



PRESS RELEASE | 15 FEBRUARY 2022

Wiki Loves Africa 2022 competition challenges how *Home and Habitat* across Africa is perceived on Wikipedia

Wiki Loves Africa 2022 – one of Africa's largest photographic competitions – launches to visually celebrate Home and Habitat across Africa. Photographers, videographers, filmmakers and audiophiles (professionals and skilled amateurs) are invited to enter. Entries illustrate Wikipedia articles. Prizes totaling USD7000 to be won..

Cape Town, South Africa, 15 February 2022 — Wiki Loves Africa, the annual photography and media competition, is open for entries. This year, professional and amateur photographers, videographers, filmmakers and audiophiles are invited to submit entries under the theme of *Home and Habitat*.

Wiki Loves Africa has challenged the distorting lens of Western media stereotypes since 2014. It encourages people across the continent to change the visual narrative, close the gaps and alter global perceptions of "Africa " on Wikipedia (and beyond).

"A single image holds immense power. This power has been welded with dire consequences to paint a negative 'single story' of Africa. That power can also be used to positive effect. Wiki Loves Africa ensures that the myriad stories of "Africa" are captured and shared. Not just with Wikipedia's global audience but, more importantly with the people from the continent," says Isla Haddow-Flood, Wiki Loves Africa co-creator.

The focus on Home and Habitat this year is a natural progression after last year's Health + Wellness. This year's theme invites photographers and artists to visually explore what *home* means, how it reflects our identity, and how it integrates with the larger environments that we inhabit. In the era of COVID the concept of *home* as either a physical or emotional space, a place of permanence, safety or solace, has been both challenged and reinforced by enforced lockdowns.



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Competitors are asked to explore the many aspects of home and habitat, including, but not limited to, types and uses of residence, locations, institutions, and communities, as well as the traditional or contemporary architectural structures, aesthetic choices, design details and construction materials that make up and distinguish a house or community. Habitat is not limited to community or humans, and we are excited to receive reflections of animals at 'home' or in their natural environments.

Since 2014 Wiki Loves Africa has facilitated the addition of 73,000 alternative 'African' perspectives to the Wikipedia free licenced media library, Wikimedia Commons. Wikipedia's more than 55 million articles (in 2021) can be accessed in over 300 languages, for free, and without advertisements, all created by volunteers. Not every image that is entered for Wiki Loves Africa illustrates a Wikipedia article. Only 1 in 7 distinct images have made it onto a Wikipedia page, but these images have been collectively viewed **942 million** times. This equates to nearly 1 billion opportunities where a previously negative or biased perspective of Africa or Africans has been revised, reviewed or altered.

"The relatively easy task of uploading images to an information mega portal, like Wikipedia, provides Africans with an opportunity to share their 'Africa', their identity, contemporary reality, and rich heritage," said Florence Devouard, Wiki Loves Africa co-creator. "The lack of African representation online can only be changed by Africans. Wiki Loves Africa is a fun, easy way to do that,"

Wiki Loves Africa not only changes how Africa is perceived, it provides a very necessary visible platform to grow the skills of African professional photographers who are eager to present their visual artistry to the world. Over 9,000 photographers from 53 countries have submitted entries throughout Wiki Loves Africa's history. This is no mean feat in a region where access to and access for professional photographers is notoriously low. World Press Photo's annual competition laments that 2% of its global entries are submitted from Africa.



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Wiki Loves Africa is open for entries until 15 April. Entries are accepted from anywhere on the globe, but must represent 'Africa' and the theme of Home & Habitat. There are multiple events being hosted by **30 local volunteer Wikimedia communities** across Africa. All entries must be released under a free licence and uploaded via Wikimedia Commons, the media library for Wikipedia and other Wikimedia knowledge portals.

How to get involved

To enter photographs, videos or audio files to the competition, [please visit the competition portal](#).

To attend a local event or find out more about Wikimedia in your country, [please visit this link providing access to each Wikimedia community](#).

Let others know about the Wiki Loves Africa competition or your entries on social media using #WikiLovesAfrica, and tag @WikiLovesAfrica in your posts.

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PRIZES:

The international prizes are:

- 1st prize: US\$2000
- 2nd prize: US\$1500
- 3rd prize: US\$1000
- Culturally-specific or traditional views of homes, houses or spaces of living : US\$750
- Prize for best quality video: \$1000
- Special Collection (a series of images that tell a story): \$750

Each winner will also receive a pack of Wiki Loves Africa-branded merchandise.

Media release by Wiki In Africa

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NOTES FOR THE EDITOR:

About Wiki Loves Africa

[Wiki Loves Africa](#) (WLA) is a photo contest that takes place annually and is run across the African continent to challenge the relentless negative depiction of "Africa" on global knowledge platforms. Each year the community chooses a universal theme. In 2022 this theme is Home and Habitat.

It encourages the 'crowd' contribution by developing and upskilling African photographers, creatives and cultural practitioners by leveraging the power of the open movement. Their photographic, audio or video entries under a free licence to illustrate the world's largest and most widely accessed knowledge resource, Wikipedia. Through local events and training around the competition, the project actively develops local creative and Wikimedia volunteer communities.

www.wikilovesafrica.net

Wiki Loves Africa facts and figures (Jan 2022)

- There have been 7 contests held annually since 2014
- 72,375 images donated by 9,277 submitters to the Commons under a free licence (CC-BY-SA);
- Wiki Loves Africa images have been viewed 941.5 million times (Jan 2016 - Jan 2022);
- Wiki Loves Africa images are viewed between 23 million and 41 million times each month (depending on the month)
- Wikimedia Communities in 24 African countries have hosted over 300 participation and training events;
- The competition attracted high levels of new contributors, averaging 81% over the years;
- A Wiki Loves Africa prize-winning image was included in *The Journeys Through Our Fragile Heritage* exhibition at UNESCO, Paris; and
- Wiki Loves Africa's ISA tool won the Multimedia category at the WikiData Awards 2019

About Wiki In Africa

Wiki In Africa's mission is to facilitate global access for all to open knowledge that reflects and represents the diverse cultures, peoples, biodiversities, and histories of the African continent and other previously marginalized and disenfranchised communities with the same depth and breadth as other knowledges.

Wiki In Africa is a registered non-profit organisation that is based in South Africa and works across the continent and beyond. During 2022 its focus programs includes [Wiki Loves Africa](#), [Wiki Loves Women](#), [WikiFundj](#), [WikiChallenge African Schools](#), and [WikiAfrica Hour](#).

These focus programs provide engaging and fun opportunities that empower and train interested individuals and communities to collect, develop and contribute educational and cultural knowledge under a free license. The programmes Wiki In Africa creates specifically progress skills acquisition, leadership development, and community building to bridge the content and contribution gap that perpetuates the digital divide that plagues Africa, thus decolonising knowledge and the internet.

www.wikiinafrica.org



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About the Wikimedia Foundation

The Wikimedia Foundation is the nonprofit organisation that operates Wikipedia and the other Wikimedia free knowledge projects. Its vision is a world in which every single human can freely share in the sum of all knowledge. We believe that everyone has the potential to contribute something to our shared knowledge, and that everyone should be able to access that knowledge freely. We host Wikipedia and the Wikimedia projects, build software experiences for reading, contributing, and sharing Wikimedia content, support the volunteer communities and partners who make Wikimedia possible, and advocate for policies that enable Wikimedia and free knowledge to thrive.

www.wikimediafoundation.org