



July 22, 2026

To the ICANN gTLD Program Assessors

From the First Nations Information Governance Centre in support of Te Kāhui Raraunga Charitable Trust

The First Nations Information Governance Centre (FNIGC) is a national incorporated, non-profit organization committed to producing evidence-based research and information that will help each First Nation in Canada achieve data sovereignty in alignment with their distinct worldview. The FNIGC is a strictly technical and apolitical organization with a mandate from the Assembly of First Nations' Chiefs-in-Assembly (AFN Resolution #48, December 2009) to strengthen First Nations data sovereignty. FNIGC is not a rights-holding organization; our work includes research and analysis of the technical elements of First Nations data sovereignty, supporting First Nations in advancing the national First Nations Data Governance Strategy (FNDGS), and stewarding the First Nations Principles of OCAP®: ownership, control, access, and possession of First Nations information by First Nations.

FNIGC supports the submission of Te Kāhui Raraunga Charitable Trust for a Generic Top Level Domain (gTLD) to further the establishment of a global indigenous 'Data Trust' as a governance model to support First Nations organizations in a larger capacity that allows for multiple First Nations organizations and rights holders to develop a process and digital space that strengthens self-determination. Data sovereignty is a crucial step toward realizing full self-government of First Nations. Indigenous peoples, and by extension, First Nations, having control of their own digital domains will protect their inherent, Treaty, and Constitutional rights to data sovereignty by strengthening their ownership and control of the stack.

FNIGC implores ICAAN to recognize the unique needs of global Indigenous Peoples to build their own domains in the digital world. As the digital world takes up more of our society, Indigenous peoples need access to the tools that they can control and possess – a domain would be a fundamental building block towards digital sovereignty. Currently, First Nations are limited to the use of .ca domain names through CIRA, which is administered with “economic, social and cultural” goals in a firmly Canadian Context. While CIRA sees its work “as a go-to public resource” with goals to “build a better internet across Canada and around the world,” First Nations in Canada know that their values are distinct from Canada. The opportunity for First Nations to participate in a gTLD administered through Indigenous Protocols, which for First Nations would include the First Nations Principles of OCAP®, is important in operationalizing Indigenous digital futures.

