

AVCC SUBMISSION FOR SECOND LEVEL DOMAIN NAMES

A) NAME

The Australian Vice-Chancellors' Committee seeks to create the domains **university.au.** and **uni.au.**

B) PURPOSE

The **university.au** and **uni.au** domains will provide universities with the opportunity to further develop global higher education brands and marketing strategies both collectively and individually. The university sector derives significant revenues from the large number of international students who study in Australia. According to ABS data, in 2001 there were 112,342 international students from which Australia derived about \$4 billion in foreign currency. This is a highly competitive international market and one that the university sector must continuously service and promote in order to maintain and expand its market share.

This initiative will assist in protecting the online identity of Australian universities by providing a rigorous online registration process like the new EDUCAUSE process in the US higher education market.

The major Internet search engines support advanced searching by sub-domain names so it will be very simple to find universities, as defined under the Australian Qualifications Framework, and university collaborative organisations endorsed by the AVCC on behalf of the higher education sector

C) INTENDED USERS

The users of the **university.au** and **uni.au** 2LDs will be Australian universities and associated university organisations, including those formed by the members to support collaborative activities (eg. consortiums and representative groups). Most but not all intended users will be AVCC members or groupings of members. While almost all registrants will be members of the AVCC, or bodies closely associated with members, other organisations with close association with higher education will also be eligible for membership. Higher education institutions are those defined under the Australian Qualifications Framework Register of Authorities empowered by Government to Accredit Post-Compulsory Education and Training Courses.

D) ESTIMATED NUMBER OF POTENTIAL REGISTRANTS

The likely the number of registrants is about 50

E) FUNDING MODEL

The intention is to levy each registrant for a fixed amount per annum in order to cover the auDA levy and the AusRegistry Pty Ltd payment for registry services. Administrative costs will be minimal and domain name applications will be handled through the AVCC. AARNet Pty Ltd (a company wholly owned by 38 Australian universities and CSIRO) has agreed to collect the annual domain name levy as part of its normal billing of universities for Internet usage.

F) SELECTION CRITERIA

1. Clear long term commitment to manage the domain

The Australian Vice-Chancellors' Committee advances higher education through voluntary, cooperative and coordinated action. The Committee is non-partisan and exists exclusively for educational purposes. Its continuing aim is to serve the best interests of the universities and, through them, the nation.

The organisation that ultimately became the Australian Vice-Chancellors' Committee was formed in May 1920 of Australia's then six universities. In 1966, the AVCC secretariat was re-located from Melbourne to Canberra, where it now operates with an annual budget of \$3.99 million and 25 staff.

The Board of Directors consists of nine Vice-Chancellors and meets six times a year. The full membership of the AVCC strongly supports this proposal as it is anticipated that it will provide a new avenue for raising the profile of Australian universities nationally and internationally and in institutional and collective "branding" of Australian higher education.

2. Serve the needs of users not well served by existing 2LDs (ie. edu.au)

The education and training sector in Australia encompasses both public and private providers including over 1000 nationally registered training providers, 6900 state schools and 2554 independent schools. Historically only universities and nationally significant education and training organisations were allocated an edu.au domain name at the 3rd level. However .edu.au users today number approximately 6500 and overshadow the 38 universities and associated organisations.

Considerable difficulties have emerged in the development of eligibility criteria for edu.au. It is likely that the emerging policy will be targeted towards meeting the needs of the majority of the users (ie schools, private training providers and a wide range of education and training associations). The use of generic and geographic names is also an issue within the edu.au domain. A number of schools and TAFE colleges share the same geographic name as universities so that it is unlikely that geographic names would be readily available to universities. This inhibits the use of the most appropriate domain names by AVCC members (eg. charlessturt.university.au and sydney.university.au).

3. Clear support from members

The proposal is supported by the AVCC members. In addition, the AVCC has held discussions with representatives of the Council of Australian University Directors of Information Technology (CAUDIT) (www.caudit.edu.au) and AARNet Pty Ltd (www.aarnet.edu.au). Both organisations fully support the proposal.

4. Widen the choice of names

Universities have a significant investment in their current edu.au domain name however this proposal adds options for more online identities and individual universities may choose to migrate quickly or slowly to the new names as their preferred identity.

G) REASON TO BE CLOSED

Universities and Australian Governments are very keen to protect the international reputation of Australia's universities. National and State legislation establishes each Australian university, with a national register administered by the Australian Qualifications Framework listing each recognised university plus a small number of other self accrediting higher education institutions.. The creation of a closed domain will ensure that only institutions approved to call themselves 'university' and listed on the AQF register can register in the domain. This is comparable to the system operating under .edu in the US that is now strictly regulated by EDUCAUSE (www.educause.edu).

H) ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA

The principal eligibility criterion will be institutions established as universities under State, ACT, NT or National Acts and listed on the Australian Qualifications Framework Register of Authorities empowered by Government to Accredit Post-compulsory Education and Training Courses. A copy of this register is attached. In addition a number of related university organisations that represent or service the sector will also be eligible to register in the domain. These include the Australian Vice Chancellors Committee, IDP, AARNet, Group of Eight, ATN and Higher Education Systems. University subsidiaries, which are typically commercial operations, but not necessarily so, will be eligible to register as fourth level registrations under the name(s) of the university(ies) concerned. These subsidiaries can also register in other appropriate domains such as edu.au and com.au.

The use of the full geographic name of a university will be allowed (eg. *charlessturt.university.au* and *sydney.university.au*).

I) POLICY RULES

The AVCC will adopt the auDA Policy of Domain Names except that the use of the full geographic name of a university will be allowed (eg. *charlessturt.university.au* and *sydney.university.au*).

Any cases of disputes will be considered by the AVCC Board of Directors.

J) PEAK BODY

The Australian Vice-Chancellors' Committee will manage the **university.au** and **uni.au** 2LDs.