
Question 155: Community Policies Meet RVC Requirements

Explain how the proposed Community Registration Policies of the applying entity meet the Registry Commitments Evaluation criteria 4 and 5.

The proposed Community Registration Policies are designed to preserve, support, and strengthen the relationship between the .chess TLD and the identified global chess community. They reflect the existing organization of that community through FIDE, its Continents, Member Federations, Affiliated Organisations, and the broader organized chess ecosystem; establish meaningful and verifiable boundaries for active use of the namespace; preserve a connection between activated names and community identity or activity; provide mechanisms for community accountability; and support the continued operation of .chess for the benefit of the identified community over time.

In addition to the requirements contained in the .chess Community Registration Policy (attached to the response to Question 137), the Applicant proposes in Questions 151–153 additional platform-neutrality commitments concerning eligibility, name selection, and launch allocation. Those proposed commitments provide that participation in the active .chess namespace is based upon an objective nexus to the chess community rather than use of, affiliation with, or a commercial relationship with the Registry Operator, its Affiliates, or any particular online chess platform.

Organization and Representation of the Identified Community

The identified global chess community is organized around three connected components: (1) the formal FIDE structure, including FIDE, its Continents, Member Federations, Affiliated Organisations, professional players with FIDE IDs, and registered users of the official FIDE online platform; (2) the professional chess community, including clubs, arbiters and other officials, commentators, tournament organizers, accredited journalists, and FIDE-run educational programs operating under or in accordance with FIDE and Member Federation rules and standards; and (3) the broader non-professional chess community, including amateur clubs and organizers, contributors, trainers, content creators, and chess-related businesses.

These components are not separate communities. They are interconnected parts of a single global chess ecosystem. The formal FIDE structure provides the institutional and governance framework for organized chess, while professional and non-professional participants contribute to, support, promote, teach, develop, report on, and provide services to chess worldwide.

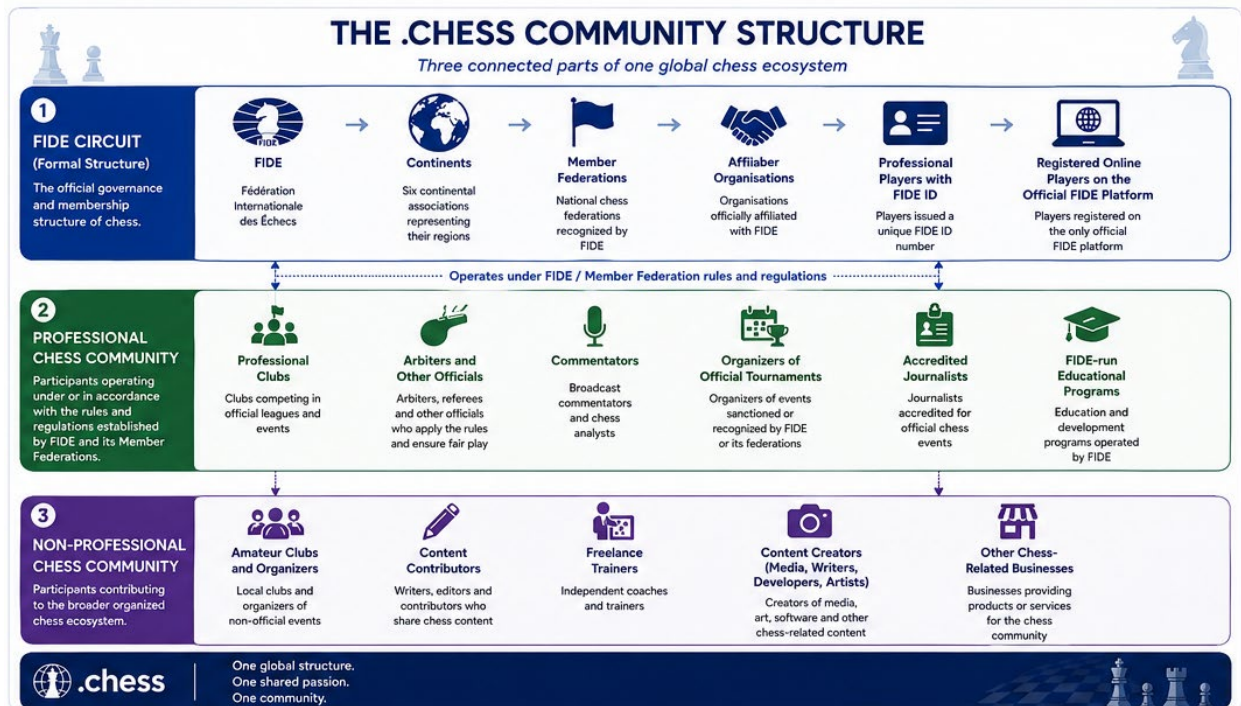


Figure 1. Structure of the Identified Global Chess Community

Figure 1 illustrates why the Community Registration Policies are intentionally broader than formal FIDE membership. The policies recognize both formally identified participants within the FIDE structure and other persons and organizations having an objectively verifiable nexus to the chess community. This allows the .chess namespace to reflect the actual structure of the global chess community while maintaining a meaningful and enforceable community boundary.

The Community Registration Policy therefore recognizes multiple forms of objectively identifiable participation in the community. In addition to FIDE, its Continents, Member Federations, and Affiliated Organisations, eligible categories include players, clubs, leagues, academies, organizers, arbiters and other officials, trainers and coaches, educational institutions, media organizations and journalists, content contributors, software and database developers, businesses, nonprofit organizations, sponsors, and other persons and organizations having a bona fide and objectively verifiable nexus to the chess community.

This structure is reflected directly in the Community Registration Policies. Eligibility is based upon an objectively verifiable relationship with the identified community rather than mere interest in chess or a commercial relationship with the Registry Operator. At the same time, the breadth of the eligibility categories recognizes that participation in the global chess community

occurs through numerous institutional, professional, competitive, educational, commercial, technical, and cultural activities.

The Community Registration Policies therefore translate the existing organization and boundaries of the global chess community into objective rules governing participation in the .chess namespace. The policies are intended neither to redefine the chess community nor to limit it to the customers or users of any particular commercial platform. Instead, they establish registration requirements corresponding to the institutions, activities, relationships, and forms of participation through which the identified community already exists.

This approach is consistent with the Community Priority Evaluation framework in Section 5.4. ICANN expects a Community applicant to demonstrate a relationship with an organized and enduring community, propose dedicated registration policies commensurate with the community's purpose, and operate the gTLD according to Community Registration Policies incorporated into the Registry Agreement. The CPE Panel separately evaluates whether registrant eligibility is restricted to members of the identified community and whether name selection rules are consistent with the articulated community purpose.

The .chess Community Registration Policies therefore do more than establish ordinary registration conditions. They are intended to preserve the integrity and cohesion of the identified community within the namespace and to maintain the institutional relationship between the TLD and the global chess community throughout the operation of .chess.

Criterion 4 – No Duplication of or Conflict with Applicable Law, ICANN Agreements or Policies

The applying entity believes that the Community Registration Policies proposed in Questions 151–153 are not duplicative of, and are not contrary to, requirements under applicable law, the Base Registry Agreement, the Registrar Accreditation Agreement, ICANN Consensus Policies, or ICANN Temporary Policies.

Criterion 4 provides that a proposed commitment should not duplicate obligations already applicable through the Registry Agreement, applicable ICANN policies, or applicable law; must not conflict with such requirements; and must not prevent Registrars or other parties from complying with their applicable ICANN obligations. At the same time, ICANN recognizes that a commitment may enhance, supplement, or expand upon existing contractual or policy requirements so long as it is not contrary to them.

The registrant eligibility policy proposed in Question 151 is community specific. It restricts activation and continued active use of .chess domain names to persons and organizations having a bona fide nexus to the identified global chess community and establishes objective categories and verification mechanisms for determining eligibility. No generally applicable ICANN requirement independently restricts activation or continued active use of a .chess domain name to members of the identified chess community. The policy therefore supplements the general Registry Agreement framework by establishing the community boundary necessary to operate .chess as a Community gTLD.

The Applicant additionally proposes in Question 151 that the eligibility requirements be administered on a platform-neutral basis. Eligibility does not depend upon a Registrant's use of, affiliation with, or commercial relationship with any particular online chess platform, the Registry Operator, or an Affiliate of the Registry Operator, except where such relationship independently constitutes the basis for eligibility under an otherwise applicable eligibility category. This requirement reinforces that the Community Registration Policy defines participation by reference to the identified global chess community itself rather than by reference to the customer base or commercial relationships of any particular market participant.

The eligibility policy also reinforces the organization and cohesion of the identified community. Eligibility is tied to demonstrable participation in, governance of, service to, contribution to, or support of organized chess rather than to a Registrant's unverified assertion of interest or affiliation with any particular commercial platform. This structure reflects the recognized institutions and participant categories that comprise the community and ensures that use of the namespace remains connected to that community over time.

The name selection policy proposed in Question 152 is likewise community specific. It requires a bona fide relationship between a second level .chess domain name and the Registrant's name, identity, role, activities, contribution, rights, or other recognized connection to the chess community. The Applicant additionally proposes in Question 152 that Registry Operator shall not provide preferential access to or activation of a domain name based solely upon a Registrant's use of, affiliation with, or commercial relationship with a particular online chess platform, the Registry Operator, or an Affiliate of the Registry Operator, except where that relationship independently establishes rights in or a bona fide connection to the requested name under an applicable name selection classification.

This requirement supplements applicable ICANN syntax, rights-protection, reserved-name, and other registration requirements rather than duplicating them. Its purpose is to ensure that the

names used within .chess reinforce the identity, structure, activities, and recognized participants of the global chess community. This directly supports the CPE requirement that name selection rules be consistent with the articulated community purpose.

The Registration Eligibility Dispute Resolution Policy proposed in Question 153 is also not duplicative of existing ICANN dispute resolution mechanisms. The REDRP addresses compliance with the .chess-specific registrant eligibility and name selection requirements. It supplements rather than replaces or restricts the applicability of ICANN-mandated dispute resolution mechanisms. Its community-specific purpose is to provide Applicants, Registrants, and other members of the identified community with an administrative mechanism for addressing alleged failures to comply with the eligibility and name selection requirements governing activation and continued active use of domain names and preserving the community nature of the namespace.

The Community-Priority Launch and Allocation Policy proposed in Question 153 is similarly distinct from generally applicable ICANN requirements. It establishes a .chess-specific launch sequence under which FIDE and other governing and representative bodies of the identified community receive registration opportunities before broader availability to other eligible community members. Any ICANN-mandated Sunrise or rights-protection requirements will continue to apply independently. The community-priority sequence supplements those requirements by recognizing the existing institutional organization of the chess community and enabling its representative bodies to establish their presence within the namespace before broader community availability. Where a domain name is registered pursuant to an ICANN-mandated Sunrise, the additional .chess Community Registration Policies govern whether that domain name may be activated. The additional platform-neutrality commitment proposed in Question 153 provides that priority within the community launch process will be based upon the Applicant's institutional or community status under the applicable launch phase, not merely upon use of or commercial affiliation with the Registry Operator, an Affiliate, or a particular online chess platform.

The proposed Community Registration Policies are not intended to restate existing ICANN contractual obligations. Where the operation of .chess necessarily intersects with an existing ICANN requirement, such as rights-protection mechanisms, the Community Registration Policies are intended to operate alongside and consistently with that requirement rather than create a duplicate contractual obligation.

Nothing in the proposed Community Registration Policies requires the Registry Operator or any Registrar to act contrary to the Registry Agreement, Registrar Accreditation Agreement, applicable Consensus Policies or Temporary Policies, or applicable law. The applying entity therefore believes that the proposed policies satisfy Criterion 4.

Criterion 5 – Compatibility with the ICANN Bylaws

The applying entity believes that the proposed Community Registration Policies are compatible with the ICANN Bylaws.

Criterion 5 focuses particularly on whether a proposed commitment would cause ICANN to enforce restrictions on the substance of content within a gTLD. The Applicant Guidebook distinguishes such content restrictions from permissible non-content-restrictive commitments concerning operational, procedural, and technical aspects of domain name registration and management, expressly identifying registration eligibility requirements and related procedures as examples of non-content-restrictive commitments.

The registrant eligibility policy addresses the conditions under which a Registrant may activate and continue active use of a .chess domain name. It does not prescribe or restrict the substance of communications, viewpoints, information, or other content provided through that domain name.

The name selection policy addresses which second-level domain names an eligible Registrant may activate and continue to use actively based upon an objective relationship between the domain name and the Registrant. It regulates the selection and activation and continued active use of the domain name itself, not the substance of content communicated through a website, email service, or other resource using that domain name.

The REDRP provides a procedural mechanism for determining compliance with the eligibility and name selection policies. Decisions under the REDRP concern whether a Registrant or domain name satisfies those objective eligibility and name selection requirements applicable to activation and continued active use of the domain name. The REDRP does not authorize decisions based upon the substance or viewpoint of content communicated through a domain name.

The community-priority launch and allocation policy determines when specified categories of eligible community members may apply for domain names and how registrations are sequenced

during launch. It concerns the administration and allocation of domain names and does not regulate content.

These policies are intended to preserve the community character of .chess by establishing objective requirements concerning eligibility, domain-name selection, verification, allocation, and compliance, rather than by controlling expression. ICANN's enforcement role would therefore be limited to determining whether the Registry Operator complied with objective contractual obligations relating to domain name registration, activation, allocation, and registry administration. ICANN would not be required to evaluate or regulate the substance of speech or other content within the TLD.

The Community Registration Policies also reinforce the CPE community framework without creating content regulation. Section 5.4 evaluates whether the identified community is organized, engaged, aware of itself, established, and enduring, and whether the dedicated registration policies are commensurate with the purpose of that community. The .chess policies support those objectives by maintaining objective community boundaries and accountability while leaving substantive expression within registered domains outside the Community Registration Policies.

Accordingly, the applying entity believes that the proposed Community Registration Policies are compatible with the ICANN Bylaws and satisfy Criterion 5.

Additional Registry Service

The applying entity does not believe that implementation of the proposed Community Registration Policies requires operation of an additional Registry Service.

The Registry-operated eligibility verification mechanism, name selection verification, administration of the REDRP, community-priority launch sequencing, periodic compliance review, and community policy review are administrative, and policy functions associated with domain name registration and registry management. Enforcement is contemplated through ordinary registry capabilities and administrative processes, including non-activation, activation, hold, suspension, and cancellation.

The Applicant Guidebook provides that if performance of a proposed commitment requires an additional Registry Service, that service must be evaluated through the RSP Program and approved by ICANN. The applying entity will coordinate implementation of the Community Registration Policies with its selected RSP. If implementation planning identifies any function that constitutes an additional Registry Service requiring ICANN approval, the applying entity

and its selected RSP will obtain the required approval through the RSP Program before implementing that service.

Community Sustainability and Accountability

Taken together, the proposed Community Registration Policies are intended to ensure that .chess remains institutionally and operationally connected to the identified global chess community over time.

The eligibility requirements contained in the separately uploaded .chess Community Registration Policy (attached to the response to Question 137) preserve the community boundary. The additional platform-neutrality commitment proposed by the Applicant in Question 151 reinforces that boundary by ensuring that it is defined by participation in and connection to the chess community rather than by commercial affiliation with the Registry Operator, its Affiliates, or any particular online chess platform. The name selection policy ensures that the namespace reflects the identities, institutions, activities, terminology, and contributions of that community. The REDRP provides an accountability mechanism for enforcing those requirements. The community-priority launch recognizes the institutional structure of organized chess and provides its governing and representative bodies with an appropriate role in establishing the namespace.

The .chess Community Registration Policy further provides for periodic review of the Community Registration Policies at least once every five years, including consultation with Member Federations, FIDE Affiliated Organisations, Registrants, and other members of the identified community. This mechanism is intended to preserve continuing engagement and accountability while ensuring that the policies remain consistent with the mission and purpose of .chess as the community evolves.

These features are consistent with the broader Community Priority Evaluation framework, under which ICANN considers organization, active engagement, awareness among community members, established presence, longevity, the nexus between the string and community, dedicated registration policies, and community endorsement.

Conclusion

The applying entity believes that the proposed .chess Community Registration Policies satisfy Registry Commitments Evaluation Criteria 4 and 5. They establish community-specific and objectively enforceable requirements that supplement rather than duplicate or conflict with applicable law and ICANN agreements and policies. They govern eligibility, name selection,

verification, allocation, activation, continued compliance, and enforcement rather than the substance of content or expression. The Applicant's additional platform-neutrality commitments further ensure that access to the active namespace is based upon objective community criteria rather than affiliation with any particular commercial platform or Registry Operator-related service. They are also structured to preserve and strengthen the relationship between the .chess namespace and the organized, established, and enduring global chess community that the TLD is intended to serve.