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 service through multiple registrars. These registrars provide registration service 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 Singapore name space (i.e. .sg) in the categories: '.sg', 'com.sg', 'org.sg', 'net.sg', 'edu.sg' and 'per.sg'. They are required to adhere to the following policy in registering '.sg' domain names:

.com.sg - Applicants in this category must be commercial entities which are either registered or are about to be registered with the Accounting and Corporate Regulatory Authority (ACRA), the International Enterprise Singapore (IE Singapore) or any professional body. A foreign company which is not so registered may only apply for such a domain name if it has a representative in Singapore, which shall be a legal entity that is similarly registered by any of the afore-mentioned organisations, and is duly authorised (in writing) by the foreign company to apply for the registration of the domain name.

.org.sg - Applicants for names under this category shall either be registered or are about to be registered with the Registry of Societies, and may include organisations such as Town Councils, Community Centres, People's Association and Embassies or any organisational unit under such organisations.

.net.sg - This category is for info-comm operators or network providers in Singapore.

.edu.sg - This domain is for educational institutions. Applicants for domain names under this category must be educational institutions registered with the Ministry of Education (MOE), Singapore.

.per.sg - This domain is for the registration of personal domain names. Only Singapore citizens and permanent residents aged 21 years and above can apply for a .per.sg domain name.

.sg - This domain is open to all. Foreign applicants for domain names under this category must appoint a local agent having a valid Singapore postal address as the Administrative Contact.

3 REGISTRAR ACCREDITATION SCHEME

3.1 Application

3.1.1 Applicants are 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.

3.1.2 There is no deadline to accrediting registrars 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 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 Lastly, Registrars shall undertake to offer, among the full suite of services, the 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 implemented competitive domain name registration for '.sg', 'com.sg', 'org.sg', 'net.sg', 'edu.sg' and 'per.sg'. Accredited registrars are allowed to handle one or more of these domains. 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 the following minimum criteria before they can be accepted for consideration:

(a) Business capability: Applicant with a minimum working capital of S$50,000. Applicant must submit a business plan on how it can efficiently, accurately, and securely handle registration services. Where the applicant is not based in Singapore, it shall appoint or establish a Singapore-registered business entity, which shall undertake and discharge the responsibility and obligation of the accredited registrar and its operation shall be subject to Singapore law.

(b) Prior experience: 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: Applicant must demonstrate how it can accommodate all of the archival database requirements for registrars. This includes the creation

and maintenance of Whois-type public access database service as required by SGNIC and the provision of daily back-up and archives of them. In addition, applicants must submit detailed plan of the security system in creating and maintaining database in respect of the registration of domain names.

(d) Organisational capability: Applicant must show its capability to provide prompt service to registrants for their registration needs as well as other registration obligations.

3.5 Performance Bond

3.5.1 Applicants with at least two years of audited statements showing a working capital of S$50,000 would not have to post a performance bond. Companies which do not have the required audited statements or for companies which in SGNIC's assessment, have yet to prove their credibility and competency; are required to provide SGNIC with 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 (excluding GST) will be payable by each applicant. The fee paid is non-refundable and successful applicants will be required to pay an additional accreditation fee of S$4,500 (excluding GST) to cover the first three years of accreditation. The accreditation will thereafter be renewed at a three yearly interval upon application and payment of S$4,500 (excluding GST) accreditation fee by the registrar.

3.6.2 Accredited registrars are required to maintain a minimum of 500 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 by giving reasonable advance notice. A registrar who defaults and loses its accreditation by SGNIC will not be able to claim rebate of the accreditation fee paid in advance.

3.7 Payment Scheme

3.7.1 Accredited registrars are required to have an initial Deposit Account of S$3,000 with SGNIC. 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 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 the 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 In the event that competition in domain name registration is not effective, SGNIC reserves the right to set the price range for the domain name registration service 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 follow 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 the Agreement is posted at SGNIC website www.nic.net.sg.