



**WIKIMANIA**  
**STOCKHOLM**



# How to grow the technical community by 2030

[bit.ly/wm19-tech-2030](https://bit.ly/wm19-tech-2030)

# What's this about 2030?

- Strategy process
- Recommendations
- Feedback

# Movement strategy

- 2016-17: strategic direction (large-scale community discussions)
- 2018-19: recommendations (working groups, strategy salons)
- 2020: implementation

# Movement strategy

- 2016-17: strategic direction (large-scale community discussions)
- 2018-19: recommendations (9 working groups, strategy salons)
  - Wikimedia Summit 2019: working group scope
  - Wikimania 2019: draft recommendations
  - final recommendation by end of October
- 2020: implementation

# Structural vs programmatic

- Parallel process: WMF & affiliates plan programmatic activities, working groups plan structural change
- Programmatic: what we are going to do (develop software / feature X).
- Structural: how we are going to do it (especially, how to change roles and processes within the movement)
- Not in scope:
  - individual bugs / features (“Commons should allow MP4 uploads!”)
  - product vision (“Wikipedia should be video-based!”)
  - technology vision (“Wikipedia should be on the blockchain!”)
- In scope: structural change needed to handle recurring problems / challenges. E.g. how do we involve the community better in decision-making? what kind of systems or processes or groups need to be in place for it?

# Strategic direction: service and equity

“By 2030, Wikimedia will become the essential infrastructure of the ecosystem of free knowledge, and anyone who shares our vision will be able to join us.”

# Product & Technology scope

Four focus areas:

- Governance
- Technical community
- Funding
- Role in society

# Current situation

- Governance: users are consulted but there is no true participative planning and decisionmaking.
- Technical community: most development is done by WMF and WMDE. Volunteer community is stagnant and the support they get is ad hoc.
- Funding: largely reliant on donations, which is bound to become a bottleneck.
- Role in society: no comprehensive effort for trying to understand our impact on the world.

# Recommendations in a nutshell

- Governance: decentralize development and open up planning and development processes to community participation; as a precondition, ensure quality discussion and understanding of planning assumption.
- Technical community: adopt new engagement models.
- Funding: research blockers to commercial adoption of MediaWiki.
- Role in society: create bodies to tackle ethical questions around new technology, and risks to real and perceived neutrality.

# Recommendations

- Governance:
  - Decentralize development and infrastructure, with the WMF retaining ownership of the core infrastructure.
  - Create discussion / governance platforms fine-tuned for constructive and inclusive discussion and consensus-building.
  - Set up an open and transparent project proposal process which shares decision-making power with the communities, who in turn commit to honoring the decisions they are involved in.
  - Create a Deployment Council for setting the requirements for deploying new functionality to the wikis, in the form of a co-decision-making process between the organization building the feature and the editor community.
  - Create a knowledge dissemination team to ensure that core community members understand the factual basis of ongoing projects and strategic decisions.

# Recommendations

- Technical community:
  - Adopt new engagement models which will help attract, retain, and support technical contributors in the Wikimedia community. Increased attraction and retention rates will, in turn, lead to a more significant and diverse developer community that addresses various software needs the movement has.
- Funding:
  - Successful open source projects tend to receive resources from a diverse set of entities, while MediaWiki is a monoculture almost entirely dependent on the Wikimedia movement, even though there seems to be a much wider demand for the functionality it provides. Research what blocks the emergence of a wider ecosystem.

# Recommendations

- Role in society:
  - Create an Emerging Technology Ethics advisory panel including paid staff, affiliates and independent experts to review new areas of technology for potential social or ethical concerns, and create recommendations and guidelines for how to engage with them in a way consistent with the movement's values, and to identify new technology risks to our users or platform.
  - Task some entity with reviewing the social and policy impacts of Wikimedia and to identifying if/how planned changes impact real and perceived neutrality of the project, and what potential risks or opportunities might arise for Wikimedia as a consumer product.

# Feedback

- What do you like in the recommendations?
- What do you dislike in the recommendations?
- What recommendations do you think are missing?

(If you are reading these slides online, you can provide feedback on the talk pages of the [working group](#).)