

## #techprom Featured Speaker - Chairwoman Mitchell Baker

by [Catherine Brack](#) [1]  
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Earlier this month, we interviewed our first #techprom keynote speaker, [Ambassador Eileen Donahue](#) [2]. Today, we want to introduce our second speaker, Mitchell Baker, Chairwoman of the Mozilla Foundation. Preview her remarks below and follow her work at @MitchellBaker and CDT at @CenDemTech.

**CDT:** What drew you to tech/Internet issues initially?

**Chairwoman Baker:** I am drawn to the challenge of the unknown, to figuring out how things work and how they might work better. Technology in general, and the Internet in particular, have been the source of immense and disruptive change in the last few decades. They provided a vector for building new things. They also provide a mechanism for changing peoples' lives and of giving people new opportunities. Figuring out how to put the puzzle pieces together to build new technology that has positive impact is a huge challenge, and an irresistible opportunity

**CDT:** Do you see any major challenges for the open source community arising in the next few years?

**Chairwoman Baker:** Yes. One key challenge is how much impact on the daily individual experience open source software will have in the age of cloud computing, massive data exploration and the new "mobile" computing environments. Even if all the software is technically licensed under an open source license, consumers and citizens may nevertheless be locked into closed systems where we're tracked, logged, monitored and monetized without much understanding or control. Figuring out how to bring the principles of open source software to the solution-space for this problem is another giant challenge and opportunity.

**CDT:** Between SOPA, ACTA, and the ITU's WCIT, 2012 saw a number of government-driven attempts to regulate the Internet that received significant pushback from civil society groups and Internet users. What role do you see users having in Internet-related public policy debates in 2013 and beyond?

**Chairwoman Baker:** The role of citizens in Internet-related policy debates is critical. If citizens are silent then we will end up with a net loss of freedom and enlightenment. Internet technology is immensely powerful; it plays a huge and increasing role in our relationship to each other, to the commercial world and to our governments. Citizens must speak up and help define the nature of those relationships. SOPA, PIPA and ACTA represented the defensive role for citizens, where massive angry protests were required to stop very bad policy decisions from being implemented. Ideally we will develop ways for citizens to participate in a constructive dialog for how we maintain the values we cherish. Mozilla aspires to play a role in making this happen. We salute CDT and the role it plays.

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