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Making the Internet work better

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December 6, 2021

Dear John,

It was wonderful to “meet” you last week. As someone new to the Internet Engineering Task Force (IETF), it’s so important for me to hear from our stakeholders, and certainly ARIN has been a longtime and valued partner to the IETF. Thank you for ARIN’s years of support, and for giving so much of your personal time as well.

As a follow-up to that conversation, I wanted to offer you an update on the IETF and the IETF Endowment, as both have seen changes in the past few years. We know that ARIN was an early champion of the IETF Endowment with your leadership gift in 2016, and we hope that as we refocus our efforts on growing that Endowment, you’ll continue to play a significant role. ARIN indicated intent to donate an additional \$1 million pending steps to secure funding from additional sources, and we’re pleased to report on our efforts to that end. You may be personally familiar with much of this, but I thought an outline would be helpful to share with your Board and other stakeholders.

### **IETF Administration LLC**

Since your gift of \$1,000,000 in 2016, the IETF has continued to evolve. In 2018, the IETF and Internet Society established the IETF Administration LLC, which is a disregarded entity of the Internet Society (ISOC). It functions as a separate and distinct home for the IETF and IETF Endowment, providing greater autonomy from ISOC. The IETF LLC has an independent Board of Directors, currently chaired by Jason Livingood, which oversees the finances, legal, administrative, and meeting

obligations of the IETF. The IETF LLC has five staff members, with Jay Daley serving as Executive Director as of 2019, and includes a director of communications and operations, two senior developers, and myself. My role was established in 2021 to oversee fundraising efforts, with particular emphasis on building the IETF Endowment.

### **IETF Endowment**

As you know, the Endowment was originally created back in 2012 as a home for IETF-designated funds, gaining steam with a series of gifts, including ARIN's leadership gift, in 2016-2017, which helped encourage the establishment of the IETF LLC. As should probably be expected, it saw a pause in activity while the IETF LLC was forming, but it was never far from the IETF LLC Board's mind. Once they felt ready to support such a role, they created my position as Director of Development to help relaunch the Endowment and grow it into something that could ultimately sustain the IETF community.

Since my arrival, we've been focused on a few key priorities. First is understanding the community, its awareness of the Endowment, and determining how best to engage both organizations and individuals within the community in the growth of the Endowment. The second priority is understanding the value proposition, for the IETF broadly, and for the Endowment specifically. The third is updating the website, collateral, and supporting information to allow for strong Endowment outreach and advocacy, as well as being thoughtful partners to those who offer support to the Endowment. We are nearing completion of all three priorities for this stage, and as such, we are reaching out to our friends quietly now to provide updates and request their support, with the intention for a more public relaunch in mid 2022.

### **IETF Endowment Goals**

The IETF Endowment is a designated investment fund created in support of the Internet Engineering Task Force and its activities, intended to ensure the long-term sustainability of the IETF. By supporting the IETF Endowment, you are championing the following:

- *Open Standards & Broad Participation:* The IETF was intentionally created without a membership structure so that anyone with the technical competency can participate in an individual capacity. This lack of membership ensures its position as the primary neutral standards body because participants cannot exert influence as they could in a pay-to-play organization where members, companies, or governments pay fees to set the direction. IETF standards are reached by rough consensus, allowing the ideas with the strongest technical merit to rise to the surface. These standards are freely available, ensuring small-to-midsize companies and entrepreneurs are on

equal footing with the large technology companies. With a community from around the world and an increased focus on diversity in all its forms, IETF seeks to ensure that the global Internet has input from the global community, and represents the realities of all who use it.

- *Technology of the Future:* The IETF has been around as long as the modern Internet, and much of the way we use the Internet today is predicated upon the standards developed in the IETF. As the Internet continues to evolve, so does the work of IETF. Our participants are continually updating existing protocols and anticipating emerging needs, while creating building blocks for the infrastructure for what lies ahead. The IETF attracts diverse and deep expertise from industry, academia, engineering, and civil society to anticipate what's needed and respond. No single company or government brings the depth and breadth of knowledge to their technical work as the IETF community.
- *Independent Ideas and Independent Finances:* At present, the majority of IETF funding comes from a single source, the Internet Society (ISOC). While IETF remains incredibly appreciative of the generous support of ISOC, as a newly formed organization, the IETF LLC seeks to diversify our funding sources to ensure financial independence and thus shield itself from the single point of failure that is relying on any single funding source, including ISOC.
- *Preserving the Technical Archive:* A gift to the IETF Endowment ensures that nearly 10,000 RFCs created over the last 35 years will remain freely available for reference in perpetuity via the RFC archive. The IETF Endowment will help ensure that whatever the future of the RFC Series that documents the technical building blocks of the Internet as we currently understand it, the records and technical expertise that the Internet is predicated upon remain resources for whoever and whatever comes next.

### **IETF Endowment Matching Opportunity**

One of the most exciting changes since we last spoke with you about the IETF Endowment is that we've received a matching pledge for the IETF Endowment from the Internet Society. Through 2027, ISOC will match 2:1 any gifts made to the Endowment up to \$12M, and then match 1:1 on an additional \$6M. This has the opportunity to secure \$30M additional funds for the IETF Endowment!

The match also is important for prospective donors to the Endowment, as it allows gifts made to the IETF Endowment to have even greater impact. For example, IETF recently received a new gift from LACNIC (Internet Registries for Latin America and the Caribbean) for \$100,000. Because this gift is eligible for the match, IETF

Endowment will receive a total of \$300,000. For LACNIC, who believes in the work of the IETF and wants to support its longevity and financial independence, it's meaningful that their gift can move the needle so significantly.

As you already know, the work of the IETF is critically important. So too is ensuring that this work will continue uninterrupted for as long as it's needed, and that the legacy of this work is preserved in perpetuity. ARIN has been a longtime partner in advancing the work of the IETF, and one of the most vocal advocates for the Endowment. Your pledge of \$1,000,000 back in 2016 was instrumental in the growth and maturity that IETF has seen since, and we hope you will consider continuing your support with an additional gift of \$1,000,000 in 2022. As we strategize our relaunch of the Endowment, a significant gift from ARIN would speak volumes to our industry as well as give us momentum when we seek support beyond the traditional sources.

I'd be pleased to provide you with additional information, including our Endowment Policy and/or our Investment Policy, as you deem helpful. I encourage you to reach out to myself or Jay should you wish to continue the conversation. Many thanks for your consideration of this request, and years of support to the IETF. We look forward to future collaborations and discussions.

Warm regards,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Lee Berkeley Shaw". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Lee-Berkeley Shaw  
Director of Development  
IETF Administration LLC