

Digital Trust Foundation

June 24, 2015
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The [Digital Trust Foundation](#) today announced \$1.4 million in grants for research into the online privacy and security experiences of low-socioeconomic status people. The grants will go to five top research groups in the online privacy and security field.

“We had the privilege of reviewing and choosing from an impressive set of research proposals,” said Larry Magid, Digital Trust Foundation board member and [ConnectSafely.org](#) CEO and co-founder. “We hope to expand the field’s, as well as the general public’s, understanding of how low-socioeconomic status people talk about online privacy and security, as well as whether they have different needs when it comes to privacy and security protections.”

Two of the grants will fund national studies of digital privacy behaviors and needs of low-socioeconomic status (low-SES) people, including a participatory research project designed and implemented in collaboration with community-based organizations in Charlotte, North Carolina; Detroit, Michigan; and Los Angeles, California. A third grant will support a study of privacy concerns and security practices of low-SES people in rural Appalachia, an area that has been understudied when it comes to technology use. Another funded project will examine how low-SES young adults talk about privacy, to contribute to the field’s understanding of how to talk about privacy in a culturally-relevant way. Finally, the Foundation funded research into how data use affects low-wage workers in three industries: agriculture, retail, and manufacturing.

For more information about the organizations and projects receiving Digital Trust Foundation grants, please visit www.digitaltrustfoundation.org/grant-summaries/.

The Digital Trust Foundation board of directors allocated funding to four program areas: (1) Privacy Education for Youth; (2) Understanding Socioeconomic Status and Online Privacy and Security; (3) Assessing, Preventing, and Addressing Digital Abuse; (4) General Funding for Promotion of Online Privacy, Safety, and Security. As of June 2015, the Foundation has completed its grantmaking. It will announce the grantees in the Assessing, Preventing, and Addressing Digital Abuse program area in July 2015.

The directors of the Digital Trust Foundation are Erin Egan, Chris Hoofnagle, and Larry Magid.

Digital Trust Foundation Board of Directors
Erin Egan | Chris Hoofnagle | Larry Magid

About the Digital Trust Foundation

In 2007, a class action lawsuit was filed in the United States District Court of the Northern District of California against Facebook on behalf of 3.6 million users of Facebook concerning its “Beacon” program. KamberLaw represented the plaintiffs in this action and Cooley LLP represented Facebook. This suit was settled in 2009 and was granted final approval by the Hon. Richard Seeborg in March 2010. As part of the settlement, the parties created the Foundation (the Digital Trust Foundation) “the purpose of which shall be to fund projects and initiatives that promote the cause of online privacy, safety, and security.” The case settled for \$9.5 million, with the Foundation receiving approximately \$6.7 million after attorney’s fees, payments to plaintiffs, and administrative costs. There were four objectors to the settlement, two of whom appealed the approval to the Ninth Circuit Court of Appeals and subsequently the Supreme Court. But ultimately, in November 2013, the appeals were rejected and the Foundation was funded. The Foundation will distribute more than \$6 million and will close its doors once all of the grants have been distributed and completed.

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