



Introducing Wikimedia

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Hello, and thank you for making the time for this presentation today. I'm Fiona Romeo, and I lead the culture and heritage program at the Wikimedia Foundation. I joined the Foundation about three years ago, after working for more than 14 years in museums in both the US and the UK, including the Science Museum, National Maritime Museum and Royal Observatory in London; and MoMA, the Museum of Modern Art, in New York.



Help us share museums' knowledge with communities everywhere



Gonsaalo, CC BY-SA 4.0

I'm here at this ICOM conference with colleagues from Italy, Germany, Portugal, Spain, and Switzerland, with an invitation.

Help us share museums' knowledge with communities everywhere.

We've actually been collaborating with some of ICOM's committees for several years.

Wikimedia x ICOM

1. International Museum Day campaign

For several years, Wikimedia affiliates from around the world have been documenting museums on Wikipedia and Wikidata.

2. Illustrating and disseminating Red Lists

Wikimedia Switzerland and Wikimedia Czech Republic are helping to protect cultural heritage in Afghanistan and Southeast Europe.

3. Developing shared perspectives

Wikimedia Argentina organised a discussion about decolonisation and image description with ICOM CECA LAC.

4. Joint advocacy for open access

Wikimedia Italy and ICOM are working together to empower Italian GLAMs to share content related to their digital collections.

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References

https://meta.wikimedia.org/wiki/International_Museum_Day_2023

https://meta.wikimedia.org/wiki/Wikimedia_CH/Afghanistan_Antiquities_at_Risk

https://meta.wikimedia.org/wiki/Wikimedia_Czech_Republic/Red_List_of_Southeast_European_Cultural_Objects_at_Risk

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ut_p0o7Wl8c

https://meta.wikimedia.org/wiki/Empowering_Italian_GLAMs

New definition of museum



“...Open to the public, accessible and inclusive, museums foster diversity and sustainability. They operate and communicate ethically, professionally and with the participation of communities, offering varied experiences for education, enjoyment, reflection and knowledge sharing.”



But ICOM's new definition of museum, which highlights the importance of accessibility, diversity, community participation, and knowledge sharing, is so aligned with the Wikimedia movement, that it feels like an invitation to extend our collaboration.

So I want to take some time today to reintroduce you to Wikipedia, highlight our other collaborative projects, share some case studies, and explain how you can partner with us.

References

<https://icom.museum/en/news/icom-approves-a-new-museum-definition/>

Video available at:

https://meta.wikimedia.org/wiki/Communications/A_Wiki_Minute

Wikimedia makes knowledge free and accessible to everyone around the world. We do this by hosting Wikipedia, which provides access to over 55 million articles across 300 languages...

References

https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:How_does_Wikipedia_work_%E2%80%93_A_WIKI_MINUTE_16-9.webm

https://meta.wikimedia.org/wiki/Communications/A_Wiki_Minute

Wikipedia

Free encyclopedia written by volunteers and supported by reliable, published secondary sources.

Digitised collection images can be found on a range of articles, such as biographies, historic events, and broader concepts like 'play' and 'love'.



The screenshot shows the Wikipedia article for "Play (activity)". At the top, there is a navigation bar with links for "article", "talk", "edit source", "history", "move", and "watch". Below this is a banner for "Wiki Loves Monuments: Photograph a monument, help Wikipedia and win!" with a "Learn more" link. The article title "Play (activity)" is prominently displayed, followed by the text "From Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia". The main text begins with a note: "'Playing' redirects here. For the jazz album by Old and New Dreams, see *Playing (album)*. For the 2007 film, see *Playing (film)*." The article then defines play as a range of intrinsically motivated activities for recreational pleasure and enjoyment, commonly associated with children and juvenile-level activities. It mentions that many prominent researchers in psychology, including Maria Montessori, Jean Piaget, William James, Sigmund Freud, Carl Jung, and Lev Vygotsky, have viewed play as confined to the human species. A photograph of a child playing with a ball is included, captioned "Playfulness by Paul Nash". A table of contents is visible on the right side of the article, listing sections such as "Definitions", "Forms", "Children", "History of childhood playtime", "Cultural differences of play", "Sports", "Benefits in youth", "Research findings on benefits in youth", "Adults", "Workplace", "Seniors", "Other animals", "Development and learning", "Physical, mental and social", and "Play in educational practices".

References

<https://mw19.mwconf.org/paper/museum-collections-on-wikipedia-opening-up-to-open-data-initiatives/>



Editathon jointly organized by Museo Egizio di Torino, Wikimedia Italia, and Archivio Storico Ricordi. Photo by Museo Egizio di Torino, 2022, CC BY-SA 4.0



Museums contribute their expertise to Wikipedia by embedding Wikimedians-in-Residence, or hosting edit-a-thons in their museums, where they open up research materials that are usually out of reach and provide inspiring meeting spaces, like the gallery shown here. The Soumaya Museum in Mexico hosted record-breaking 50- and 72-hour edit-a-thons, earning a place in the Guinness World Records.

References

<https://www.guinnessworldrecords.com/world-records/430455-longest-edit-a-thon#:~:text=The%20longest%20edit%2Da%2Dthon.388%20in%20total%20were%20edited.>

Other collaborative projects

1. Wikimedia Commons	2. Wikidata	3. Wikibase	4. Wikisource
Repository of openly-licensed media, which is used to illustrate Wikipedia and close representation gaps online.	Open and collaborative database that connects knowledge across institutional and national boundaries.	Open-source software for creating knowledge bases, leading to linked open data for cultural heritage.	Transcription platform for books and manuscripts, which is creating digital libraries for underrepresented languages.

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But Wikipedia is just one of 13 wiki-based projects that are created through an open, collaborative model that everyone can be a part of. More than 1.7 billion unique devices visit Wikimedia sites every month. And more than 300,000 people add, edit, and update Wikimedia projects every month.

Four of the projects that are particularly useful to museums are Wikimedia Commons, Wikidata, Wikibase, and Wikisource...

Case studies



One of the first large contributions to Wikimedia Commons was made by the Bundesarchiv. They shared 80,000 images relating to German history and invited Wikimedians to identify the people shown in these images by linking to the people authority file of the Deutsche Nationalbibliothek.



To keep the museum open while it was closed for renovation, Brazil's Museu do Ipiranga contributed images of their collections to Wikimedia, attracting three million views each month. After a catastrophic fire at the Museu Nacional, the Wikimedia community in Brazil crowdsourced images of displays to preserve what knowledge remained.

I want to bring these projects to life through six short case studies.

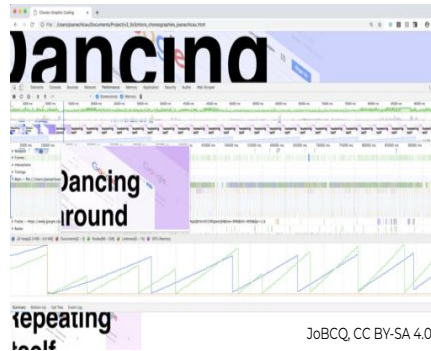
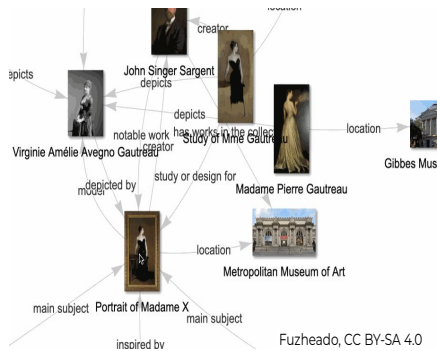
References

<https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/Commons:Bundesarchiv#:~:text=Wikimedia%20Commons%20received%20more%20than.Germany%20and%20the%20Federal%20Archives.>

<https://medium.com/open-glam/opening-up-the-collection-of-a-closed-museum-in-brazil-f58f05bef5b2>

<https://wikimediafoundation.org/news/2018/09/10/national-museum-brazil-fire/>

Case studies



The London Science Museum used Wikidata to reveal new connections between people, institutions, and objects. The national libraries of France and Germany are experimenting with Wikibase to develop authority files that connect library records to museum objects, archival documents, and research, fostering a more diverse community of practice.

Arts organization Rhizome uses Wikibase to document its archive of born-digital art and digital preservation activities. They said that only Wikibase was flexible enough to describe an ever-changing field like internet art. Wikibase also allows researchers to formulate complex data queries via an accessible graphical user interface.

35 national libraries around the world (including Egypt, Israel, Korea, the U.S. and the Vatican) have linked their authority control data with Wikidata. Describing Wikidata as a 'Rosetta Stone', the London Science Museum...

...By connecting their data to Wikidata, museums and libraries can cross institutional and national boundaries, uniting disparate collections, and creating linked open data for cultural heritage.

References

<https://thesciencemuseum.github.io/heritageconnector/>

<https://wiki.dnb.de/pages/viewpage.action?pageId=167019461>

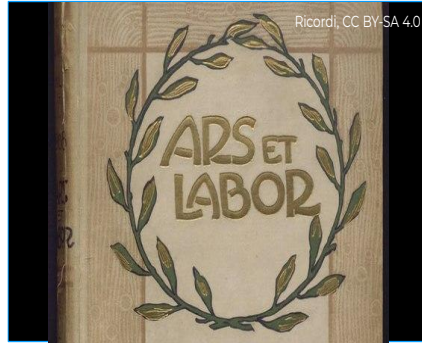
<https://rhizome.org/editorial/2021/apr/26/the-artbase-relaunches-welcome-to-linked-open-data/>

<https://youtu.be/DyOznbPF0KI?feature=shared&t=876>

Case studies



Thousands of manuscripts were digitized to create a Balinese Wikisource. The interface supported students and communities to type in their own script and their transcriptions trained a better Optical Character Recognition model. Recently, the British Library shared their manuscripts with Javanese-speaking volunteers.



The Fundación Joaquín Díaz and the Musikverket (Swedish Performing Arts Agency) have shared recordings of traditional music to Commons. The Archivio Storico Ricordi published music files alongside transcribed scores on Wikisource, making it possible to read and listen to music in the same place.

...For the British Library, the global Wikimedia movement provides a way for them to work on their manuscripts with the communities of origin and native speakers of the languages...

References

<https://diff.wikimedia.org/2021/11/15/balinese-wikisource-wikipustaka-gives-a-new-life-to-palm-leaf-manuscripts/>

<https://blogs.bl.uk/digital-scholarship/2023/08/the-british-library-loves-manuscripts-on-wikisource.html>

<https://readcoop.eu/preserving-cultural-heritage-transkribus-integration-with-wikimedia-projects/#:~:text=As%20of%20July%202023%2C%20Transkribus,a%20sister%20project%20of%20Wikipedia.>

https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/Commons:Fundaci%C3%B3n_Joaqu%C3%ADn_D%C3%ADaz

https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/Commons:Swedish_Performing_Arts_Agency

Wikimedia strategy

Knowledge equity

We act as a social movement to break down the social, political, and technical barriers preventing people from accessing and contributing to free knowledge.

Knowledge as a service

We provide a free knowledge infrastructure to enable Wikimedia projects and others to collect and use different forms of free, trusted knowledge.



Underlying these projects are the two core pillars of the Wikimedia strategy.

References

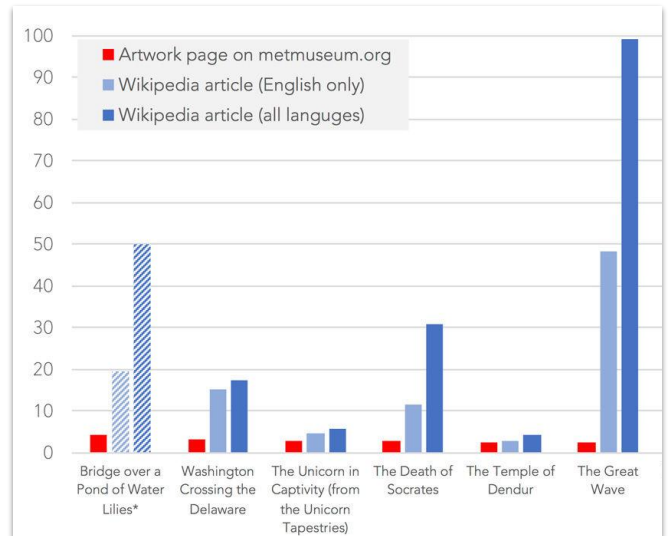
https://meta.wikimedia.org/wiki/Movement_Strategy

Better together

Collaboration between Wikimedia and museums promotes open access so everyone can enjoy culture as a global public good.

Museums provide the expertise and essential source material to make Wikimedia projects more reliable, better illustrated, and connected through linked open data.

In turn, museums make their knowledge more visible and accessible to new audiences in more than 300 languages.



The Metropolitan Museum of Art

The Wikimedia movement and museums are simply better together...

...For example, in 2021, the Cleveland Museum of Art's collection images attracted 65M views on Wikipedia, compared to 3M views on their own website. In the same year, the Wellcome Collection announced that their images on Wikipedia have been viewed more than 1.5 billion times. It's not only large museums with international brands that achieve this visibility. Each month, a few hundred image files contributed by The Museum of Veterinary Anatomy in São Paulo attract millions of page views.

References

<https://www.metmuseum.org/blogs/now-at-the-met/2018/open-access-at-the-met-year-one>

<https://www.clevelandart.org/art/collection/dashboard#page-5>

<https://stacks.wellcomecollection.org/images-from-wellcome-collection-pass-1-5-billion-views-on-wikipedia-ee9663b62bef>

https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/Category:Collections_of_the_Museum_of_Veterinary_Anatomy_FMVZ_USP



Image available at
<https://www.moma.org/calendar/events/1005>

A Sort of Joy (Thousands of Exhausted Things). April 4, 2015. The Museum of Modern Art, New York. Photo by Manuel Molina Martagon.



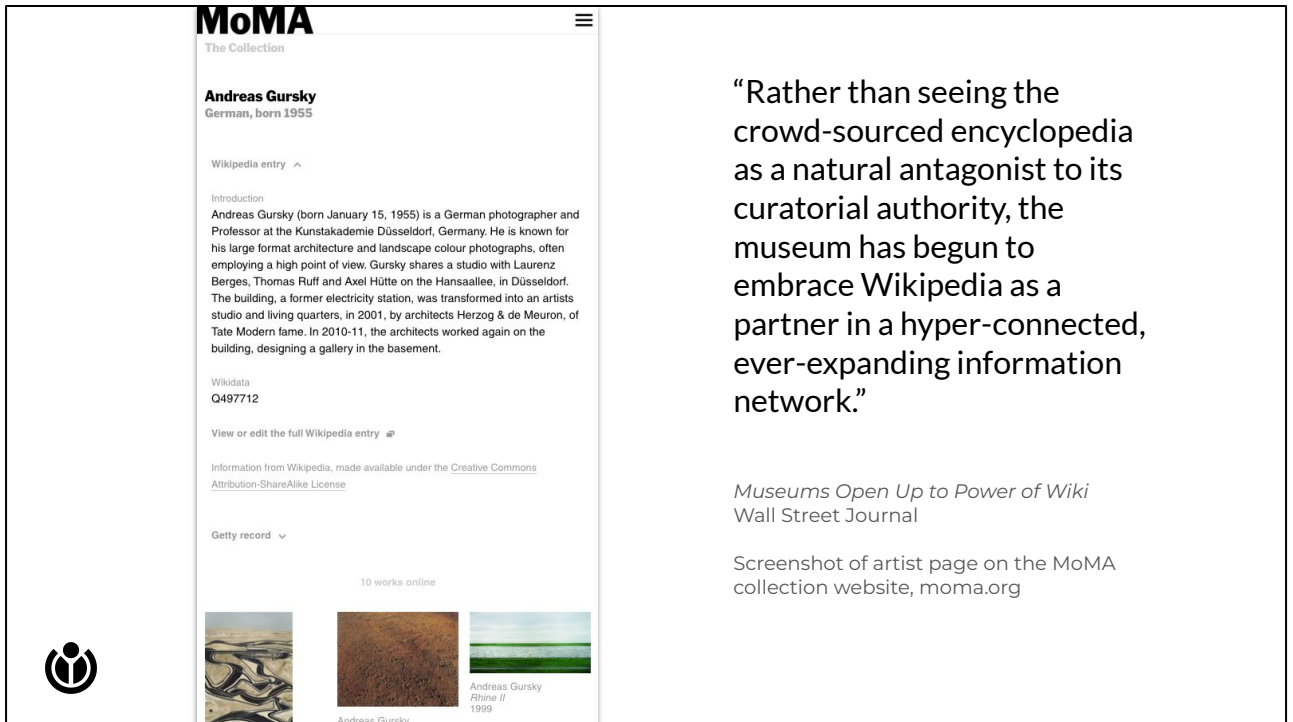
When I was at the Museum of Modern Art in New York, I shared data for more than 125,000 works from MoMA's collection using an open license, CC0. The impetus for going open was an artist's residency. The Office for Creative Research (also known as OCR) wanted to produce a live performance of MoMA's collection data. Titled *A Sort of Joy (Thousands of Exhausted Things)*, it was performed in MoMA's busy galleries by the theater company Elevator Repair Service.

OCR was tenacious in pursuing data for their residency, explaining the importance to their practice of seeing everything, rather than simply working with the 55,000 "good" collection records that were already available to the public on MoMA's website. OCR wanted to work with the records that were incomplete, the records that contained errors. They wanted access to the majority of the collection database that was flagged as "not curator approved" and therefore out of public view. OCR argued that collection data "can be and should be terrain for exploration, forum for interrogation, and substrate for creation." They said that, "There is prose and poetry and performance to be made from these rows and columns."

It would have taken me so much longer to persuade the rest of the museum to switch to open if there hadn't been such an immediate and seductive benefit—the creation of a new artwork. But having secured the data for OCR's artwork, we then released it to everyone to allow for the creation of other works that hadn't yet been imagined.

References

<https://medium.com/digital-moma/thousands-of-exhausted-things-or-why-we-dedicated-moma-s-collection-data-to-the-public-domain-7e0a7165e99>



Within weeks, this open data was picked up by a prolific Wikimedia volunteer, Magnus Manske, who matched our records to the corresponding items on Wikidata. This also connected our artists to the Getty’s Union List of Artist Names and other databases. We used the Wikidata QIDs to integrate both Wikipedia excerpts and Getty data on the artist pages of our own website.

At the time, I argued that if MoMA wanted people to ‘understand and enjoy the art of our time’—as its mission says it does—then it should contribute to Wikipedia, which is, for most people, the content website of first resort. Crucially, by integrating with Wikidata, MoMA was able to bring in translations of artists’ names, which made its collection much more discoverable to the wide global audience it wanted to reach.

Reporting on our wiki work, the Wall Street Journal said that “the museum has begun to embrace Wikipedia as a partner in a hyper-connected, ever-expanding information network.”

References

<https://www.wsj.com/articles/museums-open-up-to-power-of-wiki-1444613033>

<https://medium.com/digital-moma/bringing-art-knowledge-to-everyone-who-seeks-it-899ec257a55c>



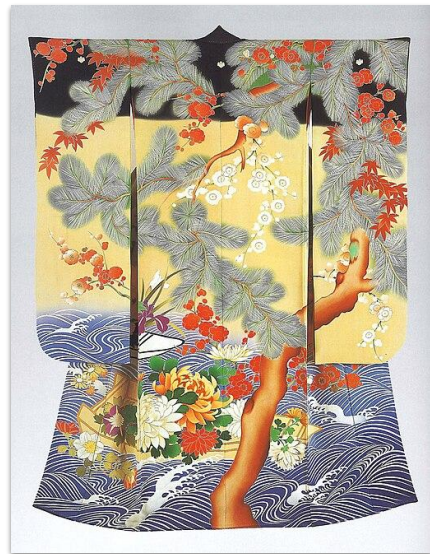
National Portrait Gallery, Public domain, via Wikimedia Commons



Many of the institutions sharing images do so to address representation gaps on the Internet. For example, the Smithsonian is focused on amplifying the accomplishments of American women by adding their biographies to Wikipedia. Some of their most viewed images on Wikipedia are of women of color, such as Sojourner Truth, A Chippeway Widow, and Josephine Baker.

References

[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Wikipedia:GLAM/Smithsonian_Institution/American_Women%27s_History_Initiative_\(AWHI\)](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Wikipedia:GLAM/Smithsonian_Institution/American_Women%27s_History_Initiative_(AWHI))



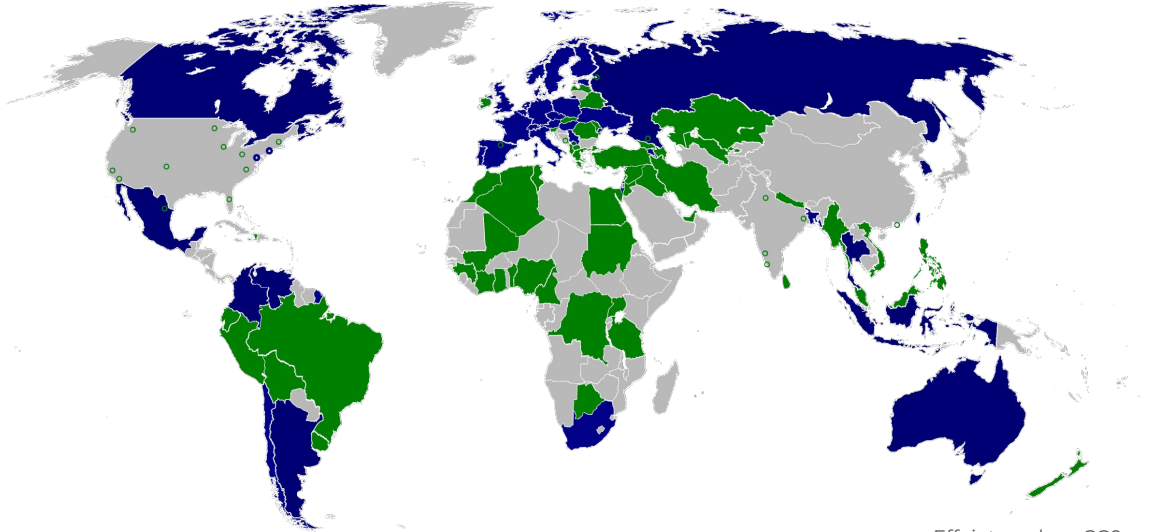
Khalili Collections, CC BY-SA 4.0

Wikimedia UK and the private Khalili Collections found that “there appears to be a systemic cultural bias against non-Western visual art and artists across all Wikipedia platforms and in various languages”. A Wikimedian in Residence is now working with the Khalili Collections to improve Wikipedia’s coverage of topics from Islamic pilgrimage to Japanese fashions.

References

<https://wikimedia.org.uk/khalili-foundation/>

Ask a Wikimedian



Effeetsanders, CCO

Our projects and volunteer contributors are supported by a global nonprofit, the Wikimedia Foundation. Wikipedia is the only top website that is supported by a nonprofit. This means we make decisions based on our mission, and how to support our readers and editors, rather than profit incentives. With more than 140 affiliates around the world, we have a presence in every inhabited continent. Every country that is shown in blue or green on this map has a Wikimedia group that you can contact.

References

https://meta.wikimedia.org/wiki/Wikimedia_movement_affiliates

Ask a Wikimedian

Workshop your collaboration ideas with Wikimedia groups from Italy, Germany, Portugal, Spain, and Switzerland.

We are available at our conference stand from Tuesday to Thursday, between 9am and 6pm.



Foeromeo, CC BY-SA 4.0



Here in Spain, we have the national chapter, Wikimedia España, and groups like Amical Wikimedia, which is focused on Catalan language and culture. Each museum has different needs and goals, and our local communities spend time with potential partners to identify the projects and activities that will have the biggest impact for them. Visit our stand to discuss the possibilities for your museum with Wikimedia groups from Italy, Germany, Portugal, Spain, and Switzerland.

References

https://meta.wikimedia.org/wiki/Wikimedia_at_the_20th_ICOM-CC_Triennial_Conference/Organisers

	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY
11-11.30			How to approach Wikipedia, if you are a museum
11.30-12	Your digital volunteer program: Collaboration between museums and the Wikimedia community	Wikibase, Linked Open Data and Museums	Introduction to Wikipedia: Solving doubts and refuting common misconceptions
12-12.30	Wikimedia Strategy and the New Museum Definition	Wikibase, Linked Open Data and Museums	Wikisource Loves Manuscripts: Digitising manuscripts to bring underrepresented languages to the Internet
12.30-1	How a Wikimedian-in-Residence can help your collections reach new and wider audiences	Digital preservation and conservation: the role of Wikimedia in building collective memory	Digital preservation: evidence from Empowering Italian GLAMs' case studies



We also have a program of talks and Q&A sessions.

References

https://meta.wikimedia.org/wiki/Wikimedia_at_the_20th_ICOM-CC_Triennial_Conference/Program

w.wiki/7RBq



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You can find out more about the Wikimedia projects and movement, our collaborations with ICOM and museums, and your local Wikimedia group at a dedicated website for conference delegates.

Go to <https://w.wiki/7RBq>