



President & CEO Report

November 2025

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As 2025 comes to a close, I am pleased to report that the Internet Society and Internet Society Foundation are on track to achieve the goals of our 2025 Action Plans and, most importantly, we have made great strides toward achieving the ambitious goals of our 2030 strategy. The impact of the Internet Society is seen in the communities that now have connectivity thanks to Internet Society Foundation support, the Internet Society alumni who have new opportunities because of the training they received, the global community of chapters speaking up for the Internet they deserve, and the laws that are changing because the Internet Society stood up for the principles of an open Internet for everyone.

This year has not been without its challenges. Managing through risk—particularly the changes in the global donor environment and significant geopolitical shifts—has required constant vigilance and adaptability. Despite these challenges, **the Internet Society is strong**. Our strengths lie in our global community, our exceptional staff, and our clarity of vision and purpose. We have a clear strategy that drives us toward excellence. As challenging as the current environment may be, these strengths will keep us focused and ensure that we can continue to do our important work in building and defending the Internet for everyone.

Internet Society Managing Director Yogesh Khanna and Internet Society Foundation Managing Director Chris Locke will provide a more detailed update on our year-to-date progress on the 2025 Action Plans for the Internet Society and the Foundation. Through their leadership, we have implemented important organizational changes to position ourselves for growth and scalability. These changes, combined with enhanced strategic and operational alignment between the Internet Society and Foundation, are designed to meet donor expectations, strengthen our voice as a leading advocate, and unify our communications for greater impact.

Year One as CEO: Reflections, Challenges, and Opportunities

As I reflect on my first year as President and CEO of the Internet Society, I am struck by the incredible journey we have shared together—one marked by significant accomplishments, meaningful challenges, and extraordinary opportunities ahead.



Community at the Center

Last year, when I outlined my vision for my time as CEO, I identified three key themes:

- Engaging with and recognizing the community
- Connecting the Internet Society's work to its impact on people
- Defending and advocating for a globally connected Internet

As I began my role, I challenged myself and our entire team to **bring community into the center of everything the Internet Society does**—how we advocate, how we implement our projects, and how we present ourselves to the world. To the staff's enormous credit, they have risen to this challenge. Early feedback we receive tells us that the community is feeling seen and heard in ways that are making a real difference.

Our Online Trust and Safety co-creation initiative exemplifies this commitment. We know that while the Internet brings many opportunities to the newly connected, it also brings scams, false information, and other security threats. We also know that many of our chapters are providing training and resources to vulnerable people in their local communities. By working directly with community members to design this program, we have demonstrated that community voices shape our work at every level. This work culminated in pilot training programs in El Salvador, Brazil, and Rwanda, in partnership with the chapters, to get detailed feedback on our new training content. This feedback will be incorporated into the final materials, strengthening the chapters' ability to provide crucial support to their communities.

When the Danish presidency of the European Union pushed forward the legislation commonly called "Chat Control", we engaged with our chapters, our partners, and many other allies to explain why this legislation, rather than protecting children, would in fact expose them to much greater risk. The vote was recently postponed until December, the result of sustained pressure to rethink the proposal.

This type of co-creation and community involvement can serve as a model for our entire portfolio of projects and programs.

We've seen high levels of engagement from our community, reflecting not only their commitment but also the effectiveness of the 2030 Strategy in creating clearer pathways for meaningful participation. So far this year, we have seen participation in our activities from:

- 107 chapters (88%)
- 29 Organization Members (37%)
- 8 Special Interest Groups and Standing Groups (100%)

Our investment in chapters has reached new levels. **In 2025, we granted USD \$1,959,400 to 94 chapters**, demonstrating our commitment to supporting local action and impact.



One notable example is our Beyond the Net grant program, which has grown from USD \$280,000 in 2021 to nearly USD \$1 million in 2025.

Our relationships within the Internet technical community are strong. The Internet Society and ICANN [released a joint report documenting the achievements](#) of the Internet Governance Forum. We partnered with I* organizations and Internet Society chapters in Africa to support AFRINIC during this challenging period and will continue to do so as the new Board begins its work. Working with ICANN, the IAB, IETF, and other partners, we've ensured that the voice of the technical community has been heard in the UN's WSIS+20 Review. Our liaison with the IAB helps ensure that critical advocacy efforts are underpinned by rigorous technical input. Additionally, through regular CEO meetings with key partners and stakeholders, we are building the collaborative foundations necessary for the years ahead.

Connecting Our Work to Impact on People

Our communications ensure that stakeholders—from policymakers to potential partners to community members themselves—understand not just what we do, but why it matters for people everywhere.

We use stories and data to illustrate the human impact of our work, from the educators and technical community members who run the Internet, to the communities in rural Malawi who created sustainable connectivity for schools, to the women and youth in Sierra Leone who received training on digital literacy skills and tools to improve their lives.

We also launched [the "Who Runs the Internet?" campaign](#), which uses simple terms and engaging videos to show how the Internet works and its impact on our daily lives. The campaign is drawing fresh eyes to our work and our vision for a multistakeholder Internet.

Defending and Advocating for a Globally Connected Internet

We see forces around the world working to fragment the Internet, impose digital sovereignty at the expense of openness, and undermine the multistakeholder model that has been essential to the Internet's success.

We've increasingly spoken out about what's at stake amidst these unprecedented challenges by:

- Highlighting the social and economic benefits of the Internet and the importance of cooperation and coordination,
- [Explaining](#) the consequences of not having global interoperability, or if different countries block different services,
- [Reinforcing](#) the economic harm if innovators are forced to ask permission or pay for permission to connect to people around the world,



- Using economic data to show how Internet exchange points make Internet connectivity more affordable,
- Showing how community-centered connectivity solutions are critical to reaching the remaining unconnected, and
- Demonstrating that encryption is for privacy, security, and freedom of speech.

This year, we've focused on the UN's WSIS+20 Review. Together, our staff and our global community have worked to ensure the international community recommits to the multistakeholder model and supports the Internet Governance Forum as the primary platform for dialogue on Internet governance.

This advocacy is not just about defending what exists—it is about shaping what comes next. In 2026, we will deepen our investment in advocacy, seeking to position the Internet Society as a leading voice for the future of an open, secure, and trustworthy Internet for everyone.

Strengthening our Operations

In 2025, we improved operational efficiency through automation, system integration, and deeper use of existing financial tools. These improvements have expanded our capacity to scale operations in 2026 while maintaining excellence in financial compliance and reporting—particularly as we manage a growing number of grants.

We advanced our data strategy with progress to standardize and centralize data across both the Internet Society and the Foundation. A key milestone was the establishment of our Impact Measurement Framework, a multi-year structure that enables us to monitor and measure the positive outcomes our work creates for people everywhere. As a result, we are well-positioned to further strengthen organization-wide data collection, automation, and reporting in the year ahead.

We matured our governance and compliance capabilities. We conducted an enterprise risk assessment and introduced enterprise-level policy management standards through our new “Policy on Policies” framework. We also modernized compliance education with a quarterly training model, helping build a more responsive and effective compliance culture. In addition, we enhanced key operational processes by ensuring data compliance for our Pulse platform, simplifying contract management, and standardizing vendor management.

Scaling Our Impact

Looking ahead, we are focused on deepening our impact through strategic partnerships with like-minded organizations and innovative funding models.

Our co-funding approach is showing early success. We secured Meta as the first donor to our Connectivity Co-Funding Initiative in March, and in June, we launched the Common Good



Cyber Fund at the G7 Leaders' Summit in partnership with the Global Cyber Alliance and other leading cybersecurity organizations as part of our larger Safer Internet Fund. These initiatives enable us to accomplish more together with peer donor organizations than any of us could do alone.

These partnerships position us as a thought leader and change maker, driving collaborative investments that go well beyond what we could finance alone. They also mark an important philosophical shift in how we do our work. For the first time, we are positioning the Internet Society and Internet Society Foundation together as a leading donor in the field of digital development.

Between 2019 and 2024, the Internet Society Foundation awarded over USD \$63 million in more than 1,000 grants across more than 120 countries. We will use this portfolio of investments as a springboard into our next phase of grantmaking. 2026 will be a critical year for nonprofit organizations and donors of all kinds as they navigate geopolitical shifts amid budgetary constraints. The Internet Society is positioned to be a strong partner, ready to support resilience among all stakeholders with whom we work.

Conclusion

As I look back on this first year, I am filled with gratitude—for the trust the Board has placed in me, for the dedication of our staff, and for the commitment of our global community. Our vision of the Internet for everyone remains as important today as ever. No matter what challenges we face in the world, we remain steadfast as a global community in achieving this vision.

This is my focus as we navigate into the future. Together, we will ensure that people everywhere have access to an affordable, reliable, safe, and secure Internet. Together, we will defend the open Internet and the multistakeholder model that keeps it strong. Together, we will help people understand what is at stake if we don't get this right.