

# Tracking Protection Working Group Charter

The **mission** of the [Tracking Protection Working Group](http://www.w3.org/Privacy/) is to improve user privacy and user control by defining mechanisms for expressing user preferences around Web tracking,

[Join the Tracking Protection Working Group.](#)

<b>End date</b>	31 December 2017
<b>Confidentiality</b>	Proceedings are <a href="#">public</a>
<b>Co-chairs</b>	Carl Cargill, Adobe Matthias Schunter, Intel
<b>Team Contact</b>	TBD (FTE %: 1)
<b>Usual Meeting Schedule</b>	Teleconferences: as-needed Face-to-face: 1-2 per year

## Scope

The Working Group will produce a Recommendation-track specification for a simple machine-readable preference expression mechanism ("Do Not Track"). The goal is to allow users to selectively opt-in or opt-out of web tracking. This mechanism is documented in our Candidate Recommendation on "Tracking Preference Expression (TPE)" that defines mechanisms for user agents to express a general tracking preference, defines tracking status resources that allow web-sites to explain their tracking behavior to users, and provides a mechanism for users to manage site specific and broader exceptions.

The Working Group will continue Recommendation-track focus work on the TPE specification: an HTTP header to signal the preference and a site's response, and the use of an ECMAScript API or DOM property for the same purpose. <http://www.w3.org/Submission/web-tracking-protection/>

**A main focus for the extended implementation phase (until Summer 2017) is to demonstrate the viability of TPE to address the requirements for managing cookie and tracking consent that satisfies the requirements of EU privacy legislation.**

The working group does not plan to prescribe a specific approach/policy for web-sites to respect a user's preference. We will continue to collect feedback and implementation experience of the Tracking Compliance and Scope (TCS) that is currently in Candidate Recommendation state. If we perceive a sufficient implementation support for TCS, we may later decide to advance it to Recommendation status.

The group will actively engage governmental, industry, academic and advocacy organizations to seek global consensus. The Working Group may investigate monitoring of implementation and conformance to Recommendations by both user agents and Web sites.

## Success Criteria / Goals

- Production of stable Recommendation-track specification for the Tracking Preference Expression (TPE). The TPE may require to be extended by the minimally required definitions of TCS to be self-contained.
- The revised TPE will be aligned with the emerging EU privacy regulations and other proposed compliance documents.
- Stretch Goal: Demonstrate how the TPE can help web-sites to achieve privacy compliance in the EU.
- Stretch Goal: Endorsement of the proposed use of TPE to simplify compliance by some EU regulators.

## Out of Scope

While guidelines that define the user experience or user interface may be useful (and within scope), the Working Group will not specify the exact presentation to the user.

The group does not plan to explore the extent to which compliance specifications have a common basis or provide a comparative assessment of example compliance options.

The Working Group will not design mechanisms for the expression of complex or general-purpose policy statements.

## Deliverables

The group expects to publish the following documents consistent with the above scope. The titles of the documents are indicative only.

- **Tracking Preference Expression (Do Not Track), Recommendation.**  
This specification defines the technical mechanisms for expressing a Do Not Track preference, for example as an HTTP header or a DOM property. It may include mechanisms for sites to signal whether and how they honor this preference.
  - Draft state: Candidate Recommendation
  - Target State: Recommendation
- **Tracking Compliance and Scope (TCS):** We continue to maintain the existing Tracking Compliance Specification.
  - Draft State: Candidate Recommendation
  - Target State: Candidate Recommendation
- **Implementation Reports:** The working group plans to publish implementation reports for TPE that document how TPE can be used in practice. A particular focus is

to demonstrate how using TPE could help companies to comply with EU privacy regulations.

The Working Group may also publish guides for implementation and compliance by user agents and Web sites.

## Testing

The Working Group may publish test suites for technical specifications or reports evaluating compliance.

## Milestones

Specification	FPWD	LC	CR	CR2	Rec
Tracking Preference Expression (TCS)	September 2011	April 2014	August 2015	April 2017	August 2017
Tracking Compliance and Scope (TCS)			August 2015	August 2017	

## Dependencies and Liaisons

### W3C Groups

Web Advertising Business Group (Anticipated)

Input from the advertising industry on common practices, priorities and business model issues will be essential.

[Device APIs and Policy Working Group](#)

Requirements and proposals for policy expression may provide useful insight.

[Privacy Interest Group](#) (Anticipated)

Since the TPWG is explicitly addressing privacy, the group will work closely with the Privacy Interest Group.

[WAI Protocols and Formats Working Group](#)

The group will work with WAI to address any accessibility issues that may arise from new tracking protection technology.

[Internationalization Activity](#)

The group will work with the Internationalization Activity to address any internationalization issues that may arise from new tracking protection technology.

Furthermore, the Tracking Protection Working Group expects to follow these W3C Recommendations:

- [QA Framework: Specification Guidelines](#).
- [Character Model for the World Wide Web 1.0: Fundamentals](#)
- [Architecture of the World Wide Web, Volume I](#)

## External Groups

**Art 29 Group:** The EU board of data privacy commissioners. This is the main advisory board concerning privacy regulation and compliance in the EU.

[Internet Engineering Task Force Applications Area](#) and [Privacy Directorate](#)

Review of HTTP header additions and privacy implications.

The task force working on defining tracking will actively seek collaboration with external groups including: government regulators in the US, EU and other jurisdictions, existing industry self-regulatory programs, consumer protection advocacy organizations and academics.

Public workshops may be used to invite participation and comments from a wider audience.

## Participation

To be successful, the Tracking Protection Working Group is expected to have 10 or more active participants for its duration. Effective participation to Tracking Protection Working Group is expected to consume one work day per week for each participant; two days per week for editors.

The Working Group will actively seek out participants that reflect consumer privacy, advertising industry and regulatory perspectives. Chairs may choose to invite individuals to formally participate in the group, per the [Invited Expert policy](#).

Participants are reminded of the [Good Standing requirements](#) of the W3C Process.

## Communication

This group primarily conducts its work on the public mailing list **public-tracking**. The group may use multiple public lists to separate conversation of technical and non-technical deliverables. A member-only list may be created for administrative purposes only.

Information about the group (deliverables, participants, face-to-face meetings, teleconferences, etc.) is available from the Tracking Protection Working Group home page.

## Decision Policy

As explained in the Process Document ([section 3.3](#)), this group will seek to make decisions when there is consensus. When the Chair puts a question and observes dissent, after due consideration of different opinions, the Chair should record a decision (possibly after a formal vote) and any objections, and move on.

The group has adopted a detailed decision policy that determines consensus by carefully selecting the proposed alternative with the “least substantiated objections”. The detailed process is documented at <https://www.w3.org/2011/tracking-protection/decision-policy.html>

This charter is written in accordance with [Section 3.4, Votes](#) of the W3C Process Document and includes no voting procedures beyond what the Process Document requires.

# Patent Policy

This Working Group operates under the [W3C Patent Policy](#) (5 February 2004 Version). To promote the widest adoption of Web standards, W3C seeks to issue Recommendations that can be implemented, according to this policy, on a Royalty-Free basis.

For more information about disclosure obligations for this group, please see the [W3C Patent Policy Implementation](#).

## About this Charter

This charter for the Tracking Protection Working Group has been created according to [section 6.2](#) of the [Process Document](#). In the event of a conflict between this document or the provisions of any charter and the W3C Process, the W3C Process shall take precedence.

On [1 August 2012](#), this charter has been extended until 31 January 2013. The schedule within the charter was updated at the same time.

On 12 February 2013, this charter was [extended](#) (Member-only link) until 30 April 2014. The schedule within the charter was updated at the same time.

Additionally, the charter was updated to reflect the [change of co-chair from Aleecia M. McDonald to Peter Swire](#).

On 25 September 2013, the charter was updated to reflect the [change of co-chair from Peter Swire to Justin Brookman and Carl Cargill](#). At the same time, Matthias Schunter's affiliation was updated.

On 16 April 2014, the charter was extended until 31 December 2015. The schedule within the charter was updated at the same time.

On 16 December, 2015, the charter was extended until 30 June 2016. The schedule within the charter was updated and Justin Brookman's departure as Chair was reflected at the same time.

In September 2016, the charter was extended until 31 December 2016, and team contact was updated.

In December 2016, the charter was refocused on TPE and EU compliance and extended until December 2017.

*Wendy Seltzer, W3C*

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