inclusive of the prevailing rate of GST) to cover the first three years of accreditation. Upon application by the registrar, the accreditation may be extended for successive periods of up to three (3) years on each occasion, subject to approval by SGNIC, and payment by the registrar of the then prevailing extension fee for accreditation and GST on such fee. For foreign-based registrars, GST will be charged at 0% for the above-mentioned fees. All fees paid are non-refundable.
- 3.6.2 Accredited registrars are required to maintain a minimum of 100 new registrations per year to remain accredited. Subject to the provisions of the Registrar Accreditation Agreement, SGNIC may suspend or terminate the accreditation of registrars at any time during the accreditation period upon notice. Should a registrar's accreditation be terminated, any fees that are already paid to SGNIC will not be refunded.

3.7 Payment Scheme

- 3.7.1 Accredited registrars are required to maintain a deposit of S\$3,000 with SGNIC ("the Deposit Account"). Domain name registration and renewal fees will be charged against the registrar's balance in the Deposit Account. SGNIC will set a threshold level to ensure the top-up of the Deposit Account by registrars taking into account the time taken by registrars for the top-up.
- 3.7.2 Notwithstanding the above, SGNIC may specify alternative or additional modes of payment.

3.8 Domain Name Registration Fees

- 3.8.1 Accredited registrars may levy their own fees and charge registrants for registering and maintaining domain names under .SG. Accredited registrars will in turn account to SGNIC for the payment of domain name registration and maintenance fees based on the number of domain names registered by their registrars.
- 3.8.2 SGNIC reserves the right to prescribe the price ranges at which accredited registrars must provide domain name registration services to ensure fair competition and the achievement of benefits arising from such competition.

3.9 Use of SGNIC Logo and other Trademarks

SGNIC will prescribe the circumstances and conditions under which accredited registrars are allowed to use SGNIC's logo and other trademarks. SGNIC may also specify the requirements which registrars have to fulfill in making reference to their status as accredited registrars of SGNIC.

3.10 Domain Name Dispute Resolution

With the registry-registrar scheme, the potential for conflicts between holders of intellectual property and domain name holders may increase. Consistent with international practice, SGNIC will not be involved in any domain name dispute. Registrars are required to incorporate in their agreements with domain name holders the need for domain name holders to comply with the Singapore Domain Name Dispute Resolution Policy ("SDRP"). SGNIC and its registrars will comply with the policy and procedures of the SDRP to resolve any disputes in domain name registration.

3.11 Agreement

Accredited registrars are required to sign a Registrar Accreditation Agreement with SGNIC, a copy of which is posted at the SGNIC website www.sgnic.sg, which agreement shall govern the relationship between SGNIC and the Registrar. These Application Guidelines are for general information only and are not intended to supersede or supplement the Registrar Accreditation Agreement. All fees and charges quoted in this document are inclusive of GST (payable at the prevailing rate), and are subject to change.