Open Technology Fund

A Radio Free Asia Program

Annual Report

2012

OPEN TECHNOLOGY FUND

RFA

Table of Contents

Executive Summary

The Internet has emerged as a crucial platform for freedom of expression and the exchange of ideas and information. Access to an open Internet offers an opportunity for a global citizenry to freely communicate, collaborate, and exchange ideas. Unfortunately hundreds of millions of individuals' online interactions are being monitored and obstructed by repressive governments. These government actions limit the ability for citizens to take full advantage of the powerful communications platform that the Internet has become. In the face of this oppression, the United States Congress recognized Radio Free Asia (RFA) through the Broadcasting Board of Governors (BBG) as an engine to empower a global citizenry to overcome governments that illegitimately block, censor, and curb the potential of the Internet as a free speech zone.[1]

RFA's mission[2] is to provide accurate and timely information to the people of Asia who lack adequate protections for freedom of expression, free speech, and a free press. In a 21st century society, creating and protecting these freedoms requires technology tools that enable the exercise of human rights within repressive societies. To that end, RFA created the Open Technology Fund program (OTF) as a next-generation initiative that utilizes U.S. government funds to support Internet freedom projects that:

- Develop open and accessible technologies that support human rights and foster open societies; and,

- Promote inclusive and safe access to global communications networks.

To ensure that both the process and the goals of this project are consistent with our principles, OTF has prioritized innovation and transparency in its organizational structure and decision-making processes -- providing dramatically increased accountability throughout the initiative. Increased transparency and accountability serves the public as well as the broader Internet freedom effort -- providing the means for constant feedback, improvement, new project discovery, and contributions from a diversity of viewpoints and perspectives.

This OTF annual report serves as a thorough introduction to the program, its goals, and its existing and future commitments to the larger Internet freedom community. This report highlights important facets of OTF's work and the projects OTF supports -- their accomplishments and their ongoing work. This report provides the public with a deep look inside OTF's internal processes. Finally, this report will introduce OTF's anticipated future work in 2013 and beyond.

[1] "P.L. 111-202: A bill to permanently authorize Radio Free Asia, and for other purposes." (124 Stat. 1374; Date: 7/13/2010).
[2] Radio Free Asia, Mission Statement, 2011, <http://www.rfa.org/english/about/mission.html>.

Results

In the 6 months since OTF began supporting projects, much has been accomplished:

- Creation of a mobile wireless test-bed that allows mobile phone tools that increase safety to be rigorously tested for security vulnerabilities;

- Deployment of safe and secure voice communication to African smart-phone users[3];

- Interoperability of safe text messaging between iPhone and Android users[4];

- Expansion of a bridge between the public Internet and a safe privacy protecting network, allowing users bound by hostile communication networks safe passage in and out of the public Internet[5];

- Deployment of secure Cloud infrastructure in Turkey, Cambodia, Hong Kong, South Korea, and a test-bed in Washington, DC[6];

- Initial deployment of a the first automated public global censorship monitors; and[7],

- Deployment of the first high capacity Tor node to South East Asia.

In the 9 months since OTF declared a commitment to transparency, it has seen the following results:

- Public disclosure of internal program processes, including the process by which projects are selected, on the program web site;

- Full disclosure of OTF expenditures including recipients, initiatives, and amounts;

- Inclusion of the Internet freedom community in project review processes to assist in identifying strengths and weaknesses;

- Consistent communication amongst Internet freedom funders to understand and coordinate publicly funded activities and to head off superfluous efforts;

- Require and encourage interaction amongst projects to produce synergies and build on the work of others;

- Pool resources to create shared global infrastructure, services, and users to remove costs, overhead, and redundancies present across many projects; and,

- Publish an annual report that provides an open, accessible and comprehensive means of describing the OTF program and its work.

[3] *See* RedPhone Beta, Google play, Sept. 18, 2012 <https://play.google.com/store/apps/details?id=org.thoughtcrime.redphone>.
[4] "A Partnership for Open Secure Mobile Messaging between iOS and Android," Guardian Project, June 8, 2012.
[5] See GitHub, Tor2web-3.0 <https://github.com/globaleaks/Tor2Web-3.0/wiki>.
[6] Piston Cloud, "Radio Free Asia Deploys Enterprise OpenStack Solution from Piston Cloud," April 10, 2012.
[7] *See* OONI: Open Observatory of Network Interference < http://ooni.nu/>.

Supported Projects

To fulfill program goals, OTF supports:

- Research in how Internet interference on modern communication networks occurs and to discover the technologies and methodologies that can circumvent interference;

- Development of the technologies required to circumvent censorship and increase communication safety; and,

- Implementation of circumvention tools for widespread use and adoption amongst non-technical citizens affected by censorship, interference, and illegitimate surveillance.

F2CF/Berkeley Anti-Censorship Lab and Incubator[8]

- $600,000 over 12 months

This project expands the Lab's test-bed to mobility-based tools. The test-bed allows for real world testing in a variety of configurable network environments. The project also includes incubation of in-country applications and services.

Ooni Probe[9]

- $400,000 over 6 months

OONI is the Open Observatory for Network Interference and its aim is to collect high quality data (through Measurement Lab) using open methodologies and Free and Open Source Software (FL/OSS) to share observations and data about the types, methods and amount of surveillance and censorship in the world. Measurement Lab is an open platform for researchers to deploy Internet measurement tools. By enhancing Internet transparency, M-Lab helps sustain a healthy, innovative Internet.

Open Internet Tools Project[10]

- $125,000 over 12 months

The Open Internet Tools Project (OpenITP) supports development of and collaboration among open source projects that enable secure, anonymous, reliable, and unrestricted communication on the Internet. OpenITP's goal is to reduce the ability of state and non-state actors to impose censorship or other restrictions on Internet access and communications.

[8] Freedom2Connect Foundation <http://www.f2cf.org>
[9] Tor Project's Ooni-Prob and Measurement Lab <http://ooni.nu> <http://www.measurementlab.net>
[10] Open Internet Tools Project <http://openitp.org>

Development

Benetech[11]

- $320,000 over 12 months

Journalists and human rights defenders and their sources who trust them with their stories face grave threats to their personal safety. As more journalists use technology to store and manage their data, more perpetrators try to attack that technology. Benetech's Martus is a tool aimed at providing journalists with a means of transmitting information, while protecting their sources and themselves.

Cryptocat[12]

- $93,000 over 9 months

Cryptocat is a web application that aims to provide an open source, browser-based communication environment with security that is comparable to desktop-based encrypted chat applications. Cryptocat aims to leverage both the ease of use and accessibility afforded by web applications and the security provided by client-side public key crypto-systems.

GlobaLeaks[13]

- $108,400 over 12 months

GlobaLeaks is the first open-source whistle-blowing framework. It empowers anyone to easily set up and maintain a whistle-blowing platform.

The Guardian Project[14]

- $388,500 over 18 months

The Guardian Project aims to create easy to use apps, open-source firmware MODs, and customized, commercial mobile phones that can be used and deployed around the world, by anyone looking to protect communications and personal data from unjust intrusion and monitoring.

Open Whisper Systems[15]

Open Whisper Systems provides mobile security solutions that enable data and device security for the Android platform.

[11] Benetech's Martus Project <https://www.martus.org>
[12] Cryptocat <https://www.crypto.cat>
[13] GlobaLeaks <http://globaleaks.org>
[14] The Guardian Project <https://guardianproject.info>
[15] Whisper Systems <http://www.whispersys.com>

Implementation

Commotion[16]

- $1,000,000 over 12 months

Commotion, is an open source "device-as-infrastructure" communication platform that integrates users' existing cell phones, Wi-Fi enabled computers, and other wireless-capable devices to create community- and metro-scale, peer-to-peer communications networks.

LEAP Encryption Access Project[17]

- $991,750 over 18 months

The LEAP Encryption Access Project (LEAP) will promote communication security by increasing both supply and demand for encrypted Internet services. To increase supply, LEAP will work with service providers to better deploy and maintain a secure services infrastructure. To increase demand, LEAP will create software designed to make secure communication accessible to the common user.

Rapid Responders

- $955,300 over 12 months

In order to ensure the development of Internet freedom tools are able to respond to conditions on the ground, the Open Technology Fund program reserves funds to rapidly address situations requiring immediate attention.

Global Secure Cloud Infrastructure

- $1,100,000 over 12 months

RFA, working with partners on-the-ground, is deploying high capacity cloud infrastructure close to high-censorship areas in the Middle East, Northern Africa, and Asia. Once deployed, RFA gives access to both OTF and non-OTF projects to research, develop, deploy and scale their tools and services to scale from small to large network surges common to human right groups online. The result is greater access and lower overhead for the projects.

Project Resources

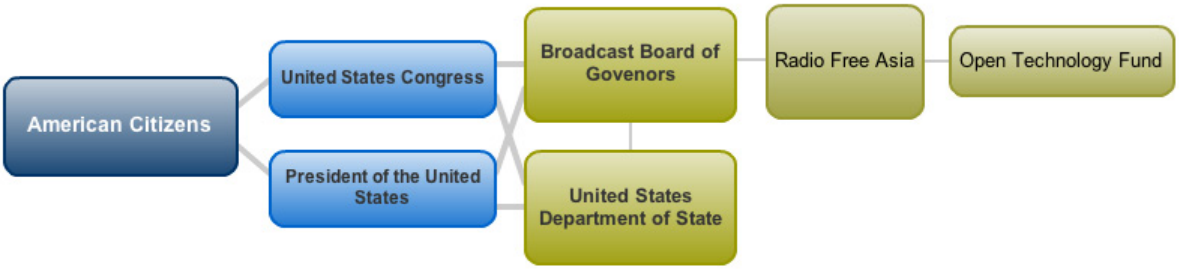
- $425,000 over 12 months

OTF partners with numerous individuals and entities to provide OTF projects with a variety of resources to ensure the tools funded are effective. These resources include code audits, red-teaming and usability testing; some of which are a requirement for OTF providing support. These resources build on those that are inherent to open source projects, allowing the larger community of interested researchers to provide similar reviews. OTF also provides collaboration tools that serve to improve communication and cross-pollination amongst projects.

[16] The Commotion Wireless Project <https://commotionwireless.net>
[17] The Leap Encrypted Access Project <https://leap.se>

Organizational Hierarchy

Open Technology Fund is a Radio Free Asia program created in 2012. RFA was created in 1994 as a private, non-profit organization by an act of the United States Congress and funded through the Broadcast Board of Governors.[18] The BBG is an independent agency of the U.S. Government overseen by Congress. RFA receives an annual grant from the BBG as directed by the appropriations bill for the Department of State, foreign operations and related programs. On July 13, 2010, a bill was signed into law that permanently authorized Radio Free Asia to receive grants from the BBG (P.L. 111-202). The bill also included a Sense of the Senate that RFA should receive additional funding for "Internet censorship circumvention."[19]



Money

Fiscal Year 2012 Funds

In its inaugural year, OTF received a total of $6.8 million from the BBG. $3.8 million originated from the BBG's existing $11.6 million 2012 budget for Internet Anti-Censorship projects.[20] The additional $3 million was passed through from the BBG to RFA after the U.S. Congress and President re-allocated $10 million in 2011 from the U.S. Department of State for the expansion of unrestricted access to information on the Internet.[21]

[18] "P.L. 103-236: International Broadcasting Act of 1994." (108 Stat. 43; Date: 4/30/94).
[19] "P.L. 111-202: A bill to permanently authorize Radio Free Asia, and for other purposes." (124 Stat. 1374; Date: 7/13/2010).
[20] *See* Broadcasting Board of Governors FY 2013 Budget Submission, February 12, 2012, p. 4.
[21] *See* e.g. Mary Beth Sheridan, "Congress trims State's Internet freedom funds," Washington Post, April 12, 2011..

Fiscal Year 2012 Expenditures

F2CF/Berkeley Anti-Censorship Lab	Mobile Test Bed Security Audit	600,000
Cryptocat	Secure End-To-End Chat	93,000
Guardian	End-To-End Ios/Android Encrypted Data Communications	388,500
LEAP	Secure System Administration & Network Management	991,750
OpenITP	Incubator For Internet Security Project Development	125,000
Ooni-probe	Real-Time Global Censor Behavior Analytics	400,000
GlobaLeaks	Secure Delivery Of Encrypted Data	108,400
Benetech	Circumvention Tool Adaption	320,000
Open Whisper Systems	Secure Mobile Communications	-
Commotion	Independent Mesh Wi-Fi Infrastructure	1,000,000
Rapid Responders	Rapid Counter Censorship Development	955,300
Project Resources	Security Audits, Red Teaming, Usability Testing And Collaboration Tools	425,000
Global Cloud Secure Infrastructure	Safe Global Cloud Infrastructure For Anti-Censorship Projects	1,100,000
Program Administration	Internal Expense To Run The OTF Program	294,188
		6,800,000

Funding Model

Project Identification

Surveying Internet Freedom

The inception of OTF began with the premise that Internet freedom funds could help projects and people not currently reachable by existing program structures. To identify the type of projects not currently supported, OTF surveyed current publicly funded Internet freedom programs for their supported projects. In some cases, this was difficult and often impossible due to sensitivities with traditional government procurement processes. At the same time, OTF sought the structure and goals of existing funding programs to identify potential innovations for a new program. As operations began, one guiding principle arose as OTF sought to build relationships with existing programs: parallel funding projects are appropriate when strategic and beneficial to people at-risk on-the-ground without spending public funds redundantly.

Ideal Project Criteria

A map of existing U.S. government funded projects gave OTF the focus to identify ideal project criteria and priorities appropriate for private corporate funding in the space.

OTF found that the program could be most beneficial if it supports Internet freedom projects that:

- Directly support freedom of speech and expression;
- Request smaller amounts (between $75,000 and $600,000);
- Focus on a localized on-the-ground deployment;
- Increase the communication safety awareness of people on-the-ground;
- Increase the access and collaboration between on-the-ground users and developers of tools promoting safe communication;
- Integrate technologies that increase safety into commonly used software and platforms;
- Increase the capacity and capabilities of the Internet freedom developer community writ large;
- Are not limited to delivery of specific content;
- Interested in productive reviews and audits of their work;
- Have moved beyond proof-of-concept development; and,
- Are without existing support.

With a list of ideal project criteria, OTF consulted with existing U.S. Government funded programs, the program's funded projects, the needs of journalists for both large media outlets and citizen journalists, global human rights groups, and networks of at-risk users on-the-ground. Through these consultations, OTF could identify common needs and, if it existed, a project with the capability to address those needs. If no project existed, OTF identified the fundamental elements that required further development and intervention to become the missing piece. At the conclusion of the consultations, OTF's list of potential projects exceeded fifty.

Project Categories

Given the sizable list of potential projects, OTF was able to group projects together according to characteristics. Categorization allows OTF to identify a project's relationship with other OTF projects, partnering them to work together to map common effective solutions to unique on-the-ground situations. The result is the ability for OTF to distinguish effective project proposals deliberately and strategically for long and short-term needs.

The first category defines the project's general nature: research, development or implementation. The second category, user segmentation, defines a project's likely user characteristics including: users who are very safety consciousness with a strong desire and need for privacy and security, users with a general safety consciousness with a low to moderate need for privacy and security, and users with no safety consciousness most concerned with access rather than privacy and security. Technology architecture is the third category, defined by a project's characteristics to mitigate censorship or circumvent repressive communication networks. Technology architectures included those that: utilize existing communication networks to transport information, create new communication networks to transport information, or a hybrid of both.

Project Assessment

Constrained resources and due diligence dramatically reduced the pool of potential projects. An internal (or passive) assessment of potential projects began before initiating contact. Assessment areas included technical, financial, on-the-ground relevance, cultural, political, and risk. By having a Program Director with significant qualifications in the Internet freedom space, many applicant questions can be asked and addressed prior to outside review. Projects that moved beyond this passive assessment were contacted directly and asked to propose a scope of work. At this stage, OTF engaged in an active assessment with the project to confirm passive assessment findings. Projects passing both passive and active assessments were then evaluated by OTF's peer review process (via the OTF Technical Council). Feedback from the peer review informed OTF's funding decision and refined the project's final scope of work. Finally, the successful projects were contracted with.

Peer Review

Before OTF support of a project, members of an independent Technical Council provide a detailed review of each project.[22] Current Council members are:

- Matt Braithwaite, Google;

- Michael Brennan, Drexel University;

- Gunnar Hellekson, Red Hat;

- Anthony D. Joseph, UC Berkeley;

- Moxie Marlinspike, Twitter; and,

- Andrew Mclaughlin, Tumblr.

Because there is a relatively small universe of Internet freedom experts, OTF has a very clear Conflict of Interest Policy and process for the Technical Council. If a Council member has a conflict with a project previously reviewed, OTF ensures there are sufficient non-conflicted members to secure a robust review. This policy is particularly important in the Internet freedom space due to a small community of individuals and organizations working on the technical solutions to address specialized challenges for such a massive number of affected users.

Further, the OTF peer review process for all projects includes ongoing communication and, in certain instances, a review with the BBG's Internet Anti-Censorship group, the IBB Chief Technology Officer, and the Department of State's Internet freedom group. Each project receives extensive review before it reaches RFA's legal office and the budgeting and contracts office for final in-house due diligence and contract approval. In addition, OTF provide program and project information to many other independent researchers, groups and agencies both before and after committing support to projects. OTF regularly update USAID, NED, FCC, FTC, and Members of Congress who frequently request information on the program's current progress. Further, OTF posts all program projects with a description of their work to be publicly reviewed on the program's website. The result of this unprecedented cross-agency and external cooperation is a diligent process in compliance with Public Law 112-74 allowing the U.S. Government to responsibly support emerging technologies in a nimble and agile way.

[22] *See* Appendix I, a set of framing questions presented to each Technical Council Member.

Contracting

The primary mechanism for support is through contractual agreements with incremental compensation occurring upon the completion of agreed upon progress or deliverables. A variety of reasons exist to utilize such a vehicle and numerous, additional safeguards were included to prevent any improper distribution of funds. The principal reasons for this approach stem from the nature of the work and the strategic direction of the program within the Internet anti-censorship space.

Unlike funds being disbursed to acquire physical materials or tangible products, the goal of this funding is to advance the development of existing circumvention technology for utilization in closed societies. As a result of the very specialized intellectual property space, in some cases the funding is ill suited for distribution via competitive bidding. While there are a variety of vendors when acquiring office furniture, the same cannot be said for bona fide security oriented developers and programmers with extensive knowledge of repressive government censorship techniques and existing infrastructure to distribute that technology.

The numerous restrictions and hurdles of other funders provided the OTF program a pool of projects with proven technology and significant previous work without the resources necessary to continue their development, sometimes just as the intended audiences were discovering and beginning to use the tool. These are exactly the types of opportunities OTF can engage in and swiftly revitalize - many times with comparatively minimal funding.

The flexibility contained within OTF's funding model allows the program to ensure potential projects focus their resources on primary functions rather then secondary expenses. The OTF program removes redundant inter-modal project costs through innovative internal and external models. For instance, costs surrounding server space, IT administrative costs and security audits are all shared. OTF believes that the technologists should be funded to do what they do best and not to build overhead.

Another efficiency created through this funding model is the recognition of the codependency between attractive, usable tools and distribution technologies. Numerous citizen-facing tools are reliant on distribution technologies to be successful. Conversely, distribution technologies are of limited use without attractive usable tools. By having the ability to strategically create collaboration opportunities, the OTF program can ensure integration occurs at a level not otherwise possible. The OTF program encourages early stage interaction between the developers and the implementers.

The OTF Team

Michael Meehan, BBG Member, RFA Board Chair

Mr. Meehan is chair of the BBG's Strategy and Budget Committee, co-chair of the Communications and Outreach Committee and its subcommittee on Global Internet freedom. He also serves as Chair of the Board of Radio Free Asia, and Chair of the Board of Middle East Broadcasting Networks.

Libby Liu, President of RFA

Ms. Liu provides strategic and operational direction to meet RFA's mission of providing balanced, objective news to listeners in East Asian countries where such news is unavailable. In addition to directing editorial and administrative policies and procedures, she coordinates issues in these areas with the BBG, the International Broadcasting Bureau, and other associated entities.

Bernadette Burns, General Counsel and Secretary, RFA

Bernadette Mooney Burns has been RFA's General Counsel since 2006 and was elected Secretary in 2008. She serves as the chief legal advisor to RFA and OTF.

Richard Smith, Budget Director, RFA

Richard is responsible for advising the RFA and OTF on matters related to contracting and operating budgets including the development of annual and multi-year budgets and financial plans; contract reviews; analyzing the fiscal impact of legislation; playing a central role in the annual budget process and compliance with applicable laws and regulations.

Dan Meredith, Director of OTF, RFA

Dan joined RFA in January 2012 as OTF's inaugural director. As director, he is responsible for OTF's day-to-day operations and long-term planning.

Adam Lynn, Program Manager of OTF, RFA

Adam joined RFA in April 2012 as OTF's inaugural program manger. As program manager, he is actively engaged in OTF's day-to-day operations and long-term planning.

2013 Funding

On September 22, 2012, the U.S. Congress passed a bill to fund the U.S. Government from October 1, 2012 through March 27, 2013 with a continuing resolution (CR).[23] A CR is a joint resolution between the U.S. House of Representatives and U.S. Senate to provide funding for existing federal programs at current or reduced levels from the past fiscal year. In 2012, OTF received $3.8 million from the BBG's normal operating budget. Thus, under a year-long Continuing Resolution, OTF expects to receive a minimum of $3.8 million for fiscal year 2013.[24]

The Budget Control Act of 2011 includes provisions that will result in a 8.2 percent reduction in non-defense discretionary spending to occur on January 3, 2013.[25] It is currently unclear whether any additional Congressional measures will mitigate or otherwise affect these budget reductions. As noted above, the final budget for OTF will be determined by the BBG.

More Visibility and Transparency

Visibility into program processes and exposure is a central component of OTF. The program intends to continue attending conferences and other gatherings, speak publicly about the program, OTF projects, and Internet freedom at large. By doing so, OTF will increase the awareness of interested policymakers and the public and stay current in this fast-moving space.

The increase in visibility will continue to highlight the opportunity for a nimble funding structure with increased transparency as a new model for Internet freedom funding. It will provide opportunity to solicit input towards increasing the transparent and efficient nature of the program. Bolstered by these contributions, the result is a benefit to the broader Internet freedom community.

[23] *See e.g.* Brian Faler, "Congress Adopts Stopgap Budget as Lawmakers Eye Campaigns," Businessweek, Sept. 22, 2012.
[24] *See* Broadcasting Board of Governors FY 2013 Budget Submission, February 12, 2012, p. 12.
[25] "Public Law 112-25: Budget Control Act of 2011." (125 Stat. 245; Date: 8/2/11).

Data, Analysis, Research

Inside the Program

In pushing a new funding model, it is important to maintain rigorous data collection that will allow for a thorough exploration of both positive results and areas for improvement. OTF intends to identify additional means of compiling data on the performance of the program through automation methods.

The quantitative and qualitative data collected will serve as a core component of OTF's internal performance analytics. With the proper mechanisms for project and public feedback and self-tracking, a rigorous annual analysis will assess efficiency, adaptability, transparency, and other important components of the program. OTF intends to include this more thorough inward-looking analysis in subsequent annual reports.

In the interest of transparency, the data-sets created will be made available to interested parties and publicly licensed when able. This step will offer the larger community an unprecedented means of assessing a government funding program and further push improved transparency in this space. Release of this data will also expand opportunities to identify improvements or additional metrics to capture.

Inside the Projects

Quantitative and qualitative data from projects is also a core component of project performance analytics. As a project grows, success and failure can be tracked by safe data collection of important metrics. Building in the mechanisms to collect and release needed data is resource intensive. OTF will continue to create incentives and reduce the barriers for projects to collect and release important data publicly to, again, further increase the transparency in the Internet freedom space.

Alternative Funding Models

The U.S. Government has five entities openly funding Internet freedom programs. Each agency has a distinct process for funding projects suited for diverse project types. Each process has known advantages and disadvantages. For example, OTF's current model does not include public submission process while others such as the Department of State do include this process.[26] Fortunately, OTF is uniquely capable of experimenting with alternative funding models.

In 2013, OTF will attempt to accelerate innovation and increase exposure to the Internet freedom effort by modifying the program funding model to include an open solicitation to the public for proposals and review assistance. The submission process will be open to nonprofits, for-profits or individuals anywhere in the world that support Internet freedom and OTF's goals. With the belief that ideas improve when they are publicly available, OTF hopes to incorporate public review into the existing peer review process.

Collaboration, Coordination, and Resource Sharing.

For Each Project

It is critical that the right communication and productivity tools exist and are utilized to foster a successful collaborative environment. A focus in OTF's first year was structuring the program and the projects in a way that was conducive to collaboration. In 2013, OTF intends to focus on providing the tools and resources necessary to build off of that structured collaboration. Many of these additional tools will be created as a direct result of the feedback received from projects wishing to further expand collaboration.

Improving collaboration tools between projects is just one facet of the resources that will be made available to OTF projects. A tool is only as good as the number of people putting it to use. As a result, all relevant projects will have a usability analysis performed to identify hurdles to adoption and strategies for mitigation. Beyond this step, OTF will be looking to support strategies to improve non-technical involvement with Internet freedom tools. As the creation and strengthening of Internet freedom tools matures, increasing engagement with users is critical.

OTF is additionally planning to ensure non-technical resources exist throughout the lifetime of an OTF project. This means offering clear documentation on submitting a proposal, the due diligence process, duties and resources for a project and project completion. The program also intends to offer broader documentation resources for a variety of public stakeholders.

Many of these initiatives are only as good as the project and public feedback loop provided to improve them. In order to strengthen the mechanisms to communicate with OTF, the ability to provide anonymous submissions will be offered. This should give any party the ability to comfortably provide feedback to the OTF program.

[26] Bureau of Democracy, Human Rights and Labor and Bureau of Near Eastern Affairs Joint Request for Statements of Interest: Internet Freedom Programs <http:/www07.grants.gov/search/search.do?oppId=169233&mode=VIEW>

Between Projects

Another step OTF is taking to build on the collaboration occurring between projects is to assist in developing inter-project red teams. These teams would accompany the outside security audits required in all OTF projects. Beyond the obvious benefits of additional review and feedback, inter-project teams will also give OTF projects a much more intimate knowledge of their counterpart's work.

Cross-Agency

OTF also intends to build on the cross-agency collaboration achieved to date. These outcomes will be determined following discussions with the funding community. Nonetheless, OTF will strive for improved identification of complementary, not duplicative, funding opportunities; building on the successes of improved communication; and helping the community better understand the different roles of the funders in this space. OTF also intends to keep other U.S. government Internet freedom funders updated on the program's transparency efforts and offer assistance to those interested in taking steps to improve transparency within their own program.

Inter-Nation

Internet freedom is a global initiative with many states adopting common principles for their own programs. The implementation of these funding programs by other nations is creating new opportunities and openings for collaboration. OTF will continue to facilitate information sharing with U.S. agencies supporting Internet freedom. To further international development of Internet freedom like efforts, OTF will also work to increase the sharing of information between International Internet freedom efforts. In the coming year, OTF intends to create opportunities for innovative collaboration and identify interesting program models between U.S. and International Internet freedom funders.

Non-Government

Corporations with users bridled by censor networks, traditional NGO's defending human rights, and large institutional funding organizations all recognize the relationship freedom of speech has to safe communication and access to the Internet. They have created or are in the process of creating and modifying existing programs to support efforts similar to Internet freedom. Again, OTF will work to increase the sharing of information between these organizations to create opportunities for innovative collaboration and to identify interesting program models.

Conclusion

The freedom to speak openly has been suppressed throughout human history. Each new communication medium was and continues to be a target of censors: be it voice, pen, printing press, telegraph, telephone, radio, television, and now the Internet.[27] Even today, not one country is without annual violation of globally-recognized human rights.[28] Resisting this relentless pressure are the tireless efforts of those who refuse to have their freedoms suppressed. In the past, supporters of freedom hid the books listed in the Index *Librorum Prohibitorum*[29] and today they build tools that defend Internet freedom.[30]

The effort to defend freedom of speech has always been a struggle between large and small. Today is no different. Current resources allocated to restrain Internet freedom dramatically exceed those allocated to defend Internet freedom in closed societies.[31] Despite this imbalance and with a surprising degree of success, innovators defending the rights of people suffering from oppression continue building tools of empowerment to freely share ideas and information over the Internet.

As these 21st century struggles for fundamental freedom continue, a diverse range of funding models must be employed to support them. The mechanisms to enhance Internet freedom efforts have only begun to emerge. OTF creates the collaborative space necessary to foster continued successful research, development, and implementation of Internet freedom technologies. Through OTF's commitment to transparency and knowledge-sharing within the Internet freedom community, OTF is pioneering best practices that move the entire Internet freedom movement forward. This inaugural OTF Annual Report is meant to expand understanding around the importance and benefit of maximum transparency and solicit feedback that brings much-needed conversations and debates to the fore.

[27] *See e.g.* Jonathon W. Penney, University of Oxford/Citizen Lab & Centre for Global Security Studies, University of Toronto, "Communications Disruption & Censorship under International Law: History Lessons," Presented at the USENIX Workshop on Free and Open Communications on the Internet (FOCI), August 6, 2012.
[28] *See e.g.* Freedom House, "Freedom of the Net 2012," September 24, 2012.
[29] *See e.g.* Paul Halsall, "Index librorum prohibitorum, 1557-1966," Internet Modern History Sourcebook, Fordham University, May 1998.
[30] *See e.g.* DJ Pangburn, "Hacktivists recognized for their efforts in Internet freedom," Death and Taxes Magazine, August 30, 2012.
[31] *See e.g.* Thomas Lum, Patricia Moloney Figliola and Matthew C. Weed, "China, Internet Freedom, and U.S. Policy," Congressional Research Service, R42601, July 13, 2012.

Appendix I: Initial Questions Proposed to the Technical Council

- Are the project's goals clear?

- Are the projects goals realistically met by the proposed solution?

- Is the proposed solution viable in the real world?

- What will the project's challenges be?

- Does the project's focus impact either high value users (people in greater danger) or is it for a large numbers of users?

- Will the project be able to support itself by the requested funding, community sources, or other in-kind or indirect support?

- Does the project demonstrate external demand (i.e., demand originated from potential users, not from would-be patrons of some possibly hypothetical set of users)?

- Does the project articulate a measurable set of evaluation criteria and milestone metrics against results?

- Does the project demonstrate a high degree of usability/accessibility?

- Does the projects team posses the skills uniquely qualifying them to complete the proposed scope of work?

- Will the project fill a potential need or function that is currently unfilled, rather than reinventing the wheel?

- Does or should the project support a collaborative open community of developers?

- How does the project facilitate inter-project collaboration, including: talking with others doing similar things and identifying potential points of overlap; acted/planned to modularize code to enable others to reuse?

- What is the project's plan for future development/implementation? Does this trajectory continue to support RFA's mission/goals?

- Do the project deliverables assist other RFA projects/goals beyond this one initiative?

- Does the project have a diversified funding/support stream (i.e., how dependent would the project be on RFA)?

- Does the project team have a history of successful work related to the current initiative?

- Does the project have a core team (leadership, developers, etc.) dedicated to this project, in particular?