



Research Grant Program

The Research program supports global research endeavors that aim to improve our understanding of the Internet and its value for all. Through this program, we identify and support a diverse group of researchers and research institutions, who are generating intersectional research that can be applied to decision-making in government and industry.

The program supports research that can be applied and is open, meaning the research ideas seek to answer real-world questions, are openly published, and are made available to the scientific community at no cost.

2023 BY THE NUMBERS

\$5.7 MM.

USD awarded to grantees in 2023 who shall advance our understanding of the Internet and its value for all.

383

Research products developed, that contribute to the body of evidence on the potential and future of the Internet.

166

collaborations with industry, academia and civil society towards building a stronger and better Internet.



Impact:

The Research program produced significant findings and outputs in 2023 that garnered the interest of various stakeholders, such as policymakers, industry experts, academia, and civil society. These research products bring us one step closer to creating a decolonized, greener, and trustworthy Internet that fosters economic development.



In 2023, we also disbursed 14% more funds than in 2022 to support researchers working on identifying solutions to preserve the values of the Internet.

Influencing Policy and Technological Advances

Our grantees have presented their research in several global and regional fora such as Internet Governance Forums (IGFs), Internet Engineering Task Force (IETF), and Internet Research Task Force (IRTF). Their findings, made possible through our grants, have been able to influence policy and technological discourses.

Building a Community and Learning from our Researchers

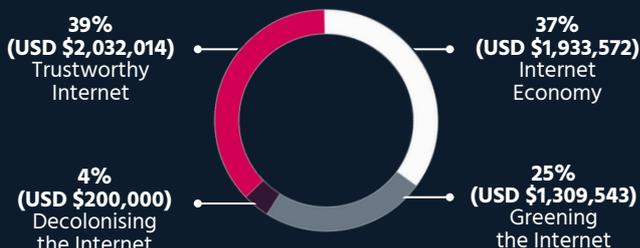
In-person gatherings and virtual grantee meetups contributed to strengthening our relationships with our grant partners. In 2023, we actively took steps to build a community of practice amongst our various Research grantee cohorts. As a result of this, we witnessed the emergence of a few wonderful collaborations and partnerships that are now collectively working towards building a better Internet. We also reflected on the insights shared and endeavored to incorporate these learnings.

Supporting Emerging Leaders on the Internet and Climate Change

Globally, there has been increasing acknowledgement of the effects of environment and climate change on the Internet and the impact of digital technologies on our planet. Within the thematic area of “Greening the Internet”, we have partnered with researchers who are currently leading this discourse. For example, our grantee, Nicole Starosielski, was invited to present her work supported through the Research grant at the UN COP28 meeting held in Dubai on December 2023, during which she disseminated their research on the sustainability of subsea cable networks with governments worldwide.

Many such projects funded by the Research Program have made significant contributions to this area of research and have helped generate awareness among diverse stakeholders.

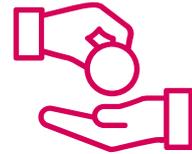
2023 GRANTS
SPENDING BY THEME



ACTIVE GRANTEEES
BY ORGANIZATION TYPE



Grantee Spotlight: significant outcomes



“The Global South, and especially the rural areas of the Global South are very contextual and it may not work well when you build technologies like the way Big Tech does because if it’s not relevant to the users, they would not use it. So there’s a lot of work that goes in field visits, collaborative workshops that are required. And without the Internet Society Foundation grant, it would have probably been impossible to do this.”

FRANCIS SAA-DITTOH (INDIVIDUAL RESEARCHER)

Assistant Lecturer, Department of Computer Science,
School of Engineering, University for Development Studies
Theme: Decolonizing the Internet - Ghana

Reset Tech Australia - Designing & Defining a World in Children’s Best Interests

With new tech regulations being passed around the world demanding that digital products and services are built and work in ways that promote “children’s best interests”, Reset Tech Australia’s [project](#) explored and defined what that actually means. The team’s participatory approach to conducting research involved 14,000 young people from Slovenia, 12 people from Australia, 122 young people from Ghana and 97 young people from Antigua & Barbuda, all between the ages of 13 and 18. Through the course of the project, the findings from the research study received attention from legislators and policy makers in each of these regions, like the Information Commissioner’s Office in Slovenia, South African Data Commissioner, Department of Education in Antigua & Barbuda and the Australian e-Safety Commissioner.

University of Amsterdam – Critical Infrastructure Lab

The [Critical Infrastructure Lab](#)’s research aims to increase our understanding of the power relationships and resource dependencies that exist through Internet infrastructure. Towards this, their research analyzes how less powerful stakeholders can effectively engage in shaping Internet infrastructure and what alternative infrastructures should look like for the Internet to continue serving the public interest. With the support of the Internet Society Foundation’s Research grant in 2023, University of Amsterdam successfully launched the Critical Infrastructure Lab that brought together 150 practitioners, policymakers, activists, researchers, civil society, and industry representatives to discuss the topics of geopolitics, environment, and standards in relation to infrastructure.

Countries we funded in 2023



- | | | |
|------------|--------------|--|
| Australia | Malawi | Uganda |
| Austria | Mexico | United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland (the) |
| Germany | Netherlands | United States of America |
| Ghana | Poland | Zimbabwe |
| India | South Africa | |
| Kyrgyzstan | Sweden | |

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