

Internet Society Foundation **2025 Action Plan**



Introduction

The Internet Society Foundation believes the Internet can make a positive difference for people everywhere—

as a resource that enriches people’s lives. We champion the use of the network and its ability to bring communities better education, healthcare, and economic opportunity. We believe that by working together, we can use the Internet to shape a better future for us all.

The 2030 strategic goal of the Internet Society Foundation is to be a strong supporting organization helping to grow the impact of the Internet Society and its community. Our four pillars— Philanthropy, Communications, Empowerment, and Revenue Generation— will carry out their strategic plans collectively to support this effort in 2025 and beyond ([see the Internet Society’s 2025 Action Plan](#)).

Through a multi-year approach to our work, we will develop new avenues to expand our philanthropic giving and increase the impact of Internet Society programs. We will focus on utilizing data and evidence to measure the impact of our work and enhance communications with our key audiences. Taking these steps in 2025 will lay the groundwork to position us in 2030 as a recognizable global Foundation, a major philanthropic funder, and a robust partner to other funders in our community.

This strategic action plan maps our way forward in 2025, as we continue to expand our initiatives and deepen our commitment to providing meaningful access to an open, globally connected, secure, and trustworthy Internet for everyone.

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.**



Building Impact:

The Four Pillars of the Internet Society Foundation





> Philanthropy

Goals 2025

- ▶ **Programs:** Commit \$12 million in grant funding for 2025 and develop a clear direction to guide the operationalization of the 2030 plan between 2025 and 2030.
- ▶ **Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning (MEL):** Implement the learning and measurement framework and broaden MEL efforts to target the Internet Society Foundation and the Internet Society teams.
- ▶ **Operations:** Effectively adapt grantmaking operational procedures to successfully implement programmatic changes to the Philanthropy grant portfolio in support of the 2030 strategy, while executing all operations functions with excellence.
- ▶ **Communications:** Increase the number of supporters of our work, deliver compelling storytelling around our impact, and build our grant partners' communications capacity through targeted resources and training.



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Philanthropy Programs

2025 Direction

Our 2025 Programs direction is guided by our mandate to be an effective supporting organization to the Internet Society. With a new [2030 Strategy in place for the Internet Society](#), going forward we will design and manage a more responsive portfolio that supports the Internet Society's six new program areas, and that can easily adapt and respond to change, while centering our grantees' success and sustainability.

We will operate 12 funding areas in 2025, providing grants to Internet Society chapters as well as organizations and individuals around the world. As in past years, the Philanthropy Team will continue to fund Internet Governance Forums (IGFs) as well as Schools of Internet Governance, and we will provide funding to the Internet Engineering Task Force (IETF) LLC and Global Cyber Alliance which supports the MANRS project. Collaboration will remain central to our way of working.

Our Programmatic direction for 2025 is outlined below. We intend to implement these recommendations beginning in 2025 and continuing through 2030, while acknowledging that the realities of organizational change and several dependencies may prompt us to pivot and make adjustments where needed.

Cross Portfolio

Based on recent findings from the 2024 Grantee Perception Survey, we are committed to learning and growing how we lead our grantmaking. In 2025, we will look for ways to deepen our relationship with our grantees such as more renewals and pursuing multi-year grants. This will include

creating a mechanism for unrestricted giving and simplifying our grant requirements, a process that is already in motion.

2030 strategy priorities, and incorporate learnings to the program from the SCILLS 2024 evaluation, which is scheduled to conclude in Q1 of 2025.

Program Specific

- ▶ **BOLT and Connecting the Unconnected (CTU)** – We aim to develop a larger “Connectivity Program” by determining how BOLT and Connecting the Unconnected might be combined as one program. We will not have an open call for the BOLT program in 2025 to allow us time to develop this new direction. Moreover, we will explore with the Internet Society on other potential community-centered connectivity grant programs that further the efforts to respond to the [Internet Society's 2030 strategy](#).
- ▶ **Beyond the Net and Chapter Admin** – We will pilot combining Beyond the Net Small funding with Chapter Admin in 2025. This will allow chapters to have access to more operating funds for event and administrative activities associated with events and trainings included in individual chapters’ Action Plans.
- ▶ **Research** – We will put a pause on an open call for the Research program for all of 2025 and determine the best way forward in light of the popularity of this program.
- ▶ **Resiliency** – We will sunset this program as it is currently designed due to internal challenges and competing priorities. We will continue to manage ongoing grants but not launch an open call for applications in 2025 and beyond.
- ▶ **SCILLS** – We will continue to make a small number of new grants (by invitation only) and renewals, start exploring new countries based on the

Philanthropy Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning (MEL) – 2025 Direction

The MEL Team will expand its scope of work and size in 2025, adding new resources to support the growing need for MEL support across the Foundation and Internet Society. Guided by the Internet Society's 2030 strategic priorities, the team will continue to build and promote cross learning, collaboration and implementation of best practices in MEL across both organizations.

In 2025, a main priority for the MEL Team will be to validate the Philanthropy team learning and measurement framework developed in 2024. The learning and measurement framework is an organization wide set of processes (and culture) that allows us to define, measure and understand impact in a consistent way. This will be done by working together with the Program teams to advance a common understanding of impact and through dedicated discussions on learning and strategic adjustment.

Philanthropy Communications – 2025 Direction

Our communications efforts for 2025 will continue to help build a visible and engaging brand around our work that can attract key audiences. In light of the Internet Society's 2030 strategy, moving forward we will adjust our outreach strategies accordingly to attract new types of grantees (i.e. women, indigenous people, and refugee populations). Additionally, we will focus on creating content that responds to our audience's stated preferences.



We will emphasize providing: practical information for grantees; human-centric storytelling to elevate voices and clearly demonstrate how the Internet is changing lives and communities for the better; and community building to create identification and community among our partners and supporters.

Philanthropy Operations – 2025 Direction

As the Philanthropy Team prepares for changes to our grant portfolio under the 2030 strategy, the Operations Team will need to adjust our grantmaking systems and procedures accordingly. In 2025, we will continue assessing our grant

cycle operations to identify where we can improve operational processes for greater efficiency, standardization, and effectiveness.

This work will include: constructing and implementing new programmatic changes, metrics, and updates to the grant portfolio in the Fluxx grants management system; revising application and reporting forms to be more flexible to support strategic transformations and enable easier integration with evolving programs; reducing administrative burden and improving data collection; and incorporating a robust renewal functionality into the system to support multi-year grants, increase efficiency, and improve user experience.



Measuring Our Success

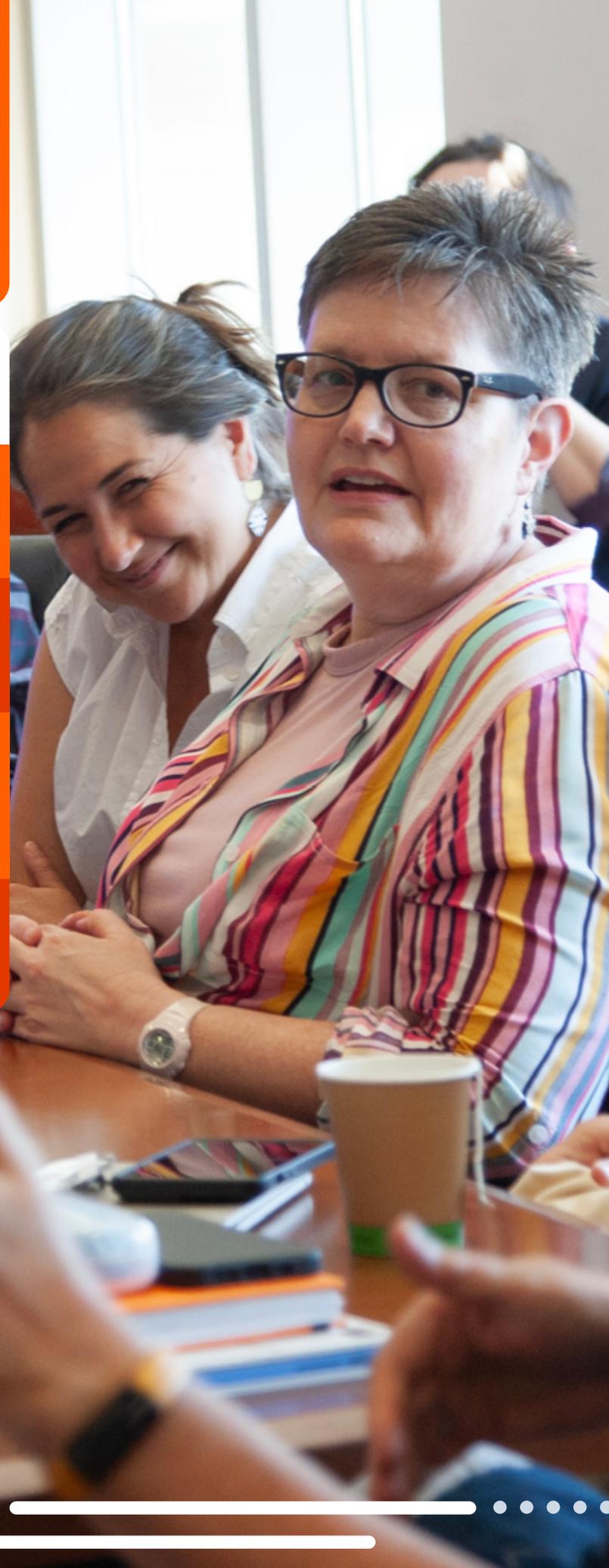
- ▶ **Philanthropy Programs:** \$12 million in grant funding committed, guidance on operationalizing the 2030 plan developed and communicated to all stakeholders.
- ▶ **Philanthropy MEL:** Learning and measurement framework is validated through at least four learning sessions with Philanthropy and Foundation teams.
- ▶ **Philanthropy Communications:** Increased number of supporters, as shown by a 20% increase in our newsletter subscriptions and a 20% increase in our social media following, 8-10 impact stories delivered in 2025 that center our grant partners, and two trainings delivered to support our grant partner's communications capacity.
- ▶ **Philanthropy Operations:** Systematic construction of programmatic changes and revisions implemented in Fluxx grants management system and all 2025 programs launched successfully, required system integrations completed, Grants Management workflows executed and streamlined, budget forecasting and planning processes refined for greater accuracy, and project management activities carried out to support Philanthropy team deliverables.



> Communications

Goals 2025

- ▶ **Define and operationalize** recognized global brand 2030 transformation metrics.
- ▶ **Refresh** Internet Society brand identity and public relations.
- ▶ **Position** Internet Society as the go-to Internet technology expert for policymakers.
- ▶ **Showcase** inspiring stories of people impacted by Internet Society's efforts.



Communications

Approach to 2025 Objectives

In 2025, we will update our communication strategy, laying a strong foundation to transform Internet Society into a recognized global brand. Our approach will focus on putting people at the heart of our communications.

Plan to achieve 2025 objectives

To lay a strong foundation for achieving Internet Society's 2030 recognized global brand transformation we will evolve the Internet Society brand to be more human-centric and expand our core brand assets for our community-at-large to leverage at a grassroots level.

We will shift our media relations to public affairs, focusing on advocacy efforts in key markets. We will leverage our experts and stories of how forced Internet policy regulations can have unintended consequences on people. We'll leverage these opportunities to get in front of policymakers.

A Closer Look

- ▶ Evolve brand architecture to be more inspirational and human-centric.
- ▶ Enhance collateral for community usage.
- ▶ Develop strong public affairs advocacy campaigns in key markets.

- ▶ Enhance the user experience on Internet Society's website.

Putting people at the heart of Internet Society's communications will be achieved by highlighting the measurable impact of Internet Society's work on people and communities in meaningful ways.

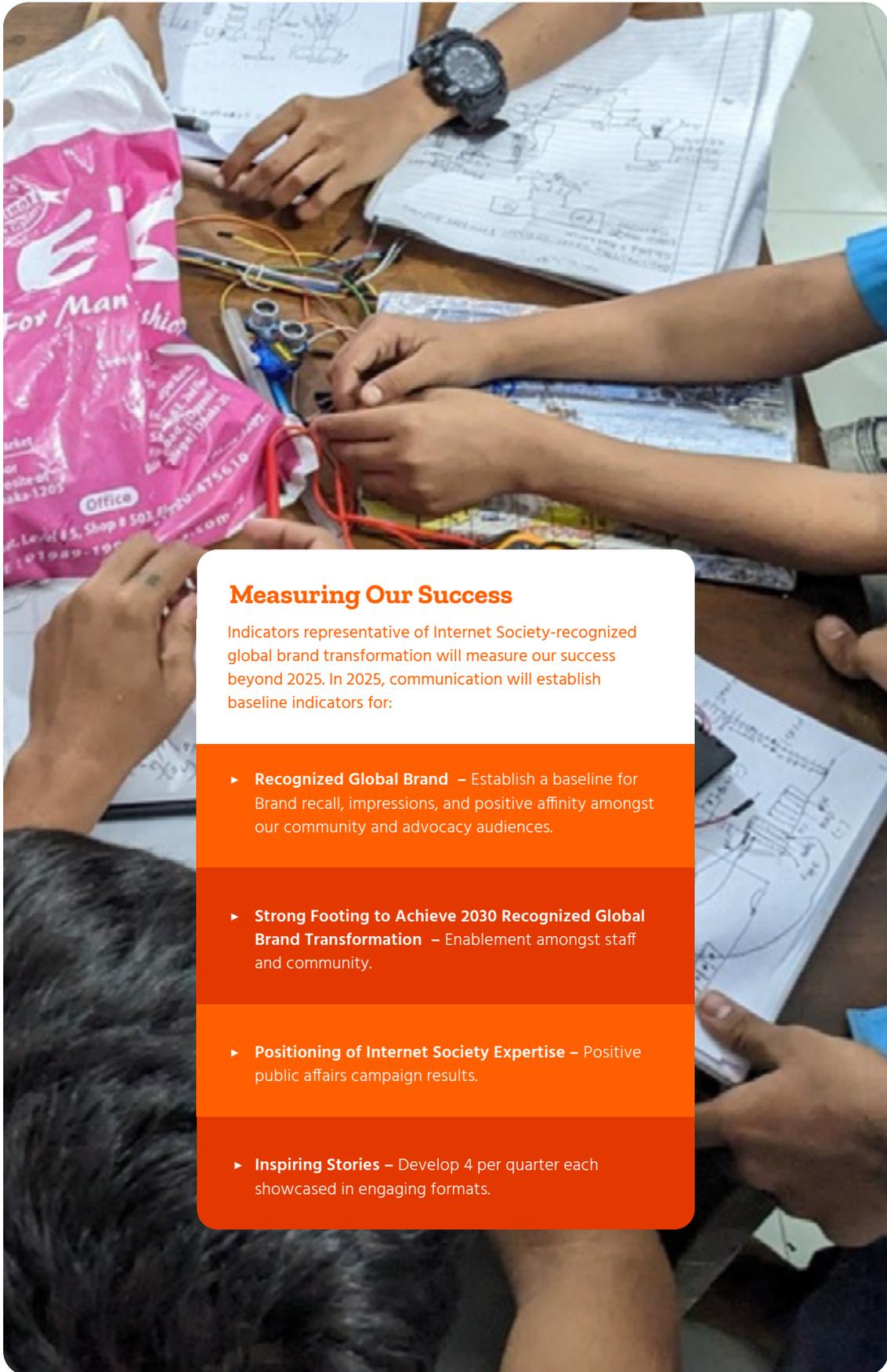
We will develop and showcase inspiring stories from people around the world who have access to the secure and trustworthy globally connected Internet.

We will showcase that the Internet Society's expertise lies within our people, who can read and react to the global environment and geopolitics.

We will celebrate Internet advocates and the next generation of champions.

A Closer Look

- ▶ Apply an audience-first communication approach for the Internet Society.
- ▶ Lean into compelling stories that connect Internet Society's work to the impact on people and communities.
- ▶ Showcase the impact of Internet Society community work at the grassroots community level.
- ▶ Present Internet Society experts as people ready to help shape effective Internet policy.



Measuring Our Success

Indicators representative of Internet Society-recognized global brand transformation will measure our success beyond 2025. In 2025, communication will establish baseline indicators for:

- ▶ **Recognized Global Brand** – Establish a baseline for Brand recall, impressions, and positive affinity amongst our community and advocacy audiences.
- ▶ **Strong Footing to Achieve 2030 Recognized Global Brand Transformation** – Enablement amongst staff and community.
- ▶ **Positioning of Internet Society Expertise** – Positive public affairs campaign results.
- ▶ **Inspiring Stories** – Develop 4 per quarter each showcased in engaging formats.



› Empowerment

Goals 2025

- ▶ **Define** and engage Internet Leaders through the Alumni network.
- ▶ **Scale** the Empowerment programs through local training partners and chapters, and through targeted fellowship programs.
- ▶ **Support** the delivery of the Internet Society programs.
- ▶ **Adopt** a data-driven approach to enable sound business decisions and impact measurement and stories.

Empowerment

2025 Direction

The 2025 Empowerment programs will be implemented through three workstreams: support of the Internet Society program and transformation projects, leadership of the Internet Society transformation to ‘Cultivation of Future Internet Leaders,’ and implementation of core Empowerment programs.

Support of Internet Society Program projects

► Community-Centered Connectivity

In 2025, the Empowerment Team will develop a technical training model, help assess training material and identify any gaps in training content. This will be used to create a phased approach roadmap to update, adapt, and develop training content to enable community-centered connectivity. Initial training content development will start in the second half of the year.

► Affordable and Reliable Access

In 2025, the Empowerment Team will support the review of all our Internet exchange point (IXPs) training materials to ensure that they remain current and relevant in light of changes in technology and user needs. We will promote the training with relevant stakeholders to support the deployment of five IXPs.

We will expand the African Peering and Interconnection Forum (AfPIF) fellowship to cover two additional regional peering events. The peering fellowship will provide fellows with the necessary skills and competencies to take on a peering coordinator role in the targeted regions.

► Online Trust and Safety

In 2025, the Empowerment Team will support the development of a user needs assessment report, an inventory of available training material, a gap analysis, and a recommendation for a phased approach to training material development and delivery through partners and chapters. Through the alumni network, we will support establishing a community of online safety champions.

► Open and Trustworthy Internet

In support of this program, we will actively engage the alumni network to provide input in developing an advocacy strategy. Moreover, the Youth Ambassadors and alums will support advocacy efforts during key Internet events. We will deliver a pilot NDSS fellowship, providing students with skills and competencies to effectively participate in the conference and stay engaged in the alumni network.

Cultivation of Future Internet Leaders Transformation

This transformation aims to cultivate future Internet leaders who are equipped with knowledge, competencies, and skills to advance the Internet Society strategy. We will deliver programs that a) cultivate a vibrant alumni community delivering impact; b) develop Internet leaders with relevant skills, knowledge, and competencies through immersive learning; and equip a global community with hands-on skills and knowledge.

In 2025, we will deliver two projects supporting the ‘Cultivation of Future Internet Leaders’ transformation: Defining Internet Leaders and Scaling empowerment programs.



► **Defining Internet Leaders**

Out of the over 125,000 individuals who align with the Internet Society mission, we count over 1,000 volunteers and just over 300 alums in our community. Those people have identified as willing to step up and take action.

However, through our alumni network, we see that only a core group of people take on the roles of leaders within their communities.

We will use this project to define the characteristics of Internet Leaders and build a plan to cultivate and engage them.

► **Scaling Empowerment Programs**

With scalable empowerment programs, we can broaden our reach, increase impact, and support our brand. This will also support our revenue generation efforts.

In 2025, we will:

- continue to build local training capacity and train trainers in-country, empowering them to deliver our hands-on practical training content.
- identify and develop technical expert trainers who can support capacity building in local communities.
- expand our collaboration with local training delivery partners and chapters to ensure consistency and replicability.
- replicate our fellowship programs, equipping fellows from specific target groups with technical expertise and leadership competencies, empowering them to support our strategic goals.

Core Empowerment programs delivery

Alumni network

The alumni network represents a core group of people who have gone through one or more Internet Society programs and acquired skills, competencies, and knowledge to support the mission of the Internet Society. They will become advocates, implement projects at the local level, carry the Internet Society voice, and expand our reach.

In 2025, we will deepen and expand the engagement of the alumni network to support the [Internet Society 2030 strategic goals](#). They will be a key audience to activate and mobilize for our advocacy efforts.

We will move measurements of alumni engagement beyond participation in activities and develop a framework to track their impact in support of the development of social and economic opportunities for communities and in support of our advocacy efforts.

Fellowship programs

▶ Youth Ambassadors Program

This 12-month program equips young people with the knowledge and skills to influence policies that defend the Internet while innovating for a better world. In 2025, we will select 15 fellows to participate in the program and identify four industry events where fellows can put their learnings to practice.

▶ Early Career Fellowship

Through this six-month fellowship, we equip global early career professionals with the practical knowledge and skills to contribute to the development of

the Internet. In 2025, we will select 15 fellows who will develop projects that address Internet issues and present them during a symposium at the end of the program.

▶ Mid Career Fellowship

In 2025, this seven-month fellowship will continue to equip 15 fellows with the knowledge, skills, and competencies to enable inclusive, innovative, holistic, and strategic leadership to support our mission.

▶ Peering Fellowship

In 2024, the AfPIF fellowship prepared Internet experts to attend the regional peering event and actively contribute to the positive development of affordable and resilient access. In 2025, we will expand the AfPIF fellowship to a global Peering Fellowship, equipping 15 fellows in 3 regions with skills and tools to address interconnection, peering, and traffic exchange challenges.

▶ Network and Distributed System Security (NDSS) Fellowship

Since 2014, the Internet Society has supported full-time students attending the annual Network and Distributed System Security (NDSS) Symposium. In 2025, a fellowship program will equip the selected students with knowledge and skills, better preparing them to engage actively during the symposium.

▶ Community Fellowship

Starting in 2025, we will enrich the Internet Society community workshops with online training sessions focusing on advocacy skills to support the 'Inspired and Mobilize Global Community' transformation. The in-person workshops will be used to exchange perspectives, build connections between fellows and Internet Society experts, and put some of the skills to practice through case studies.



Training and e-learning

► Online training delivery

In 2025, we will continue to deliver courses through our online learning platform in four modalities: self-paced courses, scheduled moderated courses, on-demand courses through partners, and track learning, with a focus on on-demand and track learning.

► Creating local training capacity through train-the-trainer programs

Building off the success and impact of the Designing and Deploying Computer Networks Train the Trainer program, we will expand the program to 2 more locations.

► Scaling our training programs delivery through training delivery partners and chapters

We will streamline our approach to training delivery through partners and chapters to reach a wider audience and continue to scale our delivery through local training.

► Ongoing administration and continuous improvements

Improvements on the platform will be implemented by building out the courses in more flexible modules, allowing us to provide more user-centric learning experiences. Accessibility improvements remain central to our approach, for which we work closely with our accessibility SG for platform improvements and testing.

Data analysis and impact reporting

In 2025, we will align data gathering and tracking across all empowerment programs, work closely with the collaborative systems team to expand the use of Salesforce for data tracking, and build out a measurement dashboard in Tableau to support data analysis and visualization.



Measuring Our Success

These measurements will help us determine our success in 2025 and tie back to the objectives mentioned earlier in this document:

- ▶ **We will have a clear definition of Internet leaders,** understand how we can engage with them, and have metrics to track their impact. At least 25% of the alumni network will be cultivated to become Internet leaders.

- ▶ **Empowerment programs have been scaled,** and we will have reached more people and increased our impact. We will:
 - a. Reach 1000 students through training delivery partners and chapters.
 - b. Build the local training capacity through technical trainers and training the trainers (30 technical trainers and 100 tutors ready to train by the end of 2025).
 - c. Deliver six fellowship programs.
 - d. Grow the alumni network by 125 alums.

- ▶ **We will have contributed** to the 2030 Internet Society strategy signals of success (To be defined when Internet Society has set their metrics).

- ▶ **Empowerment program data is tracked** consistently across programs, a measurement dashboard is implemented with the MEL and collaborative systems teams, and at least five impact stories are shared.

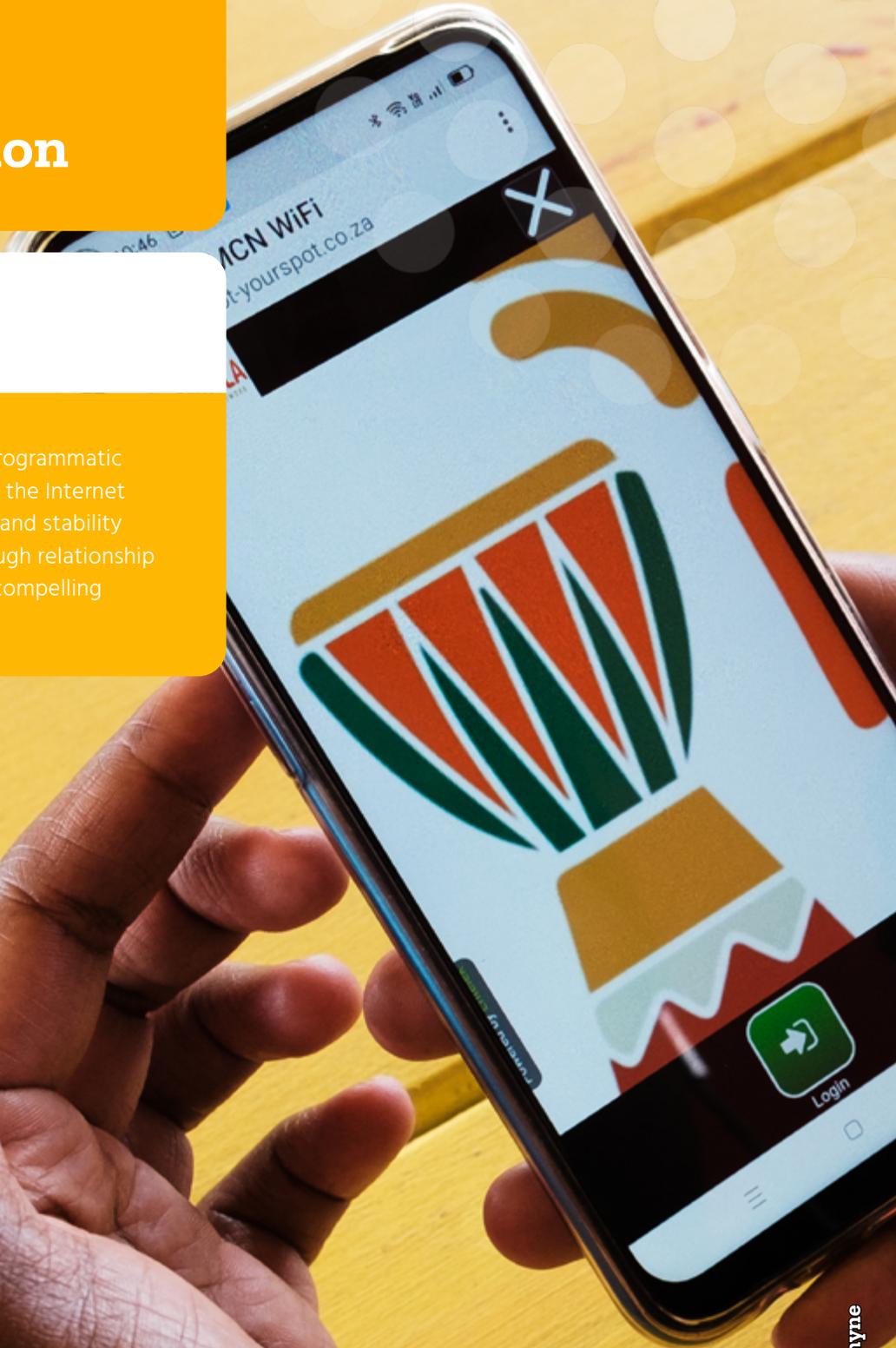
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> Revenue Generation

Goal 2025

- ▶ **Our goal** is to increase programmatic impact and contribute to the Internet Society's financial health and stability by securing funding through relationship building and by offering compelling funding opportunities.



2025 Direction

Revenue Generation in 2025 falls under two broad categories, fundraising and co-funding. Our fundraising program focuses on expanding the ways that people, corporations and institutions can support our work. Whether it's through sponsoring one of the Internet Society's internationally recognized flagship events, setting up matching corporate giving programs or signing up to become a monthly supporter, we want each supporter to give in a way that is most meaningful to them and to know that their contribution has made an impact.

In 2025, we will:

- ▶ Conduct groundwork and consultation on scaling individual donation approach.
- ▶ Determine when and how to scale segmented individual donor giving and stewardship work.
- ▶ Launch employee giving campaign.
- ▶ Create approach to attract more organizational members across diverse geographic regions.

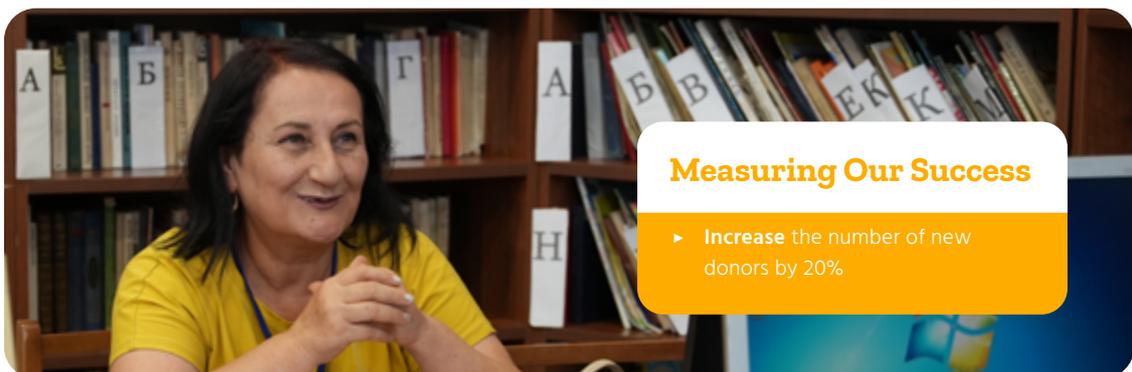
Our co-funding program offers funders the opportunity to partner with the Internet Society and the Foundation to deliver scaled-up impact in areas of mutual interest.

Combining resources means we can do more together when we leverage the Internet Society's three decades of program delivery experience, existing multi-year funding, and our proven grant-making capabilities to reduce global digital inequality, ensure that the Internet is secure and trustworthy, and improve people's lives.

In 2025, we will:

- ▶ Establish a Connectivity Fund in support of Internet Society's strategic impact programs.
- ▶ Identify and engage synergistic co-funding partners.

We will create and execute a 2025 generated revenue plan that emphasizes donor-centric approaches and strategic interaction. This plan will be led by a dedicated RevGenTeam member who will shepherd each donor and facilitate various funding opportunities such as memberships, donations, sponsorships, and grants. By cultivating leads that arise organically and strategically, we will build solid relationships and tailored engagement plans that complement and build upon the Communications Team's market-level engagement and audience awareness efforts, and the Organization Membership Team's focus on retention and upgrades within our organization member community.



Conclusion

2025 marks a new and exciting chapter for the Internet Society Foundation, as we continue to evolve our work and deepen our commitment to ensuring a world in which the Internet is for everyone.

As a strong supporting organization, we will deliver world-class grant management, tell inspirational stories, cultivate Internet advocates, and enhance our approaches to measuring impact and attracting funding. This will firmly position us to contribute to the Internet Society's growth and influence.

Underpinning our work is our belief that the Internet can make a positive difference for people everywhere and we will continue to work each day to ensure that our vision—that the Internet is for everyone—becomes a reality for all.



> Foundation 2025 Budget

ISOC Foundation

2025 Budget (000's)

PIR Contribution Revenue \$28,000

Total Revenue \$28,000

Expenses:

Personnel Costs 12,343

Funding Program Management 904

Empowerment 837

Corporate Operations 2,352

Revenue Generation 982

Governance 118

Total Expenses \$17,536

Net Surplus/(Deficit) \$10,464



	Estimated Ending Balance, net of committed @ 12/31/24"	New Awards in 2025	Additional Board Designation	2025 Beginning Balance, net of committed
RARE	\$483	\$1,850	\$1,370	\$1,853
SCILLS/Capacity Building	534	2,675	2,150	2,684
Research	106	5,300	5,200	5,306
BtN/Chapters/IGF	-	1,500	1,500	1,500
BOLT	206	1,700	1,500	1,706
Opportunities	-	1,250	1,250	1,250
IETF	-	7,300	7,300	7,300
PAID by Society		(2,500)	(2,500)	(2,500)
Total Board Designated Funds	\$1,330	\$19,075	\$17,770	\$19,100

Let's connect!



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<https://isoc.pub/3MV1iey>



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www.isocfoundation.org



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