

# Motivating volunteers and retaining newcomers

Case study of Wikimedia Ukraine's "wiki condensed milk" program

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# How can we ensure Wikipedia volunteers are appreciated for their work?

- Editing Wikipedia is often a solitary job. When you've done something great – like proofreading a long article – it's not always appreciated by others, and the appreciation is often not manifested
- In other words, newcomers and experienced editors alike don't get enough positive feedback (and they do get negative feedback)

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# How can we ensure Wikipedia volunteers are appreciated for their work?

- There are different efforts in place to ensure editors receive more appreciation – on the design level (e.g. system congratulations when you reach a certain edit threshold) & on community level (e.g. virtual barnstars)
- But the problem still remains, and there should be more efforts to address it. One case study – Wikimedia Ukraine “wiki condensed milk” program

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# The concept

- Identify most active users over the past month – divided by the categories of newbies and experienced users
- Offer them a physical package containing condensed milk [sweet dessert] with Wikipedia-branded souvenirs & a thank-you note

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# The concept

- We offer separate awards for functionary & technical work: admins, patrollers, bot operators – because their work often goes unrecognized
- There are some material resources required, but not a lot: a small amount of money for materials and postal expenses + a few hours of staff time monthly for organizing the process

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**In 2022 we  
rewarded: 41  
newbies, 12  
experienced users  
and 12 patrollers,  
15 administrators  
& 5 bot operators**

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- Impact of the program: showing newcomers that their work is appreciated + giving an additional boost to experienced editors
  - Some of the newcomers who've received the award go on to become active editors & community members
- Of course, this program won't resolve big issues itself, but it's part of our broader work to support the volunteer community

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# Thank you!

- Read the Diff article for more details:  
[w.wiki/7Ehn](https://w.wiki/7Ehn)
- I'll be happy to share more or learn about your work — reach out at  
[anton.protsiuk@wikimedia.org.ua](mailto:anton.protsiuk@wikimedia.org.ua)



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