

# Sir Timothy Berners-Lee OM, KBE, FRS, FREng, FRSA

## Longer Biography

For those who want details for some reason. This is more or less a collection of everything which has been asked for to date.

### Background

In 1989, while working at [CERN](#), the European Particle Physics Laboratory in Geneva, Switzerland, Tim Berners-Lee proposed a global hypertext project, to be known as the World Wide Web. Based on the earlier "Enquire" work, it was designed to allow people to work together by combining their knowledge in a web of hypertext documents. He wrote the first World Wide Web server, "*httpd*", and the first client, "*WorldWideWeb*" a what-you-see-is-what-you-get hypertext browser/editor which ran in the NeXTStep environment. This work was started in October 1990, and the program "WorldWideWeb" first made available within CERN in December, and on the Internet at large in the summer of 1991.

Through 1991 and 1993, Tim continued working on the design of the Web, coordinating feedback from users across the Internet. His initial specifications of URIs, HTTP and HTML were refined and discussed in larger circles as the Web technology spread.

Tim Berners-Lee graduated from [the Queen's College](#) at Oxford University, England, 1976. Whilst there he built his first computer with a soldering iron, TTL gates, an M6800 processor and an old television.

He spent two years with Plessey Telecommunications Ltd (Poole, Dorset, UK) a major UK Telecom equipment manufacturer, working on distributed transaction systems, message relays, and bar code technology.

In 1978 Tim left Plessey to join D.G Nash Ltd (Ferndown, Dorset, UK), where he wrote among other things typesetting software for intelligent printers, and a multitasking operating system.

A year and a half spent as an independent consultant included a six month stint (Jun-Dec 1980) as consultant software engineer at [CERN](#). Whilst there, he wrote for his own private use his first program for storing information including using random associations. Named "Enquire" and never published, this program formed the conceptual basis for the future development of the World Wide Web.

From 1981 until 1984, Tim worked at John Poole's *Image Computer Systems Ltd*, with technical design responsibility. Work here included real time control firmware, graphics and communications software, and a generic macro language. In 1984, he took up a fellowship at CERN, to work on distributed real-time systems for scientific data acquisition and system control. Among other things, he worked on FASTBUS system software and designed a heterogeneous remote procedure call system.

In 1994, Tim founded the [World Wide Web Consortium](#) at the then Laboratory for Computer Science ([LCS](#)) which merged with the Artificial Intelligence Lab in 2003 to become the

# W3 Longer Biography



Timothy John Berners-Lee

A B C D E F G H I J K L

Computer Science and Artificial Intelligence Laboratory ([CSAIL](#)) at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology ([MIT](#)). Since that time he has served as the Director of the World Wide Web Consortium a Web standards organization which develops interoperable technologies (specifications, guidelines, software, and tools) to lead the Web to its full potential. The Consortium has host sites located at MIT, at [ERCIM](#) in Europe, and at Keio University in Japan as well as [Offices](#) around the world.

In 1999, he became the first holder of [3Com Founders chair](#) at [MIT](#). In 2008 he was named 3COM Founders Professor of Engineering in the School of Engineering, with a joint appointment in the Department of Electrical Engineering and Computer Science at CSAIL where he also leads the Decentralized Information Group ([DIG](#)). Co-Chaired by Dr. Lalana Kagal, the DIG Research Group works on projects including: how to re-decentralize the Web and help radically change the way Web applications work today, resulting in true data ownership; working to ensure the rights of users in big data and analytics and systems; as well as harnessing mobile technologies to aid during disaster relief and help society. In 2016, Sir Tim joined the [Computer Science Department at the University of Oxford as a Professor](#).

In 2008 he founded and became Director of the [World Wide Web Foundation](#). The Web Foundation is a non-profit organisation devoted to achieving a world in which all people can use the Web to communicate, collaborate and innovate freely. The Web Foundation works to fund and coordinate efforts to defend the Open Web and further its potential to benefit humanity.

In [June 2009](#) then Prime Minister Gordon Brown announced that he would work with the UK Government to help make data more open and accessible on the Web, building on the work of the [Power of Information Task Force](#). Sir Tim was a member of [The Public Sector Transparency Board](#) tasked to drive forward the UK Government's transparency agenda. He has promoted open government data globally, is a member of the UK's Transparency Board.

In 2011 he was named to the Board of Trustees of the [Ford Foundation](#), a globally oriented private foundation with the mission of advancing human welfare. He is President of the UK's [Open Data Institute](#) which was formed in 2012 to catalyse open data for economic, environmental, and social value.

He is the author, with Mark Fischetti, of the 1999 book "[Weaving the Web](#)" on the the past present and future of the Web.

On March 18 2013, Sir Tim, along with Vinton Cerf, Robert Kahn, Louis Pouzin and Marc Andreessen, was awarded the [Queen Elizabeth Prize for Engineering](#) for "ground-breaking innovation in engineering that has been of global benefit to humanity."

On 4 April 2017, Sir Tim was awarded the [ACM A.M. Turing Prize](#) for inventing the World Wide Web, the first web browser, and the fundamental protocols and algorithms allowing the Web to scale. The Turing Prize, called the "Nobel Prize of Computing" is considered one of the most prestigious awards in Computer Science.

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## Awards

1995:

[World Wide Web Hall of Fame](#)

[Kilby Foundation's](#) "Young Innovator of the Year" Award

[ACM Software Systems Award](#) (co-recipient)  
[Honorary Prix Ars Electronica](#)  
[Distinguished Fellow](#) of the British Computer Society

1997:

Awarded an [Order of the British Empire](#) (OBE)  
IEEE Koji Kobayashi Computers and Communications Award  
[Duddell Medal](#) of the Institute of Physics  
Interactive Services Association's Distinguished Service Award  
[MCI Computerworld/Smithsonian](#) Award for Leadership in Innovation  
International Communication Institute's Columbus Prize

1998:

Charles Babbage award  
Mountbatten Medal of the National Electronics Council  
Lord Lloyd of Kilgerran Prize from the Foundation for Science and Technology  
PC Magazine Lifetime Achievement Award in Technical Excellence  
[MacArthur Fellowship](#)  
[The Eduard Rhein Technology Award](#)  
Honorary Fellow, [Institution of Electrical Engineers](#)

1999:

Named "One of the 100 greatest minds of the century" by Time Magazine  
World Technology Award for Communication Technology  
Honorary Fellowship, The Society for Technical Communications

2000:

[Paul Evan Peters Award](#) of ARL, Educause and CNI  
[Electronic Freedom Foundation's](#) Pioneer Award  
[George R Stibitz Computer Pioneer Award](#), [American Computer Museum](#)  
Special Award for Outstanding Contribution of the World Television Forum

2001:

[Sir Frank Whittle Medal](#), the [Royal Academy of Engineering](#)  
Fellow, [Royal Society](#)  
Member, [American Academy of Arts and Sciences](#)

2002:

[Japan Prize](#), the [Science and Technology Foundation of Japan](#)  
[Prince of Asturias Foundation](#) Prize for Scientific and Technical Research (shared with with Larry Roberts, Rob Kahn and Vint Cerf)  
Fellow, [Guglielmo Marconi Foundation](#)  
[Albert Medal](#) of the [Royal Society for the Encouragement of Art, Manufactures and Commerce](#) (RSA)

2003

The Royal Photographic Society's Progress Medal and Honorary Fellowship (HonFRPS)  
[Computer History Museum Fellow Award](#)

2004:

[Knighted](#) (KBE) by H.M. the Queen for services to the global development of the Internet  
[Millennium Technology Prize](#)  
[Special Award](#) of the American Society for Information Science and Technology  
Member, [American Philosophical Society](#)

2005:

[Common Wealth Award](#) for Distinguished Service for Mass Communications  
[Die Quadriga Award](#)  
Financial Times Lifetime Achievement Award

2006:

[President's Medal](#), the Institute of Physics

2007:

Awarded the [Order of Merit](#) by H.M. the Queen  
[Charles Stark Draper Prize](#), National Academy of Engineering  
[Lovelace Medal](#), British Computer Society  
[D&AD President's Award](#) for Innovation and Creativity  
MITX (Massachusetts Innovation & Technology Exchange) [Leadership Award](#)  
Foreign Associate of the National Academy of Engineering

2008:

[BITC Award for Excellence](#)  
[IEEE/RSE Wolfson James Clerk Maxwell Award](#)  
Fellow, [IEEE](#)  
[Pathfinder Award](#), Harvard Kennedy School of Government

2009:

[Foreign Associate](#), National Academy of Sciences  
Given the title of *Royal Designer* by the [Royal Society for the encouragement of Arts, Manufacture and Commerce](#)  
Webby Awards [Lifetime Achievement Award](#)

2010:

[UNESCO Niels Bohr Gold Medal Award](#)

2011:

[The Mikhail Gorbachev Award](#)  
[DAMA Web Awards](#), [Bilbao Web Summit](#)

2012:

Institute of Electrical and Electronics Engineers [Internet Hall of Fame](#)  
[Innovation 101 Lifetime Achievement Award](#)  
[Sultan Qaboos Order for Culture, Science and Arts](#) (First Class)  
[DNA Summit Lifetime Achievement Award](#)

2013:

Shared the [Queen Elizabeth II Prize for Engineering](#) with Bob Kahn, Vint Cerf, Louis Pouzin and Marc Andreessen.  
[Visionary of the Year Award](#), Society for New Communication Research.

2014:

[Honorary Freedom of the City of London](#)  
[Lifetime Achievement Award from the Oxford Internet Institute](#)  
[Pride of Britain "Special Award for Outstanding Achievement"](#)  
[Webby award for Lifetime Achievement](#)  
[Public Knowledge IP3 Award](#)  
[Bradford Wasburn Award](#), Museum of Science, Boston  
[Mohammed bin Rashid Knowledge Award](#) (with Jimmy Wales)

2015:

[Gottlieb Duttweiler Prize](#), Zurich, Switzerland  
[The 1st class Order of the Cross of Terra Mariana](#), Republic of Estonia

2016:

[John Maynard Keynes Prize](#)

2017:

[ACM A.M. Turing Prize](#), San Francisco, California

**Honorary Degrees:**

[Parsons School of Design](#), New York (D.F.A., 1995)

[Southampton University](#) (D.Sc., 1995)  
[Essex University](#) (D.U., 1998)  
[Southern Cross University](#) (PhD, 1998)  
[Open University](#) (D.U., 2000)  
[Columbia University](#) (D.Law, 2001)  
[Oxford University](#) (D.Sc., 2001)  
[University of Port Elizabeth](#) (DSc., 2002)  
[Lancaster University](#) (D.Sc., 2004)  
[Universitat Oberta de Catalunya](#) (Dr. Hon. 2008)  
[University of Manchester](#) (D.Sc., 2008)  
[Universidad Politecnica de Madrid](#) (Dr. Hon. 2009)  
[University of Liege](#) (Dr. Hon. 2009)  
[VU University Amsterdam](#) (Dr. Hon., 2009)  
[Harvard University](#) (D.Sc., 2011)  
[University of the Arts, London](#) (Dr. Hon., 2012)  
[University of St. Andrews](#) (Dr. Hon., 2013)  
[Yale University](#), ([Doctor of Engineering and Technology](#), 2014)  
[Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute](#), D.Sc

## Selected Publications

Berners-Lee, T.J., et al, "[World-Wide Web: Information Universe](#)", Electronic Publishing: Research, Applications and Policy, April 1992.

Berners-Lee T.J., et al, "[The World Wide Web](#)", Communications of the ACM, Volume 37 Issue 8, August 1994, Pages 76-82

Tim Berners-Lee with Mark Fischetti, [Weaving the Web](#), Harper San Francisco, 1999

Tim Berners-Lee, Dan Connolly, Ralph R. Swick "[Web Architecture: Describing and Exchanging Data](#)", W3C Note, 1999/6-7.

Berners-Lee, Tim. and Hendler, James "[Publishing on the Semantic Web](#)", Nature, April 26 2001 p. 1023-1025.

Berners-Lee, Tim; Hendler, James and Lassila, Ora "[The Semantic Web](#)", Scientific American, May 2001, p. 29-37.

James Hendler, Tim Berners-Lee and Eric Miller, '[Integrating Applications on the Semantic Web](#)', Journal of the Institute of Electrical Engineers of Japan, Vol 122(10), October, 2002, p. 676-680

Hendler, J., Berners-Lee, T.J., and Miller, E., '[Integrating Applications on the Semantic Web](#)', Journal of the Institute of Electrical Engineers of Japan, Vol 122(10), October, 2002, p. 676-680.

Nigel Shadbolt, Wendy Hall, Tim Berners-Lee, "[The Semantic Web Revisited](#)", IEEE Intelligent Systems Journal, May/June 2006, pp 96-101

[Web Science Workshop Report](#), 12th-13th September, 2005. Hosted by the British Computer Society, London

Tim Berners-Lee, Wendy Hall, James Hendler, Nigel Shadbolt, Daniel J. Weitzner, [Enhanced: Creating a Science of the Web](#), Science Vol. 313, 11 August 2006, pp. 769-771

Tim-Berners Lee, Wendy Hall, James A. Hendler, Kieron O'Hara, Nigel Shadbolt and Daniel J. Weitzner, [A Framework for Web Science](#), Foundations and Trends in Web Science, Volume 1, Issue 1 (also available as a book: ISBN: 1-933019-33-6 144pp September 2006)

Nigel Shadbolt, Tim Berners-Lee "[Web Science: Studying the Internet to Protect Our Future](#)", Scientific American, Vol. 299, No. 4, P. 76, October 2008

Christian Bizer, Tom Heath, Tim Berners-Lee, "[Linked Data - The Story So Far](#)" (pdf), International Journal on Semantic Web and Information Systems (IJSWIS), 5(3): 1-22. DOI: 10.4018/jswis.2009081901, 2009

Tim Berners-Lee, "[Long Live the Web: A Call for Continued Open Standards and Neutrality](#)", Scientific America, Vol. 22, November 2010

(See a full list of [publications](#))

## Education

[The Queen's College](#), Oxford University, England, BA Hons (I) Physics, 1973-1976.

[Emanuel School](#), London 1969-73

Born London, England, 8 June 1955. Married to Rosemary Leith.

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# Tim Berners-Lee

**Sir Timothy John Berners-Lee** OM KBE FRS FREng FRSA FBCS (born 8 June 1955),<sup>[1]</sup> also known as **TimBL**, is an English engineer and computer scientist, best known as the inventor of the World Wide Web. He is currently a professor of Computer Science at the University of Oxford and at Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT).<sup>[3][4]</sup> He made a proposal for an information management system in March 1989,<sup>[5]</sup> and he implemented the first successful communication between a Hypertext Transfer Protocol (HTTP) client and server via the internet in mid-November the same year.<sup>[6][7][8][9][10]</sup>

Berners-Lee is the director of the World Wide Web Consortium (W3C), which oversees the continued development of the Web. He is also the founder of the World Wide Web Foundation and is a senior researcher and holder of the 3Com founders chair at the MIT Computer Science and Artificial Intelligence Laboratory (CSAIL).<sup>[11]</sup> He is a director of the Web Science Research Initiative (WSRI),<sup>[12]</sup> and a member of the advisory board of the MIT Center for Collective Intelligence.<sup>[13][14]</sup> In 2011, he was named as a member of the board of trustees of the Ford Foundation.<sup>[15]</sup> He is a founder and president of the Open Data Institute.

In 2004, Berners-Lee was knighted by Queen Elizabeth II for his pioneering work.<sup>[16][17]</sup> In April 2009, he was elected a foreign associate of the United States National Academy of Sciences.<sup>[18][19]</sup> Named in *Time* magazine's list of the 100 Most Important People of the 20th century, Berners-Lee has received a number of other accolades for his invention.<sup>[20]</sup> He was honoured as the "Inventor of the World Wide Web" during the 2012 Summer Olympics opening ceremony, in which he appeared in person, working with a vintage NeXT Computer at the London Olympic Stadium.<sup>[21]</sup> He tweeted "This is for everyone",<sup>[22]</sup> which instantly was spelled out in LCD lights attached to the chairs of the 80,000 people in the audience.<sup>[21]</sup> Berners-Lee received the 2016 Turing Award "for inventing the World Wide Web, the first web browser, and the fundamental protocols and algorithms allowing the Web to scale".<sup>[23]</sup>

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Sir

**Tim Berners-Lee**

OM KBE FRS FREng FRSA FBCS



Berners-Lee in 2014

<b>Born</b>	Timothy John Berners-Lee <div>8 June 1955<sup>[1]</sup></div> <div>London, England</div>
<b>Other names</b>	TimBL <div>TBL</div>
<b>Education</b>	Emanuel School
<b>Alma mater</b>	The Queen's College, Oxford
<b>Occupation</b>	Professor of Computer Science
<b>Spouse(s)</b>	Nancy Carlson <div>(<span>m.</span><span> </span>1990<span>;</span><span> </span><span>div.</span><span> </span>2011)<div>Rosemary Leith<div>(<span>m.</span><span> </span>2014)</div></div></div>
<b>Children</b>	2
<b>Parent(s)</b>	Conway Berners-Lee <div>Mary Lee Woods</div>
<b>Awards</b>	Turing Award (2016)



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## Early life and education

Berners-Lee was born in London, England, United Kingdom,<sup>[24]</sup> one of four children born to Mary Lee Woods and Conway Berners-Lee. His parents worked on the first commercially built computer, the Ferranti Mark 1. He attended Sheen Mount Primary School, and then went on to attend south west London's Emanuel School from 1969 to 1973, at the time a direct grant grammar school, which became an independent school in 1975.<sup>[1][16]</sup> A keen trainspotter as a child, he learnt about electronics from tinkering with a model railway.<sup>[25]</sup> He studied at The Queen's College, Oxford, from 1973 to 1976, where he received a first-class bachelor of arts degree in physics.<sup>[1][24]</sup> While he was at college, Berners-Lee made a computer out of an old television set, which he bought from a repair shop.<sup>[26]</sup>

## Career



Berners-Lee, 2005

After graduation, Berners-Lee worked as an engineer at the telecommunications company Plessey in Poole, Dorset.<sup>[24]</sup> In 1978, he joined D. G. Nash in Ferndown, Dorset, where he helped create type-setting software for printers.<sup>[24]</sup>

Berners-Lee worked as an independent contractor at CERN from June to December 1980. While in Geneva, he proposed a project based on the concept of hypertext, to facilitate sharing and updating information among researchers.<sup>[27]</sup> To demonstrate it, he built a prototype system named ENQUIRE.<sup>[28]</sup>

After leaving CERN in late 1980, he went to work at John Poole's Image Computer Systems, Ltd, in Bournemouth, Dorset.<sup>[29]</sup> He ran the company's technical side for three years.<sup>[30]</sup> The project he worked on was a "real-time remote procedure call" which gave him experience in computer networking.<sup>[29]</sup> In 1984, he returned to CERN as a fellow.<sup>[28]</sup>

In 1989, CERN was the largest internet node in Europe, and Berners-Lee saw an opportunity to join hypertext with the internet:

I just had to take the hypertext idea and connect it to the Transmission Control Protocol and domain name system ideas and—ta-da!—the World Wide Web<sup>[31]</sup> ... Creating the web was really an act of desperation, because the situation without it was very difficult when I was working at CERN later. Most of the technology involved in the web, like the hypertext, like the internet, multifont text objects, had all been designed

- Queen Elizabeth Prize (2013)
- OM (2007)
- KBE (2004)
- FRS (2001)<sup>[2]</sup>
- FREng (2001)
- FRSA (2001)
- DFBCS (1995)
- See full list of honours

### Scientific career

- Institutions
- World Wide Web Consortium
- University of Oxford
- University of Southampton
- Plessey
- MIT

- Website
- www.w3.org/People/Berners-Lee (http://www.w3.org/People/Berners-Lee)

already. I just had to put them together. It was a step of generalising, going to a higher level of abstraction, thinking about all the documentation systems out there as being possibly part of a larger imaginary documentation system.<sup>[32]</sup>

Berners-Lee wrote his proposal in March 1989 and, in 1990, redistributed it. It then was accepted by his manager, Mike Sendall.<sup>[33]</sup> He used similar ideas to those underlying the ENQUIRE system to create the World Wide Web, for which he designed and built the first Web browser. His software also functioned as an editor (called WorldWideWeb, running on the NeXTSTEP operating system), and the first Web server, CERN HTTPd (short for Hypertext Transfer Protocol daemon).

Mike Sendall buys a NeXT cube for evaluation, and gives it to Tim [Berners-Lee]. Tim's prototype implementation on NeXTStep is made in the space of a few months, thanks to the qualities of the NeXTStep software development system. This prototype offers WYSIWYG browsing/authoring! Current Web browsers used in 'surfing the internet' are mere passive windows, depriving the user of the possibility to contribute. During some sessions in the CERN cafeteria, Tim and I try to find a catching name for the system. I was determined that the name should not yet again be taken from Greek mythology..... Tim proposes 'World-Wide Web'. I like this very much, except that it is difficult to pronounce in French... by Robert Cailliau, 2 November 1995.<sup>[34]</sup>



This NeXT Computer was used by Berners-Lee at CERN and became the world's first web server

The first website was built at CERN. Despite this being an international organisation hosted by Switzerland, the office that Berners-Lee used was just across the border in France.<sup>[35]</sup> The website was put online on 6 August 1991 for the first time:<sup>[36]</sup>

**info.cern.ch** was the address of the world's first-ever web site and web server, running on a NeXT computer at CERN. The first web page address was <http://info.cern.ch/hypertext/WWW/TheProject.html>, which centred on information regarding the WWW project. Visitors could learn more about hypertext, technical details for creating their own webpage, and even an explanation on how to search the Web for information. There are no screenshots of this original page and, in any case, changes were made daily to the information available on the page as the WWW project developed. You may find a later copy (1992) on the World Wide Web Consortium website.<sup>[37]</sup>

It provided an explanation of what the World Wide Web was, and how one could use a browser and set up a web server, as well as how to get started with your own website.<sup>[38][39][40][41][42]</sup> In a list of 80 cultural moments that shaped the world, chosen by a panel of 25 eminent scientists, academics, writers, and world leaders, the invention of the World Wide Web was ranked number one, with the entry stating, "The fastest growing communications medium of all time, the internet has changed the shape of modern life forever. We can connect with each other instantly, all over the world".<sup>[43]</sup>

In 1994, Berners-Lee founded the W3C at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology. It comprised various companies that were willing to create standards and recommendations to improve the quality of the Web. Berners-Lee made his idea available freely, with no patent and no royalties due. The World Wide Web Consortium decided that its standards should be based on royalty-free technology, so that they easily could be adopted by anyone.<sup>[44]</sup>

In 2001, Berners-Lee became a patron of the East Dorset Heritage Trust, having previously lived in Colehill in Wimborne, East Dorset.<sup>[45]</sup> In December 2004, he accepted a chair in computer science at the School of Electronics and Computer Science, University of Southampton, Hampshire, to work on the Semantic Web.<sup>[46][47]</sup>

In a *Times* article in October 2009, Berners-Lee admitted that the initial pair of slashes ("//") in a web address were "unnecessary". He told the newspaper that he easily could have designed web addresses without the slashes. "There you go, it seemed like a good idea at the time", he said in his lighthearted apology.<sup>[48]</sup>

## Recent work



Tim Berners-Lee at the Home Office, London, on 11 March 2010

In June 2009, then-British Prime Minister Gordon Brown announced Berners-Lee would work with the UK government to help make data more open and accessible on the Web, building on the work of the Power of Information Task Force.<sup>[49]</sup> Berners-Lee and Professor Nigel Shadbolt are the two key figures behind data.gov.uk, a UK government project to open up almost all data acquired for official purposes for free re-use. Commenting on the opening up of Ordnance Survey data in April 2010, Berners-Lee said that: "The changes signal a wider cultural change in government based on an assumption that information should be in the public domain unless there is a good reason not to—not the other way around." He went on to say: "Greater openness, accountability and transparency in Government will give people greater choice and make it easier for individuals to get more directly involved in issues that matter to them."<sup>[50]</sup>

In November 2009, Berners-Lee launched the World Wide Web Foundation in order to "advance the Web to empower humanity by launching transformative programs that build local capacity to leverage the Web as a medium for positive change."<sup>[51]</sup>

Berners-Lee is one of the pioneer voices in favour of net neutrality,<sup>[52]</sup> and has expressed the view that ISPs should supply "connectivity with no strings attached", and should neither control nor monitor the browsing activities of customers without their expressed consent.<sup>[53][54]</sup> He advocates the idea that net neutrality is a kind of human network right: "Threats to the internet, such as companies or governments that interfere with or snoop on internet traffic, compromise basic human network rights."<sup>[55]</sup> Berners-Lee participated in an open letter to the US Federal Communications Commission (FCC). He and 20 other Internet pioneers urged the FCC to cancel a vote on 14 December 2017 to uphold net neutrality. The letter was addressed to Senator Roger Wicker, Senator Brian Schatz, Representative Marsha Blackburn and Representative Michael F. Doyle.<sup>[56]</sup>



Berners-Lee speaking at the launch of the World Wide Web Foundation

Berners-Lee joined the board of advisors of start-up State.com, based in London.<sup>[57]</sup> As of May 2012, Berners-Lee is president of the Open Data Institute,<sup>[58]</sup> which he co-founded with Nigel Shadbolt in 2012.



Berners-Lee's tweet, "This is for everyone",<sup>[22]</sup> at the 2012 Summer Olympic Games in London

The Alliance for Affordable Internet (A4AI) was launched in October 2013 and Berners-Lee is leading the coalition of public and private organisations that includes Google, Facebook, Intel, and Microsoft. The A4AI seeks to make internet access more affordable so that access is broadened in the developing world, where only 31% of people are online. Berners-Lee will work with those aiming to decrease internet access prices so that they fall below the UN Broadband Commission's worldwide target of 5% of monthly income.<sup>[59]</sup>

Berners-Lee holds the founders chair in Computer Science at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, where he heads the Decentralized Information Group and is leading Solid, a joint project with the Qatar Computing Research Institute that aims to radically change the way Web applications work today, resulting in true data ownership as well as improved

privacy.<sup>[60]</sup> In October 2016, he joined the Department of Computer Science at Oxford University as a professorial research fellow<sup>[61]</sup> and as a fellow of Christ Church, one of the Oxford colleges.<sup>[62]</sup>

On September 30, 2018, Berners-Lee announced a new application made by open-source startup Inrupt called Solid, which aims to give users more control over their personal data and lets users choose where the data goes, who's allowed to see certain elements and which apps are allowed to see that data.<sup>[63]</sup>

## Personal life

Berners-Lee married Nancy Carlson, an American computer programmer, in 1990; she was also working in Switzerland, at the World Health Organisation.<sup>[64]</sup> They had two children and divorced in 2011.

He formed a relationship with Rosemary Leith, a Canadian internet and banking entrepreneur. Leith studied business at Queen's University, then moved to Britain to pursue a career in investment and analysis.<sup>[65]</sup> She worked in the City of London as a principal investor prior to 2000.<sup>[66]</sup> She was married to Mark Opzoomer, later the CEO of Rambler Media; the couple had three children, after which she left the financial sector, co-founding a start-up during the dot-com bubble. *Management Today* described her webzine (as it was called then) as "the first web site devoted entirely to those women struggling to strike a healthy balance between work and home life".<sup>[67]</sup> More recent projects span both finance and internet. In 2011 she chaired the World Economic Forum Global Agenda Council for the Future of Internet Security<sup>[68]</sup> and from 2015 she has been on the board of YouGov.<sup>[69]</sup> She is on the advisory board for funding platform AllBright, to support "female entrepreneurs from start-ups to established businesses"<sup>[70]</sup>, and provided funding to Netwealth Investments Ltd<sup>[71]</sup>. Leith is a fellow at Harvard University's Berkman Klein Center for Internet & Society<sup>[72]</sup>

In 2014 Berners-Lee and Leith married at the Chapel Royal, St. James's Palace in London.<sup>[73]</sup> The couple collaborate on projects such as venture capital to support artificial intelligence companies<sup>[74]</sup>. Leith is a founding director of the World Wide Web Foundation<sup>[75]</sup>, a non-profit Berners-Lee launched.

Berners-Lee was raised as an Anglican, but in his youth, he turned away from religion. After he became a parent, he became a Unitarian Universalist (UU).<sup>[76]</sup> He has stated: "Like many people, I had a religious upbringing which I rejected as a teenager... Like many people, I came back to religion when we had children".<sup>[77]</sup> He and his wife wanted to teach spirituality to their children, and after hearing a Unitarian minister and visiting the UU Church, they opted for it.<sup>[78]</sup> He is an active member of that church,<sup>[79]</sup> to which he adheres because he perceives it as a tolerant and liberal belief. He has said: "I believe that much of the philosophy of life associated with many religions is much more sound than the dogma which comes along with it. So I do respect them."<sup>[77]</sup>

# Distinctions

Berners-Lee has received many awards and honours. He was knighted by Queen Elizabeth II in the 2004 New Year Honours "for services to the global development of the internet", and was invested formally on 16 July 2004.<sup>[16][17]</sup>

On 13 June 2007, he was appointed to the Order of Merit (OM), an order restricted to 24 (living) members.<sup>[80]</sup> Bestowing membership of the Order of Merit is within the personal purview of the Queen, and does not require recommendation by ministers or the Prime Minister. He was elected a Fellow of the Royal Society (FRS) in 2001.<sup>[2]</sup> He has been conferred honorary degrees from a number of Universities around the world, including Manchester (his parents worked on the Manchester Mark 1 in the 1940s), Harvard and Yale.<sup>[81][82][83]</sup>

In 2012, Berners-Lee was among the British cultural icons selected by artist Sir Peter Blake to appear in a new version of his most famous artwork – the Beatles' *Sgt. Pepper's Lonely Hearts Club Band* album cover – to celebrate the British cultural figures of his life that he most admires to mark his 80th birthday.<sup>[84][85]</sup>

In 2013, he was awarded the inaugural Queen Elizabeth Prize for Engineering.<sup>[86]</sup> On 4 April 2017, he received the 2016 ACM Turing Award "for inventing the World Wide Web, the first web browser, and the fundamental protocols and algorithms allowing the Web to scale".<sup>[23]</sup>

"He wove the World Wide Web and created a mass medium for the 21st century. The World Wide Web is Berners-Lee's alone. He designed it. He loosed it on the world. And he more than anyone else has fought to keep it open, nonproprietary and free."

—Tim Berners-Lee's entry in *Time* magazine's list of the 100 Most Important People of the 20th century, March 1999.<sup>[20]</sup>

## See also

- Vannevar Bush
- Douglas Engelbart
- Ted Nelson
- Ian Ritchie
- Eelco van Asperen
- History of the World Wide Web
- Kevin Hughes
- libwww
- List of pioneers in computer science
- Mundaneum
- Network neutrality
- Paul Otlet
- Bob Taylor
- Nicola Pellow
- NeXTcube

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## External links

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- Tim Berners-Lee ([https://www.ted.com/speakers/tim\\_berners\\_lee](https://www.ted.com/speakers/tim_berners_lee)) at TED 
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- Appearances (<https://www.c-span.org/person/?timbernerslee>) on C-SPAN

Preceded by <b>First recipient</b>	<b>Millennium Technology Prize winner</b> 2004 (for the <a href="#">World Wide Web</a> )	Succeeded by <b>Shuji Nakamura</b>
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