

.alum Mission and Purpose

“Alum” is an informal shorthand term for former students, graduates, or members of a school, organization, or program, with its plural form being “alums.” Sockeye LLC (“Sockeye” or the “Registry”), applicant for the “.alum” gTLD, will serve the global community of alums by providing a dedicated namespace for lifelong connection between alums and their alma maters.

According to the UNESCO Institute for Statistics (UIS), global higher-education enrollment alone surpassed 235 million students by 2020, more than doubling since 2000; cumulative populations of alums now number in the hundreds of millions worldwide. Alums are among the most consequential stakeholders any institution has. In the United States alone, the contributions of alums consistently account for roughly a quarter of all philanthropic giving to higher education — funding scholarships, research, and financial aid that would otherwise depend on tuition or public support. Beyond monetary contributions, alums provide mentorship, internships, recruiting pipelines, and reputational goodwill that shape an institution's standing over decades. Yet advancement professionals consistently report that a large share of alums lose contact with their institutions within a decade of graduation — becoming “lost alums” whose reconnection would benefit both the institution and, in many cases, alums themselves. The .alum Registry is built to close that gap. It gives alums a durable, portable digital identity tied to their affiliation — an address that persists across jobs, employers, and personal email providers. It gives schools, organizations, and programs a dedicated namespace in which to publish alum directories, class pages, chapter sites, and reunion tools.

INTENDED REGISTRANTS AND USERS

Though .alum will be an open, generic top-level domain, intended registrants include, among others: (i) alums of accredited educational and professional institutions; (ii) alum associations, federations, and honor societies; (iii) colleges, universities, secondary schools, and vocational or professional programs administering alum relations; (iv) class-year cohorts, regional chapters, reunion committees, and affinity groups; and (v) service providers whose work materially serves the alum community, including career networks, giving platforms, and reunion coordinators. Users will include these registrants and the customers, partners, and end users who interact with them.

ACTIVITIES TO ACHIEVE THE PURPOSE

The Registry will operate as an open top-level domain with: a Sunrise phase for trademark holders; a Landrush phase; tiered pricing that keeps individual registrations affordable while discouraging misappropriation of strings associated with established institutions; anti-abuse monitoring aligned with the ICANN DNS Abuse Framework; and coordinated outreach to advancement offices and international higher-education networks. Names will be distributed through the ICANN-accredited registrar channel.

SUSTAINABILITY OVER TIME

Sustainability rests on three durable pillars. First, populations of alums grow every year, with each graduating cohort adding to the addressable base; UNESCO's tertiary enrollment data confirms this is a global, secular trend. Second, both individual alums and their institutions exhibit long tenure — alum identities do not expire, and advancement offices operate on multi-decade planning horizons, both supporting strong renewal rates. Third, the Registry is capitalized to operate .alum for the required contractual term even under conservative demand scenarios. Surplus revenue will be reinvested in abuse mitigation, Universal Acceptance, and community outreach — reinforcing the long-term value of the namespace to the alum community it serves.
