



Internet Society
Foundation

2023 Philanthropy Plan

Growing to a Stronger Future



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Introduction

2023 marks the fourth year of operations for the Internet Society Foundation. This year, in dedication to our vision of The Internet is for Everyone, we will see noticeable growth. In 2023, a larger portfolio of programs will become available due to the transfer of initiatives from the Internet Society to the philanthropic portfolio at the Foundation. Therefore, more funding opportunities than ever before will be managed through the Foundation and our existing programs will continue to expand.

In early 2022, we discovered certain restrictions on Foundation activities that required alterations in how applicants were reviewed. To respond to this, the Internet Society and Foundation realigned some structures in such a way that will significantly increase the size of both the portfolio of philanthropic activities and the organization itself, starting in 2023. Philanthropic programs will work to focus on growing the Internet and/or making it stronger in support of the Internet Society's emphasis.

The expansion of the Foundation's portfolio comes at a pivotal time, as countless people remain unconnected to the Internet or unable to experience the tangible life-changing benefits of being connected. Our expanding philanthropic portfolio is designed to fully address this situation and we are excited to play an even larger role in affecting positive global change.

The Foundation was launched by the Internet Society in 2019 to extend the reach of its vision and mission through philanthropy. Specifically, the Foundation was established as a supporting organization to the Internet Society to invest in organizations and individuals dedicated to providing meaningful access to an open, globally connected, secure, and trustworthy Internet for everyone.

We have established ourselves as an organization that seeks unique solutions and prioritizes our grantees' success and sustainability to ensure that a true difference is being made for people and the planet every day.

Our commitment to our work remains the same and includes:

- Transparency in our processes working with independent experts to review, score, and provide recommendations on applications submitted for funding
- Integrity in our programming
- Structuring our programs based on a thoughtful portfolio strategy
- Nurturing a grantee community and communities of practice
- Continuing our Test / Learn / Adapt approach, providing ourselves opportunities to reflect, learn, and make improvements

In 2023, we remain committed to securing the Internet's growth, development and strength and the empowerment of new generations of Internet champions.

Our Vision

The Internet is for everyone.

Our Mission

The Internet Society Foundation champions ideas and enables communities to unlock the Internet's potential to tackle the world's evolving challenges.





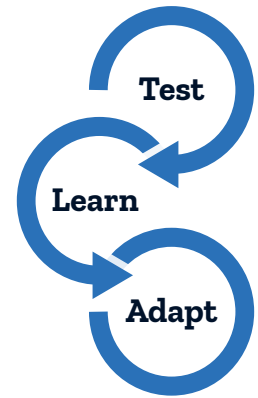
Our 2022 Successes

2022 was a year that saw many important achievements for the Foundation on which we will build for 2023. Some highlights from our 2022 programs:

- Launched a successful second round of the Resiliency and BOLT (Building Opportunities & Leveraging Technology) programs, and a fifth round of our Research program. The Foundation is currently supporting 23 research projects at various stages in 12 countries.
- Completed the first cohort of our SCILLS (Strengthening Communities, Improving Lives and Livelihoods) program, and renewed five of our grantees from the 2020 SCILLS cohort
- Identified three additional countries / regions for SCILLS program expansion with a focus on channeling more funds to unserved and underserved communities: Brazil, Ghana, and Indonesia
- Enhanced the Beyond the Net program based on grantee feedback, including increased grant amounts and grant length for both Small and Large grants
- Raised the Foundation's brand profile by participating in speaking engagements, publishing articles about our work, growing our podcast, and maintaining an aggressive social media campaign
- Conducted nine grantee reflection calls for the Research, Emergency Response and BOLT programs for grantees to discuss their projects and exchange ideas across themes and cohorts
- Hosted a grantee gathering in Colombia that provided an open forum for our SCILLS and BOLT grantees to collaborate, learn from each other, and deepen existing ties
- Streamlined the Foundation's Monitoring, Evaluation, and Learning strategy by moving our entire metrics, learning questions, and objectives into our Fluxx Grants Management System. This paves the way for enhanced report standardization and data visualization process
- Developed and adapted a robust process for project renewals for individuals and organizations in our Emergency Response, SCILLS and Research programs
- Pivoted quickly to reshape our portfolio and operations in support of a structural realignment
- Enhanced our grantee engagement and project assessment process through site visits and in-person meetings with grantees in eight countries

Our Test / Learn / Adapt Model

All Foundation successes in 2022 will continue to inform our 2023 Test / Learn / Adapt strategy. The Foundation responds rapidly to test answers to questions as they arise and moves quickly to implement learnings to inform decisions. In 2022 we launched, paused, and continued programs, refining as we went along. We will continue this ambitious way of working in 2023 and beyond.



Our 2023 Philanthropy Plan Objectives

- 1. Commit at least \$15 million in funds by the end of 2023**
- 2. Standardize efficient reporting and internal learning processes for all programs**
- 3. Increase awareness of the Foundation and expand its opportunities among key target audiences**
- 4. Deliver on existing program commitments and successfully transition Internet Society programs over to management of the Foundation, while demonstrating operational excellence and a commitment to equitable grantmaking practices**

Measures for these objectives can be found later in this plan.

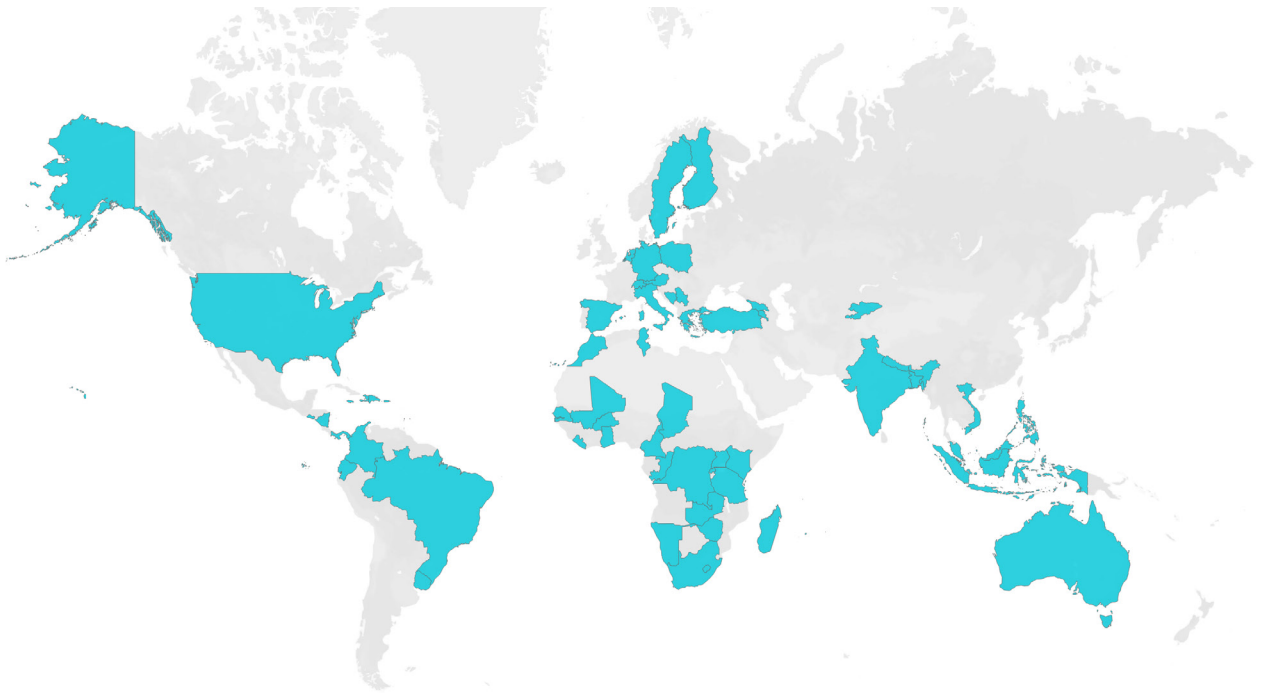




Our 2023 Funding Areas Overview

Beginning in 2023, the Foundation will operate 18 different funding areas, providing grants to Internet Society Chapters as well as organizations and individuals around the world. All programs will focus on growing the Internet and/or making it stronger in keeping with the focus of the Internet Society.

To date in 2022, we have funded projects in fifty-five countries worldwide as well as six regionally focused projects covering six different regions¹. There were also seven projects awarded in 2022 with a global scope.



Funding Areas for 2023

In addition to the current programs referenced above in our **2022 Successes section** – Beyond the Net Funding Program: Small Grants and Large Grants; Strengthening Communities and Improving Lives & Livelihoods (SCILLS); Emergency Response Program COVID-19: Resiliency; Research; Building Opportunities and Leveraging Technology (BOLT) – the Foundation will continue to fund Internet Governance Forums (IGF) as well as Schools of Internet Governance. The Foundation also will provide funding to the Internet Engineering Task Force (IETF) LLC as it has in past years.

And, as mentioned previously, our portfolio will broaden with program administration of the projects shown below in order for them to benefit from the Foundation team’s philanthropic expertise. These will be managed through Fluxx, our Grants Management System, but the funds to support them will come from the Internet Society.

¹ Africa, Asia Pacific, Europe, Latin America & Caribbean, Middle East, and North America.

Internet Infrastructure

- New and Existing Internet Exchange Points – support of projects that expand IXPs, making the Internet faster and more affordable
- New and Existing Community Networks – support of projects that bridge the connectivity gap by helping people build and maintain their own Internet connections

Community Funding

- Chapter Admin – annual funding to support Internet Society chapters to manage their day-to-day activities and maximize their effectiveness
- Encryption micro-grants/Global Encryption Day events – support of projects that promote strong encryption, a fundamental part of how we remain safe online and offline
- Technical Communities – Network Operating Group (NOG) Sponsorships – support of projects that enable strong and sustainable Technical Communities; the people who build and maintain the Internet infrastructure that connects so many

Ambassador/Fellowship Programs: A set of empowerment programs designed to identify and nurture a global network of Internet champions, also managed in Fluxx from the Foundation but funded through the Internet Society:

- Mutually Agreed Norms for Routing Security (MANRS) Ambassadors
- Internet Governance Forum (IGF) Youth Ambassadors
- Pulse Fellowships
- Early Career Fellowships
- Mid-Career Fellowships

The Foundation is in the process of developing systems and management processes for each of these programs for when they officially become part of our organization. Potential applicants for each will be educated on the direction during Q4 of 2022 and into Q1 of 2023.



2023 Direction for 2022 Portfolio

Beyond the Net

As we did throughout 2022, the Beyond the Net team will continue to enhance the program to become more responsive to Internet Society chapters and the communities they serve. A selection of planned activities for 2023 include:

- Engaging with less active chapters to better understand how the Beyond the Net Program can respond to their needs
- Sharpening the Beyond the Net program's goals, objectives, focus areas and regularly communicating these to the chapters
- Driving stronger skills for grant-seekers, with a focus on writing, goal setting, and monitoring, evaluation, and learning (MEL)
- Continuing to drive open communication through regular webinars targeting all chapters
- Inviting successful Beyond the Net Small grantees to consider applying for Large grants in order to scale their projects

The planned activities will be evaluated in partnership with the Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning (MEL) team. We have a baseline for the level of activity among the chapters based on their history of applying for Beyond the Net funding. In the second half of 2022, the Programs Team has begun to join quarterly calls with chapters by region to share information about Beyond the Net and will continue to do so in 2023. This allows us to answer questions, address concerns, and build stronger relationships with the ISOC Staff and the chapters.

In order to help chapters submit high quality applications, we have updated the applications and are encouraging applicants to complete the ISOC Foundation Grant Application and Project Implementation training. We are also planning to hold periodic workshops with MEL to support the creation of objectives and indicators that can be tracked by the grantees.

By the end of 2023, the Beyond the Net program will have committed up to \$700,000 in Large and Small grants and will have increased the number of applications by 20%.

Also in 2023, the Beyond the Net team will continue to work on capturing the social return / impact of the program by building and contributing to a stronger monitoring and evaluation framework for projects.

Strengthening Communities / Improving Lives & Livelihoods (SCILLS)

The Foundation launched the SCILLS Program in 2020 in three countries: Bangladesh, Colombia, and Senegal. In 2021, the Foundation awarded a second cohort of grants in those same three countries. Currently, we are funding a total of 14 grantees between the two SCILLS cohorts. We also have an additional three grantees from 2020 who are continuing their work into 2023.

In 2023, the Foundation will continue to work closely with the three current grantee countries referenced above and will also expand the SCILLS Program to three new countries: Brazil, Ghana, and Indonesia. Three grants will be awarded in each country in 2023.

The SCILLS program will also launch an open call for project proposals from the three original countries – Bangladesh, Colombia, and Senegal – and award two grants in each country by October 2023.

Research

Since September 2020, the Research Grant Program has awarded over \$3.3M to independent researchers and research institutions around the world in support of expanding our applied knowledge of the Internet. By the end of 2022, an additional \$2M is likely to be awarded in support of these efforts, exceeding both expectations and the original designated funding amounts for the year. Because of the continued success and growth of this program, we aim to grant an additional \$5.5M in 2023 as we anticipate continued interest and requests for support. We also anticipate renewing grants for previously supported projects. We do not anticipate any changes to the thematic areas in 2023. The four current thematic areas will remain: Greening the Internet, The Internet Economy, A Trustworthy Internet, and Decolonizing the Internet.

The program will maintain two delineated funding streams: 1) for independent researchers with award amounts up to \$200k for specific research projects and 2) for institutions with award amounts up to \$500k and in support of building organizational capacity through multi-year core funding.

In 2023, the program will increase funding to our amendment pool to accommodate additional opportunities that present themselves throughout the course of the grant and implementation of the research project. Additionally, we will continue to work towards supporting our grantees in disseminating information and increasing visibility of their work. In partnership with our communications team, we will support the creation, launch, and maintenance of an online database of funded projects that highlights project outputs.



Resiliency and Responding to Emergencies (RARE)

The RARE program consists of two distinct but related components: Emergency Response and Resiliency.

Emergency Response

Since its inception in 2020, the Emergency Response Program has awarded \$4.7M to support projects that respond to emergent needs of communities strongly affected by or at-risk of COVID-19. The pandemic was our focus for 2020, 2021, and 2022.

As the disruption caused by the pandemic lessens and our ability to mitigate its impact improves, we look to 2023 as an opportunity to explore other global emergencies in which the Internet can play a critical role and to build a shortlist of new focus areas for the program for 2024 and beyond. With this change in focus for the Emergency Response program, we hope to continue support for current COVID-19 related projects by moving these commitments to other more relevant grant programs within our portfolio.

Resiliency

The Resiliency Program provided an opportunity to test a theory of change involving our Internet Society chapter Community: If we facilitate a partnership between our grantees and local Internet Society chapters to deliver resilient Internet projects in areas most at-risk for natural disaster, then we will greatly increase the efficiency of our funding by improving the capacity of local Internet actors to be prepared in the event of natural disaster. In 2021 we awarded \$1.5M for two-year grants in support of testing this theory. As those grants end in 2023, we will have more knowledge about what works and how we continue to leverage Internet Society chapters throughout our other programming areas.

Additionally, by the end of 2022, we will have awarded another \$1.5M to projects that support resilient Internet infrastructure around the world. While these grants are not part of testing the theory of change, we hope the Internet Society chapters will provide tremendous insight into how the Foundation can best address critical challenges presented by climate change and the impacts of natural disasters. In 2023, we will combine all of this knowledge to devise our program strategy to commit \$2M in additional awards.

It is worth noting that the resiliency focus is purposeful for the Foundation as there is too little funding for organizations working to prepare the infrastructure to withstand strain.

Building Opportunities and Leveraging Technology (BOLT)

By the end of 2022, the Foundation will have committed another \$1M to BOLT grantees working toward more sustainable and equitable Internet connectivity solutions. Funding will increase to \$1.5M in 2023. We will continue the BOLT Amplify grant to highlight the work underway in the projects we support, while building capacity of those grantees in generating and telling their own impact stories. We hope to learn more about this approach and the potential for this type of award to be impactful in other grant programs across the portfolio.

Internet Governance Forum (IGF)

The Foundation will continue to provide funding to those who are eligible to manage and successfully implement a local, national, or regional IGF or School of Internet Governance (SIG).

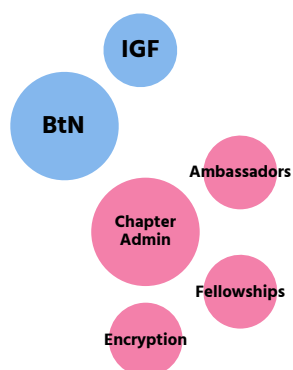
For national and regional IGFs, the Foundation will continue its practice to fund only those events that are officially recognized by the United Nations (UN) Internet Governance Forum (IGF) Secretariat or verified by the UN IGF Secretariat to be eligible for official recognition.

Portfolio Structure for Programs

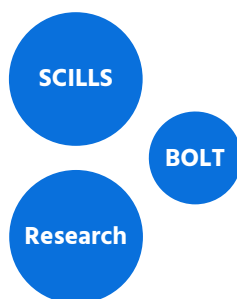
We will organize our portfolio of work into three pillars: 1) **The Internet Society Community** under which Beyond the Net, IGF, Ambassadors, Fellowships, Encryption and Chapter Admin would fall; 2) **Exploration & Futures** under which SCILLS, BOLT and Research would fall; and **Develop and Strengthen** in which RARE (Resiliency and Emergency Response), Community Networks (CNs), Internet Exchange Points (IXPs) Technical Communities would be managed.

Figure 1: Future state of the Foundation portfolio with programs organized thematically

ISOC COMMUNITY



EXPLORATION & FUTURES



DEVELOP & STRENGTHEN





Internet Engineering Task Force (IETF)

In addition to the work described above, the Foundation will also continue to support the Internet Engineering Task Force (IETF) by providing funds to IETF Administration LLC. The IETF is the leading Internet standards body. It develops open standards through open processes with one goal in mind: to make the Internet work better.

The Internet Engineering Task Force (IETF) is the premier Internet standards body, developing open standards through open processes. The IETF is a large open international community of network designers, operators, vendors, and researchers concerned with the evolution of the Internet architecture and the smooth operation of the Internet.

The IETF Administration LLC (IETF LLC) provides the corporate legal home for the IETF, the Internet Architecture Board (IAB), and the Internet Research Task Force (IRTF). The responsibilities of the IETF LLC include: supporting the ongoing operations of the IETF, including meetings and non-meeting activities; managing the IETF's finances and budget; raising money on behalf of the IETF, and establishing and enforcing policies. The IETF LLC is managed by the IETF Executive Director who is overseen by the IETF LLC Board of Directors.

The amount of funds to be provided to the IETF in 2023 is \$6.75M. The Foundation also has an agreement with the IETF to match certain funds that the IETF may raise for itself. The details are found at [here](#) and [here](#).



Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning (MEL)

The Foundation is committed to a robust Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning (MEL) framework to measure results in the areas we are funding and to ensure accountability with the funds that are entrusted to the Foundation. In 2022, we streamlined the Foundation's MEL strategy by moving program metrics, learning questions, and objectives into our Fluxx Grants Management system. This will pave the way for an enhanced report standardization and data visualization process.

In 2023, we will continue to standardize our reporting and learning processes across the portfolio. The MEL team plans to develop a culture of internal cross learning and collaboration between programs. By revising and updating application and reporting templates, the MEL team will help create a clear review and approval process for reports. The MEL team will also work with the Program teams to create a stronger workflow of opportunities for collaboration and implementation of best practices gathered from grantees.

Philanthropy Communications

Increasing visibility and awareness of the Foundation's brand among key stakeholders (potential applicants, applicants, grantees, and future partners) is critical to the success and growth of the Foundation. In 2023, we will continue to drive growth in the key areas below to continue attracting a qualified, diverse applicant pool for all funding areas.

The specific Communications objectives to achieve by the end of 2023 include:

- Website traffic – increase website traffic by 25%
- Social media reach – reach 30,000 followers
- Newsletter subscriptions – grow subscription list by 50%
- Number of earned media opportunities – secure five earned media opportunities

The Philanthropy Communications team will develop and implement a digital marketing plan that includes paid social media and online advertising. The team will continue to enhance the Foundation website, ensuring it remains a vibrant, easy-to-use, and accessible platform for all users. Targeted media outreach will be conducted by the Philanthropy Communications team about the Foundation's work and sponsorship opportunities will be sought to increase brand awareness.

Acknowledging that 2023 will bring considerable change to the Foundation, the Philanthropy Communications team will expand communications support to the philanthropic focus of the Foundation to enable a smooth transition of programs from the Internet Society to the Foundation. Efforts will be made to clarify the Foundation's evolving portfolio among our key stakeholders. The evolution of the programs administered by the Foundation provides more opportunities to increase storytelling and documentation of the positive change and impact the Foundation is enabling in communities around the world. The Foundation team will also document what is being learned in the process as our impact is expanded to include the programs of the Internet Society.



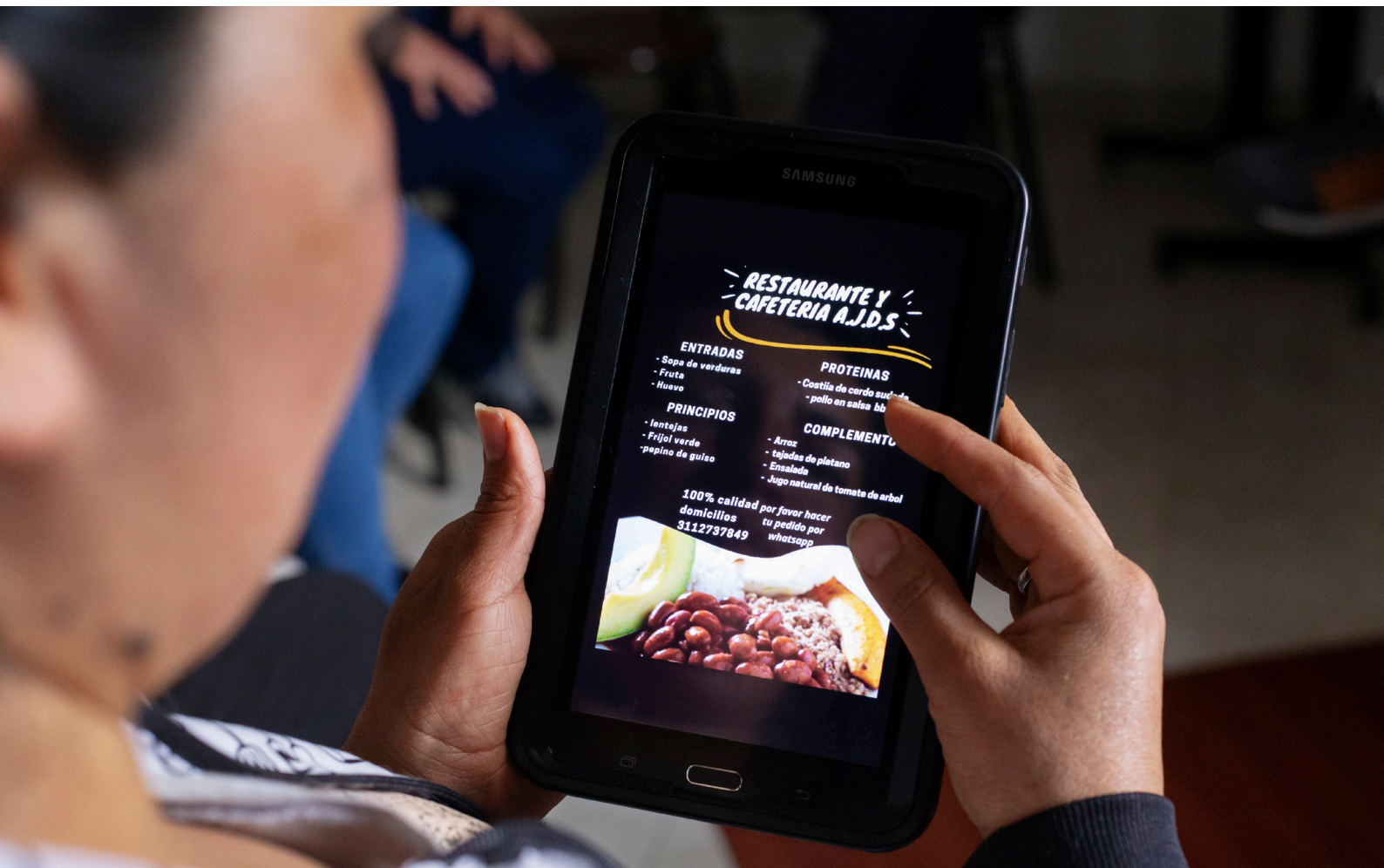
Operations

The Foundation's Operations Team is responsible for a variety of areas including all aspects of maintaining and growing our technical capabilities and, in close collaboration with the Executive Director, managing our financial future and developing policies and procedures.

With Internet Society programs/projects being transferred to the Foundation, the Operations team's focus will be on providing operational excellence in order to successfully deliver on existing program commitments while smoothly integrating the Internet Society programs. To that end, we will design and build a variety of internal processes to support the evolving needs of the philanthropic focus of the Foundation. We will also work closely with our MEL colleagues to implement strategies that keep our external and internal stakeholders informed and engaged in our work. We also aim to capture and measure data in order to have meaningful insights on the impact our programs have worldwide.

Underpinning all of our work is a commitment to adhere to equitable grantmaking practices. We will partner with the MEL team and Programs teams to regularly gather feedback from grantees and respond to their suggestions.

A few examples of processes we have introduced, and will continue to enhance, include collaborating with Program teams to make our application forms more easily accessible, and working with our Legal colleagues to determine what is necessary in order to have the smallest burden possible on our grantees.



Continuing to Build a Grantee Community

The Foundation is committed to ensuring our grantees feel inspired about their work and stay connected to one another and the Foundation. We are dedicated to building and maintaining a community that provides mutual and reciprocal experiences for learning. We are committed to listening to, learning from, and adapting our practices in response to grantee voices. To achieve this, we will regularly check in with all cohorts to build relationships and determine if they need support. This practice has proven to be very valuable in 2022. Our 2022 grantee gathering in Colombia provided an open forum for our grantees to collaborate, learn from one another, and deepen existing relationships.

Quotes from grantees in response to the question: What information learned in the session was the most useful to you as a project leader in your community?

Networking, because it was the time to creatively explore how to collaborate with other organizations.

We were very inspired by some of the projects of fellow organizations, and we will definitely try to keep in touch with them. Something specific to point out would be the very profound reflection our partner at SOLE made on how we can stimulate a more communitarian way to relate to the Internet, and the amazing learning possibilities that can be unfolded in such a way.

The knowledge of what other organizations are doing in the territory is really important, as now we can find ways to collaborate and increment our impact.

Looking ahead to 2023, we will continue to enhance grantee engagement and the project assessment process through virtual reflection calls, grantee site visits, and in-person meetings.



Measuring Our Success for 2022

These measurements will help us determine our success in 2023 and tie back to the objectives mentioned earlier in this document:

1. Commit at least \$15 million in funding across our portfolio
2. Report and application forms standardized and streamlined, while remaining responsive to individual program requirements and grantee feedback
3. Increased awareness of the Foundation and its opportunities among key target audiences
4. All new and currently active programs launched in Fluxx, our Grant Management System, two activities executed to support equitable grantmaking practices; and positive feedback received from all stakeholder groups





Budget

Section to be completed once budget is approved by Board of Trustees.

