NEW AMERICA

OPEN TECHNOLOGY INSTITUTE

YEAR IN REVIEW
2015

JAN
Net Neutrality

MAR
Interconnection

MAY
M-Lab

JUL
Cybersecurity

FEB
Broadband Access and Adoption

APR
Civic Innovation
Open Internet

JUN
Wireless
Encryption

LIST OF 2015 FUNDERS

OTI is grateful for the support of the following organizations and individuals who believe in OTI's mission and vision.

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WHERE YOU READ ABOUT OTI IN 2015

LETTER FROM THE DIRECTOR

OTI Director Kevin Bankston

A lot can happen in one year.

2015 was a historic year in the evolution of the Open Technology Institute at New America, with major victories and profound changes for the organization.

Let's start with the victories. Although we can't claim all the credit—we are proud to be part of a broad and diverse movement—there is no question that in 2015, OTI leveled up and proved itself as a critical tech policy leader on a range of pressing issues. We helped build and lead the coalitions, and do the hard research and advocacy, that turned the prospect of the FCC issuing a strong net neutrality rule from an impossibility into an inevitability, convinced Congress to pass the first major surveillance reform law in decades, and ensured that the White House did not propose legislation that would undermine the encryption technology that keeps all of our data and communications safe. We also collaborated with other programs at New America to help promote broadband access in America's schools, and to develop the policy ideas that will help us maintain our cybersecurity in the years and decades to come.

In all of these cases, our work exemplified OTI's commitment to a multi-disciplinary and multi-pronged approach that is unparalleled, bringing together lawyers, researchers, advocates, community organizers and technologists to cover the field with major white papers, short op-eds, testimony to Congress, in-depth quantitative research, community-level education, dozens of high-profile events, and, of course, reams and reams of agency comments. Under one roof we have a large team with a wide range of perspectives and backgrounds—civil liberties, human rights, social justice, consumer protection, open government, open technology, and more—and that diversity is what makes us strong. Our broad range of perspectives is a feature, not a bug, because all of us have dedicated ourselves to the same social justice-driven mission: we want every community to have equitable access to an Internet that is both open and secure.

Which brings us to transitions. Building consensus around a renewed and clarified mission was my first and most important task when I became the director of OTI last June. I stepped into that job, after having served as OTI's policy director, when my predecessor Alan Davidson accepted the call to public service and became Director of Digital Economy at the Commerce Department. I can't say how grateful I am to the team, Alan, and Anne-Marie Slaughter for supporting that move with energy and enthusiasm, and working with me to ensure that I completed Alan's original mission. That mission was to take the incredible organization that OTI founder Sascha Meinrath had forged with such vision and inspiration, and transition it "from startup to stable"—from a scrappy new organization to a solid institution that will survive the test of time.

I'm proud to say that transition is now complete. OTI has a renewed mission that will guide us into the future. We have a strong new leadership team that mixes old and new staff. We have some real wins under our belts, and fresh new projects in the offing such as TechCongress, the Congressional Innovation Fellowship project we just launched to place technologists on Capitol Hill. We have a new office right around the corner from the White House that gives us the space we need to continue to grow, and a much more diverse group of funders to help support that growth. And we have you, our friends and supporters, who've stood by us through all of the changes.

A lot can happen in one year. We can't wait to see what the next year holds for OTI. We hope you'll be a part of it.

Kevin Bankston
Director of the Open Technology Institute

OTI's Mission

OTI works at the intersection of technology and policy to ensure that every community has equitable access to digital technology and its benefits. We promote universal access to communications technologies that are both open and secure, using a multi-disciplinary approach that brings together advocates, researchers, organizers, and innovators.

OTI LEADS

On the encryption debate, net neutrality, and broadband access and adoption, OTI demonstrates leadership on the technology issues affecting millions of Americans.
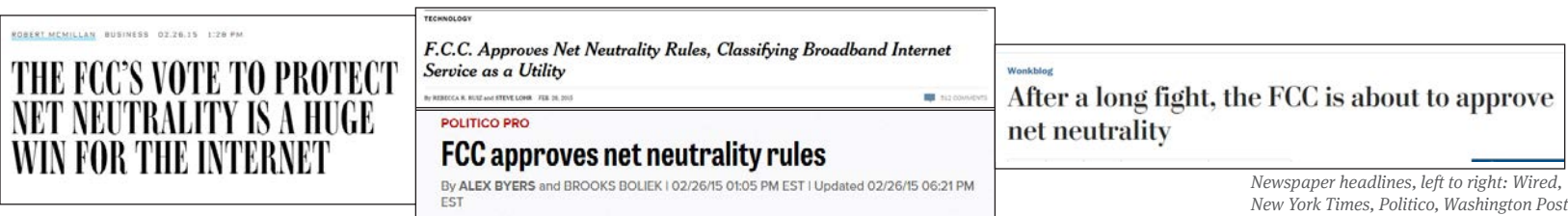
Encryption

The current debate that is raging over law enforcement's desire for surveillance backdoors into encrypted communications and devices harkens back to a similar debate that occurred two decades ago, as reflected in OTI's widely-shared report Doomed to Repeat History? Lessons From the Crypto Wars of the 1990s. The consensus amongst experts then, as it is now, was that giving government investigators special access to encrypted data is technically impossible to do without seriously undermining our cybersecurity against other threats, while also undermining the U.S. tech economy, and threatening human rights across the globe.

OTI's work on encryption was a top priority for the cybersecurity and surveillance teams in 2015. In addition to pressing Congress to support encryption and oppose backdoors—OTI Director Kevin Bankston testified in the House of Representatives on the issue in April—OTI successfully influenced President Obama's stance. OTI organized a powerful letter from an unprecedented alliance of tech companies, privacy advocates, security experts and policy experts, demanding that the White House oppose government-mandated surveillance backdoors and support strong encryption. This letter was the strongest statement yet that the unified Internet community would broadly oppose any effort by the government to weaken the security of our digital devices and online services, and directly contributed to the White House's decision not to pursue legislation on the issue.

After the terrorist attacks in Paris in November 2015, the encryption debate reignited. OTI quickly responded by organizing a meeting between the White House and civil society organizations that had participated in a successful We The People petition on the encryption issue. In addition, OTI rapidly released several new articles and papers that were shared and cited widely, including one paper that conclusively undermined the claim that regulation of American companies' encryption offerings would prevent terrorists such as those in Paris from evading surveillance. Thanks in no small part to OTI's extensive and deeply-researched advocacy, the House of Representatives has now repeatedly voted in favor of appropriations amendments that prohibit the government from asking or requiring companies to weaken the security of their products to facilitate government surveillance.

OTI has also worked internationally to advocate for global norms around the use of encryption, including by submitting comments on the relationship between encryption and human rights in February 2015 to the United Nations' Special Rapporteur on Free Expression. Several of OTI's recommendations were adopted in the Special Rapporteur's final report to the Human Rights Council, and its comments were cited several times in the companion document.

Newspaper headlines, left to right: Wired, New York Times, Politico, Washington Post

Net Neutrality

The promise of a free and open Internet, where individuals are able to decide for themselves what they see and do online without interference from Internet service providers, is a cornerstone of OTI's policy work. When the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) responded to comments from over 4 million Americans and adopted the Open Internet Order in February 2015, we celebrated. The passage of the strongest net neutrality rules in U.S. history represents countless hours of work by OTI to help shape this vital order. While helping to lead a broad coalition of industry and civil society groups, OTI filed comments and met with the FCC more than any other civil society organization. Through the work of our Wireless Future Project (WiFu), OTI ensured that the Order applied to mobile wireless networks—closing a loophole from an earlier set of rules—and addressed interconnection for the first time in FCC history. As the Commission moves toward implementation of the Order, we have continued to engage and intervene to preserve net neutrality. In May 2015, in response to an industry lawsuit against the FCC to overturn the Open Internet Order, OTI formally intervened in the case to defend net neutrality and the FCC's authority. While a ruling is not expected until well into 2016, OTI's action helped to ensure that the Commission wasn't left to defend the Order in court alone. OTI also worked to stop a six-month effort in Congress to use the FCC's funding legislation as a means to block implementation of the Order. Our efforts have helped keep the Internet free and open for millions of Americans, but our work on net neutrality is far from over.

Interconnection

Technology policy recommendations are only as good as the data that back them up. In the fight for net neutrality, OTI's work with the Measurement Lab Consortium [M-Lab]—the largest collection of open Internet performance data on the planet—provided crucial evidence that the Internet service of million of Internet users was being degraded, likely due to business disputes between their ISPs and other interconnecting parties. This data laid the foundation for FCC intervention in February 2015, when the Commission asserted its authority to review interconnection disputes under the Open Internet Order. The data were released in ISP Interconnection and its Impact on Consumer Internet Performance - A Measurement Lab Consortium Technical Report.

In the report, M-Lab demonstrated how ISPs' relationships with different Internet exchange providers could lead to consumer harm. This report was not only cited extensively in the Open Internet Order in February 2015, but was also influential in blocking the proposed merger between Comcast and Time Warner Cable. This report furnished the data that provided OTI with the quantitative research that underscored its comments to the FCC and the successful push to have interconnection included in the Open Internet Order.

Municipal Networks

The National Broadband Plan calls broadband "the greatest infrastructure challenge of the 21st century." As the expectation of connectivity at home and in school continues to grow, communities around the country feel their needs are not being met by existing broadband providers. They look to local governments to assess the options and build local municipal networks that offer good service at affordable prices, either independently or in partnership with private entities. OTI has been a longtime advocate for the value of community-owned networks and infrastructure, and supported petitions from North Carolina and Tennessee that asked the FCC to preempt state laws that restricted local broadband networks. In February 2015, the FCC overturned those laws in a preemption order that repeatedly cited OTI's work, and is currently defending that order against an industry-backed lawsuit. In November 2015, OTI filed an amicus brief in that case to support the FCC alongside other public interest groups, broadband advocates, and local governments.

ISP INTERCONNECTION AND ITS IMPACT ON CONSUMER INTERNET PERFORMANCE

E-Rate

Equal access to broadband resources is critically important in our schools and libraries. Working with New America's Education Policy Program, OTI contributed to the improvement of broadband Internet access for these anchor institutions through the FCC's E-rate (education rate) program, which subsidizes school and library connectivity across the country. OTI's work was heavily cited by the FCC in both the July 2014 E-rate Modernization Order and the December E-rate Order, and a significant number of its recommendations were adopted by the commission. OTI continues to work to ensure broadband access in schools by developing an effective tool to measure actual broadband capacity. In 2015, OTI, in collaboration with the Education Policy Program, launched Measuring Broadband in Public Schools, creating a device that has been placed in Virginia's Alexandria school system to measure broadband use.
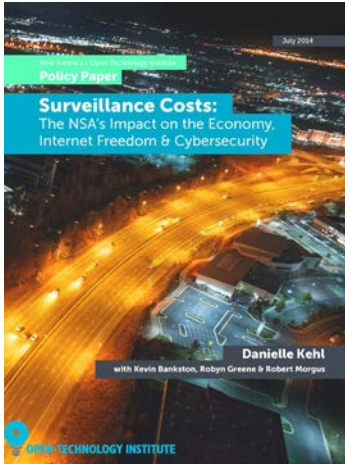
Broadband Competition

OTI advocated on behalf of consumers and innovation during the FCC's review of several major telecommunications mergers in 2015. OTI helped to thwart Comcast's bid to acquire Time Warner Cable in April 2015, and successfully pushed for interconnection conditions on the AT&T/DirecTV merger in July 2015—the first time the FCC has ever imposed interconnection-related conditions on a transaction. In October 2015, OTI advocated for close scrutiny of Charter's proposed bid to acquire Time Warner Cable, which is still pending before the FCC and Department of Justice.

Wireless Future Project

The Wireless Future Project (WiFu), led by Michael Calabrese, develops and advocates policies to promote ubiquitous, fast, and affordable wireless broadband connectivity, mobile broadband competition, and the reallocation of more prime spectrum for unlicensed and shared public access. WiFu played a key role in the public interest campaign for strong net neutrality rules, leading the advocacy that resulted in applying the Open Internet rules equally to wired and wireless service providers. After the order was issued, WiFu continued to make progress in opening more spectrum for Wi-Fi and other unlicensed innovation. Most notably, in April 2015 the FCC voted unanimously to open a large band of military spectrum to create a new Citizens' Broadband Radio Service that was initially proposed by WiFu in 2011 and then recommended by the President's Council of Advisors on Science and Technology as a framework for future and more efficient spectrum sharing.

OTI PROTECTS

OTI believes that everyone has the right to access an Internet that is not only open but secure, and that includes having security against privacy violations by governments and service providers. Working on its own and as a part of New America's Cybersecurity Initiative, OTI is pushing every day for policies that will provide that security.

USA Freedom

Ever since the first Snowden revelations about the National Security Agency's mass spying in 2013, OTI has been one of the groups leading the charge for surveillance reform—not only by educating policymakers on the costs of surveillance but by building consensus within civil society on what reforms would have to be a part of any new surveillance legislation. However, OTIs biggest role was probably as a convener and leader of civil society groups and Internet companies through its informal 'Stronger Internet' coalition, a coalition that would have to speak with one voice in order to obtain meaningful new restrictions on the NSA. Those years of work finally bore fruit in June 2015 when Congress passed the USA FREEDOM Act, the first major surveillance reform legislation in decades and the first (but not last!) step toward reining in the NSA. USA FREEDOM ended the NSA's bulk collection of Americans' phone records while applying critical new transparency and accountability measures to the NSA's other surveillance activities.

Cybersecurity

The threat to our digital information is constant and pervasive. The Internet has connected us, but the policies and debates that surround the security of our networks are too often disconnected, disjointed, and stuck in an unsuccessful status quo. It is evident that public policy and private sector efforts have failed to match the scale and complexity of this issue. That is why OTI joined with New America's International Security Program in 2015 to launch New America's Cybersecurity Initiative, a collaboration dedicated to finding new voices with fresh perspectives, highlighting bold new ideas, and breaking down issue and organizational barriers to build up this field of study.

Over the course of 2015, OTI confronted the Cybersecurity Information Sharing Act (CISA), renamed the Cybersecurity Act of 2015. The bill, which originated in the Senate Select Committee on Intelligence in 2014, increases government access to Americans' personal information without clear limitations on law enforcement or intelligence agency usage or guidelines on security and maintenance of the data. OTI's deep analysis on the issue demonstrated that not only would CISA endanger the information of millions, but that it would not have prevented any of the most high profile cyber attacks of the last year. Through extensive engagement with civic groups, security experts, and tech companies that included sending a letter signed by 71 groups and experts to the White House encouraging President Obama to veto CISA, a day of blogging by the coalition, and intensive education of Congressional staffers, CISA became as controversial in Congress as it has always been to the privacy community, and the result was two failed procedural votes on CISA in June and a failure to get it to a full vote in August 2015. Though the bill eventually passed at the close of the year, it was too controversial to receive a stand alone vote—instead it was attached to a must-pass spending bill at the eleventh hour. While OTI strongly opposed the final bill, it is clear that the work of OTI and other groups in civil society had a significant and positive impact in improving information sharing legislation over the course of the nearly decade-long debate.

Internet Governance

OTI has been a major supporter of the US government's decision to transfer oversight of the Internet's naming and numbering system (the "Internet Assigned Numbers Authority" or "IANA") to an international multistakeholder body. OTI has actively worked to educate Congress that the "IANA transition" is necessary in order to ensure that Internet governance does not become dominated by governments, including testimony before the House Energy and Commerce Committee's Communications and Technology Subcommittee. In 2015, OTI authored two papers in a series of research reports on the history of the Internet's naming system and the importance of accountability in the IANA transfer process, and has engaged civil society and the private sector in the process of developing the transition proposal.

Consumer Privacy

As technology evolves, consumer privacy protections must evolve as well. OTI promotes consumer privacy protections that foster confidence in communications networks as safe and reliable places for free expression. In early 2015, OTI led efforts by consumer and privacy advocates urging the FCC to pass new regulations protecting precise location information generated by developing technologies associated with mobile phone networks, especially as carriers deploy those technologies to enhance their ability to help locate customers to respond to emergencies. In recognition of OTI's leadership on communications privacy issues, OTI Senior Policy Counsel Laura Moy was asked to speak at public workshops held by both the Federal Communications Commission and the Federal Trade Commission. Laura also twice testified before the House of Representatives in 2015 in favor of strong data security and breach notification protections for consumers, and in opposition to legislative proposals that would eliminate key legal protections for phone, cable, and satellite records. OTI also joined with other consumer and privacy advocates to coordinate activities educating key Hill staff on the issue. Due in part to OTI's efforts and leadership, Congress has not passed any legislation that would weaken existing data security and breach notification protections.

Technology Exports

OTI is a leader in analyzing how U.S. trade restrictions can help or hinder the free flow of information around the world, particularly in repressive countries. OTI has been actively engaged in ensuring that rules to control the spread of surveillance technology to repressive regimes, a goal that OTI supports, do not unintentionally restrict tools and activities that are crucial to maintaining cybersecurity. Contributing to the multistakeholder process of updating the Wassenaar Arrangement, the rules that govern export controls for surveillance technology, OTI and its allies filed comments in July 2015 with the Commerce Department highlighting the concern that overbroad export controls may unnecessarily limit freedom of expression and criminalize important security research. OTI continues to track these issues as developments emerge, emphasizing the importance of ensuring that the tools of free speech are available to ordinary people while tools of oppression are kept out of the hands of repressive governments and other bad actors.

Cybersecurity Initiative

The Cybersecurity Initiative at New America, a collaborative project between New America's International Security program and the Open Technology Institute, is designed to address a cybersecurity debate that is too often disjointed, disconnected, and stuck in the status quo. The initiative seeks to create new areas of collaboration, showcase innovative ideas, and break down organizational barriers to encourage the creation of the cybersecurity policies that we need today, and set out a roadmap to address the issues that we know will be headline stories tomorrow. In 2015, the initiative created a network of National Cyber Fellows, engaging thinkers from across the United States, from in and outside the cyber policy community, to write and contribute new thinking to the policy debate. It also hosted several events, including Policy/Business Roundtables that brought together policy and business experts to talk about current and future cyber threats, and an Annual Conference that brought together diverse expert communities and policy leaders while highlighting bold new ideas. The initiative is co-directed by Ian Wallace, Senior Fellow in the International Security Program and Ross Schulman, Senior Policy Counsel at OTI.

Copyright, Security, and Innovation

In addition to broad engagement on export controls and privacy protections, OTI is also active on the impact of copyright restrictions on cybersecurity, free expression, innovation, and competition. Congress passed the Digital Millennium Copyright Act (DMCA) in 1998 to combat copyright infringement, but its broad mandate has subjected a wide range of activities to unnecessary litigation. The DMCA has since been used to interfere with independent security researchers working to identify vulnerabilities in computer software, to stifle competition, and to suppress device portability. That's why OTI, working with a coalition of allies, has successfully advocated for exemptions to the DMCA, including exemptions that would allow security researchers to do the good work they do finding software vulnerabilities, so that those vulnerabilities can be addressed and we can all be a little safer. These actions include active engagement with the rulemaking process through comments, reply comments, coalition building, and testimony before the Copyright Office. In addition, OTI collaborated with the Digital Right to Repair Coalition to deliver thousands of public comments to the Copyright Office in support of proposed exemptions.

Alan Davidson interviews Bruce Schneier at Cybersecurity for a New America 2015

Heather Roff talks about "New (and Old) Ethics: What can Kant Teach us About Cybersecurity.

Admiral Mike Rogers Speaks at Cybersecurity for a New America, February 23, 2015.

Cybersecurity Initiative Co-Director Ian Wallace

OTI MEASURES

At OTI, we believe that the value of data live in their thoughtful and transparent collection, which, when united with deep technical analysis, provide a roadmap for improved decision making.

Measurement Lab Consortium

When your Internet connection doesn't work as expected, how can you tell whether the problem is caused by your connection, the application, or something else? Answering this question and others like it is surprisingly difficult. OTI is a founding member of, and contributor to, Measurement Lab (M-Lab), a consortium of research, industry, and public interest partners. M-Lab is dedicated to providing an infrastructure for the open, verifiable measurement of global network performance. M-Lab provides the largest collection of open Internet performance data on the planet and allows consumers to test their network connections to identify the issues at play. Over the past year, M-Lab has more than doubled its total sites in the U.S., is expanding in Europe, Africa, Latin America and Southeast Asia to provide more global coverage, and is also expanding the scope of its data analysis work. The team, in collaboration with New America's Education Policy Program, recently launched its first project to measure the reliability of Internet in schools, launching a pilot project in Alexandria, Virginia called Measuring Broadband in Public Schools. Results from this pilot study will be available in 2016, and will inform a larger discussion on the importance of network reliability for public institutions.

MLAB

Map of current M-Lab server sites globally

Cost of Connectivity

To provide context around discussions of Internet accessibility in the U.S. and around the world, OTI has released a series of Cost of Connectivity reports, which assess the cost and speed of broadband Internet access in 24 cities in the U.S. and abroad. In 2015, OTI's third Cost of Connectivity report was cited by President Obama in the White House "Community-Based Broadband Solutions" report and subsequent speech about the importance of investing in high-speed broadband. The third Cost of Connectivity report found, for the third year in a row, that the lack of competition in the broadband space causes the majority of U.S. cities surveyed to lag behind their international peers for both prices and speeds. In addition, OTI was invited to present its report findings to members of the European Parliament in Brussels in the spring of 2015.

President Obama shares Cost of Connectivty charts

Ranking Digital Rights

On November 3, 2015, the Ranking Digital Rights project launched the first annual Corporate Accountability Index, ranking 16 of the world's largest Internet and telecommunications companies according to 31 indicators focused on corporate disclosure of policies and practices that affect users' freedom of expression and privacy. While some of these companies have moved toward greater transparency in some respects, there is still a lack of standards on corporate best practices for respecting human rights online. The Index helps to identify these areas of practice and the laws and regulations that can impact companies in respecting users' rights. Led by Rebecca MacKinnon, the Ranking Digital Rights' Corporate Accountability Index is the product of more than two years of rigorous research, consultation, and testing, including a pilot study conducted in 2014 in partnership with the investment research firm Sustainalytics. Previously, Ranking Digital Rights was one of nine winners of the prestigious Knight News Challenge. The inaugural Ranking Digital Rights Index was covered in The Guardian, The Wall Street Journal, NBC News, and other outlets. The Index, plus a full list of funders, partners, and updates can be found at RankingDigitalRights.org.
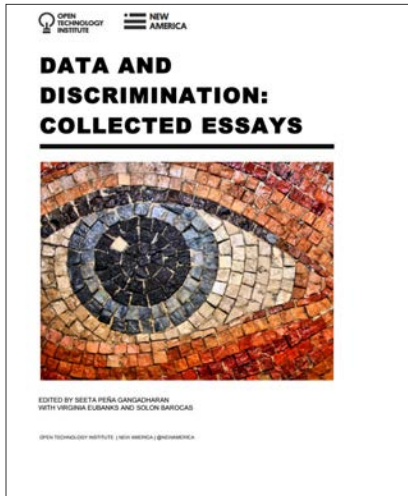

Above right: Rebecca MacKinnon launches RDR at Civic Hall, NYC
Below right: Rebecca discusses RDR on The Wall Street Journal's Opinions blog

OTI CONNECTS

A foundational part of OTI's work is its direct engagement with communities to understand and support local adoption, ownership, governance, and use of communications technology.

Data and Discrimination

Few groups have been as influential as OTI on the issue of how "big data" analysis and automated decision-making lead to discriminatory outcomes. In May 2014, OTI convened a group of academics to explore some of the most complex and pressing public problems related to data and discrimination. OTI released a collection of essays featuring the work of 11 different researchers and addressed the different facets of data-driven discrimination, including its political, social and historical implications. That publication coincided with the October 2014 conference, "Data & Civil Rights: Why 'Big Data' is a Civil Rights Issue," organized by OTI in conjunction with the Leadership Conference on Civil and Human Rights and the Data & Society Research Institute. The White House cited the work that came out of that event in its 2015 interim progress report on big data and privacy, affirming the importance of educating policymakers on how big data and automated decision-making can reinforce historic inequalities and threaten civil rights if not deployed carefully.

Body Worn Cameras

> *What institutional and regulatory choices do we need to make now — before police cameras become the status quo?*
>
> Seeta Peña Gangadharan, Fellow, OTI, May 2015

In May 2015, OTI co-organized a private roundtable on body worn cameras, civil rights and public safety, and hosted a public event on the same topic. The event focused on identifying the institutional and regulatory questions that may impact community-level debates, and addressed the public dialogue that treats body worn cameras as a panacea for problems of race and policing in America.

OTI hosted a public follow-up conversation on the current state of the body camera and police technology field in December 2015. In addition, OTI co-facilitated a private mock community meeting, testing a new curriculum to engage grassroots activists in body camera debates nationwide and looking at ways to map civil rights principles onto hardware and software so vendors and clients can make choices that prioritize the wellbeing of local communities. In a time when the public often looks toward technological innovations as the first solution to a variety of social conflicts, OTI considers how best to solve the questions at the intersection of society, technology, and policy.

From left to right, Malkia Cyril, Sarah Brayne, Justin Ready, Nicole Austin-Hillery, and Brian K. Jordan speak at the event "Who's Watching Who? Police Cameras, Civil Rights, and Public Safety" at New America on May 19, 2015.

Community Wireless SEED Grants

Digital communication and technology have been important tools for enhancing local community media, improving transparency, and organizing around social justice issues. However, technology has also been used within systems of control to enhance surveillance, decrease personal privacy, and aggregate the ownership and creation of information. To resist these systems and demonstrate an alternative vision, many communities have come together to build new models that prioritize relationships, collaboration, and creativity. OTI finds these small acts of resistance to digital control in neighborhoods, small towns, and rural areas around the world inspiring and rich with lessons.

Building on several years of collaborative work, in the summer of 2014, OTI and the Detroit Community Technology Projects formed the Community Technology Partnership. Together these programs established a small grants program to support community organizers around the world to address critical digital justice issues in their towns and neighborhoods. In 2015, the first year of the project, OTI focused on providing grants to groups building community-controlled communication infrastructure, as a means of community self-reliance and strengthened community media.

Over the last year, OTI provided 11 SEED grants to civil society organizations in Belarus, the Democratic Republic of Congo, Argentina, Namibia, Nicaragua, Timor Leste, Nigeria, India, Myanmar, and Brazil. Recipients included community radio stations, youth media groups, community development organizations, art and tech collectives, health cooperatives, and schools.

For photo credits, please see the 2015 SEED Grant report.

Circumvention Tech Festival

In today's world, those who control the ability to communicate have the power to dominate the conversation. Supporting the creators and communities behind open source secure communications tools empowers Internet users to connect on their own terms. In March 2015, the Open Internet Tools Project at OTI mounted a week-long festival-style event, bringing together the international circumvention technology community, and its users and supporters in Valencia, Spain. This first Circumvention Tech Festival brought together over over 600 individuals from 43 countries and 78 cities, to share stories, participate in workshop sessions, create in hackathons, and collaborate in a space designed for face-to-face engagement and cross-disciplinary networking. While serving as a host for several large events (Iran Cyber Dialogue, the Tor Annual Dev Meeting, and the Trainers' Summit), the CT Festival also featured two community-run series—one in English and one in Spanish—offering space for projects and individuals to host their own talks, hackathons, panel discussions, trainings, and other events. It connected a broad community of developers, hackers, funders, security trainers, human rights activists, and journalists to share best practices and explore methodologies for the making of tools that provide safe and secure communication to all.

OTI EDUCATES

OTI is committed to supporting freedom and social justice in the digital age by educating Congress, key stakeholders, and the public on a variety of outreach platforms.

Civic Innovation Fellows

Engaging underserved communities in the civic process is a critical challenge. How can technology change democratic systems for the better? OTI looks at many different ways to innovate civic tools, integrate existing technology, and facilitate discussions around the how technology can support communities. OTI Civic Innovation Fellows Laurenellen McCann and Dr. Hollie Russon Gilman lead these conversations through engagement with grassroots organizations, collaboration with arts communities, research on existing technologies and exploration of new ways to innovate and integrate new technologies and processes from the community level to the national level. OTI's Civic Innovation Fellows have spoken at the White House, at major conferences such as Code for America, and at major research institutions, including Harvard.

Hollie Russon Gilman

In 2015, Dr. Hollie Russon Gilman worked closely with leaders at a variety of top policy schools, including the Dean of the Kennedy School at Princeton and the CTO of Harvard, on a teaching toolkit at the intersection of technology and public policy. That toolkit included a comprehensive dataset of technology-related policy curricula, as well as several original case studies designed by Hollie to teach the next generation of public policy leaders how to effectively integrate technology to improve the public sector. In early 2016, Hollie is releasing a book as part of a Harvard series on Innovative Government in the 21st Century.

Laurenellen McCann

Laurenellen McCann is an organizer, tech policy expert, and civic innovation fellow with OTI. Her work seeks to refocus public sector "innovation" on communal ingenuity, emphasizing the importance of relational organizing, behavior change, and cultural context above individual tools and technologies. She also runs The Curious Citizens Project, a D.C.-based organization whose experiments meld tech, placemaking tactics, and art activation to increase participation in public commons. In 2015, Laurenellen published Experimental Modes of Civic Engagement in Civic Tech in consultation with the Smart Chicago Collaborative on an investigation into what it means to build civic tech with, not for.

Laurenellen McCann presents at the White House's first Tech Meetup in April 2015 on what it means to build with, not for communities in the creation of tools for governance and resilience. Photo by Demond Drummer.

Hollie Russon Gilman speaks at Designing The Future of the University at Georgetown University.

TechCongress

By 2020, technology will touch virtually all areas of life and every issue that comes before Congress. TechCongress gives talented professionals working at the intersection of technology and public life the opportunity to gain first-hand knowledge of federal policymaking and shape the future of tech policy through a nine-month fellowship with Members of Congress or Congressional Committees. Led by Travis Moore, former Legislative Director for Congressman Henry Waxman, TechCongress is incubated at the Open Technology Institute, and officially launched in 2015. The first class of Congressional Innovation Fellows will begin serving in Congress in early 2016. More information is available at techcongress.io

Kevin Bankston testified before the U.S. House of Representatives Subcommittee on Information Technology of the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform, April 29, 2015.

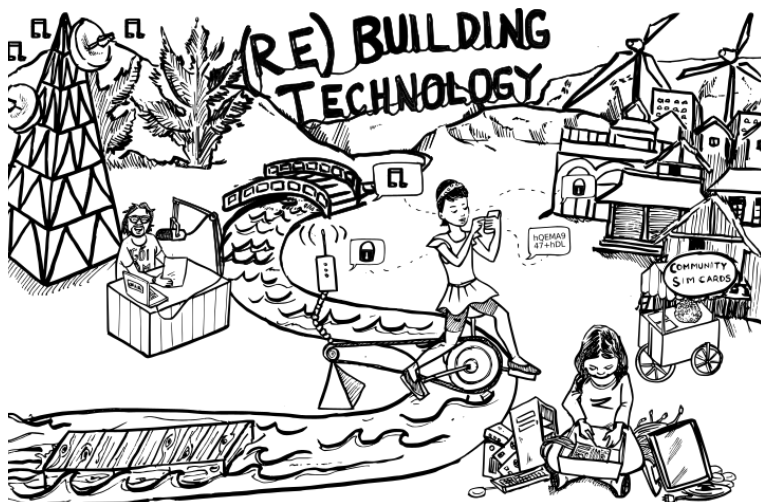Laura Moy testifies before the U.S. House of Representatives House Energy and Commerce Committee, March 18, 2015.
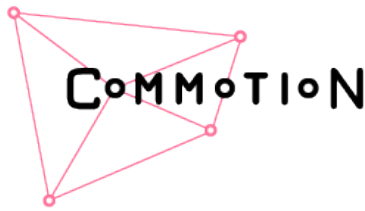

Danielle Kehl testifies on the IANA transition before the U.S. House of Representatives Subcommittee on Communications and Technology of the Energy and Commerce Committee, May 13, 2015.

Some have framed this debate as a choice between safety and privacy. But that's a false choice.

Kevin Bankston, Testimony Before the U.S. House of Representatives, April 29, 2015

Technology for the People featured Aliya Rahman, Jessica Rosenworcel, Megan Smith, and Anne-Marie Slaughter, February 18, 2015.

Mozilla-Ford Open Web Fellows

OTI was proud to be in the first class of hosting organizations for the Ford-Mozilla Open Web Fellows program. The program — a collaboration between the Ford Foundation and Mozilla — is an international leadership initiative that brings together the best emerging technology talent and civil society organizations to protect the open Web. The program fills a critical niche: it provides an ecosystem for the next generation of Open Web advocates to make an early impact. OTI's Open Web Fellow, Gemma Barrett, is focusing on using open-source tools, such as Measurement Lab and a Transparency Reporting Toolkit, to measure net neutrality and company transparency.

Cover from (Re)Building Technology Zine, a collaboration with the Detroit Community Technology Project and OTI.

OTI BUILDS

OTI seeks practical ways to link more communities by sharing data, engaging on policy, and connecting with each other. Through these tools, OTI seeks to engage communities outside of the policy circle.

Commotion

Beginning in 2011, OTI has supported the implementation of community mesh networks—networks that allow devices to connect directly with each other rather than through a communications provider—using OTI's Commotion mesh software and through the co-development of Digital Stewards training programs in Detroit and Brooklyn. Communities and cities hoping to leverage the potential of wireless technology often end up using hardware solutions that bind them to a single hardware vendor, and worse, regularly buying new licenses for that hardware. Commotion offers an open source alternative that focuses on ease of use. Over the past year, Commotion has been focused on upgrading its base and expanding its hardware compatibility so that it can be deployed in more countries and on more routers. In 2015, Commotion also collaborated with WLAN Slovenia to build network management tools to make it easier for communities to manage their Commotion networks.

A sample image from the World of Drones Database

Data Visualization

Data Visualization is never just about the images or interactive charts produced for publications — it's actually a technique for providing more in depth tools for exploring and understanding analyses as well as providing a more open and comprehensive source for researchers, journalists, and policymakers. In late 2014, OTI launched the DataViz Project to address these opportunities and needs. The emergence of data journalism has raised the bar on quality of data visualization to more effectively educate the target audience. Over the the last year, OTI set up an open data portal using CKAN, an open-source platform for data hosting, and worked closely with projects and initiatives at New America to build data resource sites in support of their policy research. Of particular note, the team worked with the Humanitarian Drones Project to create a map of flights and regulations showing the growing proliferation of drones and drone regulation globally, as well as with the Cybersecurity Initiative on a cyber definitions database to catalogue and disseminate standard definitions for cybersecurity terminology, among others.

Project	Description	Find it Online
Internet Governance	Exploring ways to communicate Internet governance structures, processes and politics.	Swing States Visualization https://www.newamerica.org/oti/visualizing-swing-states-in-the-global-internet-governance-debate/ Cyber Definitions Database http://cyberdefinitions.newamerica.org
The Drones Database and Map	Tracking which countries currently possess drones and how they acquired them, based on an analysis of hundreds of news reports and government documents.	http://drones.newamerica.org
Rebuilding the International Security Data Site	All databases from New America's International Security program, including analysis on the rise of political Islam, U.S. counterterrorism operations, and cyber warfare.	http://securitydata.newamerica.net

OTI CELEBRATES

At the end of 2015, OTI took time to celebrate its many accomplishments, and marked the end of the year by moving into its new space around the corner from the White House.

The OTI team, missing Michael Calabrese, Rebecca MacKinnon, Steph Alarcon, Hollie Russon Gilman, Josh Stager, Gem Barrett, Ross Schulman, and Travis Moore.

The Cost of Connectivity 2014

Nick Russo and Robert Morgus with Sarah Morris and Danielle Kehl

DOOMED TO REPEAT HISTORY? LESSONS FROM THE CRYPTO WARS OF THE 1990S

Danielle Kehl, Andi Wilson, and Kevin Bankston

June 2015

A Public Interest Perspective on Local Number Portability: Consumers, Competition and Other Risks

March 2015

J. Armand Musey
Goldin Associates, LLC

and

Michael Calabrese
New America's Open Technology Institute

Building Broadband Commons

Greta Byrum

Tools for Planners and Communities

DATA AND DISCRIMINATION: COLLECTED ESSAYS

EDITED BY SEETA PEÑA GANGADHARAN WITH VIRGINIA EUBANKS AND SOLON BAROCAS

MORE INCLUSIVE GOVERNANCE IN THE DIGITAL AGE

HARVARD Kennedy School
ASH CENTER for Democratic Governance and Innovation

HOLLIE RUSSON GILMAN, PHD

Controlling Internet Infrastructure

David G. Post and Danielle Kehl

The "IANA Transition" and Why It Matters for the Future of the Internet, Part I

Community Networks for Resilience

Andy Gunn

BROADBAND TRUTH-IN-LABELING EMPOWERING CONSUMER CHOICE THROUGH STANDARDIZED DISCLOSURE

Emily Hong, Laura Moy, and Isabelle Styslinger

July 2015

"Beyond Frustrated" The Sweeping Consumer Harms as a Result of ISP Disputes

Riding the Wave: How the Moulton Campaign Leveraged Digital and Social Media To Win in 2014

David Tannenwald

ARTIFICIAL SCARCITY HOW DATA CAPS HARM CONSUMERS AND INNOVATION

Danielle Kehl and Patrick Lucey

June 2015

Experimental Modes of Civic Engagement in Civic Tech

Meeting people where they are.

LAURENELLEN MCCANN

MLAB

ISP Interconnection and its Impact on Consumer Internet Performance

A Measurement Lab Consortium Technical Report

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