Introduction to the IETF

The IETF (Internet Engineering Task Force) is a standards development organization (SDO) for the Internet.

The IETF brings together volunteers from all over the world who want to improve the Internet. It operates largely in the public domain, and its documents are freely available.

Mission

Quoting from RFC 3935: A Mission Statement for the IETF:

The mission of the IETF is:

"To produce high quality, relevant technical and engineering documents that influence the design, operation, and usage of the Internet, in a manner that opens no new way for the Internet to control, or even patrol, the Internet."

Quoting from RFC 8040: IETF Long-Term Vision:

The authoritative repository of RFCs is the RFC Editor website.

Participation

The IETF is open to participation by any individual, regardless of geographical location or affiliation. Those who participate include:

- Working Group participants
- Individual contributors
- Liaisons from other bodies

The IETF holds three week-long meetings a year with the primary goal of helping Working Groups get their tasks done, and promoting the mixing among the WGs. In-person participation at IETF meetings is by invitation only. All other participation is considered volunteer participation.

Meetings

This page links to the Meetings page for future meetings.

Principles

The IETF operates in accordance with the following principles:

- Open participation:
  - All meetings are open to participation in the weeklong meetings, with space being allocated on a first-come, first-served basis.
  - All Working Groups are free to choose their own meeting times and locations.
  - Any decision made within an IETF Working Group is considered to be a consensus decision.

- Decisions within WGs, as with the broader IETF, are taken by 'rough consensus' and not by voting. It is expected that WGs will treat each other with respect and courtesy.

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RFS

This page links to the RFC Editor website.

The Work

This page links to the Work page for further information.