GETTING TO KNOW THE INTERNET CORPORATION FOR ASSIGNED NAMES AND NUMBERS (ICANN)

With our technical partners, we help make the Internet work.

Anything connected to the Internet – including computers, mobile phones, and other devices – has a unique number called its IP address. IP stands for Internet Protocol.

This address is like a postal address. It allows messages, videos, and other packets of data to be sent from anywhere on the Internet to the device that has been uniquely identified by its IP address.

IP addresses can be difficult to remember, so instead of numbers, the Internet’s Domain Name System uses letters, numbers, and hyphens to form a name that is easier to remember.

What Does ICANN Do?

ICANN’s mission is to help ensure a stable, secure, and unified global Internet. To reach another person on the Internet, you need to type an address – a name or a number – into your computer or other device. That address must be unique so computers know where to find each other. ICANN helps coordinate and support these unique identifiers across the world. ICANN was formed in 1998 as a not-for-profit public-benefit corporation with a community of participants from all over the world.

ICANN is made up of three parts:

The ICANN community is a volunteer-based group of diverse stakeholders from across the world. They work together to give advice and develop policy within ICANN’s mission.

The ICANN Board is selected by the ICANN community. The Board provides the ICANN organization’s strategic oversight.

The ICANN organization provides staff and resources to support the ICANN community and Board, and implements policies developed by the community.