

Internet Society 2015 Action Plan

24 October 2014



Introduction

In the next year, the billions of people that use the Internet today will face opportunities and challenges that promise to decide whether this global network of networks continues to foster innovation, promote collaboration, and support social progress for themselves, and the billions more that have yet to connect. If we, together, are able to respond to these challenges and opportunities with sufficient force and urgency, the children of today will benefit from the same kind of Internet we have enjoyed for the past three decades. If we fail to respond, however, we—and they—could lose the essence of the Internet today and the unimaginable innovations it would spark tomorrow.

The Internet Society can and must take the lead in responding. We take on this task, not just because the Internet Society is *for* the open Internet, but also because we are *of* the open Internet. We were founded by Internet pioneers. Our culture embraces the openness that pervades the Internet itself. Our community spans the diversity of Internet users and uses around the globe.

And, we work to build the Internet while clearly focused on a larger purpose—to ensure that it continues to support innovation, economic development, and social progress. We will continue to build and sharpen our position on the interaction between the Internet and fundamental human rights. Ensuring the “Internet is for everyone” is not just an organizational slogan, it is intrinsic to our organizational genes.

Even as we build on this tradition, we will take a step up to match the growing importance and increased attention the Internet garners today. We also know that success requires focus. In the coming year the Internet Society will be turning its attention to the most urgent issues, imparting the greatest impact, and keeping our aim on an Internet that is open, secure, resilient, and growing. To that end, and as detailed in the plan that follows, we have identified four key areas of action in the coming year. Our Strategic Objectives are to:

- **Facilitate and promote global, regional, and local policy environments that enable the continuing evolution of an open Internet**
- **Increase the global relevance and recognition of collaborative, bottom-up, technical, consensus-based open standards development in order to protect permissionless innovation for the availability of the open Internet for current and future users; *and* increase development and use of security and resiliency technologies and best practices, shape the evolution of online identity infrastructures, and improve choice and consent in the handling of user data**

- **Provide equal development opportunities for all people by promoting the relevance, deployment, and adoption of the open Internet**
- **Increase the visibility and influence of the Internet Society as the recognized, trusted source on Internet issues**

To effectively accomplish these Strategic Objectives, we must at the same time continue to improve and develop the Internet Society organization and community themselves. Internally-focused Operational Objectives provide important complements to our outwardly-oriented Strategic Objectives and action plans. Through our Operational Objectives, we aim to ensure that the Internet Society organization and community have the tools, energy, and culture necessary to most effectively advance our mission. They are to:

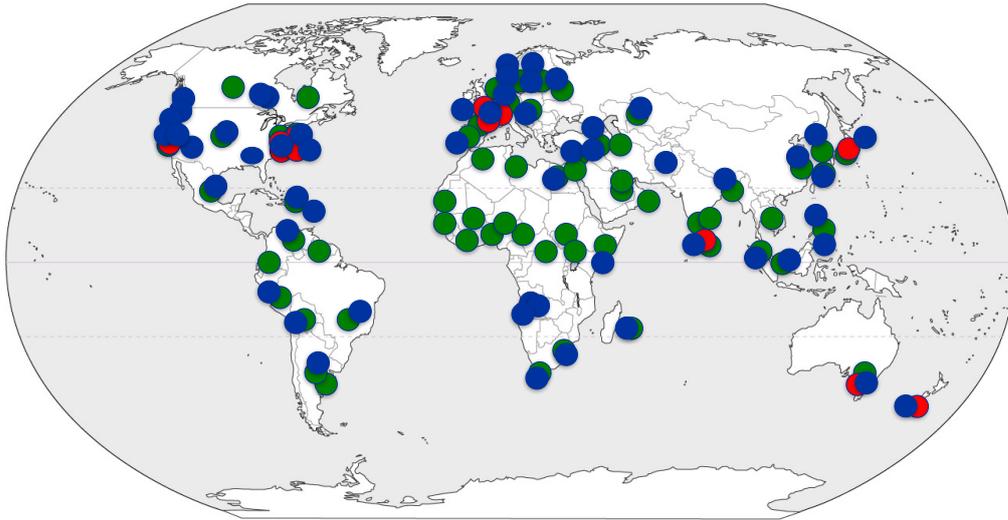
- **Create an environment that allows ISOC to use the Internet to gather real data and experiences, capitalizes on our diverse communities, and delivers messages and tools to our audiences**
- **Mobilize and energize our staff, emerging leaders, past and present ISOC Members, and other identified ISOC stakeholders to leverage and expand our outreach on an inclusive local, regional, and global scale to advance our mission**
- **Nurture a culture that mirrors the Internet attributes we wish to emulate—a team-oriented culture that values openness/inclusivity, global and cultural diversity, honesty, trust and collaboration. We look to be focused, forward thinking, flexible and dynamic within an environment where decision-making is transparent and accountability is maintained**

This document provides the broad thrusts and key initiatives we propose to accomplish these objectives. But this plan is not a plan just for the Internet Society organization. It is a plan that anticipates and depends on mobilizing the entire Internet Society community, engaging the organizations around the world that depend on the Internet, and raising awareness among those billions of people who use the Internet every day.

INTERNET SOCIETY COMMUNITY

July 2014

● Chapters ● Organization Members ● Board of Trustees



Together, the Internet Society Strategic and Operational Objectives, supported by focused initiatives and allocation of energies and resources, comprise a cohesive plan to advance the Internet Society mission through tangible outcomes that make a difference in the world. Each of these components is described in further detail in the following sections of this document. We understand that these elements provide a foundation and a framework for us, an organization and a community who passionately believe in the potential of the Internet. Now, we are obligated by our vision and our core beliefs to translate this plan into effective actions.

2015 Objectives

For 2015, we have identified four Strategic Objectives to define the key areas we must address to advance ISOC's mission, given the current challenges and opportunities facing the Internet. For each Objective, we will focus on a compact set of Initiatives. These are articulated below.

Strategic Objectives

Strategic Objective 1

Facilitate and promote global, regional, and local policy environments that enable the continuing evolution of an open Internet

Initiatives:

- A. Champion public policies that enable Internet growth, evolution, and innovation: visibly lead the agenda in emerging Internet policy areas and advocate for policies at the global, regional, and local levels that support the development of and access to an open, innovative Internet.

- B. Shape the evolution of the Global Internet Governance Ecosystem: promote ISOC's principles across global, regional, and local levels.

In 2015, initiatives to support this objective will advance ISOC's role as a champion of Open Internet policies and its position as an agenda-setter on future-looking issues and technology trends. We will produce, and disseminate in all regions, evidence-based policy guidance to catalyze innovation, growth and sustainable development. ISOC will place ethical and collaborative approaches to security and privacy at the center of OECD and APEC policies, and will step up as a leading voice in UN and other fora, for tracking and bringing to light issues at the intersection of human rights and Internet technology.

These efforts will also build consensus around a robust and collaborative Internet governance ecosystem for the future, including engaging with key countries. Outcomes include advancing ISOC's vision for the next decade within the WSIS+10 negotiations based on cross-sectorial collaboration and containment of the UN's mandate. We will also strengthen tangible mechanisms leading to needs-based voluntary policy solutions, such as the global, regional, and local Internet Governance Forums and OECD-type recommendations. We will support the development of a successful and viable solution for the IANA stewardship transition process through a multistakeholder dialogue.

Strategic Objective 2a

Increase the global relevance and recognition of collaborative, bottom-up, technical, consensus-based open standards development in order to protect permissionless innovation for the availability of the open Internet for current and future users

Initiatives:

- A. Ensure the endurance and sustainability of the IETF by supporting, interpreting, and promoting IETF activities for a broader audience, specifically policymakers, network operators, and technologists.
- B. Assess, steer, and explain developments as they relate to new technologies, shifting usage patterns, and their impact on permissionless innovation and open standard development.

The initiatives related to this Strategic Objective will result in a better understanding of, increased support for, and participation in the IETF and other standards bodies. They will lower barriers to the development, implementation, and adoption of open standards, while increasing the awareness of the importance of open standards and the demonstrated ability of the Internet industry to work together to address technical issues. They will support the development of informed and actionable technology and policy positions that contribute to shaping an open Internet, and broaden the community of network operators, technologists, and business people who work to resolve long-term technology deployment issues.

Strategic Objective 2b

Increase development and use of security and resiliency technologies and best practices, shape the evolution of online identity infrastructures, and improve choice and consent in the handling of user data

Initiatives:

- A. Expand understanding of the collaborative nature of Internet security mechanisms and increase their deployment by supporting programmes, policies, and initiatives that foster a sense of collective stewardship and shared responsibility and bringing technically informed perspectives to global discussions. Maintain a healthy, forward-thinking environment for studying fundamental Internet security issues, which can in turn be used to inform the wider community of developments in Internet security and their relevance to the Internet and its users.
- B. Shape the technology, policy developments, and debate around the way people use their identity to get online services, resulting in an ethical, scalable, robust, and collaborative infrastructure that maximizes user utility (e.g. single sign-on) while minimizing disclosure of personal information.

These initiatives will result in thoughtful and actionable approaches to Internet security on both technical and policy levels, while bridging between the academic security community and the broader technical community. In 2015, some activities will include: nurturing an environment within the network operator community that supports a minimum level of basic security mechanisms through the new Mutually Agreed Norms for Routing Security (MANRS) initiative; fostering collaboration among researchers and operators to apply, deploy, and advance the state of available Internet security technology, in part by using outcomes from the Network and Distributed System Security (NDSS) Symposium; and continuing our technical and policy work to produce an ethical, scalable, robust, and collaborative online identity infrastructure and improving understanding of the issues at the intersection of identity, privacy, and online services.

Strategic Objective 3

Provide equal development opportunities for all people by promoting the relevance, deployment, and adoption of the open Internet

Initiatives

- A. Work with communities around the world to address connectivity and infrastructure issues by identifying barriers to connectivity and deploying infrastructure and technical solutions.
- B. Identify gaps in Internet development and give communities around the world the tools to realize the benefits of the Internet and Internet economy for self-empowerment, socio-economic development and civic participation.
- C. Empower communities by sharing knowledge and providing training opportunities for promoting Internet development.

The overarching aims of this Strategic Objective are to increase cross-border and regional accessibility and connectivity, and to spur more Internet infrastructure deployment. Working with governments and other stakeholders, ISOC will focus on identifying barriers and promoting connectivity, while ensuring that the Internet's infrastructure becomes more secure and resilient. The initiatives will spur more local Internet traffic through support for country-code top level domains (ccTLDs), Internet exchange points (IXPs), wireless, and other technologies. Additional efforts will include providing grants that empower local communities to develop and implement programmes that use the Internet to provide positive economic and social impact.

Strategic Objective 4

Increase the visibility and influence of the Internet Society as the recognized, trusted source on Internet issues

Initiatives

- A. Build visibility, recognition, and traction for ISOC and its priority issues as the authoritative voice for advancing a global, open, resilient, and accessible Internet for everyone.
- B. Establish a communications platform for ISOC to disseminate its positions, exchange ideas and information with and among its communities, and build its leadership in the Internet space.
- C. Build and execute a strong communication programme to support the ongoing strategic communications requirements of the Internet Society.

This objective has, as its foundation, a campaign to clearly capture and articulate the Internet Society brand's emotional resonance around the world. Activities under the initiatives will include a proactive media outreach programme and content strategy plan, as part of a comprehensive communications plan that identifies opportunities, strategies, and resources, and to promote ISOC as thought leaders on Internet issues. We will organize the first annual Virtual Internet Society Global Members meeting in New Zealand in 2015, as well as a quarterly virtual Community Forum series calling to attention key topics and promoting discussions between ISOC staff, Chapters, and Members.

Operational Objectives

Our Operational Objectives focus on the structures, processes, and resources that must be in place for us to be successful. To ensure a strong shared sense of mission and an efficiently operating organization, we have refocused our staff and leadership structures, and strengthened our internal culture with a renewed commitment to shared values, ethics, and each other. To extend our reach, we will aim to strengthen our alliances with Chapters and Members, but also with the extended community of influential individuals including Internet Hall of Fame inductees, award recipients, and past members of the Internet Board of Trustees.

Operational Objective 1

Create an environment that allows ISOC to use the Internet to gather real data and experiences, capitalizes on our diverse communities, and delivers messages and tools to our audiences

Initiatives

- A. Create new or refine existing technology platforms to enhance productivity, streamline communication and collaboration, and extend content to appropriate users and audiences through unified platforms. Extend the reach of our membership database by delivering a Web-based interface, enhancing capabilities for Chapters, and encouraging further organization-wide adoption through training and continuous data management.
- B. Expand the messaging and content of events past the time and space constraints of a geographic venue, allowing key education, speeches, and community interaction to be extended across the Internet and our communities.
- C. Through a renewed understanding of organizational objectives and initiatives, deliver ongoing operational activities and support required to maintain and extend a healthy organization, by managing information technology systems and processes to increase productivity and facilitate data management, security, system usability, and communication.

Work related to this Objective will unify the Internet Society's organizational information repository, displacing three current systems while adding additional functionality and providing a Web-based interface and functional review of our primary membership. It will provide a virtual and Internet-enhanced event strategy by scaling webcast, virtual conferencing, and content capture and dissemination capabilities to consistently provide high-quality broadcast, interactive video, and content curation. Content developed through these efforts will be leveraged to enhance ISOC's broad e-learning platform on a wide variety of issues. While we develop these new capabilities, we will continue to leverage technology to improve the Internet Society's organizational productivity, agility, and responsiveness.

Operational Objective 2

Mobilize and energize our staff, emerging leaders, past and present ISOC Members, and other identified ISOC stakeholders to leverage and expand our outreach on an inclusive local, regional, and global scale to advance our mission

Initiatives

- A. Proactively consult, support, and organize our community and other stakeholders through global, regional, and local engagement to advance Internet Society priorities, and increase the visibility of Chapters and Members as thought leaders on key Internet issues.
- B. Strengthen relationships among Chapters, Members, Internet Hall of Fame inductees, Postel awardees, Ambassadors, Fellows, and Community Grant recipients to foster a sense of global community, and to extend our reach and amplify our mission and messages.

These initiatives will increase business engagement in ISOC at global, regional, and local levels, and will build the Internet Society's visibility over the years through speaking opportunities and other communications opportunities. For example, we will establish a programme of focused conversations—both online and in-person—led by ISOC Executives and Regional Bureau Directors for the ISOC Advisory Council to provide updates and solidify opportunities for promoting ISOC priorities on issues that are key to our overall objectives and strategy. Other concrete initiatives include gathering Members, ISOC Board, Ambassadors, Fellows, Chapters and IHOF alumni into facilitated communications to increase engagement with other stakeholders, such as business, within geographic regions that are at the forefront of issues key to ISOC's overall Strategic Objectives. Planning for these efforts would span a three-year window, beginning in 2015 and continuing over the next two years.

Operational Objective 3

Nurture a culture that mirrors the Internet attributes we wish to emulate –a team-oriented culture that values openness/inclusivity, global and cultural diversity, honesty, trust and collaboration. We look to be focused, forward thinking, flexible and dynamic within an environment where decision-making is transparent and accountability is maintained

Initiatives

- A. Establish an organizational commitment/pledge that will define how we work with each other; what we will give, and expect, from each other in order to create the culture we want to achieve.
- B. Develop and monitor SMART (Specific, Measurable, Attainable, Relevant, and Time-based) goals that are impact oriented and aligned to our long-term strategy.
- C. Mine the knowledge, skills, experience, and passion of all ISOC by establishing opt-in working groups, with established charters and project dashboards.

This Operational Objective focuses on instilling a unified and cohesive Internet Society staff, imbuing a strong shared culture that supports and matches the importance and energy of our organizational vision and mission. It will produce a working environment that encourages creativity and initiative, while instilling a clear understanding of how individual goals contribute to the overall success of the organization.

Just as our Strategic and Operational Objectives describe what we *must* accomplish, a similarly developed and focused financial plan outlines *how* we will prioritize our resources across these Objectives and Initiatives to provide the greatest return and impact on the challenges and opportunities facing the Internet.

2015 Financial Plan

Our 2015 Action Plan is supported by a Financial Plan that ensures the Internet Society remains fiscally strong and operates within our means as a charitable not-for-profit entity. The Action Plan ensures that available resources are dedicated to achieve the greatest impact, focused on our key Objectives and Initiatives. The Internet Society's 2015 Financial Plan allows us to clearly execute against our mission and provides a roadmap for future opportunities.¹

Summary Statement of Activities

(amounts in US\$000s)	
Unrestricted ISOC Revenues	2015 Budget
ISOC-Generated Revenues	\$9,523
Public Interest Registry Contribution	29,500
NET REVENUES - Unrestricted Sources	39,023
ISOC Expenses	
Functional Group Expense (excluding IETF)	32,711
Strategic Planning & Board Support	300
IETF Expenses (excluding Capital)	6,012
TOTAL ISOC EXPENSES	39,023
NET SURPLUS/(DEFICIT) Before Interest	0
Other Revenue (Expense) - Interest and Currency	500
NET UNRESTRICTED SURPLUS/(DEFICIT)	\$500

Our 2015 Revenue Plan totals nearly \$39 million, with the annual contribution from Public Interest Registry remaining consistent with the contribution level of 2014. ISOC-Generated (non-PIR) revenues of \$9.5 million are based on readily identifiable sources from Members, sponsors, grants, contributors, and meeting registrations. Based on this conservative threshold for our revenue plan, we are showing a slight decrease in funding sources in 2015. Next year, we will evaluate our current revenue opportunities and actively seek out and pursue additional opportunities, consistent with our mission and Objectives.

¹ The **2015 Revenue Plan** represents a change in presentation for "Fulfillment Costs" (the direct costs of completing funded programmes). These costs, shown as a reduction of gross revenues in 2014, are now reflected in the Functional Group expense budgets. Since both net revenues and functional expenses increase equally, this change in presentation has no impact on ISOC's net surplus.

2015 Projected Revenue

Projected Revenue By Source (US\$000s)	2014 Projected	2015 Funding Plan
Grants (Foundations & Gov't) and Corporate Contributions	\$2,116	\$1,654
Organization Membership & Individual Donors	1,405	1,520
ISOC Event Sponsorships	476	413
Event Registration Fees	177	160
IETF Sponsorships/Registration Fees/Other	4,121	4,069
Gifts-In-Kind	1,552	1,707
ISOC-Generated Revenue Total	9,847	9,523
Public Interest Registry Contribution	29,916	29,500
Grand Total	\$39,763	\$39,023

The Internet Society's 2015 expense plan (\$33 million plus \$6 million in IETF expenses) focuses on aligning all corporate resources with ISOC Objectives and Initiatives, and reflects our continued effort to streamline costs and function within our funding sources. Since personnel costs are our greatest single expense category, we will monitor and manage these closely in the coming year.

2015 Expense Budgets and Headcount by Functional Group

(amounts in US\$000's)		
Functional Group	Expense Budgets	Year-End FTE
Office of the President	\$1,964	4.0
Global Engagement	10,116	26.5
Global Policy Development	3,115	9.0
Internet Technology	3,571	11.0
Strategic Communications & Stakeholder Relations	5,574	16.0
Information Technology	2,107	7.0
Fin, Admin, Partnership Development	6,264	16.0
Subtotal Expenses and FTE by Functional Group	\$32,711	89.5
Strategic Planning & Board Support	\$300	
IETF Expenses	\$6,012	1.0
Total Expenses/FTE Under Management	\$39,023	90.5

These expense levels reflect management's efforts during 2014 to bring ISOC's cost structure in line with its foreseeable sources of funding. This is especially true with the leveling off of Public Interest Registry contributions, as predicted. Based on

restructuring of the organization in 2014, plus our focus on strategic challenges to the industry, the 2015 Action Plan represents a decrease in overall annual spending levels of nearly \$1 million.

Within our Financial Plan, we have concurrently created these Functional Group expense budgets for management accountability, while integrating a cross-organizational strategic focus through the four Strategic Objectives (with detailed Initiatives) presented in this 2015 Action Plan.

In addition, three Operational Objectives outline what the Internet Society needs to do to operate most effectively as an organization in service to the broader community. Management will further outline the resources that will be necessary to fulfill these multi-year objectives.

Finally, the 2015 Financial Plan provides significant support to the IETF, which reflects the Internet Society's dedication to its importance as the premiere standards setting organization.

2015 Budget: Summary of Activities - IETF

(amounts in US\$000's)	
	2015 Budget
IETF Revenues	
Hosts & Sponsors, Other IETF Revenue	\$ 1,616
Registration Fees	2,453
Total IETF Revenues	4,069
Operating Expenses	6,012
ISOC Direct Contribution (excl Capitalized Development)	(1,943)
Capitalized Tools Development	215
Total ISOC Direct Contribution	(2,158)

Conclusion

The coming year will be pivotal in the arc of the Internet's development. Even as the Internet connects billions more people and devices, the trajectory of its evolution, and its role as an open platform for innovation and collaboration, hangs in the balance. A change in the underlying principles and characteristics that form the foundation of the Internet will impact billions of people that use the Internet today.

Yet, the Internet Society believes the promise of an open Internet, and our work to realize it, *will* overcome the technical and policy challenges ahead. We have developed a focused plan of action, and prioritized our resources to support those actions. The Internet Society organization is energized and ready to support our community, engage with others, and help lead the way. We are looking forward to the year ahead, and toward further realizing our vision that the "Internet is for everyone."