Final Synthesis Report
Community Discussions and New Voices Research
Movement Strategy Phase One
September 2017

This report was authored by the williamsworks team, and it draws on the past nine months of collaborative work that was done with a multidisciplinary (core and extended) strategy team at WMF, as well as with others from the WM movement and outside experts. This report covers the three cycles of community discussions and the new voices research; it does not cover the discussions on the draft direction. Special thanks to consultant Suzie Nussel, the Track Leads, and supporting teams who contributed to the synthesis report(s).

I. Executive Summary

In January 2017, the constituents of the Wikimedia movement started an ambitious discussion about their collective future. The aim was to identify a common strategic direction that would unite and inspire people across the movement between now and 2030.

The process has been thorough, inspiring, messy and fascinating. More than 100 Wikimedia groups and communities from across the movement have held strategy discussions in the past nine months. These discussions were complemented by perspectives from those outside of existing Wikimedia communities, including conversations with over 300 experts globally, research on readers in twelve countries, and secondary research on global trends that affect free knowledge. These inputs were synthesized on a rolling basis and shared with the drafting committee for their consideration as they helped create the 2030 strategic direction for the Wikimedia movement.

The most popular perspectives and key findings from this work resonate with Wikimedia’s vision for a world in which every single human being can freely share in the sum of all knowledge. This common aspiration includes three main components: (1) fostering healthy communities that freely share knowledge, (2) engaging everyone across the world for global reach, and (3) creating a credible body of knowledge that is comprehensive, reliable, and of high quality.

1. Freely Share: Healthy Communities

To Wikimedians, accomplishing the vision is not possible without fostering a healthy, inclusive community. A healthy community was consistently ranked as paramount to fulfilling the overarching goal of curating the sum of all knowledge and allowing free access to all people.¹ Active, empowered communities are vital to the sustainability and future of the movement,

¹ A 1 B 222 18 Cycle 2 synthesis report
and thus are a critical precondition of its success. In order to foster a supportive community, proactive steps must be taken for everyone to feel included and respected from a wide variety of backgrounds; this means being inclusive across languages, geographies, education levels, gender identities, religions, and ages. By curbing harassment, abuse, and vandalism, Wikimedians and outside experts both believe that Wikimedia can create an open and collaborative space that is enjoyable, rewarding, and accessible to anyone who wants to contribute in good faith. Wikimedians will need to better consider the needs of newcomers and design experiences and tools to better support and welcome them so that long-term sustainability of Wikipedia can be achieved.

If done well, the movement could be a role model for other digital spaces, exemplifying how to globalize collaboration, communication, and metadata scholarship. By being a healthier, more inclusive space, Wikimedia's international communities could encourage even wider participation and a greater diversity of people, cultures, and perspectives. To do so, the movement should develop services that support positive experiences, build stronger relationships across existing communities, and encourage interactivity among its disparate projects and languages. Wikimedia also recognizes the need to design experiences and tools to support newcomers who are just beginning their journey towards advancing free and open knowledge.

By sharing knowledge globally and freely, Wikimedia could break down barriers and become a transformational force to connect cultures across the world so that people everywhere will have a role to play. Bringing more people into the movement would achieve two goals -- it would help preserve local knowledge and cultures, while increasing the number of total volunteer editors. Models of support should be tailored so that an inclusive and diverse global community extends to include many forms of contributors, from editors and donors, to networks of groups and partner organizations. By reflecting the diversity of our

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2 A [Cycle 2 synthesis report](#)
3 B [Cycle 2 synthesis report](#)
4 B [Cycle 2 synthesis report](#)
5 [Kenya strategy salon with technology experts - May 29, 2017 New Voice synthesis report](#)
6 [Wikimedia Chile - strategy meet-up in Santiago - June 6, 2017 New Voice synthesis report](#)
7 A [Cycle 2 synthesis report](#)
8 A [25 34 3 1 3 8 4 40. B 102 156 1 17 Cycle 2 synthesis report](#)
9 "Movements are built on emotion and human connection" [New Voice synthesis report](#)
10 A [22 3 4 6 26 4 3 1 5 12 21. 248 642 24 3 70 120 123 1 3 1 1 Cycle 2 synthesis report](#)
12 A [571 103 60 2 Cycle 2 synthesis report](#)
13 [San Francisco Strategy Salon - March 2, 2017 New Voice synthesis report](#)
14 A [Cycle 2 synthesis report](#)
15 [Brand awareness, attitudes, and usage - Executive Summary New Voice synthesis report](#)
17 B [Cycle 2 synthesis report](#)
18 A [78 118 16 40 6 38 41 42 58 72 18. B 13 492 496 504 509 538 577 590 Cycle 2 synthesis report](#)
world, Wikimedia can create equitable opportunities for leadership and representation in the movement’s governance to produce a robust and supportive global community of contributors and readers where everyone is able to find a home.\footnote{B \textit{79 Cycle 2 synthesis report}}

2. Every Single Human Being: Global Reach

Wikimedia’s collection of knowledge is incomplete without a fully global representation of voices, and working to close this gap will reduce bias and improve the quality of Wikimedia projects.\footnote{Strategy Salon Dinner NYC - May 30, 2017 New Voice synthesis report} \footnote{San Francisco Strategy Salon - March 2, 2017 New Voice synthesis report} When considering the knowledge that has been gathered so far, Wikimedians see tremendous gaps in: the kinds of knowledge collected,\footnote{Many community discussions have emphasized the importance of capturing more forms of knowledge, such as oral history, to a more complete collection of knowledge. Reliability of sources also continues to be a priority. Cycle 1 synthesis report; Cycle 2 synthesis report} the geographies it represents,\footnote{84\% of Wikipedia articles focus on Europe and North America. Mark Graham \textit{Geographies of the World}, 2011} and the diversity of viewpoints.\footnote{Asia makes up 60\% of the global population, but contributes only 19\% of total monthly Wikipedia edits.} Experts from outside the movement also recognize the potential for Wikimedia to become a platform for underserved audiences to access, create and preserve knowledge.\footnote{India expert workshop - June 1, 2017 New Voice synthesis report} Fixing knowledge gaps and biases was voted the \textit{top priority} for the Wikipedia movement at the 2017 Wikimedia Conference in Berlin.\footnote{A \textit{78 Cycle 2 synthesis report}}

In order to capture all knowledge, Wikimedians acknowledge that the movement \textbf{must expand its reach to new audiences and geographies} where it has not yet had a strong presence. Inclusion and diversity\footnote{“Diversity, Inclusion: This is often co-tagged with Content Bias. The general sentiment here is that the movement is still overwhelmed by a Western perspective and that must change in the coming years.” (93 statements) \textit{Cycle 1 synthesis report}} are not just core values to Wikimedia; Wikimedians believe that bringing new voices into the movement will help it curate less biased, higher quality knowledge.\footnote{“Collaboration inside and outside the movement and inclusivity will bring new voices to the movement, advance its mission, and ultimately curate less biased, higher quality knowledge (8 groups, 16 references)” \textit{Cycle 2 synthesis report}} Representation with respect to language and geography is crucial to Wikimedia’s continued success, including incorporating local viewpoints and accommodating readers from non-Western backgrounds.\footnote{21 35 19 31 25 50 49 89 Cycle 3 synthesis report}\footnote{A \textit{79 Cycle 2 synthesis report}} In some cases, bringing in new voices will involve not just training someone \textit{how} to use Wikipedia, but making them aware of \textit{what} Wikipedia is in the first place and \textit{why} it is a critical tool in the quest for free knowledge.

\cite{B \textit{79 Cycle 2 synthesis report}}
\cite{Strategy Salon Dinner NYC - May 30, 2017 New Voice synthesis report}
\cite{San Francisco Strategy Salon - March 2, 2017 New Voice synthesis report}
\cite{Many community discussions have emphasized the importance of capturing more forms of knowledge, such as oral history, to a more complete collection of knowledge. Reliability of sources also continues to be a priority. Cycle 1 synthesis report; Cycle 2 synthesis report}
\cite{Asia makes up 60\% of the global population, but contributes only 19\% of total monthly Wikipedia edits.}
Wikimedians are prepared to grow the movement, but in order to do so, **active outreach to new places for new users and partners** will be required.\(^{32}33\ 34\ 35\) Raising awareness about how Wikipedia works and promoting it in low-awareness regions will strengthen its mission.\(^{36}37\) To involve new geographies, many Wikimedians felt that Wikimedia should resolve the complexity of accepting new, diverse forms of knowledge to maintain verification across projects; Wikimedians showed strong support for incorporating oral history and other new forms of knowledge as a way to work towards Wikipedia holding the sum of all knowledge.\(^{39}40\) To that end, the accessibility of free knowledge across all languages was strongly supported by Wikimedians.\(^{41}\) In order to incorporate knowledge from around the globe, experts from outside the movement also recognized that more people must be included, and that means stretching beyond the traditional forms of accessing Wikipedia, like through a browser on a computer.\(^{42}43\)

### 3. Sum of All Knowledge: Comprehensive and Reliable Content

Wikimedia should continue its commitment and responsibility to provide information that is **reliable, verifiable, and high-quality**. In order to counteract trends of misinformation, the movement should establish clearer standardized guidelines related to **sources, citations, and notability**.\(^{44}\) Wikimedia can integrate technologies that support accuracy and fact-checking methodologies and expand the scope of what the community agrees are acceptable sources.\(^{45}46\) AI tools -- with the guidance and oversight of human editors -- can be integral in reinforcing reliability of content and reducing misinformation.\(^{47}48\) Additionally, Wikimedia can include more expert contributors but should remain true to its democratic editing process.\(^{49}50\)

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32 B [27 Cycle 2 synthesis report](#)
33 “To involve new geographies, we should consider engaging in partnerships and resolving the complexity of accepting new, diverse forms of knowledge to maintain verification across projects (8 groups, 14 references)” [Cycle 2 synthesis report](#)
34 [47 46 50 Cycle 3 synthesis report](#)
36 [30 48 50 39 29 88 Cycle 3 synthesis report](#)
37 [Summary of Key Opportunities & Findings: Indonesia & Brazil New Voice synthesis report](#)
38 (8 groups, 14 references) [Cycle 2 synthesis report](#)
39 (8 groups, 28 references) [Cycle 3 synthesis report](#)
40 [India expert workshop - June 1, 2017 New Voice synthesis report](#)
41 (Cycle 1: 22 groups, Cycle 2: 16 groups) [Cycle 1 synthesis report; Cycle 2 synthesis report](#)
42 [India expert workshop - June 1, 2017 New Voice synthesis report](#)
43 “As learning platforms evolve, we will need to think beyond the encyclopedia in order to meet the needs of users” [New Voice synthesis report](#)
44 B 15 [Cycle 2 synthesis report](#)
45 [29 30 18 20 37 Cycle 3 synthesis report](#)
46 [5 14 3 6 Cycle 3 synthesis report](#)
47 [36 15 19 Cycle 3 synthesis report](#)
48 [Considering 2030: Future technology trends that will impact the Wikimedia movement (July 2017) New Voice synthesis report](#)
49 B 76 [Cycle 2 synthesis report](#)
50 A 17 [Cycle 2 synthesis report](#)
Wikimedia should embrace the effort of increasing free knowledge in all forms, with **neutrality** as a tenet it must constantly strive for.\(^51\)

**Partnerships will make Wikimedia more effective at achieving its mission to create a body of comprehensive knowledge.**\(^52\)\(^53\)\(^54\) Wikimedia should empower individuals to share and participate in the knowledge ecosystem across institutions and communities. **Collaboration is essential** to advancing this work and expanding the movement, and partnerships should be developed with a cohesive strategy that can most effectively engage new institutions. Working with partners outside of the movement can be a critical way to improve perception, increase awareness, and engage more people, especially in emerging markets.\(^55\)\(^56\) Education and academia are two key areas within the broader ecosystem in which Wikimedia anticipates becoming a key player.\(^57\)\(^58\) Through a set of universal standards and best practices, Wikimedia should also become a leading advocate and platform for the dissemination of free and open knowledge.\(^62\)\(^63\)

**To reliably provide high-quality knowledge, Wikimedians believe that there is a need to advance technology to match the needs of the people the movement serves.**\(^64\) New technology and products should be developed for more efficient search, Q&A, and chat functionality.\(^65\)\(^66\) Wikimedia should move **“beyond the encyclopedia” with increased multimedia content**, including audio and visual information, with an emphasis on accessibility across devices, digital formats, and languages.\(^67\)\(^68\)\(^69\) But Wikimedia will also need to leverage technology to expand its reach by forging **partnerships in the technology sector**

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\(^{51}\) [52] 38 Cycle 3 synthesis report  
\(^{52}\) B 79 Cycle 2 synthesis report  
\(^{53}\) “Build partnerships to serve the hard-to-reach or marginalized, by leveraging the unique value and assets of the Wikimedia movement.” Summary of Key Opportunities & Findings: Indonesia & Brazil New Voice synthesis report  
\(^{54}\) “We are stronger when we work together, but we need direction” New Voice synthesis report  
\(^{55}\) A 78 Cycle 2 synthesis report  
\(^{57}\) A 1 Cycle 2 synthesis report  
\(^{58}\) A 16 Cycle 2 synthesis report  
\(^{59}\) A 16 Cycle 2 synthesis report  
\(^{60}\) India expert workshop - June 1, 2017 New Voice synthesis report  
\(^{61}\) Expert interviews, line 30, line 48 New Voice synthesis report  
\(^{62}\) “Wikimedia should be an influencer in shaping world policy for access to knowledge” New Voice synthesis report  
\(^{63}\) 34 16 Cycle 3 synthesis report  
\(^{64}\) A 88 Cycle 2 synthesis report  
\(^{65}\) B 89 Cycle 2 synthesis report  
\(^{66}\) 3 Cycle 3 synthesis report  
\(^{67}\) 4 40 41 8 Cycle 3 synthesis report  
\(^{68}\) Considering 2030: Future technology trends that will impact the Wikimedia movement (July 2017) New Voice synthesis report  
\(^{69}\) “Empower learning in the diverse places and ways people learn, by making content more modular and portable.” Summary of Key Opportunities & Findings: Indonesia & Brazil New Voice synthesis report
with partners like telecommunications companies. This could include collaborating with or incorporating social media functionality to consume and share knowledge, while making use of other interfaces that people are most comfortable with. Though Wikimedians recognize that technological progress is an unstoppable force, Wikimedia's focus has and always will be on its community first. **AI and machine learning** can reduce busy-work -- not replace volunteers -- and can improve the efficiency of what volunteers devote their time to. While remaining true to the **current encyclopedia model**, resources should be allocated toward **sister projects** to experiment with other initiatives that aim to be as successful as Wikipedia.

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70 16 20 26 30 39 Cycle 3 synthesis report
71 7 Cycle 3 synthesis report
72 Expert interviews, line 4, line 5, line 7, line 9 New Voice synthesis report
73 A 39 Cycle 2 synthesis report
74 “Knowledge sharing is highly social” New Voice synthesis report
75 A 45 Cycle 2 synthesis report
76 5 15 20 2 Cycle 3 synthesis report
77 3 1 11 4 24 Cycle 3 synthesis report
II. Methodology

Over the course of nine months (January-September 2017), williamsworks worked with the Wikimedia movement to identify a common strategic direction that would unite and inspire people across the movement on their way to 2030. williamsworks and Wikimedia co-architected a movement-wide consultation process to inform the strategic direction, working with the Foundation, consultant Suzie Nussel, and a steering committee of community members. Throughout three cycles of community discussion, 109 Wikimedia groups and communities contributed over 3,000 statements about their perspectives on the movement’s future. Wikimedians, including Track A (organized groups) and Track B (contributors), engaged in this global dialogue through local Wiki, in-person, and virtual discussions.

During Cycle 1, between March 14 and April 18, Wikimedia-organized groups and communities from across the movement held over 100 strategy discussions and shared over 1,800 statements in response to a big question: What do we want to build or achieve together over the next 15 years? These discussions included the 2017 Wikimedia Conference in Berlin, which brought together over 350 attendees from 70 countries and representatives of 90 affiliates, organizations, committees and other groups. The movement strategy team distilled these on and offline outputs into five themes that described potential directions and tradeoffs for our movement: creating a healthy community, participating in the augmented age, forming a truly global movement, becoming the most trusted source of knowledge, and joining the knowledge ecosystem. (See Cycle 1 Synthesis Report, methodology, and resulting 5 themes.)

Cycle 2 began with the five overarching themes that emerged from Cycle 1. The movement strategy team posted five questions under each theme: the impact a given theme would have in the world, that theme’s relative importance to the others, the tradeoffs required, additional inputs that would bolster the theme, and potential partners related to that theme. 28 organized groups and 27 communities responded to these questions between May 11 and June 12. (See Cycle 2 Summary Insights Report.)
These discussions were complemented by perspectives from those outside of existing Wikimedia communities, including conversations with experts globally, research on readers in twelve countries, and secondary research on global trends that affect free knowledge.

- Through one-on-one expert interviews, as well as Foundation-led and affiliate-led expert convenings, the movement strategy team received input from over 330 influential individuals and changemakers across technology, business, media, social services, policy, education, and arts/culture. Experts were from over a dozen countries across Africa, the Middle East, Asia, North America, Latin America and Europe.
- The Foundation and its research partners conducted research on potential readers in places where Wikimedia projects are not well known or used (Brazil, India, Indonesia, Mexico, and Nigeria) and in places where Wikimedia projects are well known and used (France, Germany, Japan, Russia, Spain, United Kingdom, and United States).
- Also in partnership with research vendors, the Foundation reviewed secondary research on issues that will affect Wikimedia’s mission between now and 2030, such as the future of the global population, technology, misinformation, and more.

At the time this report was finalized in September 2017, some research was still underway, and may be summarized and added to this report or posted separately. (See New Voices Synthesis Report.)
In **Cycle 3**, community discussions were dedicated to considering the challenges identified by the new voices research and exploring how Wikimedia may want to evolve or respond to changes in the world. The movement strategy team posed a weekly challenge question, each week from July 1 to August 13, 2017. Wikimedians responded to these questions over the same time period. (See [Cycle 3 Summary Report](#).)

Building on the summaries submitted by discussion groups, paid language liaisons, and researchers, the movement strategy team synthesized all these inputs on a rolling basis and shared with the [drafting committee](#) for their consideration as they helped create the [2030 strategic direction](#) for the Wikimedia movement. The findings outlined in this report will also inform Phase 2 of the movement strategy, involving tangible next steps for how to achieve the strategic direction as a movement.
III. Key Insights by Cycle

Cycle 1

*The movement strategy team distilled outputs from Cycle 1 community discussions into five overarching themes that described potential directions and tradeoffs for our movement:*

**Healthy, inclusive communities**
By 2030, the Wikimedia volunteer culture will be fun, rewarding, and inclusive for both existing contributors and newcomers.

**The augmented age**
By 2030, the Wikimedia movement will actively use technological innovations to help volunteers be much more creative and productive.

**A truly global movement**
By 2030, we will be a truly global movement. In particular, we will turn our attention toward regions we have not yet served well enough: Asia, the Middle East, Africa, and Latin America.

**The most respected source of knowledge**
We will work toward ever more accurate and verifiable content. By 2030, Wikimedia projects will be seen as the most high-quality, neutral, and relevant source of knowledge.

**Engaging the knowledge ecosystem**
We will build relationships with a wide variety of organizations dedicated to the ideals of free knowledge.

*These five themes emerged from a larger number of common themes that the movement strategy team identified through its initial synthesis of cycle 1:*

- **Reliable, Neutral, High-Quality Content:** Discussions of content and knowledge mostly centered around how to improve the content quality - often measured by reliability, credibility, neutrality, readability - so that Wikimedia project could be a better knowledge resources.
- **Community Health & Support:** There was frequent mention of improving the experience for contributors and the overall health of the Wikimedia community, including through greater diversity and gender balance.
- **Internal & External Collaboration:** Collaboration was a common topic, most frequently as it relates to the education sector, but also more broadly with other internal and external actors so that Wikimedia could become a well-networked player in the world of free knowledge.
• **Features:** These comments were excluded from Cycle 2 and sent to a ‘feature recommendation’ page where all features would be aggregated and assessed after Phase 1 of the movement strategy process.

• **Users, Editors, & Contributors:** There was frequent mention of improving the experience for contributors and the overall health of the Wikimedia community through programs like new editor mentoring.

• **Outreach, Awareness, & Promotion:** There was frequent mention of improving the overall health of the Wikimedia community by focusing on efforts of outreach and promotion to attract new editors.

• **Innovation:** Discussions also explored how innovation and technology can be best leveraged for Wikimedia to adapt and improve, including through automation, other platforms, and products beyond the encyclopedia.

• **Funding, Staffing, and Other Organizational Needs:** These comments were excluded from Cycle 2 because they pertained to specific, operational recommendations that would be more relevant for Phase 2. They will be reviewed at the end of Phase 1 in fall 2017.

• **Emerging Communities:** Many hoped Wikimedia could better meet the needs of emerging communities, including through better outreach and awareness, availability across languages, and accessibility via mobile and offline capabilities.

• **Advancing Education:** Collaboration was a common topic, most frequently as it relates to the education sector, but also more broadly with other internal and external actors.

• **Movement Values:** Topics like features and values were commonly discussed. While important, these ideas related more to the tactics of how we do things, rather than the outcome we hope to achieve in the world. Statements related to features will be routed to the appropriate department at Wikimedia Foundation.

• **Knowledge:** Discussions of content and knowledge mostly how to improve the content quality - often measured by reliability, credibility, neutrality, readability - so that Wikimedia project could be a better knowledge resources.

• **Sustainability & Growth:** Topics like features and values were commonly discussed. While important, these ideas related more to the tactics of how we do things, rather than the outcome we hope to achieve in the world. Statements related to features will be routed to the appropriate department at Wikimedia Foundation.

See [Cycle 1 Synthesis Report](#), methodology, and resulting 5 themes.
Cycle 2

The movement strategy team synthesized the top perspectives that emerged among Wikimedians debating the five overarching themes:

To Wikimedians, creating a healthy, inclusive community is paramount to fulfilling the overarching goal of curating the sum of all knowledge and allowing free access to all people.\textsuperscript{78} Active, empowered communities are central to the sustainability and future of the movement.\textsuperscript{79} There is pride in the great accomplishments completed so far, and the community and organized groups are passionate about making it even better. This will require proactive steps for everyone to feel included and respected – in spite of gender or geography, socioeconomic status, or education level.\textsuperscript{80} Many recommended that better mechanisms and enforcement be put in place to curb harassment, abuse, and vandalism in order to create a safe and collaborative space for all who participate.\textsuperscript{81} As the movement grows, everyone – especially experienced editors – will have to consider the needs of those who are experiencing Wikipedia for the first time – whether as a reader or a contributor.\textsuperscript{82} Wikimedians will need to design experiences and tools to better support and welcome newcomers so that long-term sustainability can be achieved.\textsuperscript{83}

The movement could be a role model for other digital spaces, exemplifying how to globalize collaboration, communication, and metadata scholarship.\textsuperscript{84} By being a healthier, more inclusive space, our international communities could encourage even wider participation and diversity of people, cultures, and perspectives.\textsuperscript{85} To do so, the movement would need more rigorous standards of quality and positive behavior\textsuperscript{86} to build stronger relationships across communities and encourage interactivity among projects and languages.

Both knowledge quality and quantity could increase as diverse voices are actively integrated and encouraged to collaborate effectively. Wikimedia could be the largest, most neutral, trusted and reliable free knowledge resource available.\textsuperscript{87} Many Wikimedians believe that people from all regions should be encouraged to participate, which would fill knowledge gaps and add more diverse points of view. This would help eliminate bias and create more neutral, reliable, verifiable, and complete content.\textsuperscript{88} While inclusion may cause some friction,\textsuperscript{89}

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\textsuperscript{83} A 35 23 34 3 1 3 3 8 4 40 B 102 556 1 17 \\
\textsuperscript{84} A 22 3 4 6 26 4 3 1 5 12 21 B 248 642 24 3 70 120 123 1 3 1 1 \\
\textsuperscript{85} A 5 1 3 1 1 B 181 217 644 84 191 208 660 9 \\
\textsuperscript{86} A 571 103 60 2 \\
\textsuperscript{87} A 316 \\
\textsuperscript{88} A 31 31 49 18 B 112 176 201 25 29 1 161 212 289 13 8
many believe that increased diversity is the best way to ensure higher quality. For many, this fulfills the primary goal of being an encyclopedia and would increase its usefulness and readership.

By sharing all knowledge globally and freely, Wikimedia could break down barriers and be a transformational force to connect cultures across the world. This would help preserve local knowledge and cultures while increasing the number of total volunteers. Different cultures have different knowledge needs; therefore, the models and support may also need to be different. Some Wikipedians warn that we must proceed with caution, helping local communities grow organically with approaches that fit their cultures. Active outreach to new places and new partners is going to be required. In some cases, this will involve not just training someone on how to use Wikimedia projects, but on making new readers and contributors aware of what it is in the first place and why they are critical participants in the quest for free knowledge. We need to resolve the complexity of how to include these new knowledge sources (oral histories, etc.), while maintaining strong verification processes and quality in all the projects.

Through technology, Wikimedia could create an open and adaptable system (seamless connection between projects and their content) that effectively integrates and supports free knowledge, even as knowledge formats and devices evolve. Wikimedia wants things to work better and more easily, and they want to fix what is broken or ineffective. Wikimedia should not be a technology innovator but use technology to its advantage to better support users and increase overall participation. We must minimally “catch up” with technology to remain relevant and sustainable. This means smart tools, general automation, and designing interfaces that accommodate today’s readers and editors. We should expand tools to curate multimedia content and search. The movement should cautiously use AI and machine learning to help increase quality and accessibility. The overall view from

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90 A 6 5 9 B 282 1 112 176 181 217
91 B 12 [survey 337 360 415 420 434 444 449 454 464 469 484 593 594] [English WP 101] [German WP 18] [Hindi WP 1 2 24] [Spanish WP 10 39] [Wikidata 20]
92 A 24 8 42 45 20 42 43 14 23 26 27 23 B 115 266 14 261 286 306 319 568 599 601 607 608 30 19 28 32 38 171 23
93 B 12
94 B 27
95 A 279
96 B 616
97 A 44
98 A 35 4
99 A 28
100 A 88
101 A 11
102 B 89
103 A 17 1
104 A 1 2 24 25 22 3 18 B 41 30 8 32 33
Wikimedians is that we should maintain our community-first focus, and use AI and other technologies to reduce busy-work, not replace volunteers, and improve quality. Machine translations with human support could allow for one global, universal encyclopedia. Above all, we should use a flexible technology strategy, so that the projects can adapt as new advances are made.

Where possible, the movement should create synergies with partners that add free content, functionality, and awareness to engage more people and ultimately benefit society. Wikimedians acknowledge that partnerships will make the movement more effective in achieving its mission, especially educational partnerships. However, some contributors point out that an investment in improved communication among Wikipedia groups and across individual contributors is needed. The movement can only be as effective as its most coordinated bodies. Some Wikimedians recognize the enormous potential for increasing partnership work with other like-minded organizations and communities. A few also shared that there is opportunity to work much better together inside the movement.

Ultimately, these actions would allow us to help create a better world, one in which free access to all knowledge increases educational and economic equity.

See Cycle 2 Summary Insights Report
New Voices

The movement strategy team synthesized the key findings from conversations with over 300 experts around the world; research on readers in regions where Wikipedia is well known, and those where it is not; and secondary research on global trends that affect free knowledge:

Knowledge sharing is highly social.

- Experts and research stressed that Wikipedia’s users today aren’t our users tomorrow. Young people -- a generation enabled by smartphones -- are the newest demographic to reach.  

- A trend toward youth is especially true in Africa, the world’s youngest region, which is predicted to rejuvenate an aging global workforce with a supply of young consumers and college graduates due to a 15 percent population boom from 2015-2030.  

- Experts say that they’re steeped in their use of social media and chat functionality, and that they prefer to share and discuss information through platforms they already know.  

- In lower-awareness regions, getting information via messaging apps is seen as equivalent to information passed by word-of-mouth—just faster and through a broader network; though this hasn’t been seen in higher-awareness regions. Information-seeking is becoming increasingly task- and search-led, and less discovery- and browsing-oriented.  

- People in Indonesia and Brazil no longer expect their content to be mediated by “trusted institutions;” instead, research found that they want their content curated by trusted individuals. In contrast, information from the United States and Western Europe cautioned against trusting in the self-cleaning mechanisms of community and showed continued interest in trusted institutions like museums and newspapers.  

- The proportion of the global population in the age range of 15-64 that possesses no education is diminishing over time. At the same time, the percentage of the global population who are internet users will rise from 44 percent to 58 percent from 2016 to 2021.

Future information technology could radically change how knowledge is created, processed and shared.

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113 Summary of Key Opportunities & Findings: Indonesia & Brazil
114 Brief: Demographics
115 Expert interviews, line 4, line 5, line 7, line 9
116 Kenya strategy salon with technology experts - May 29, 2017
117 Summary of Key Opportunities & Findings: Indonesia & Brazil
118 Summary of Key Opportunities & Findings: Indonesia & Brazil
119 Summary of Key Opportunities & Findings: Indonesia & Brazil
120 Berlin Strategy Salon - March 29, 2017
121 Wikimedia Poland affiliate-led expert salon - June 5, 2017
122 Brief: Emerging platforms
• Experts recommend that we use technology to better meet our users needs.\textsuperscript{123} Machine translation, AI and structured data are some ways to curate and deliver relevant, reliable and local relevant content.\textsuperscript{124} Research also showed improvements in AI could drive the rise of real-time, personalized education, information and entertainment services, including machine-generated music, news and storytelling.\textsuperscript{125 126 127}

• Experts believe Wikimedia should consider improving the user experience of Wikipedia and other projects in a way that appeals to the masses.\textsuperscript{128} Research suggests that guided discovery and integration with major web properties will be increasingly important.\textsuperscript{129 130}

• For example, technology experts suggest that allowing people to interact with Wikipedia content on the Google knowledge panel, or curating channels by content area on widely-used instant messaging apps such as WhatsApp, Telegram, Facebook Messenger, and Instagram will become the most prevalent ways to exchange information.\textsuperscript{131 132} New audio visual technologies could transform how people experience and share knowledge. Voice is beginning to replace typing in some contexts, which could impact how Wikipedia editors work.\textsuperscript{133} Virtual reality focuses on visual, audio and tactile communication modes, and are largely interactive rather than participatory.

\textbf{Movements are built on emotion and human connection.}

• According to research, expert interviews, and group convenings, Wikipedia must do a better job of communicating its values and approach.\textsuperscript{134 135 136 137}

• There is a belief that Wikimedia should consider incentives to keep the movement engaged and growing. What motivates someone to participate in the movement, and how do we invite others to join?\textsuperscript{138} Experts in Kenya believe people may be drawn to the idea of telling the stories of their own cultures and communities, but that it has to be

\textsuperscript{123} \textit{Summary of Key Opportunities & Findings: Indonesia & Brazil}
\textsuperscript{124} \textit{Berlin Strategy Salon - March 29, 2017}
\url{https://futuretodayinstitute.com/2017-tech-trends}
\textsuperscript{127} Brief: Emerging platforms
\textsuperscript{128} \textit{Kenya strategy salon with technology experts - May 29, 2017}
\textsuperscript{129} \textit{Summary of Key Opportunities & Findings: Indonesia & Brazil}
\textsuperscript{130} \textit{Berlin Strategy Salon - March 29, 2017}
\textsuperscript{131} Expert interviews, line 7, line 16, line 35
\textsuperscript{132} \textit{Kenya strategy salon with technology experts - May 29, 2017}
\textsuperscript{134} \textit{Summary of Key Opportunities & Findings: Indonesia & Brazil}
\textsuperscript{135} \textit{Strategy Salon Dinner NYC - May 30, 2017; Berlin Strategy Salon - March 29, 2017}
\textsuperscript{136} \textit{San Francisco Strategy Salon - March 2, 2017}
\textsuperscript{137} DC salon
\textsuperscript{138} \textit{San Francisco Strategy Salon - March 2, 2017}
positioned around tangible benefits or recognition. Rewards, badges, or other forms of validation can help, too.\footnote{139}

- Creating a distinct and desirable sense of identity and positioning around the role of a Wikipedia contributor (and why you should volunteer to be one) might be a way to encourage more to participate.\footnote{140} \footnote{141}

As learning platforms evolve, we will need to think beyond the encyclopedia in order to meet the needs of users.

- As people continue to adopt mobile devices and turn away from traditional text and toward creating and sharing video, audio, and visual multimedia content, pressure is growing on technology platforms to evolve.\footnote{142}

- New content types and platforms like AI, virtual reality, and augmented reality have the potential to serve as content or topics for Wikimedia projects, as potential opportunities for distributing Wikimedia projects’ content, or as vehicles for spreading the ethos of open editing and sharing of content.\footnote{143}

- Research and discussions with expert indicate that existing and future readers want a platform for learning that will extrapolate Wikipedia’s current encyclopaedic format and its western-centric norms.\footnote{144} \footnote{145} \footnote{146}

- Experts from Africa, Asia, and the Middle East believe that the formal education system is failing youth in emerging markets around the world, and people are seeking new ways to consume and process knowledge online.\footnote{147}

- Online knowledge-seekers are looking for short, compact and visual ways of engaging with content and acquiring new skills.\footnote{148} Wikipedia's future users will need a platform that allows them to create and transfer knowledge in non-text formats, with a strong emphasis in oral and visual resources.\footnote{149}

- Leaders in historically marginalized communities in the western world share similar concerns about current text based consumption on Wikipedia. The guidelines about who and what is cited does not often match with the cultural preservations systems in these communities.\footnote{150}

There’s a tradeoff between credibility and inclusivity.

\footnote{139} Kenya strategy salon with technology experts - May 29, 2017
\footnote{140} Kenya strategy salon with technology experts - May 29, 2017
\footnote{141} Strategy Salon Dinner NYC - May 30, 2017
\footnote{142} Brief: Emerging platforms
\footnote{143} Brief: Emerging platforms
\footnote{144} Summary of Key Opportunities & Findings: Indonesia & Brazil
\footnote{145} Bill Drayton, social enterprise expert, interviewed by Ed Bland, June 6, 2017
\footnote{146} Strategy Salon Dinner NYC - May 30, 2017
\footnote{147} Expert interviews, line 24, line 33
\footnote{148} Expert interviews, line 9, line 10, line 35
\footnote{149} Nigeria Strategy Dinners Day 1, Day 2, Day 3
\footnote{150} Strategy Salon Dinner NYC - May 30, 2017
• When discussing the quality of Wikipedia's content, several expert conversations centered around the idea that the highest quality content may not coexist with new and inexperienced voices.
• There were questions about how Wikipedia can be trusted and perceived as a credible source of knowledge while welcoming new users who don’t necessarily value unbiased reporting and the “highest quality” information.151
• Research found that people not yet included in the Wikimedia movement treat online information as biased, and adapt how they validate and use information accordingly.152 And although some people know Wikipedia is an editable platform, our research suggests that many do not think of the actual content as adaptable and expandable.153
• Wikipedia’s open contribution model is poorly understood in markets where there’s low awareness, and this is therefore viewed as a weakness.154
• Our findings suggest that inclusivity and new representation can only happen when there are lower barriers to entry, and that experienced users may need to accept less-than-perfect information in order to train and incorporate new users into the movement.155

Wikimedia should be an influencer in shaping world policy for access to knowledge.
• Experts see the potential of Wikimedia to become a platform for underserved audiences to access, create and preserve knowledge.156 157 158 159 Some of those experts go as far as to argue for a stronger political approach ["Neutrality and silence is actually taking a political position"]160.
• Wikimedia is seen as a key to the unconnected users that are in need of offline options to access content. Playing a bigger role in the affordable internet debate has also been recommended, especially as we know that the cost of mobile data is still a connectivity barrier for low income users.161 162
• Overall, there is a strong desire for free, accessible internet for all and Wikimedia is seen as a missing voice in that debate.163 164

We are stronger when we work together, but we need direction.

151 Expert interviews, line 30, line 48
152 Summary of Key Opportunities & Findings: Indonesia & Brazil
153 San Francisco Strategy Salon - March 2, 2017
154 Summary of Key Opportunities & Findings: Indonesia & Brazil
155 Wellspring ‘Awareness, Attitudes, and Usage Research’
156 Brussels Movement Strategy Dinner - March 29, 2017
157 Berlin Strategy Salon - March 29, 2017
158 India expert workshop - June 1, 2017
159 DC salon
160 Brussels Movement Strategy Dinner - March 29, 2017
161 Expert interviews, line 35
162 Summary of Key Opportunities & Findings: Indonesia & Brazil
163 Wikimedia Chile - strategy meet-up in Santiago - June 6, 2017
164 Mexico expert workshop - May 17, 2017
• Experts believe that Wikimedia should play a leadership role in the open ecosystem — and there is a particular need for a shared platform for the open knowledge community.165 They believe we can be a better partner in building a digital knowledge base for cultural institutions (GLAMs) and work with other institutions invested in the future of information (media, academia, reference fields).166
• There is an appetite for better coordination between open organizations (Creative Commons, Internet Archive) and cultural, scientific, and knowledge-based organizations generally.167

We need to be prepared for the risk of major societal and political changes in the future.
• Our orientation toward information as a society may change dramatically in the future (misinformation, disinformation, understanding of provenance, etc.).168 Trust is not promised. Populism is rising globally again.169 170
• Experts in Europe are pushing us to ask the question: what are the existential and reputational risks to Wikimedia? They believe Wikimedia may need to get more aggressive and political to respond.171 172

See New Voices Synthesis Report

165 Berlin Strategy Salon - March 29, 2017
166 India expert workshop - June 1, 2017
167 Berlin Strategy Salon - March 29, 2017
168 Economist, July 1, 2017
169 Ingrid Betancourt, Colombian politician, interviewed by Jorge Vargas, June 8, 2017
170 Brussels Movement Strategy Dinner - March 29, 2017
171 Brussels Movement Strategy Dinner - March 29, 2017
172 Berlin Strategy Salon - March 29, 2017
Cycle 3

The movement strategy team synthesized the top perspectives that emerged from Wikimedians discussing the findings from new voices:

Wikimedians recognize the forces changing the way communities consume and share content. Nearly three-quarters of Wikimedians express the desire to create social media functionality or collaborate with existing social media platforms, as long as it is done credibly with an eye toward increasing functionality and attracting new users.\(^\text{173}\)

Some Wikimedians, on the whole, believe that new technology and products should be developed for more efficient search, Q&A, and chat functionality.\(^\text{174}\) This desire to move “beyond the encyclopedia” was echoed in their strong support for increased multimedia content, including audio and visual, with an emphasis on accessibility across languages.\(^\text{175}\) At the same time, however, these Wikimedians were staunch in their support for the timeless appeal of the current encyclopedic model, and few expressed a desire to change its core capabilities and mandate.\(^\text{176}\) Instead, many Wikimedians stressed that resources could be allocated toward sister projects to house more educational materials and experiment with other initiatives.\(^\text{177}\)

Because new forms of knowledge may be difficult to verify in traditional ways, they are in favor of establishing best practices for how to deal with classifying which sources should be considered reliable and verifiable.\(^\text{178}\) Some Wikimedians believe that it can be difficult to be inclusive while still maintaining high quality standards, but they argue for including offline media sources, multimedia content, and non-traditional sources as a way to expand what the community agrees are acceptable sources.\(^\text{179}\) Twelve of the 31 sources were in favor of promoting oral history as its own Wikimedia project as long as it can be verified,\(^\text{180}\) with about five groups speaking against it.\(^\text{181}\) Verification can be conducted through experts, volunteers, and anonymous judges, and some think it should be backed with funding to support local scholars in conducting and collecting oral stories.\(^\text{182}\)

In order to counteract trends of misinformation, these Wikimedians agree that clearer guidelines related to sources should be established and knowledge sources should be made

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\(^{181}\) 1 2 3
\(^{182}\) 1 2 3 4 1
more accessible. Lists of reliable sources should be curated and sites that consistently publish false information should be blacklisted or presented with a caveat or counterbalanced with another point of view.\(^{183}\) Constant verifiability and staying up-to-date on the most current methodologies for fact-checking are critical to upholding Wikipedia’s responsibility to present quality information.\(^{184}\) These Wikimedians agreed that bias in articles is a problem, but one that does not have an easy solution.\(^{185}\) And while it may not be possible to entirely root out bias, they stressed that AI tools can be integral in reinforcing reliability of content and reducing misinformation.\(^{186}\) Stricter editing controls can also be a way to reduce misinformation, through more active administrators and privileges.\(^{187}\) In spite of the challenges, neutrality is absolutely a tenet that the movement must strive for.\(^{188}\)

As the creation, presentation, and distribution of knowledge changes, new technological features will help serve community needs. These include 3D-modeling, virtual reality, voice-to-speech and other translation services, and augmented reality.\(^{189}\) Investment should continue to be made in mobile platforms as the internet evolves, including the ability to edit and create content on mobile devices.\(^{190}\) A few Wikimedians agree that AI can and should be integrated in thoughtful collaboration with the help of human editors as a tool to help with misinformation.\(^{191}\) Partnerships in the technology sector should be pursued to strengthen Wikimedia and persist amidst future technological developments.\(^{192}\)

In order for Wikimedia to meet its current and future readers’ needs in the midst of demographic and population shifts, some Wikimedians stress that attracting new users is crucial for the continuation of the movement.\(^{193}\) A few said that special efforts should be made to educate the general audience about how Wikipedia works, including outreach to all ages, geographies, and education levels.\(^{194}\) Some Wikimedians stress that raising awareness about how Wikipedia works and promoting it in low-awareness regions will strengthen its mission.\(^{195}\) Representation with respect to language and geography is crucial to Wikimedia’s continued success, including incorporating local viewpoints and accommodating readers from a non-Western background.\(^{196}\) Technological innovations may better attract new users by providing content in more accessible
formats like mobile,\textsuperscript{197} and \textbf{language pluralism and translation} can help engage non-English speakers.\textsuperscript{198}

\textbf{See Cycle 3 Summary Report}

\textsuperscript{197} 61 32 24 36 24
\textsuperscript{198} 35 90 29 91 34
Appendix

Synthesis Reports

- **WMF All-Hands Summary Report** (Jan 2017)
- **Cycle 1 Synthesis Report, methodology, and resulting 5 themes** (Mar-Apr 2017)
- **Wikimedia Conference Summary Report** (Mar 2017)
- **Cycle 2 Synthesis Report** (May-Jun 2017)
- **New Voices Synthesis Report** (Mar-Jul 2017)
- **Cycle 3 Synthesis Report** (Jul-Aug 2017)
- **Wikimania Summary Report** (Aug 2017)

Source Pages (Compiled)

- **Cycle 1 Source Pages** (Mar-Apr 2017)
- Cycle 2 Source Pages (May-Jun 2017)
- **Cycle 3 Source Pages** (Jul-Aug 2017)

Final Direction

- **Strategic Direction** (Sept 2017)