

What is W3C?



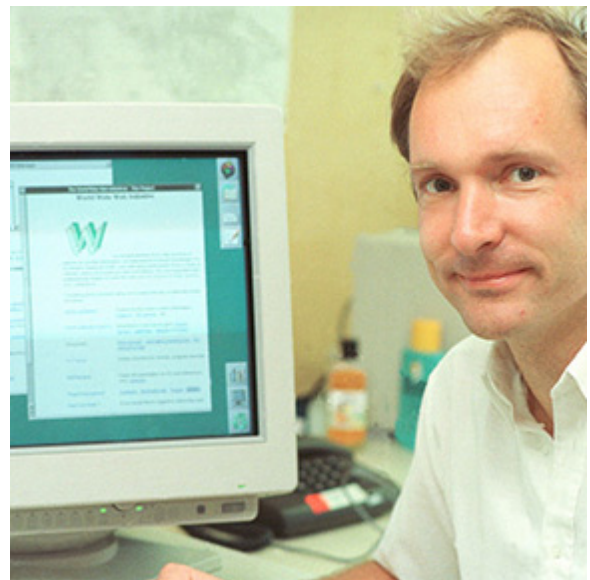
AS STEWARD OF GLOBAL WEB STANDARDS, W3C'S MISSION IS TO SAFEGUARD THE OPENNESS, ACCESSIBILITY, AND FREEDOM OF THE WORLD WIDE WEB FROM A TECHNICAL PERSPECTIVE.

W3C's primary activity is to develop protocols and guidelines that ensure long-term growth for the Web. The widely adopted Web standards define key parts of what actually makes the World Wide Web work.

A few history bits

[Tim Berners-Lee](#) wrote a [proposal](#) in 1989 for a system called the World Wide Web. He then created the first Web browser, server, and Web page. He wrote the first specifications for URLs, HTTP, and HTML.

In October 1994, Tim Berners-Lee founded the World Wide Web Consortium (W3C) at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, Laboratory for Computer Science [MIT/LCS] in collaboration with [CERN](#), where the Web originated (see information on the [original CERN Server](#)), with support from DARPA and the [European Commission](#).



Tim Berners-Lee at his desk in CERN, 1994

In April 1995, [Inria](#) became the first European W3C host, followed by [Keio University of Japan](#) (Shonan Fujisawa Campus) in Asia in 1996. In 2003, [ERCIM](#) took over the role of European W3C Host from Inria. In 2013, W3C announced [Beihang University](#) as the fourth

Host.

In addition to these four Host locations that employ W3C staff, there are [W3C Offices](#) around the globe that support the developer communities in their regions and organize local events. Find the one next to your place!

A few figures

As of March 2016, W3C is:

- A [member](#)-driven organization composed of over 400 companies, universities, start-ups, etc. from all over the world.
- 56 [technicals groups](#), including Working, and Interest Groups where technical specifications are discussed and developed.
- Over 4954 [published technical reports](#), including 357 Web standards (or W3C Recommendations) - since January 1st ,1995.
- About 244 [Community and Business Groups](#), where developers, designers, and anyone passionate about the Web have a place to hold discussions and publish ideas.
- Near 8747 active participants constituting the W3C community.
- A [technical staff](#) composed of about 76 people, spread on all five continents.