



Running a survey is an eye opening experience. The information that can be gotten from an effective survey can be greatly empowering and informative for both chapter members and the greater community. Often times it is the only reliable way to get a good idea of how the community as a whole feels or thinks about an issue. In order for a chapter to better serve the needs of the community it supports such surveys can be a powerful tool for self improvement and community support.

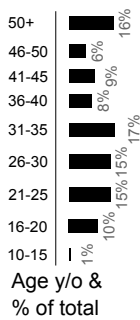
# 1 Design

What questions you want to ask and what do you want to learn more about? It is important that you are certain of your questions as you will not be able to change a question if you want to get followup data in a future survey. The fewer questions you ask the more likely participants will answer them and answer the questions fully. Ask both descriptive as well as quantitative questions. Save the descriptive questions to dig deeply on the participants views and keep the number of such questions to a minimum.



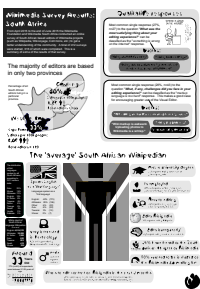
# 2 Run

Wikimedia ZA found that a banner add on Wikipedia and other Wikimedia projects to the survey on a separate site worked well. The Wikimedia Foundation was very helpful in helping us set this up. Let the survey run for two or three months.



# 3 Interpret

The data will typically come out as a spreadsheet. Going through the data manually on the spreadsheet through programs like LibreOffice or Excel, running pivot tables and charts, is a good way to identify commonalities and trends. For descriptive questions that allow the participant to give written feedback try coding the feedback so as to allow for quantitative data analysis. However don't only rely on quantitative data only, it is great for seeing big trends but does not give you much insight into the nuances of an issue or causality. Qualitative or descriptive questions are great for that sort of feedback.



# 4 Educate

Running a community survey is useless if no-one ever sees the results for if it is not used to inform a decision or action. A good way to communicate findings in a way that is easily accessible to people is via a graphic summarizing the most informative findings. Letting the data tell its own story that allows people to come to their own conclusions whilst presenting the information in clear and focused way is the challenge.

The graphic and key findings can be used to drive discussion and debate on important issues. Thereby informing policy formulation and decision making.