

Wikimedia Hubs: one-page brief¹

"Hubs" is a name for organizational units in the Wikimedia movement supporting more than one volunteer community. They are [a recommendation of the Movement Strategy](#). The idea of Hubs responds to the desire to share power, moving more decision-making closer to the communities involved. They are also expected to bring greater efficiency when working within a region or a theme, compared to the current model centralized in the Wikimedia Foundation.

So far, there are no clear definitions, roles, or responsibilities set for "Hubs". The roles and responsibilities of hubs will be defined in [the upcoming Movement Charter](#). With the drafting of that charter on the near horizon, now is a time to share thoughts about what those roles and responsibilities could and should be.

Hubs are imagined to be regional (geographic, e.g. Central Eastern Europe) and thematic (topic, e.g. GLAM). Hubs are expected to fill several roles: legal support; resource allocation (grantmaking); capacity building; inter-group coordination; technology development; mentorship; evaluation services, and more.

It is expected that different hubs will fulfill different roles, according to their needs, maturity, and resources. Some roles (e.g. grantmaking) may require the creation of legal entities. Other roles may be fulfilled by hubs that are not backed by a legal entity, and are entirely volunteer-based.

Open questions

- **Value:** what is the benefit of becoming a hub over the status quo?
- **Lifecycle:** how do hubs come into being? How do they get 'promoted' to enable more resourcing and the taking on of additional roles? How do they get 'demoted' or disbanded if proven ineffective?
- **Minimum roles:** is there a minimal set of roles a hub must fulfill?
- **Exclusivity:** could there be more than one hub for a region or a theme? If so, do they compete for resources based on performance?
- **Coverage:** must all funded work in a region or topic go through the respective hub?
- **Conflict of Interest:** can affiliate board members also be decision-makers in their respective regional hub? If so, how to manage COI? If not, who would be decision-makers in the regional hub?
- **Support:** who trains the trainers? Who ensures hubs have the expertise to offer their constituent communities?
- **Entitlement:** are hubs automatically entitled to certain things over the served communities "under" them (within a region or a theme)? Do served communities opt into a relationship with a Hub or are they automatically assigned?
- **Coordination between hubs:** when projects span multiple hubs' focus areas.

¹ Created on 27 October 2021 as a supporting document for the Hubs Co-creation workshop.