

Simply Secure

Founding principles:

1. **The future of a positive, accessible, and people-centered Internet requires trustworthy privacy and security.**
2. **If privacy and security aren't easy and intuitive, they don't work. *Usability is key.***
3. **Technology should respect the user's desire for privacy and security.**
4. **Users shouldn't have to choose between services they like and services that are secure -- they should be able to easily adopt privacy and security solutions for existing services.**

What: Imagine your non-technical friends asking you to use OTR and PGP, instead of the other way around. Simply Secure is a new effort aiming to make that a realistic scenario. We do this by *putting usability first*, working to enable *usable* open source security and privacy technologies, specifically working with those that work "on top of" existing cloud services.

There are many existing, credible, and exciting development efforts aiming to make privacy and security ubiquitous. We love this, and we want to support these existing efforts by providing funding, usability expertise, direct ties to user communities, and many other resources. To build trust and ensure these efforts can scale, we will integrate public auditing and validation practices into core development. This will validate the security and usability claims of the efforts we support.

Through this hands-on work, trial and error, and collaboration with users and user researchers we aim to develop public methodologies, shared knowledge, and community resources that ultimately enable all projects in this space to be more usable and more secure.

In five years we hope that pleasing, robust security and privacy tools that augment popular cloud services will be widely used and available. This will mean tradeoffs. While the apps we help develop -- and those that make use of our resources -- likely won't fit everyone's needs, we firmly believe that making end-to-end encryption accessible to the broader public will raise the security bar overall. And we believe this is a good thing for everyone.

Current status: The effort has a strong and engaged Advisory Board, support from Google and the Open Technology Fund as founding partners, and interest and involvement from a growing segment of the security/privacy community. In late February of 2014 the Advisory Board convened in London and developed the project's direction and goals.

Next steps: We're actively recruiting a Program Director. This person will lead and grow a global project, bringing on a team of developers, designers, and UX experts. The Program Director will also connect this work with the broader open-source, user, and academic communities. The team they assemble will work with the board to tackle two pilot projects, both focused on improving secure chat. This will form the core of a dynamic effort that grows organically, working in an iterative and exploratory fashion toward the project's mission.

Advisory Board:

- **Angela Sasse:** Head of Information Security Research, Director of the Science of Cyber Security Research Institute, University College London
- **Ben Laurie:** Open SSL core team member, Apache Software Foundation co-founder and Google Security Engineer

- **Ben Scott:** Senior Advisor to the Open Technology Institute at the New America Foundation in Washington DC and a Visiting Fellow at the Stiftung Neue Verantwortung in Berlin
- **Cory Doctorow:** Author and activist
- **George Danezis:** Reader in Security and Privacy Engineering, University College London
- **Ian Goldberg:** Author of the OTR encryption protocol and Professor, University of Waterloo
- **Wendy Seltzer:** Policy Counsel to the World Wide Web Consortium (W3C) & Visiting Fellow with Yale Law School's Information Society Project