

Google Security Blog

The latest news and insights from Google on security and safety on the Internet

Google Security Rewards - 2015 Year in Review

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We launched our [Vulnerability Reward Program](#) in 2010 because rewarding security researchers for their hard work benefits everyone. These financial rewards help make our services, and the web as a whole, safer and more secure.

With an open approach, we're able to consider a broad diversity of expertise for individual issues. We can also offer incentives for external researchers to work on challenging, time-consuming, projects that otherwise may not receive proper attention.

Last January, we summarized these efforts in our first ever [Security Reward Program 'Year in Review'](#). Now, at the beginning of another new year, we wanted to look back at 2015 and again show our appreciation for researchers' important contributions.

2015 at a Glance

Once again, researchers from around the world—Great Britain, Poland, Germany, Romania, Israel, Brazil, United States, China, Russia, India to name a few countries—participated our program.

Here's an overview of the rewards they received and broader milestones for the program, as a whole.



Android Joins Security Rewards

Android was a newcomer to the Security Reward program initiative in 2015 and it made a significant and immediate impact as soon as it joined the program.

We [launched](#) our Android VRP in June, and by the end of 2015, we had paid more than \$200,000 to researchers for their work, including our largest single payment of \$37,500 to an Android security researcher.

New Vulnerability Research Grants Pay Off

Last year, we began to provide researchers with [Vulnerability Research Grants](#), lump sums of money that researchers receive before starting their investigations. The purpose of these grants is to ensure that researchers are rewarded for their hard work, even if they don't find a vulnerability.

We've already seen positive results from this program; here's one example. Kamil Histamullin a researcher from Kasan, Russia received a VRP grant early last year. Shortly thereafter, he found an issue in YouTube Creator Studio which would have

enabled anyone to delete any video from YouTube by simply changing a parameter from the URL. After the issue was reported, our teams quickly fixed it and the researcher was rewarded \$5,000 in addition to his initial research grant. Kamil detailed his findings on his [personal blog](#) in March.

Established Programs Continue to Grow

We continued to see important security research in our established programs in 2015. Here are just a few examples:

- Tomasz Bojarski found 70 bugs on Google in 2015, and was our most prolific researcher of the year. He found a bug in our vulnerability submission form.
- You may have read about Sanmay Ved, a researcher from who was able to buy google.com for one minute on Google Domains. Our initial financial reward to Sanmay—\$ 6,006.13—spelled-out Google, numerically (squint a little and you'll see it!). We then doubled this amount when [Sanmay donated his reward to charity](#).

We also injected some new energy into these existing research programs and grants. In December, we [announced](#) that we'd be dedicating one million dollars specifically for security research related to Google Drive.

We're looking forward to continuing the Security Reward Program's growth in 2016. Stay tuned for more exciting reward program changes throughout the year.



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