

The Content Partnerships Hub – Needs assessment report 2022

[Introduction](#)

[Why we decided to conduct interviews](#)

[Method](#)

[Result](#)

[Support for collaboration](#)

[Management and communication](#)

[Technical skills and tools](#)

[Funding and staff](#)

[Documentation](#)

[Conclusions](#)

[Links](#)

Wikimedia Sverige

% Internetstiftelsen i Sverige · Hammarby Kaj 10 D · SE-120 32 Stockholm

Organisationsnr 802437-8310 · Bankgiro 5822-9915 · info@wikimedia.se · https://wikimedia.se

Introduction

To reach the goal of the Wikimedia platforms as the obvious choice for making knowledge free and available we need to expand the work with existing and potential partners across the globe. This is stated in the Wikimedia movement's strategic direction of Knowledge as a service:

“To serve our users, we will become a platform that serves open knowledge to the world across interfaces and communities. We will build tools for allies and partners to organize and exchange free knowledge beyond Wikimedia. Our infrastructure will enable us and others to collect and use different forms of free, trusted knowledge.”

We made 27 interviews during the autumn of 2021 and 8 more until the end of February 2022, totaling 35 interviews with 50 people from different parts of the Wikimedia movement. With the respondents we discussed the current status and what the needs are for successful content partnerships. The purpose has been to provide insights on what proposals should be developed and prioritize between different solutions. We have both actively contacted respondents based on geographical and thematic spread, while ensuring that anyone who has shown interest in participating in the discussions has been able to do so. We have had a greater focus on people with experience outside Europe as we have knowledge and familiarity with conditions within Europe.

Why we decided to conduct interviews

There are many ways that people learn about partnerships with the Wikimedia platforms. We have knowledge spread out on all of the platforms, but especially on [Meta-Wiki](#) for affiliates, networks and user groups. We have several [Wikimedia Events](#) and information and knowledge in a broad variety of communication channels including social media, newsletters, email lists, live broadcasts and so on.

The information and knowledge is vast and valuable, but it is very hard to find and understand and not always updated. This is not a problem unique to Wikimedia. The movement has identified the need to develop relevant support structures and new solutions to tackle the problems and

challenges that we will face when expanding our content partnership collaborations. This has been discussed in the conversation for the Wikimedia strategic direction.

We need to build up support for new people, existing skilled contributors, organizations, institutions and companies. The discussions we have had with Wikimedia affiliates and volunteers across the Wikimedia movement has allowed us to learn about the current needs, wants and existing experience. The knowledge we have gathered has helped us to ongoingly review the existing structure and processes and the needs for new ones that we are experimenting with as part of the hub. This process has also helped us to build a valuable network across the movement. We hope that this report will further help to increase the understanding of the content partnerships in the Wikimedia movement.

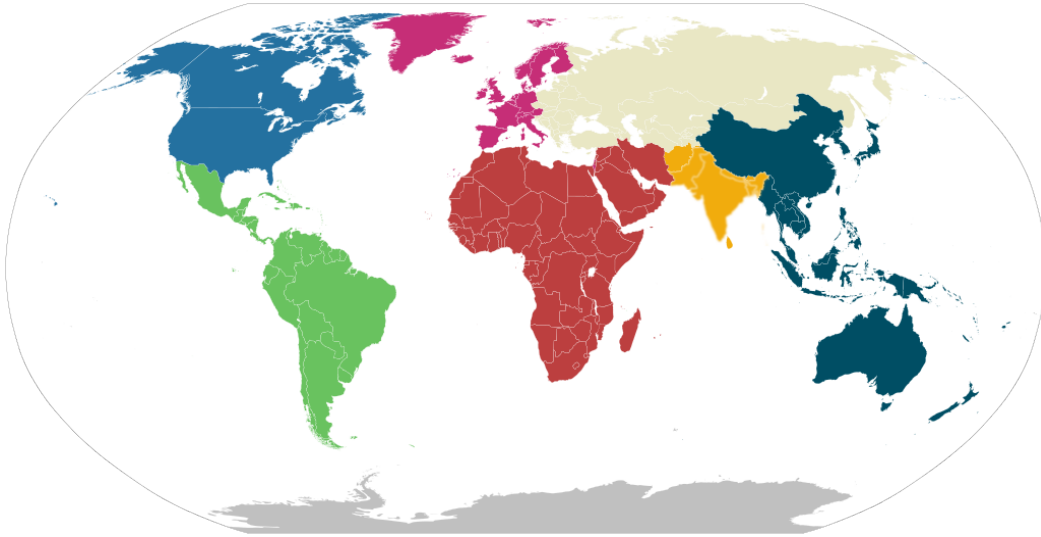
Method

We have conducted interviews focusing on three areas where we took notes together directly during the meetings. The issues have since been processed according to five key themes from the needs identified by participants and the support they requested. The method has been to start from current work and identify the needs that exist and then discuss what a possible support could look like. The notes are also complemented with video recordings in some cases.

We worked with three main questions in the interviews and discussions:

- What are the experiences and best practices from earlier work with content partnership?
- What are the main needs in the future to develop or expand work with partners?
- What would good and efficient support practically look like?

If a need was not identified it does not mean that the need does not exist, it simply did not emerge during the conversations. We have selected people for interviews and discussions with a view to geographical diversity. The respondent affiliates are people who work or are connected to the movement around the world and here we use the same division as for [Wikimedia Funds Regions](#).



Region	Number of affiliates interviewed
Middle East and Africa	9
South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC)	2
East, Southeast Asia, and Pacific (ESEAP)	4
Latin America (LATAM) and The Caribbean	3
United States and Canada	3
Northern and Western Europe	7
Central and Eastern Europe (CEE) and Central Asia	4
Global	3

Middle East and Africa	South Asia	East, Southeast Asia, and Pacific (ESEAP)
Wikimedia South Africa – notes	Wikimedia Bangladesh – notes	Wikimedia Australia – notes
Wikimedia User Group Nigeria – notes	WMF/Punjabi Wikimedian – notes	Wikimedia Indonesia – notes
Wikimedians of Cameroon User Group – notes		Wikimedia User Group of Aotearoa New Zealand – notes
Wikimedia Community User Group Tanzania – notes		Wikimedia Taiwan – notes
Wikimedia User Group Rwanda – notes		
Wikimedians in Morocco – notes		
Wikimedians of Democratic Republic of Congo User Group – notes		
Wikimedia Kenya User Group – notes		
Dagbani Wikimedians User Group – notes		

Latin America (LATAM) and The Caribbean	United States and Canada	Northern and Western Europe
Wikimedia Chile – notes	The Wikipedia Library – notes	Wikimedia Norge – notes
Wikimedia Caribbean User Group – notes	Wiki Project Med – notes	Wikimedia Belgium – notes
Wikimedia México – notes	Wikimedia Education – notes	Wikimedia España and Amical Wikimedia – notes
		AvoinGLAM – notes
		Wikimedian in Residence – notes
		Wikimedian in Residence – notes
		Wikimedia Deutschland – notes

Central and Eastern Europe (CEE) and Central Asia	Global
Wikimedia Eesti – notes	Women in Red – notes
Wikimedia Česká republika – notes	Developer – notes
Wikimedia Serbia – notes	Researcher – notes
Wikimedia Ukraine – notes	

Result

The needs and requested support from the [interviews and discussions are processed](#) and then structured here in five themes. The italicized text in the tables are quotes from the interview notes. These five themes contain several suggestions that can be linked to the work we do in the [Content Partnerships Hub](#):

1. Support for collaboration
2. Management and communication
3. Technical skills and tools
4. Funding and staff
5. Documentation

Support for collaboration



Support for collaboration

A clear need is increased opportunities for global and site-independent collaborations. It could be a platform for working groups and a network for collaboration that can be used by everyone in the movement.

Needs of interviewees	Support requested	Fulfillment of these needs
<p>Collaboration (34 requests)</p> <p>A lot of the needs could be solved if we worked together and in a more broad way could share resources and experiences. A platform for working groups and a network for collaboration that could be used by everyone in the movement.</p> <p><i>“Being able to recruit people to add content to the projects. Partnering with other chapters to collaborate on Wikidata. Working together to get more</i></p>	<p>Work more together</p> <p>The requested support is about how we can find knowledge and extended resources. Some resources can be better structured and others issues can be solved with personal contacts.</p> <p><i>“Setting up a network within the movement for partnerships. Both regional and wider areas need to be connected. Building a family for support when problems arise or when questions need to be sorted out. The community is both volunteers and staff, and we should network and build on that.”</i></p>	<p>Content Partnerships Hub</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Global projects and start investigating possibilities for joint commitments • Helpdesk as a gateway for those interested in content partnerships • Working groups platform for the development of limited collaborations <p>Others</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Let's Connect • International Wikimedia events

<p><i>out of the collaborations. Get training on working with Wikidata.”</i></p> <p><i>“Setting up a network within the movement for partnerships. Both regional and wider areas need to be connected. Building a family for support when problems arise or when questions need to be sorted out. The community is both volunteers and staff, and we should network and build on that.”</i></p>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Wikimedians in Residence Exchange Network
<p>Sharing knowledge and skills (19 requests)</p> <p>There is a need for the ability to share more knowledge and to increase skills between affiliates in the movement.</p> <p><i>“To be able to practice together in the situations that arise is a good way to solve problems.”</i></p> <p><i>“Need experiences from others to show impact. Show stats and what has been done in other parts of the world to have new and potential partners see what works. Build a pool of examples.”</i></p> <p><i>“Having access to a hotline where help and hands could be provided. Getting extra eyes to look at scripts and meta data matching to see if things could be done in a better way or with smarter tools. Formal/informal mentorship to get knowledge transfer going between community members. Both central and distributed points of contacts and list of ongoing projects.”</i></p>	<p>Mentorship and partnership programs</p> <p>Preferably implemented through global or thematic projects. A platform with the opportunity to contact people who have experience from different types of content partnerships can be a way to start the work.</p> <p><i>“Better coordination between chapters/user groups/communities to help each other and plan for future and current partnerships. Better cooperation with the Commons community for discussions in license questions or deletion discussions.”</i></p>	<p>Content Partnerships Hub</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Helpdesk both to get help and the opportunity to help others <p>Others</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Let’s Connect • International Wikimedia events • Wikimedians in Residence Exchange Network

Management and communication



Management and communication

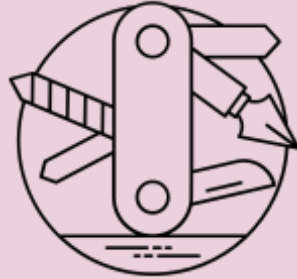
Being able to clearly control and manage work processes based on time and resources is important to reach the set goals

Needs of interviewees	Support requested	Fulfillment of these needs
<p>Communication (30 requests)</p> <p>An ongoing process to develop the current infrastructure and communicate its needs and find solutions to be able to grow in the future.</p> <p><i>“Clear expectations and agreements about what should be done and who can do what.”</i></p> <p><i>“It’s hard for new contacts to know what</i></p>	<p>Best practice</p> <p>A working method or set of working methods that is tried and tested and best used when starting and working in new projects.</p> <p><i>“Partnership champion who can run projects and partnerships. Tech support in building templates, data clean up and such.”</i></p> <p><i>“Better coordination between chapters/user groups/communities to help each other and plan for future and current partnerships. Better</i></p>	<p>Content Partnership Hub</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Working groups • Communication <p>Others</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Leadership Development Working Group

<p><i>will come out of working with the wikimedia movement, and if that can be compiled it will help. Setting up a bank of common resources to use for presentations."</i></p>	<p><i>cooperation with the Commons community for discussions in license questions or deletion discussions."</i></p>	
<p>Project management (29 requests)</p> <p>Project management is the use of specific knowledge, skills, tools and techniques to deliver something of value to people.</p> <p>Understanding how to manage a project with a content partner and knowing what information they need.</p> <p><i>"Need for training, technical, legal and project management support. Most volunteers can write articles, but do not have the technical skills to set up or manage the project."</i></p> <p><i>"Project management training in order to run collaborations better. Both how to negotiate and implement projects, but also how to write contracts and how to avoid conflicts and sort out when projects don't go as planned."</i></p>	<p>Methods and planning</p> <p>Courses and opportunities to study project management focusing on content partnerships.</p> <p>How the project's plans work and how it can be presented to the partner in a successful way..</p> <p><i>"Best: "Clear outcome for all involved partners. A list of monuments or an uploaded collection is a clear outcome. Money that does not have a decided use is not a clear outcome. Second best: Indirect outcome can be a dataset and resources to hire someone to build a list to be used for a photo contest. Third: Not really clear what should be done or who should do it, trying to avoid these partnerships."</i></p>	<p>Content Partnerships Hub</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Working groups <p>Others</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • WikiLearn
<p>Promotional material (23 requests)</p>	<p>A set of marketing material</p> <p>A set of images and marketing</p>	<p>Content Partnership Hub</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Helpdesk • Capacity building

<p>Marketing materials that are easy to understand, customize and can be used globally.</p> <p><i>"In order for a partnership to be successful, it is necessary to present to them the benefits that they will have from the achieved cooperation. Communication should be open, up-to-date, regularly informing them about the achieved results and progress of the project."</i></p>	<p>materials designed to attract customers and easy to customize and use.</p> <p><i>"Showcase material and good examples to show impact. Need to build internal capacity before reaching out further. Diversifying knowledge within the UG to offer more to partners. Resources to build up a strong offer to partners."</i></p> <p><i>"We would be happy to do some cross promotion/translation of articles/descriptions of GLAMs and GLAM material."</i></p> <p><i>"Develop more ways to work with visualizations."</i></p>	<p>Others</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identity guidelines
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Technical skills and tools



Technical skills and tools

Being able to understand and handle tools makes a lot of work easier and more efficient. It is absolutely necessary for large amounts of data.

Needs of interviewees	Support requested	Fulfillment of these needs
<p>Media upload (26 requests)</p> <p>Development, maintenance and responsibility for tools are requested when working with tools and uploading files to Wikimedia Commons.</p> <p><i>"Improvement of tools to make it easier to use. Tools like PATTYPAN need to be easy enough to use by any volunteer or GLAM employee. As laws are national it's easier to do it yourself. Info pages and flyers could be created to use to inform partners."</i></p>	<p>Technical competence</p> <p>The tools for uploads and other related content partnerships tools must work. It has been clear that this is one of the most important parts of the relationship with the partners.</p> <p><i>"Some technical help to make tools easier to work with. Some way to find help from other chapters when WMF is busy and unable to provide enough support or grants on time. Building relations with chapters through other projects like WikiGap and contacts found during Wikimedia Summit and such events."</i></p>	<p>Content Partnership Hub</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Software development for long-term work. • Helpdesk to solve needs in the near-term. • Capacity building, both by organizing trainings to teach people to use the tools and improve documentations to allow people to learn by themselves

<p><i>"Some helpful tools exist, but more support is needed to help better on how to use them. Setting up community support packages with recorder and computer to allow for recording languages for Lingua Libre."</i></p> <p><i>"Support in training to build up more technical experience and using tools. Easier to find case studies that are more developed in details and the full length of i.e. an upload. Instructional material for external partners and what they should be able to do in a partnership."</i></p> <p><i>"Where to find the best technical solutions for how to upload images and metadata. Help converting tools to be usable by other countries/communities and institutions. Cross promotion/translation of articles/descriptions of GLAMs and GLAM material."</i></p>	<p><i>"An enthusiastic marketing person who will act as an intermediary to unlock photo collections and convince professional photographers to sign over copyright – they will already have a relationship with people in the area being covered."</i></p> <p><i>"Tech resources are needed to be able to do more uploads. More developers and setting a good workflow. Not planning for training institutions to do uploads themselves, but keeping the option in mind."</i></p>	
<p>Data upload (24 requests)</p> <p>Help with metadata uploading to Wikidata or structured data to Wikimedia Commons.</p> <p><i>"Help with technical uploads and with extracting data from databases to make it available on Wikidata. We do have a lack of tech/developers in the community and it is hard to do training in data uploads as there are not that many volunteers who are interested in working with that."</i></p> <p><i>"The ability to do mass uploads and to have the possibility to work with</i></p>	<p>Technical competence</p> <p>Many steps have to be repeated or done with a certain control when developing the competence.</p> <p><i>"Support in training from experienced chapters within the movement in doing uploads and other technical stuff. Learning how to run all parts of projects. Looking at different databases with open APIs. Having the hub help connect data to Wikidata would be great."</i></p> <p><i>"Support in maintaining projects is found within the developer community, with some larger and some smaller groups. Everytime a new release</i></p>	<p>Content Partnership Hub</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Data uploads is in practice the beginning of the process of refining information into knowledge

<p><i>programmers. Work with data for example places. "Round-tripping" - for example, an institution provides content or data, and can use the Wikimedia infrastructure to enable their project, analysis or content presentation."</i></p>	<p><i>is up for deployment there is a need to find users on all platforms to help testing that nothing breaks."</i></p>	
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Funding and staff



Funding and staff

All projects and organizations need resources. It is desirable if we can identify more areas where we can collaborate globally in a sustainable way.

Needs of interviewees	Support requested	Fulfillment of these needs
<p>Infrastructure (27 requests)</p> <p>There is a difference in what different respondents mean and need when it comes to funding and resources. The basic infrastructure as systems, services, transport and power supplies, that a country or organization uses in order to work effectively.</p> <p><i>“We also lack the internet. That’s our largest handicap, internet access. It’s expensive – and of poor quality.”</i></p>	<p>Resources</p> <p>Better internet connection, office space and the capability to have more employees. More advanced technical equipment and the ability to maintain a working infrastructure.</p> <p><i>“More funding. Would like to offer resources to small partners who cannot fund that themselves. Both meeting rooms, food and drinks. Would also like to be able to offer (paying for) web space, servers and tech support.”</i></p>	<p>Content Partnership Hub</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Working groups <p>Others</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Wikimedia Foundation Funds
<p>Funding (23 requests)</p>	<p>Fundraising</p>	<p>Content Partnership Hub</p>

<p>An economic or productive factor, such as people, materials, revenue, technology, and other assets that are available to accomplish an activity and achieve the desired outcome.</p> <p>There is a need for more resources through funding. There is a desire to grow and expand in the field of content partnership.</p> <p><i>“Need to have long term planning in order to work with government institutions as they have a yearly budget that needs to be set the year before. Hard to plan that long ahead when only volunteers are working for the UG.”</i></p>	<p>Money given by a government, an organization or a company for an event or activity. Very often it means grants from Wikimedia Foundation. Support wanted when supply for funding.</p> <p><i>“Financial support in the form of rapid grants or annual grants. Both from WMF or from gov organizations. Could also be in-kind support in form of broadband connections or help with transportation or a place to be.”</i></p> <p><i>“There is a desire to grow in the work with content partnerships. The main request here is how to increase the financial possibilities. Marketing material can be developed from best practices and case studies. A common portfolio that can be shared is desirable.”</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Working groups <p>Others</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Wikimedia Foundation Funds
<p>Office and staff (21 requests)</p> <p>An office where people can work in a room or part of a building. With usual office equipment and computers.</p> <p><i>“a. Office space b. Staff c. Operational cost.”</i></p> <p><i>“Getting a contractor or someone able to have meetings and do training during their normal work hours.”</i></p>	<p>Employees and meeting rooms</p> <p>Office facilities and administrative help that can secure the the implementation of the project</p> <p><i>“Setting up community support packages with recorder and computer to allow for recording languages for Lingua Libre. Also need to find a quiet environment to get good audio when recording. Combining recording with getting photos of the environment when also travelling and visiting other areas and institutions.”</i></p>	<p>Content Partnership Hub</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Working groups <p>Others</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Wikimedia Foundation Funds

Documentation



Documentation

There is a lot of documentation on our platforms, but it needs to be better structured, up-to-date and easily accessible in the perspective of content partnerships.

Needs of interviewees	Support requested	Fulfillment of these needs
<p>Templates and guidelines (19 requests)</p> <p>A set of rules that is used as a pattern for producing other similar things and can be used across the platforms.</p> <p><i>"Standardized workflow and documentation to support partnerships."</i></p> <p><i>"Lack of map or platform to showcase earlier successful partnerships and shared collections to potential partners. A great portfolio would help to open up</i></p>	<p>Guidelines and templates</p> <p>There are different ways and processes for learning things. What is demanded is more of a joint commitment with specific conditions.</p> <p><i>"Best arguments for releasing material under free licenses and allowing for others to use as they want to. Material to get institutions to understand what the Wikimedia movement is all about. Knowledge about copyright is a problem as some institutions are not really clear in what it is and how to put correct licenses on material."</i></p>	<p>Content Partnership Hub</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Working groups

<p>conversations. Could be a global shared platform for all chapters/user groups to use. Repository for shared tools and documents to be used by GLAM organizers in the Wikimedia projects. Shared photos to be used in promoting partnerships.”</p>	<p>”A. Access to previous work and experience on the same project B. Availability of resources C. A thorough understanding of the needs of your partner.”</p>	
<p>Case studies (17 requests)</p> <p>A detailed account giving information about the development of a person, group, or thing, especially in order to show general principles.</p> <p><i>“Being able to easily find out how others have done a successful project is a good help along the way.”</i></p> <p><i>“Need experiences from others to show impact. Show stats and what has been done in other parts of the world to have new and potential partners see what works. Build a pool of examples. It’s hard for new contacts to know what will come out of working with the Wikimedia movement, and if that can be compiled it will help. Setting up a bank of common resources to use for presentations.”</i></p> <p><i>“Lot of work to raise awareness about free knowledge and free licenses.”</i></p>	<p>Case studies</p> <p>A learning situation where we simultaneously build knowledge together from real cases. Sharing is essential.</p> <p><i>“Improved documentation would help GLAM cooperations. Finding out how others work and in what ways they are doing projects. Seeing and understanding the links between uploads, pages created, project pages where the results are documented.”</i></p> <p><i>“Case studies, best practices and guidelines for the process. A durable and sustainable program.”</i></p> <p><i>“Resources (people) and funding, benefits for volunteers Tools for data and media uploads. Information about licenses to help educate partners and have them release material/data under free licenses.”</i></p>	<p>Content Partnership Hub</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Working groups
<p>Statistics (16 requests)</p> <p>Tools to collect numerical facts or measurements and it can be both the tools and the basics</p>	<p>Statistical tools</p> <p>Knowledge of the powerful tools available and how these can be used. Preferably with good examples of how</p>	<p>Content Partnership Hub</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Working groups

<p>statistic to be used and to be understood.</p> <p><i>“Good data! The need to explain the benefit for the publishers with stats and examples.”</i></p>	<p>others use and present statistics.</p> <p><i>“Having 70+ partnerships makes it hard to keep track of all contacts and to make sure they each get the feedback and impact data needed to keep the publishers happy.”</i></p>	
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Conclusions

The information presented in this report has been collected through conversations and discussions in short meetings. It is obvious that there are many needs in the work with content partnerships that we could and should work on more together. Reflecting on the daily work with perspectives on the needs and how a support may look like in the future triggers thoughts of change. A good way to increase the scope of the business is to find new collaborations where all parties can benefit from developing together and also have common goals.

Businesses that are open, transparent and non-profit can benefit greatly from collaborations. A good way to expand the business is to find collaborations where all parties benefit from development and have common goals without competing for resources. Inviting and easy-to-work platforms for collaboration is essential and we are very familiar with sharing knowledge and information in the movement. What is often missing is resources and enough time.

Collaboration can start with a request to work together in one of the areas where there are proposals from the respondents. This request can initially target affiliates that have resources and can afford to invite others in the process. To get early results the focus can be on smaller task and limited parts of collections and data uploads.

We are working on expanding international partnerships, capacity building, software development, strategic data uploads and forming a helpdesk so that interested Wikimedians can engage more in content partnerships. The existing work must continue to grow and also to adjust in relation to the ever changing needs and new initiatives.

The overall outcome of the needs assessment is that the movement both wants and has the ability to cooperate more globally and this will affect how we organize ourselves and create increased impact.

Links

Content Partnerships Hub – [Needs assessment](#).

Interpretation of [needs and support](#).