



Nominet DNS Fund



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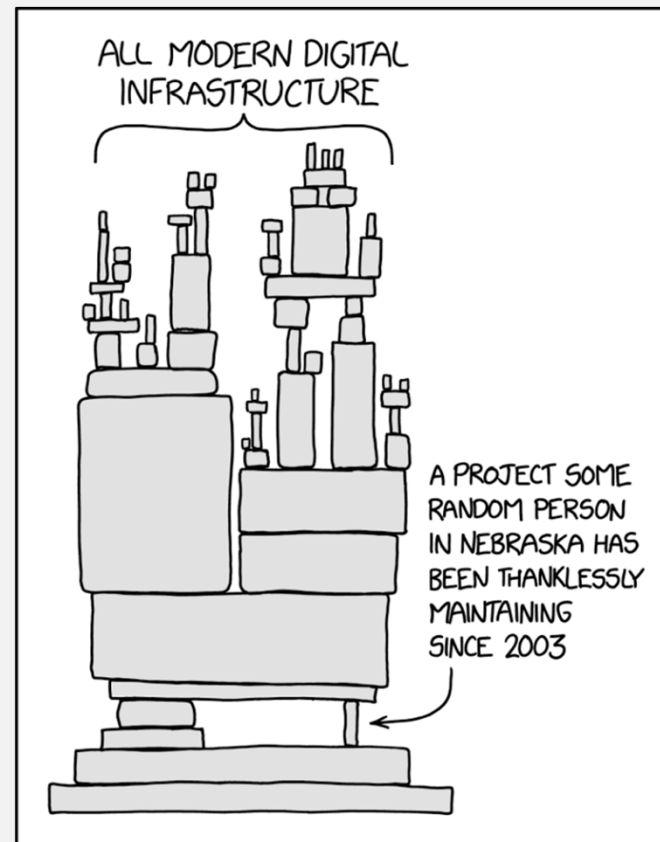
THE NOMINET DNS FUND



THE INTERNET WE NEED

The Domain Name System (DNS) is a critical, foundational layer of the internet, translating domain names into IP addresses to enable all online services. However, the open source projects and maintainers who underpin this global infrastructure often struggle to secure sustainable funding. This lack of resources poses significant risks including maintainer burnout, delayed security updates, insufficient audits or even project abandonment. Ultimately, underfunded DNS projects create systemic risks, exposing millions





Source: xkcd.com



DEMOS

Research summary

Research Questions



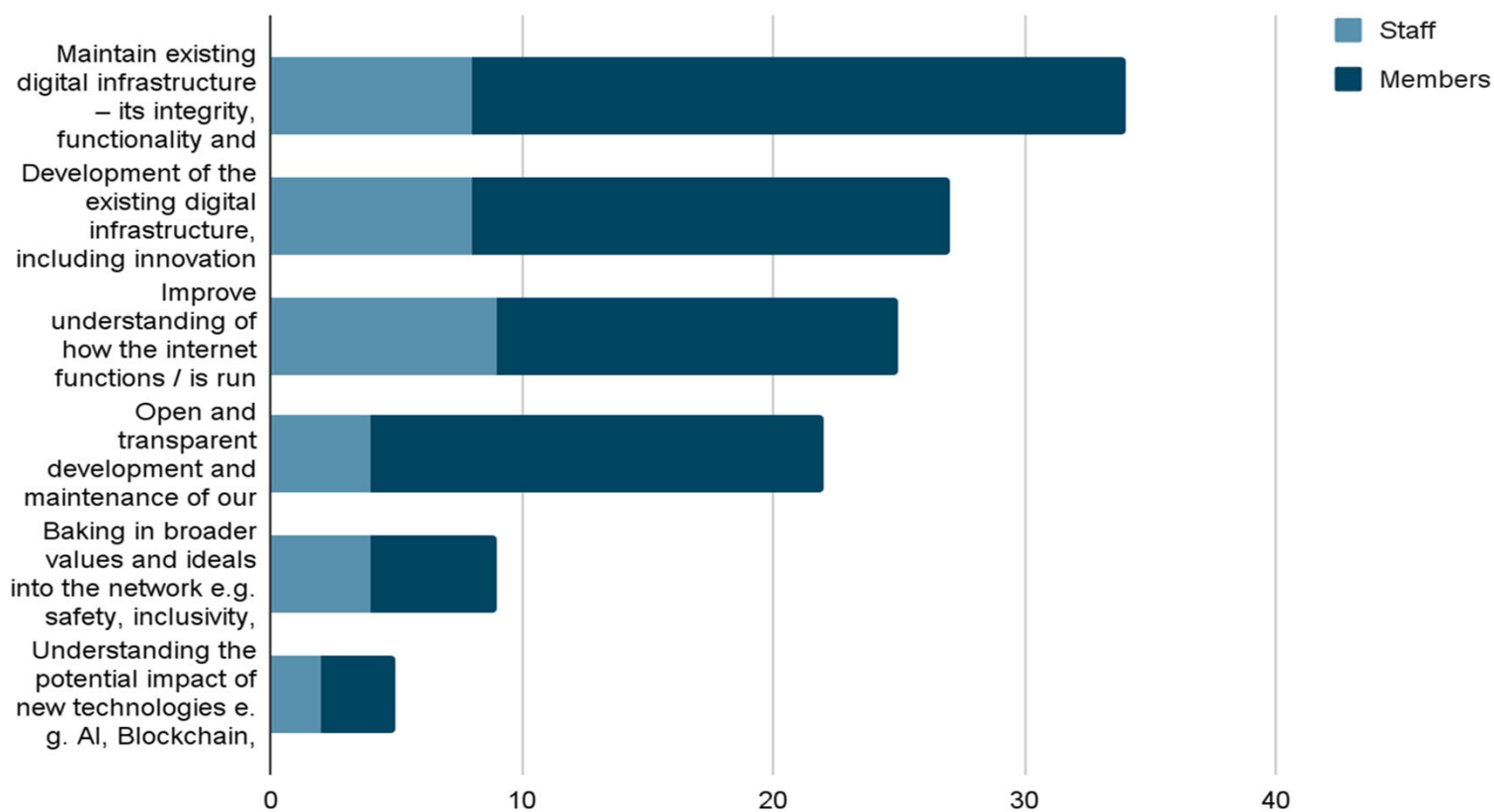
Where should Nominet focus its investment in order to best support the technology ecosystem that underpins the internet infrastructure?

What funding model should Nominet use and why?

‘Existing digital infrastructure’ is a priority for members and staff



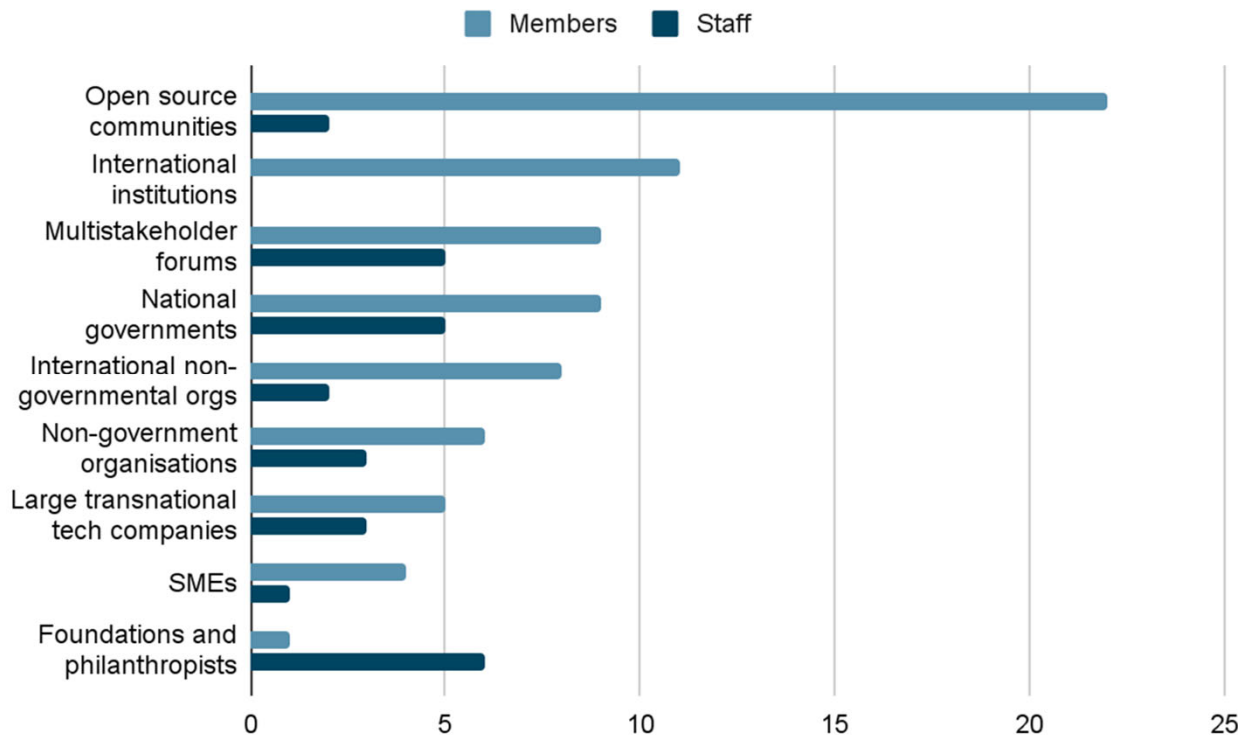
Q9. In which of the following areas do you think Nominet could contribute meaningful support? (n=41)



The open source community is key for members



Q7. Who is best placed to fix these issues and challenges? Select up to three. (n=41)

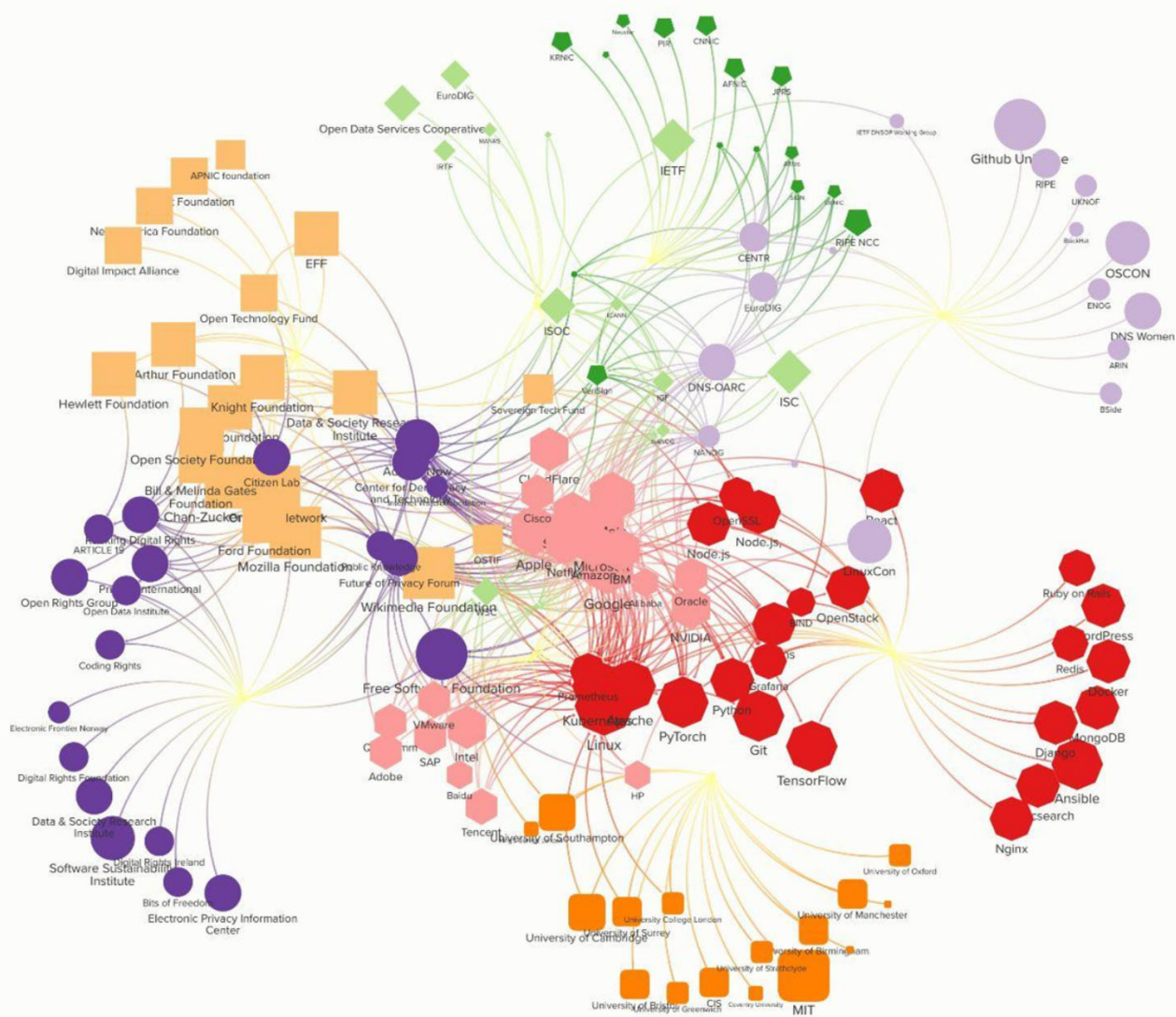


"Invest profits into Open Source software development and research, with a focus on human rights. Seriously, nothing else."

Member

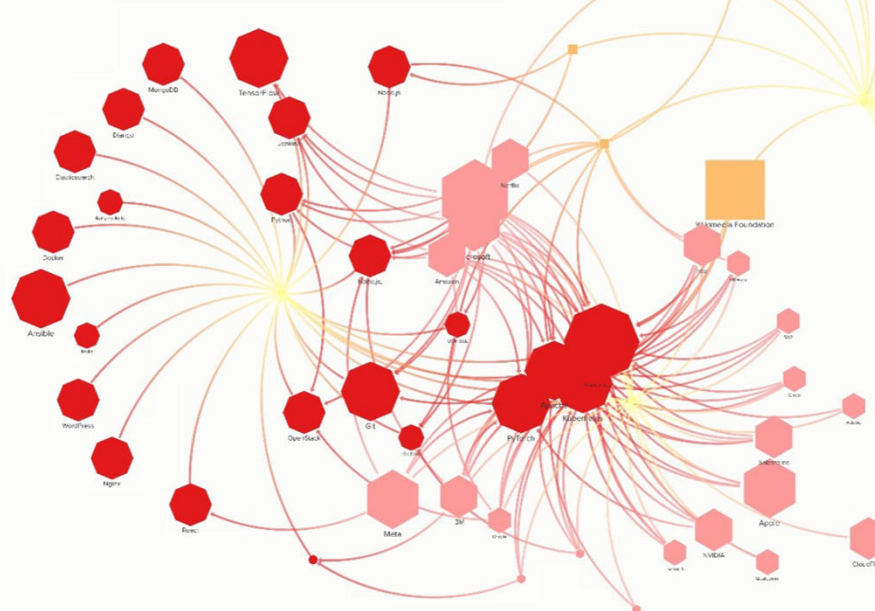
"Funding proven open-source projects to ensure their ongoing security and speed up development would secure the internet for everyone."

Member



Lack of diverse sources of funding for OSS projects.

-  Technology Companies
-  Open Source Projects / Communities
-  Funders
-  Element Type



Profit-driven tech companies provide the majority of funding for OSS projects.

Foundations target CSOs.

“ When all of the people who are being paid well to maintain OSS are doing it at the behest of a for profit corporation, the **motivations are going to inherently steer them toward profit driven motivations.**

Expert Advisor

”

Problems in pre-existing OSS funding...



1

**Majority of funding stemming from corporates and not foundations
which can bias development towards corporate interests**

2

Single source funding i.e. just one funder for one project

3

Funding not being available for individuals (only projects)



Key Details

Primary Goal

Fund and improve the security, long-term sustainability, and resilience of DNS open source projects.

Focus

Open source critical infrastructure components relevant to the development, deployment, and operation of the global DNS.

Funding available

£370,000 available in this round, with a maximum of £100k per applicant.

Key dates

Applications open 17th September to 26th October.

Apply at nominet.uk/our-impact/nominet-dns-fund/



Assessment principles



Criteria

1 Public benefit

To what extent your work enable safe, secure and resilient running of critical infrastructure, whose loss or compromise could severely impact society?

2 Core need

To what extent does the successful, resilient operation of the global DNS depend on this solution to operate?

3 Proven use

Is the technology or capability already being used successfully and at scale?

4 The right people

Does the person or team have the skills, experience, and understanding needed for this task? Do they have a track record of getting similar things done?

5 Value and sustainability

Does the proposal represent good value for money, and would the funded activity help ensure long-term sustainability?

THE NOMINET DNS FUND EXPERT ADVISORY PANEL



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Any Questions?

