

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 wrote 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](#).

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 [18 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

W3C is:

- A [member](#)-driven organization composed of about 400 companies, universities, start-ups, etc. from all over the world.
- 68 [technicals groups](#), including Working, Interest, and Coordination Groups where technical specifications are discussed and developed.

- Over 1600 [published technical reports](#), including 335 Web standards (or W3C Recommendations).
- About 200 [Community and Business Groups](#), where developers, designers, and anyone passionate about the Web have a place to hold discussions and publish ideas.
- Near 7000 active participants constituting the W3C community.
- A [technical staff](#) composed of about 80 people, spread on all five continents.

(Read also [2014 in figures](#), illustrated in the image on the right).

