

Lessons from the Organizer Lab? How should we train the next generation of campaign organizers in the Wikimedia Movement

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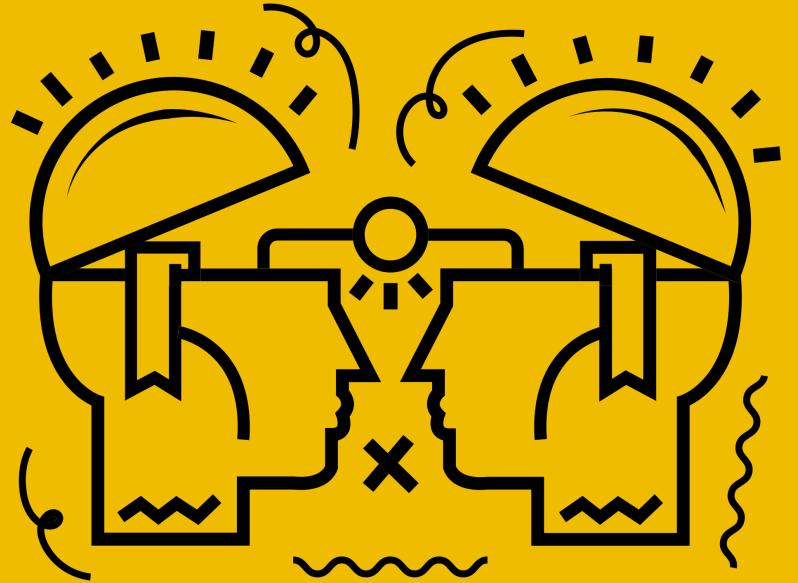
Alex Stinson and Felix Nartey



TOPICS FOR IMPACT

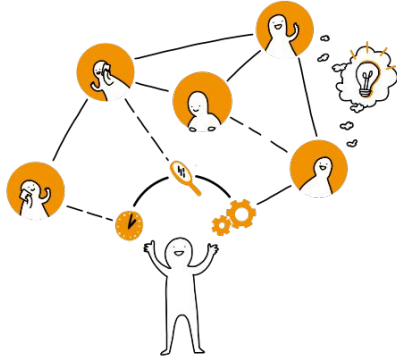
Organizer Lab *beta*

FOCUS: Climate Change & Sustainability



Why are we running an organizer capacity development course?

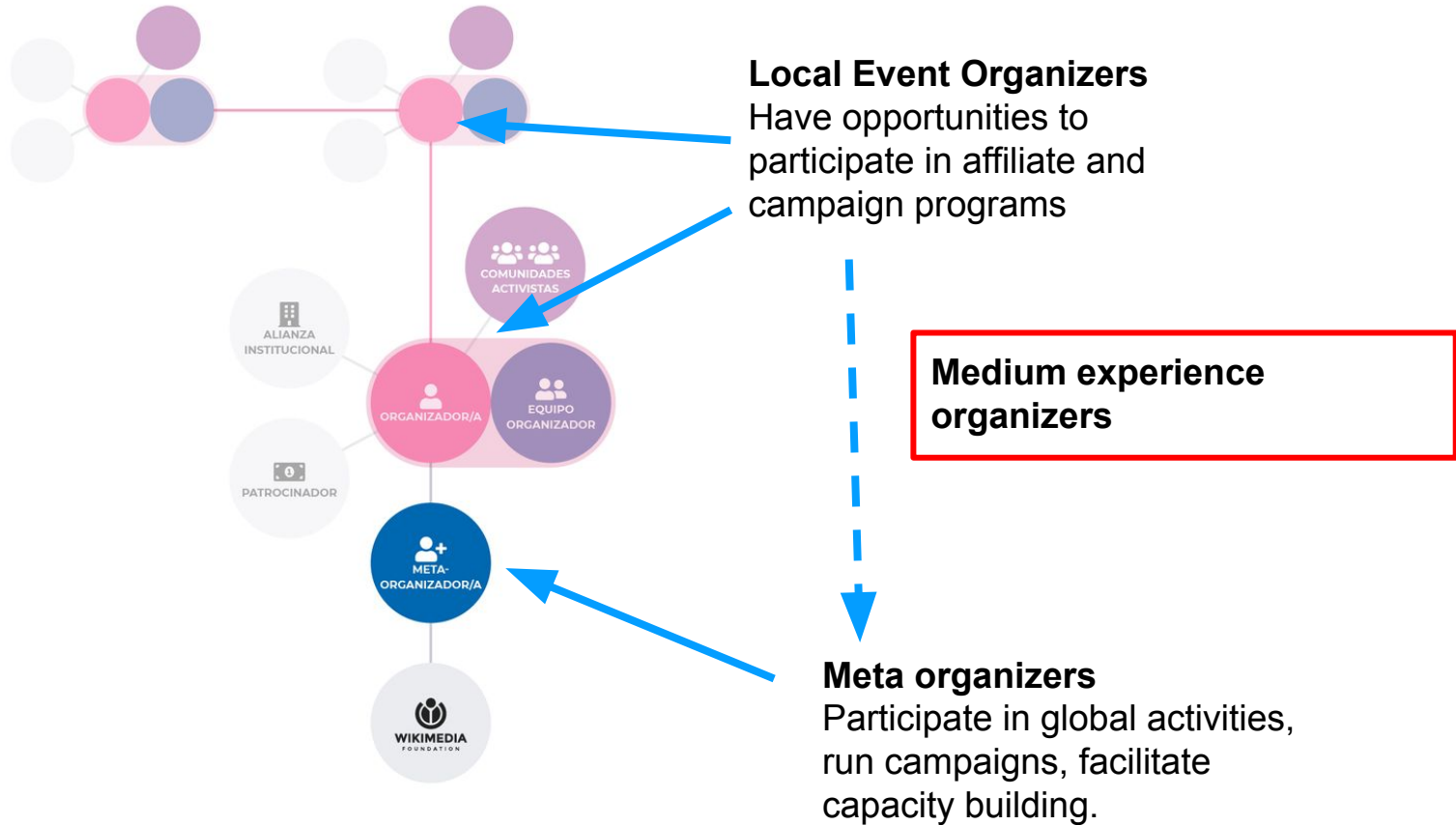
6. Invest in Skills and Leadership Development



8. Identify Topics for Impact



Who are we hoping to include?



What was the format?

- **10 weeks of intensive focus**, including 5 live sessions and 6 online learning modules on WikiLearn
- **We wanted intense peer-to-peer learning paired with directed feedback from the instructors** to mimic the kinds of learning that happens in movement contexts
- **Limited in the first round to English** content because of limitations in capacity

Course outline

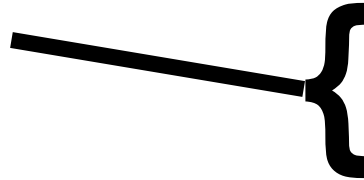
Identifying Topics for Impact



Unit 1: Learning what the Wikimedia Movement means by Knowledge Gaps and Topics for Impact

Unit 2: Using Knowledge Frameworks to Build Topic Lists for Wikimedia Activities

Designing creative audience-based events and campaigns



Unit 3: Identifying the Right Participants for Your Wikimedia Activities

Unit 4: Creatively Identifying ways to Engage Your Audience

Unit 5: Exploring Established Models of Activity in the Wikimedia Movement

Making best use of the Wikimedia Movement to support it



Unit 6: Getting Support to Run Your Project Within the Wikimedia Movement

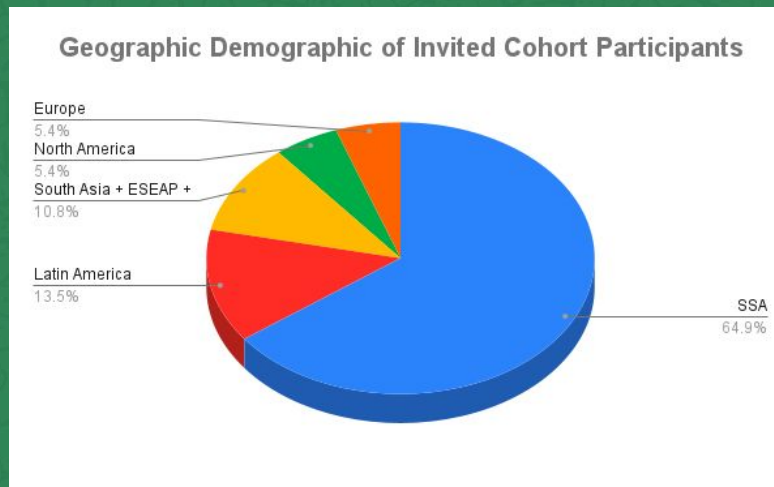
Why did we choose climate and sustainability?

- **Global, intersectional appeal.**
Were seeing an intersectional, Global South-focused community of practice forming, especially in pilot years of #WikiForHumanRights: Right to a Healthy Environment
- **Topic with a lot of complexity:**
our initial feedback from organizers since topic emerged in 2019 Wikimania is prominent was that it was hard to start.

Some numbers

143 applicants -- (1/3 of which were from Nigeria)

Accepted 37 -- 4 dropped, 21 graduated, 4 completed majority of content



In the 6 months following the course, Organizers who completed the course are running events that produce more edits than folks without the training and we have reports that organizers are using their skills for capacity building across regional and local activities

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Some testimony from our graduates

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NAME Anamaría Sosa

COUNTRY Uruguay

AUDIENCE TYPE Researcher

Digital Skills: Academic publishing, data management tools, bibliographic databases

Languages: English (professional), Spanish (native)

Wikimedia Exp: She uses Wikipedia daily to consult information, but doesn't fully trust its content. She has never edited it or thought about this possibility.

Motivations and behaviors

Professor and researcher Grade 5 at the Universidad de la República. She is a marine biologist and lives near the beach in Ciudad de la Costa, near Montevideo. She coordinates an academic unit in the Biology Department of the Faculty of Sciences and is a member of a professional organization.

She advises a marine animal protection NGO and is concerned about plastic pollution in the oceans. She also participates in a political group that belongs to the Frente Amplio, a leftist political party in Uruguay.

Challenges

She has little free time available to add another activity such as editing Wikipedia.

She also doesn't understand how collaborative editing works and which policies Wikipedia has. For these reasons, she thinks it's not good that just anyone can collaborate.

She understands the need for open access in scholarly publishing but doesn't share all the values of free culture.

Catalysts

She knows that the mass media treat environmental news superficially. She's also aware of the information gap that exists in Wikipedia on environment and climate change in Uruguay. Understands the importance of making this information available to the public.

Goals

She has teaching objectives for university students. Wikimedia can collaborate with a Wikipedia in the classroom program.

May want to share information from her papers to a wider audience. It may also want to make her research more visible and therefore have more impact inside and outside the academic world.

First interaction with Wikimedia

She's invited by email to participate in a panel organized by a UG within the Wiki4HumanRights campaign. At the meeting to discuss the activity, she's also told what the UG does and its mission, what the campaign is about and who will also participate in the panel.

She gladly accepts the invitation and begins to research what information there's about the topic she will be talking about on Wikipedia. She realizes that there's a huge information gap and that motivates her to participate.

First event

The panelist has a pedagogical vocation because, in addition to being a researcher, she is a teacher. Other experts and a Wikipedian who edits on climate change and sustainability also participate in the panel. She listens to their presentations and confirms that they share common goals.

Feelings after participating

She's pleased with the experience because she knows that she exposed to a new audience: editors of Wikimedia projects in her country and the region. She knows that the talk will be available on Youtube and she can share the link with other colleagues and her students.

She's interested in better understanding how the Wikimedia Movement works and curious with the possibility of meeting other experts in the region through these activities.



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Inaugural edition of the organizer lab awards – 6 community grants

13 April 2023 by Winnie Kabintie and Felix Nartey

🌐 Translate This Post

Read more about some [creative projects from the course!](#)



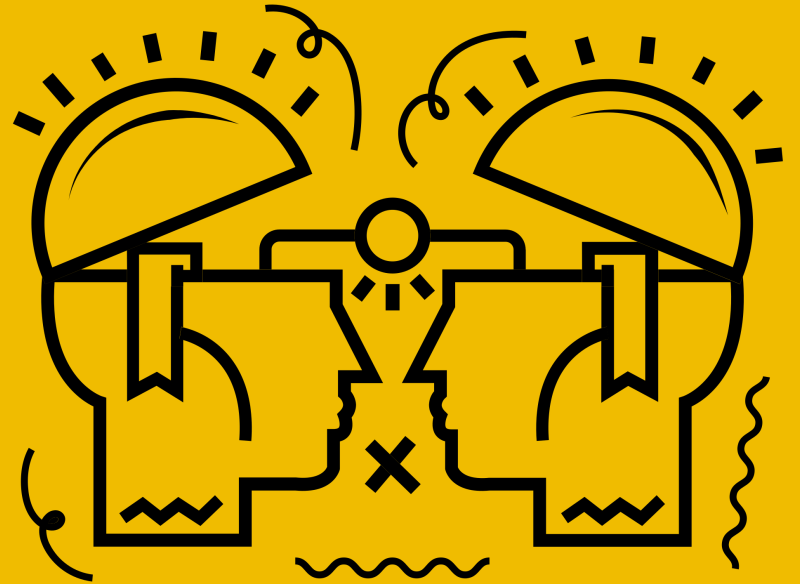
Movement organizers play a significant role in growing our Free Knowledge ecosystem by training and recruiting newcomers to the movement and facilitating better retention and activity of contributors on the projects. Taken cumulatively, movement organizers are important actors in facilitating content development on the Wikimedia platforms.

Guided by the [Movement Strategy Recommendations](#) 6 and 8 to enhance [Leadership and Capacity Building](#) and [Topics of Impact](#), the [Campaigns Team](#) at the Wikimedia Foundation works to support and advise movement organizers to run impactful effective content

TOPICS FOR IMPACT

Organizer Lab^{v2}

FOCUS: Gender and Climate



What are the big changes in round 2?

- Modifying first version of the content so that sections can be used by future learners as self-taught material
- Bigger cohort that includes both gender and climate organizers
- Piloting the addition of Gender content, in order to create a model for other organizers to create content for the self-taught topics for impact
- Piloting translation using WikiLearn's translation function

How to signup

- Watch our meta page for updates
- Wait for our call for applications right after Wikimania! (between 23 - 25 August)
- Follow procedures in our announcement for the call for applications to apply
- Reach out to us via campaigns@wikimedia.org if you have any questions

Questions for you

- What kinds of topics for impact training would you like to see in focus?
- What kinds of skill or activities would you like more international training on?
- If you had access to more self taught content on these themes, how would you use it?

<https://etherpad.wikimedia.org/p/Organizer%20Lab%20Wikimania>