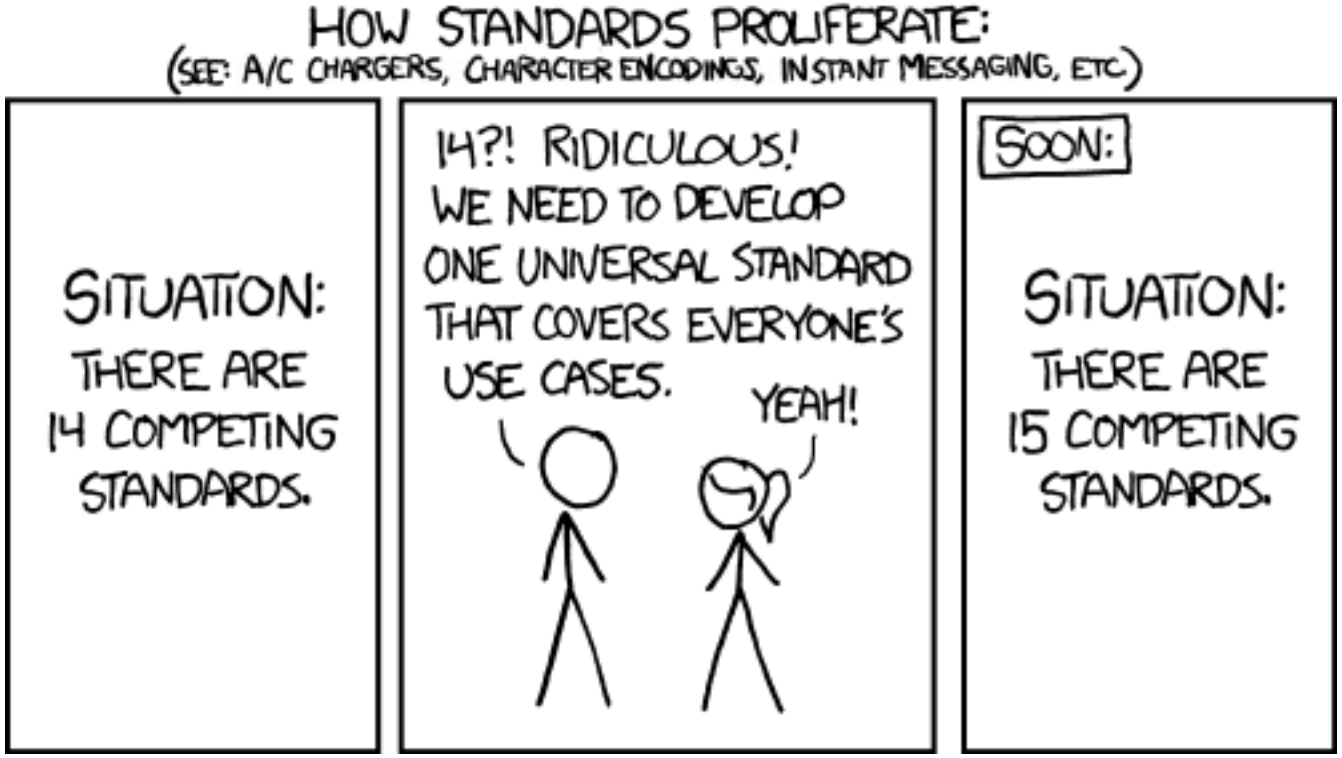
Linked Web Storage at W3C

Solid in Evolution – 15/11/2024

Laurens Debackere – Chair LWS WG


HOW STANDARDS PROLIFERATE:
(SEE: A/C CHARGERS, CHARACTER ENCODINGS, INSTANT MESSAGING, ETC)
SITUATION: THERE ARE 14 COMPETING STANDARDS.
14?! RIDICULOUS! WE NEED TO DEVELOP ONE UNIVERSAL STANDARD THAT COVERS EVERYONE'S USE CASES.
YEAH!
SOON:
SITUATION: THERE ARE 15 COMPETING STANDARDS.

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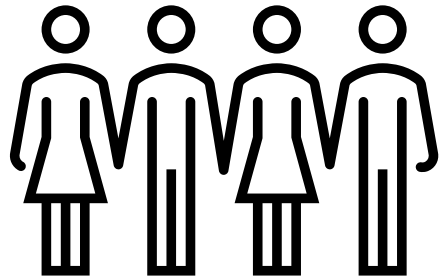
The road towards a W3C Working Group

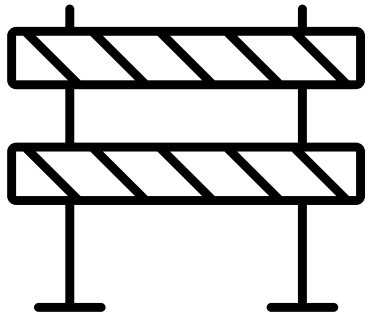
The road towards a W3C Working Group

- Solid specification has been incubated in a W3C Community Group so far
  - CG was officially launched in late 2018
- Community Groups within W3C
  - Meant for incubation of new specification work
  - Lightweight process
  - Outputs are CG reports, not formal recommendations
- Once sufficient interest is observed and incubated solutions mature
  - W3C team takes initiative to form WG or IG
  - These groups are formally recognized within the W3C process



The road towards a W3C Working Group

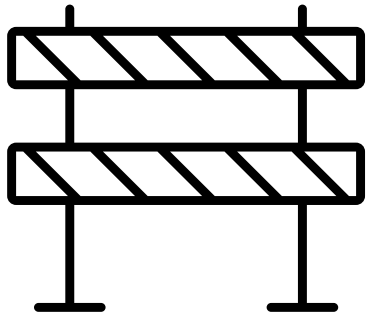
- A first charter for a Solid WG was proposed in late 2023
- Proposals are put forward for review
- **Horizontal review**: Accessibility, Architecture, i18n, Privacy, Security
- **AC review**: W3C membership gets to vote or (formally) object to a charter, note or recommendation



Feedback to formal objections: www.w3.org/2024/05/solid-new-charter-changes.html

The road towards a W3C Working Group

- The Solid WG charter received a number of formal objections
  - Thus, the initial proposal was not adopted and the working group was not formed
- Formal objections on
  - Solution-oriented approach of the WG charter, rather than defining the problem space
  - Selection of chairs
  - Limited number of implementations (rubber stamping)
  - Description of deliverables and dependencies



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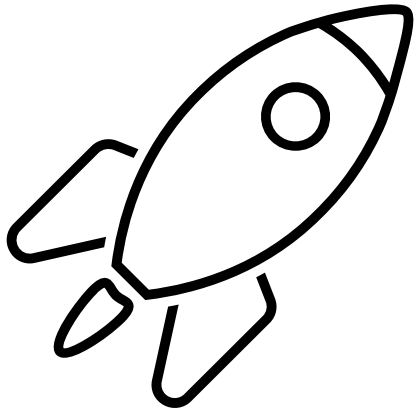
The road towards a W3C Working Group

- **Early 2024:** W3C council on formal objections
  - Council approves efforts to update charter
- Name change
  - Working title: “PUMPKIN WG” (<-> RDF)
  - New name decided by Solid community: “Linked Web Storage”
- Explainer of the protocol
- **June 2024:** Horizontal Review of updated charter
  - Additional chair: Eric Prud’hommeaux
  - Updated deliverables and dependencies
  - Problem-oriented scope
- **August/September 2024:** AC Review
- **September 2024:** Approval of the W3C AC
- **October 2024:** Start of the WG



Composition of the Working Group

Chairs

Aaron Coburn (Inrupt)

Eric Prud'hommeaux (Invited Expert)

Laurens Debackere (Digitaal Vlaanderen)

W3C Team Contact

Pierre-Antoine Champin

Participating Organizations

British Broadcasting Corporation , Digitaal Vlaanderen , Electronics and Telecommunications Research Institute (ETRI) , Forschungszentrum Informatik (FZI) , HM Government , imec , Inrupt Inc. , Institut Mines-Télécom , Institut National de Recherche en Informatique et en Automatique (Inria) , OpenLink Software Inc. , Protocol Labs , Startin'blox , Stony Brook University , Universidad Politécnica de Madrid , University of Oxford ,

Scope of the Linked Web Storage WG

*Enabling the **development** of web applications where **data storage, entity authentication, access control, and application provider are all loosely coupled**, as opposed to the web of today where these are typically all tightly coupled and changing one requires changing all, sometimes at the price of all past data.*

- Output of WG will be an **LWS Protocol** at **Recommendation** level
  - **Secure and permissioned access to externally stored data in an interoperable way**.
  - **Recommendation**: Endorsement of W3C and its Members. **Standard for the Web.**
- Other dependencies **could** be defined by the LWS WG at Recommendation level if deemed necessary

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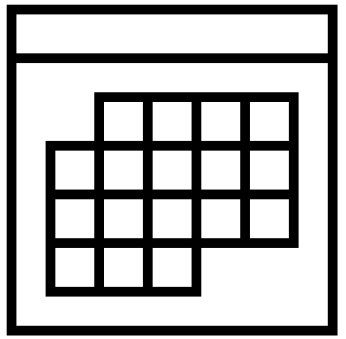
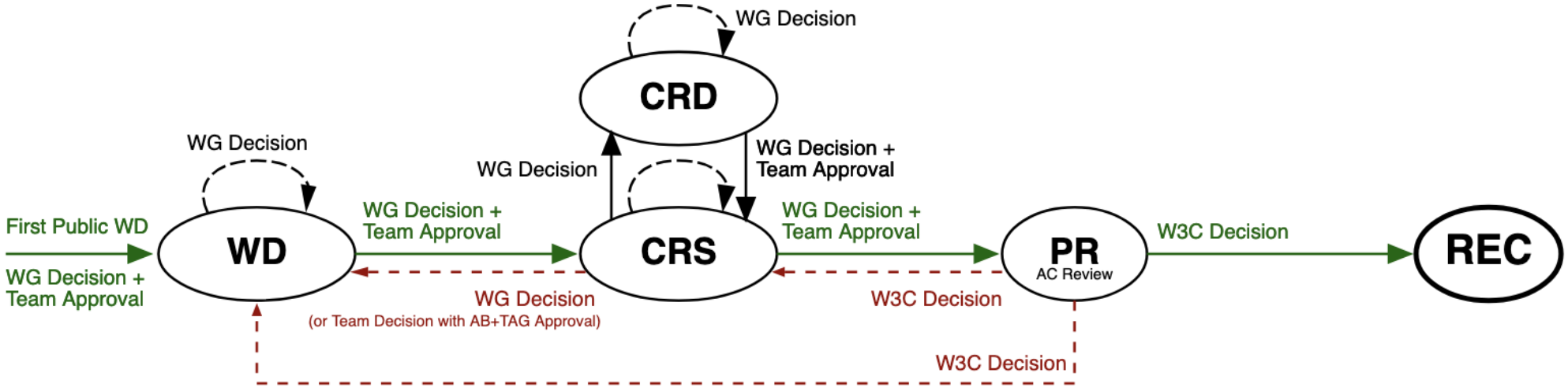
- Non-normative deliverables
  - Test suite and implementation report
    - At least 2 interoperable implementations of the protocol
  - Linked Web Storage threat model

Timeline of the LWS Working Group (so far)

- **October 2024 – January 2025**: Use Cases and Requirements WG Note
  - Working group note to formalize scope
  - Collect, refine and prioritize use cases
  - Distill requirements and adop them in specification
- **January 2025**: Work on LWS protocol starts
  - And dependencies which have no normative (RFC/REC-level) specification
  - Refinement of input documents based on requirements



Timeline of the LWS Working Group

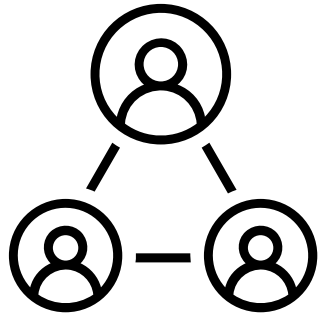


Timeline of the LWS Working Group

Note: The group will document significant changes from this initial schedule on the group home page.				
Specification	**FPWD**	**CR**	**PR**	**Rec**
Linked Web Storage Protocol	*2025-03-11*	*2026-03-10*	*2026-06-09*	*2026-09-08*

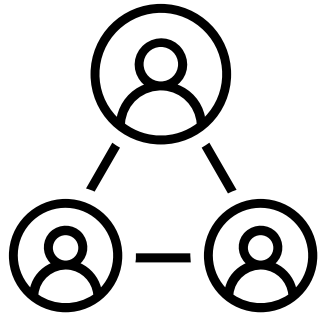
Participating an a W3C WG

- Typically limited to W3C Members (= Organizations)
  - W3C Membership fees vary based on revenue, type of organization and location.
- Individuals can join the WG as invited expert
  - Invited Experts whose specialized knowledge addresses areas where current members' expertise is lacking or insufficient.
  - Invited Experts should demonstrate previous involvement in the problem space.
  - No fee, but requires a formal approval from the W3C team and WG chairs.



Participating an a W3C WG

- Some parts of the Working Group's work are open to the entire community
  - **LWS Use Cases** - github.com/w3c/lws-ucs
    - Open for everyone to propose their use cases or user stories
  - **Mailing list** - lists.w3.org/Archives/Public/public-lws-wg/



Now what?

Call for contributions

- Join the LWS WG if you are a W3C Member
  - If not, contact Marie-Claire Forgue at W3C for more information (mcf@w3.org)
- Request to join the WG as Invited Expert
  - If you feel that your expertise as an individual might be valuable
- **Propose your use cases and user stories (!!)**
  - github.com/w3c/lws-ucs

Thank you for joining!

Questions?

Laurens.Debackere@vlaanderen.be

DIGITAAL VLAANDEREN

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