



**CONSULTATION PAPER ISSUED BY  
SINGAPORE NETWORK INFORMATION CENTRE (SGNIC)  
PRIVATE LIMITED**

**ON**

- (1) SALE OF .SG DOMAIN NAMES, AND**
- (2) REGISTRATION CRITERIA OF APPLICATION FOR  
.NET.SG DOMAIN NAMES**

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• **sgnic.sg**





## 1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 The Singapore Network Information Centre (“SGNIC”) is the appointed national registry for .SG domain names. One of SGNIC’s key objectives is to establish and implement an effective policy and registration framework for administering the registration of and promoting the growth of .SG domain names.
- 1.2 SGNIC’s existing registration rules, policies and procedures were largely established in the late 1990s and early 2000s. In view of a constantly changing business and technological landscape, SGNIC is launching this public consultation to seek views and comments from members of the public and the industry, and registrars of .SG domain names on the following matters as described in the sections below:

Section 2: Sale of .SG Domain Names

Section 3: Registration Criteria of Application for .NET.SG Names

## 2. SALE OF .SG DOMAIN NAMES

- 2.1 Under SGNIC’s .SG domain name registration framework, a registrant of a .SG domain name is not allowed to sell, trade, assign or otherwise deal with the .SG domain name that he has registered. Specifically, clause 5.1 of the Domain Name Registration Agreement (“DNRA”) states:

*“Subject to you complying with the terms of this DNRA, you shall only have the right to use, but not own, the Domain Name Registration. Save as provided for under Clause 5.5 herein, **you shall not have any right to sell, trade, assign or otherwise deal with the Domain Name Registration.**”*

The DNRA can be viewed at the following link → <https://www.sgnic.sg/pdf/domain-name-registration-agreementb1c0c7f36dd1607791cbff0000fe06a15eee.pdf?sfvrsn=2>

- 2.2 SGNIC has adopted the aforementioned no-resale policy since the early 2000s. The intent of having the policy was to discourage persons from registering .SG domain names for the purpose of resale in a secondary market. SGNIC was concerned that unfettered registrations of .SG domain names would result in such .SG domain names being used for resale and profit-making purposes rather than being put to proper and actual use such as for websites and emails. In addition, SGNIC wanted to ensure that applicants with genuine needs would not be unduly constrained in their choices for .SG domain names.



- 2.3 In recent years, however, SGNIC has received comments and feedback from members of the public, registrants and registrars regarding the no-resale policy. Some commenters are of the view that allowing the resale of names could provide more choices for end-users and enable applicants with genuine needs to acquire names of their choice, which they otherwise would not have been able to do under current rules. Other commenters are of the view that the no-resale policy could be relaxed to be consistent with the practices of other country-code top-level domain name registries which do not prohibit the resale of their domain names.
- 2.4 In view of the feedback received, SGNIC is considering revising the no-resale policy, specifically to allow the resale of domain names registered under the .SG extension, and the Chinese and Tamil Internationalised Domain Name equivalents of .SG, namely .新加坡 and .சிங்கப்பூர், for a start. The no-resale policy will continue to apply to all other extensions such as .COM.SG, .EDU.SG, .ORG.SG, etc. SGNIC has taken the following reasons into consideration:
- a. The .SG extension, and its Chinese and Tamil Internationalised Domain Name equivalents, namely .新加坡 and .சிங்கப்பூர், are open categories that all entities (whether individuals or companies) qualify for and can register in. As such, in SGNIC's view, both SGNIC and its registrars do not need to take additional steps or expend additional effort to determine if the buyer of a resale domain name under these extensions would meet the registration criteria required of these extensions.
  - b. SGNIC also understands that, operationally, disputes are less likely to occur if resale is allowed for the .SG extension and its Chinese and Tamil Internationalised Domain Name equivalents. For example, if a buyer is allowed to buy a resale .COM.SG domain name registration and has paid the relevant fees to the original registrant or the registrar, only to find out later that he does not actually meet the registration criteria for the .COM.SG extension and needs to give up the domain name he has just bought, the person then faces a situation where he may not be able to recover the monies he has paid out.
  - c. On the contrary, .SG domain name registrations using extensions such as .COM.SG, .EDU.SG and .ORG.SG, etc, are more restricted (as compared to the .SG extension) as such registrations are only made available to a specific group of entities (e.g. registered companies for .COM.SG, educational institutions for .EDU.SG, and non-profit organisations for .ORG.SG). Due to their restricted nature and to preserve the integrity of these extensions, SGNIC is of the view that it would be prudent to continue to apply the no-resale policy on these extensions. As highlighted in paragraphs 2.4(a) and 2.4(b) above, SGNIC is concerned that allowing resale in respect of these extensions would unnecessarily create cumbersome processes and potentially tricky operational issues.



2.5 In summary, the table below shows the proposed revisions to the no-resale policy:

Extension	Domain Names registered under this extension are allowed for resale	
	Current Rules	After Proposed Revision
.SG	Not Allowed	Allowed
.新加坡	Not Allowed	Allowed
.சிங்கப்பூர்	Not Allowed	Allowed
.COM.SG	Not Allowed	Not Allowed
.ORG.SG	Not Allowed	Not Allowed
.EDU.SG	Not Allowed	Not Allowed
.PER.SG	Not Allowed	Not Allowed
.NET.SG	Not Allowed	Not Allowed
.GOV.SG	Not Allowed	Not Allowed

2.6 SGNIC invites views and comments on the following:

- a. The proposal to permit the resale of domain names registered under the .SG extension, and its Chinese and Tamil Internationalised Domain Name equivalents of .新加坡 and .சிங்கப்பூர்;
- b. The proposal to retain the no-resale policy for the rest of the .SG domain name registrations using extensions such as .COM.SG, .EDU.SG, .ORG.SG, etc; and
- c. Possible implications and drawbacks of the above proposals.

### 3. REGISTRATION CRITERIA OF APPLICATION FOR .NET.SG DOMAIN NAMES

3.1 Under SGNIC's .SG domain name registration framework, in particular, clause 8.12 of SGNIC's Rules of Registration ("RoR"), the following registration criteria for a .SG domain name using the .NET.SG extension applies:

*"(i) Infocomm Media Development Authority licensees (SBO individual licence, FBO licence, or other licences providing dedicated connectivity or value-added network services); or (ii) providers offering network-based data hosting services such as email hosting, DNS hosting, web hosting and data centres may apply for Domain Names in this category provided that they also satisfy the criteria stated in paragraph 8.2. Any applied name in this category must be reflective of and substantially linked to the Applicant's principal business operations and/or company name. Any use of the applied name must be for the main purpose of conducting the Applicant's said business."*

The RoR can be viewed at the following link → <https://www.sgnic.sg/pdf/rules-of-registration25eee.pdf?sfvrsn=2>



- 3.2 The current pool of registered .SG domain names using the .NET.SG extension only number around 250 due to the restricted nature of the extension and its stringent registration qualifying criteria. In comparison, SGNIC has received feedback in recent years that the .COM.SG extension has increasingly fewer choices available for registration by companies as there are almost 100,000 domain names registered in the .COM.SG extension.
- 3.3 SGNIC considers that one way to provide more domain name choices for companies may be to open up the .NET.SG extension for all companies to register in and not limit it to only the eligible companies mentioned in paragraph 3.1 above. This would mean that the new proposed registration criteria for the .NET.SG extension would be the same as the registration criteria for the .COM.SG extension, i.e. qualifying entities would be those entities already registered with or in the process of registering with the Accounting and Corporate Regulatory Authority of Singapore, Enterprise Singapore, or any professional body in Singapore. Also, once the criterion is relaxed, domain names using the .NET.SG extension no longer need to be reflective of and substantially linked to the registrant's principal business or company name. Names registered under the .NET.SG extension also do not need to be used for the main purpose of conducting the registrant's said business.
- 3.4 At the moment, SGNIC does not intend to make available the .NET.SG extension to those entities who are eligible to register domain names using the .ORG.SG and the .EDU.SG extensions. This is because the current pool of registered domain names in these 2 extensions is small and there are still sufficient names available for registration in these 2 extensions. Similarly, SGNIC does not intend to open up the .NET.SG extension to individuals. This is in line with the practices of other country-code top-level domain registries and maintains consistency by ensuring that second-level extensions would have certain registration eligibility requirements/criteria.
- 3.5 If SGNIC relaxes the .NET.SG registration criteria, and consequently, the .NET.SG extension is made available for registration by all companies, SGNIC intends to implement and manage the change in the following manner:
- a. Advance notice will be given to members of the public that domain name registrations under the .NET.SG extension will be temporarily put on hold in preparation for the opening up of the extension for registration by all companies;
  - b. This will be followed by an initial launch process where trademark holders, existing registrants who meet the new registration criteria, and new registrants can register. Prevailing registration fees will apply during this phase. Additional fees may apply to the domain names registered during this phase.



- c. During this initial launch, where there are multiple applications for a domain name under the .NET.SG extension, priority will be accorded to applicants in the following order:
  - i. trademark holders<sup>1</sup>;
  - ii. existing registrants<sup>2</sup>; and,
  - iii. the rest of the applicants.

If there are multiple applications from each type of applicant (i.e. the applicants all enjoy the same level of priority), then the applicants would be subject to bidding. For example, if a company holding “abc.com.sg” applies for “abc.net.sg” and another company holding “abc.sg” also applies for “abc.net.sg”, then these 2 applicants would be subject to a bidding process to determine who would eventually get the name “abc.net.sg”.

- d. After the initial launch phase, a General Launch will take place where the .NET.SG extension will be made available for registration by the public at the prevailing registration fees that apply to .SG domain name registrations. Registrations will be on a first-come-first-served basis.

### 3.6 SGNIC invites views and comments on the following:

- a. The proposal to relax the .NET.SG registration criteria and make available this domain name extension to allow all companies to register for it;
- b. The proposed process to implement and manage the opening up of the .NET.SG extension to all companies as described in paragraph 3.5; and
- c. Possible implications and drawbacks of the above proposal to make available the .NET.SG extension for registration by all companies.

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<sup>1</sup> “Trademark holder” refers to the proprietor of a registered trademark which has been registered with the Intellectual Property Office of Singapore (IPOS) as of the date of application for the domain name. The registration at IPOS is for or contains (in a clear and discernible manner) the domain name sought to be registered. The trademark should remain on the IPOS register as a registered trademark for the entire duration of the launch process. Trademark registration certificates will need to be submitted at the point of application for the domain name.

<sup>2</sup> Existing registrants can only register the exact name that they currently hold in another extension. For example, a registrant of “**abc.com.sg**” can only register “**abc.net.sg**” under this phase; a registrant of “**happy.com.sg**” can only register “**happy.net.sg**” under this phase.



## 4. INVITATION TO COMMENT

- 4.1 Members of the public and the industry, and registrars of .SG domain names are invited to comment on the matters highlighted above in Sections 2 and 3.
- 4.2 We would appreciate it if you could send in your responses to [policy@sgnic.sg](mailto:policy@sgnic.sg) by **28 June 2019**. Responses can be contained within the email itself, in a Microsoft Word file or a PDF document. Where feasible, do indicate the specific section you are providing your comment on.
- 4.3 Comments received will be reviewed by SGNIC and incorporated into SGNIC's policy proposals where accepted.
- 4.4 SGNIC reserves the right to make public all or parts of any written submission received and to disclose the identity of the source. Respondents may request confidential treatment for any part of the submission that the respondent believes to be proprietary, confidential or commercially sensitive.

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