

Case  
for  
support







In a matter of decades, the Internet has evolved from an obscure research project into a global phenomenon that has transformed communications, education, healthcare, the arts, our economies, and ways of governing. There is hardly an aspect of life that the Internet has not touched, enhanced, and improved. The Internet is quite simply one of the greatest inventions in human history – the significance of which we are only now beginning to understand.

Driven by innovation, creativity, and collaboration, the Internet's seemingly unstoppable growth and widespread impact have led many to assume it is an inevitable, self-sustaining resource. But the Internet's development is far from certain and predetermined.

Rather, the Internet exists today largely due to the legacy of a dedicated global community of technology entrepreneurs who voluntarily came together in the 1980s. They sought to build our modern-day Internet upon the foundation developed in the prior decades by pioneering engineers and visionaries.

Working collaboratively and transparently, these individuals developed protocols and open standards that, over time, transformed technologies and networks into communications tools and collaboration platforms that connect people, communities, and organizations everywhere.



## A Time-Tested Approach

The Internet's success is due in large part to the unique model of consensus-driven and accessible processes, its inclusive global community, and standards that are freely available to use and build on. These technology entrepreneurs established the Internet Engineering Task Force (IETF), and the Internet Society became IETF's "organizational home." The IETF convenes a community of technologists, operators, researchers and vendors, that, together ensure the open Internet continues to grow and evolve.

The legacy of the early pioneers and founders of the IETF continues today. The IETF continues to use their time-tested model for creating protocols and open standards. The work of the IETF today includes a focus on protocols that help preserve user privacy, enable the vision for an Internet of Things, and further enable frictionless, real-time voice and video communications between Internet Users, anywhere in the world.

## The Challenges Ahead

As more people gain access, and the Internet becomes further entwined in industry, education and government, its fundamental principles — the openness that ensures its innovative power and creativity — will face new and ongoing threats.

Recently we have seen attempts to restrict open development. Around the world, certain governments are implementing closed, controlled systems, restricting grass-roots content development, and imposing controls and unwarranted regulation. Proposed legislation in several countries from around the world would undermine cybersecurity, balkanize the Internet, and impair legitimate online speech.

We believe the future of the Internet depends on a universally accessible platform to ensure its integrity as a reliable, independent, and open structure.

## Safeguarding the Future

Open standards have been key to the Internet's success and growth. Such collaborative practices support the innovation, transparency, and multi-stakeholder engagement that are essential to the Internet.

We also believe that this collaborative development model is not inevitable, and its future cannot be assumed.

The IETF has served as a crucial focal point for developing open Internet standards for nearly 30 years. The IETF has developed standards that are used billions of times every day around the world, including those that provide a foundation for email, domain names, and the Web.

To protect open standards accessibility, the Internet Society has established the Endowment for the Sustainability of the Internet Engineering Task Force (or simply the IETF Endowment). The IETF Endowment will support the standards development initiatives of the Internet Engineering Task Force.

The IETF Endowment will deliver long-term, sustainable funding for the development, evolution, and use of open Internet protocols through direct financial support for the IETF. The IETF has led the way in open Internet standards, embodying the creativity and entrepreneurial spirit that has come to characterize the Internet. Resources from the IETF Endowment will help ensure the sustainability of the IETF's important work, free of undue external influence and economic fluctuations.



## Join the Campaign to Sustain the IETF

If the Internet is to continue to promote innovation, drive business and consumer choice, protect freedom of expression, and remain a positive global force, then preserving and enhancing its open, decentralized, and collaborative character are essential.

We believe the Internet technologists of today are committed to the same spirit of collaboration, investment, and ingenuity that marked the earliest development of the Internet. We believe strongly that this community, you and all the unsung heroes of the Internet, will provide the foundation that ensures open Internet standards for years to come.

We invite you to play a significant part in creating a lasting legacy for the Internet.

Your gifts will define the future of the open Internet and help protect one of the greatest assets of our time.

We need your support.

We have the power to give future generations access to the Internet's full potential. We have the power to unlock the profound ways the Internet can and will change lives.

We hope you join us in this first of its kind campaign to protect and preserve the work of the IETF in developing technical standards for an open and resilient Internet.

This is our moment to shape history.

Please feel free to contact us at [EndowmentTeam@SustainIETF.org](mailto:EndowmentTeam@SustainIETF.org)

**www.SustainIETF.org**

**About the Internet Engineering Task Force**

The Internet Engineering Task Force (IETF) is the Internet's premier technical standards body. It gathers a large open international community of network designers, engineers, operators, vendors, and researchers concerned with the evolution of the Internet architecture and the smooth operation of the Internet. The IETF seeks broad participation. The work of the IETF takes place online, largely through email lists, reducing barriers to participation and maximizing contributions from around the world. IETF Working Groups (WGs) are organized by topic into several areas (e.g., routing, transport, security, etc.). For more information, see: <http://www.ietf.org>

**About the Internet Society**

The Internet Society ([www.internetsociety.org](http://www.internetsociety.org)) is the trusted independent source for Internet information and thought leadership around the world. It is also the organizational home for the Internet Engineering Task Force (IETF). With its principled vision, substantial technological foundation, and its global presence, the Internet Society promotes open dialogue on Internet policy, technology, and future development among users, companies, governments, and other organizations. Working with its members and Chapters around the world, the Internet Society enables the continued evolution and growth of the Internet for everyone.



**I E T F<sup>®</sup>**

