

## **APPLICATION GUIDELINES FOR ACCREDITATION AS SGNIC'S REGISTRARS**

### **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 following categories, as accredited by SGNIC: '.sg', 'com.sg', 'org.sg', 'net.sg', 'edu.sg' and 'per.sg', and such other categories SGNIC may introduce. They are required to adhere to SGNIC's policies in the registration of '.sg' domain names as published in SGNIC's REGISTRATION POLICIES, PROCEDURES AND GUIDELINES ("RPPG") 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 include but are not limited to, the following:

- (i) Accepting and processing of registrant applications for registration;
- (ii) Operating its own domain name system 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 its registrar's obligations to both its 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 dispute 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 those registrants who prefer to have other entities to provide technical support to their domain names.

### **3.3 Number of Registrars**

SGNIC intends to promote a competitive environment for domain name registrations for '.sg', 'com.sg', 'org.sg', 'net.sg', 'edu.sg' and 'per.sg'. Accredited registrars will be allowed to handle one or more of these domains as accredited by SGNIC. To facilitate competition, no limit will be imposed on the number of registrars to be accredited.

### **3.4 Minimum Accreditation Criteria For Registrar**

Applicants have to meet certain minimum 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. Singapore-based applicants should establish that they have 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 accreditation. Where the applicant is not based in Singapore, it should be an ICANN accredited registrar.
- (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 creation and maintenance of a Whois-type public access database service as required by SGNIC and 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 through a domestic Singapore telephone number during designated times.

### **3.5 Performance Bond**

- 3.5.1 Singapore-based applicants whose audited statements for the preceding two years demonstrate a working capital of at least S\$50,000 would not have to post a performance bond. Singapore-based applicants which cannot meet this requirement, or which in SGNIC's assessment, have yet to establish their track record and credentials are required to provide SGNIC a performance bond of S\$30,000 in the form of a banker's guarantee when accepted by SGNIC as accredited registrars. 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. SGNIC reserves its right to increase the performance bond at SGNIC's sole discretion.

- 3.5.2 Specifically, a registrar's banker's guarantee will 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 find new registrars or make other arrangement to host their domain names.

### **3.6 Fees And Accreditation Duration**

- 3.6.1 An application processing fee of S\$1000 will be payable by each applicant. Successful applicants will be required to pay an additional accreditation fee of S\$4,500 to cover the first three years of accreditation. Upon application by the registrar, the accreditation may be renewed at three yearly intervals, subject to approval by SGNIC, and payment by registrar of an accreditation renewal fee of S\$4,500. 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. SGNIC reserves the right to withdraw the accreditation of non-performing registrars at any time during the accreditation period upon notice. A registrar which defaults and loses its accreditation will not be able to claim any refunds of any fees or other monies paid to SGNIC in advance.

### **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 registrants.

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 its agreement with domain name holders the need to comply with the Singapore Domain Name Dispute Resolution Policy (SDRP). SGNIC and its registrars will comply with the policy and procedures of the Singapore Domain Name Dispute Resolution Policy (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 <http://www.nic.sg>, which agreement shall govern the relationship between SGNIC and the Registrar. This document is for general information only and is not intend to supersede or supplement the Registrar Accreditation Agreement. All fees and charges quoted in this document are before GST (which shall be payable at the prevailing rate), and are subject to change.