

Wikimedia UK: Partners in Open Knowledge

Understanding the impact of our Wikimedians in Residence (2012–2017)

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Cover Image: Museum of Independence situated in Dhaka, Bangladesh depicts the struggle for independence of Bangladesh. Photograph by Pallabkibir. CC BY-SA 4.0. tinyurl.com/y2nq5dqz

(All images within this report are from Wikimedia Commons)

Executive summary

The Wikimedian in Residence programme at Wikimedia UK is now seven years old. The nature and capacity of our partner organisations varied, but all were important cultural or educational institutions.

This publication examines the impact of Wikimedia UK’s Wikimedian in Residence programme, focusing on residencies that took place between 2012 and 2017. Our report considers how the programme developed during that five year period, and what difference it made to partner institutions; looking at how their activities and cultures changed both during and after the residency. Using end-of-project reviews and reflections by the people involved, the study tries to understand the impact of the Wikimedian in Residence programme, and to determine why some outcomes were short-lived while others proved more sustainable. The report builds on an initial assessment completed in 2014.

Our understanding of the impact of the programme changed over time, and sometimes surprised us. In general, the scale of the impact of Wikimedian in Residences exceeded the expectations of both Wikimedia and the host organisations. The evidence from partner organisations and others involved in the programme justifies the following conclusions:

- Wikimedians in Residence enabled existing collections to reach new audiences, and partner institutions have been better able to share their knowledge. This continued once the residencies ended.
- Wikimedians in Residence brought about significant changes to institutions’ external image. Organisations once seen as outdated and ‘out of sync’ with the needs of their users and potential users were able to present themselves as relevant to modern audiences.
- Wikimedians in Residence transformed partner institutions’ culture and self-perception. They became more open and better connected to their audiences.
- The Wikimedian in Residence programme had a multiplier effect. Where collaborations had a broader focus than the partner institutions themselves, the projects often had an impact at a sector-wide level.

Sustainability was one of the desired outcomes of the Wikimedian in Residence programme. Our understanding of ‘sustainability’ evolved - from wanting to maintain the same level of activity, to ensuring that the changes introduced during the project remain in place. We see evidence of sustainability

- in the willingness of past hosts to engage with Wikimedia again,
- in the policies on open knowledge adopted and maintained, and
- in the skills transferred within the organisation and within the sector. (The immersive Wikimedian in Residence experience, for example, enabled partners to acquire the know-how for mass uploads, digitisation or data management projects.)

This research leads us to a series of best practice recommendations for implementation before, during or after a residency:

- Agree clear objectives, but allow for flexibility
- Establish the digital skills level of the partner organisation, and make provision for appropriate levels of training
- Ensure project visibility
- Build communication, transparency and trust
- Recruit appropriately. Residents’ skills, especially soft skills, matter
- Project design must deliver efficiency gains to the host
- Demonstrate the financial value of releasing content openly.

Introduction


Wikimedia UK

Wikimedia UK believes that open access to knowledge is a fundamental right, and a driver for social and economic development. We work with organisations from the cultural and education sectors to unlock content, remove barriers to knowledge, develop new ways of engaging with the public and enable learners to benefit fully from the educational potential of the Wikimedia projects.

The charity's strategic goals from 2016–2019 were to:

- Increase the quality and quantity of coverage of subjects that are currently underrepresented on Wikipedia and the other Wikimedia projects
- Support the development of open knowledge in the UK, by increasing the understanding and recognition of the value of open knowledge and advocating for change at an organisational, sectoral and public policy level
- Support the use of the Wikimedia projects as important tools for education and learning in the UK



 Detail from a large wooden manuscript cabinet from central Thailand showing a scene from the Mahosadha Jataka, one of the last Ten Birth Tales of the Buddha. British Library, Foster 1057. Public Domain. tinyurl.com/y3sqf5dn



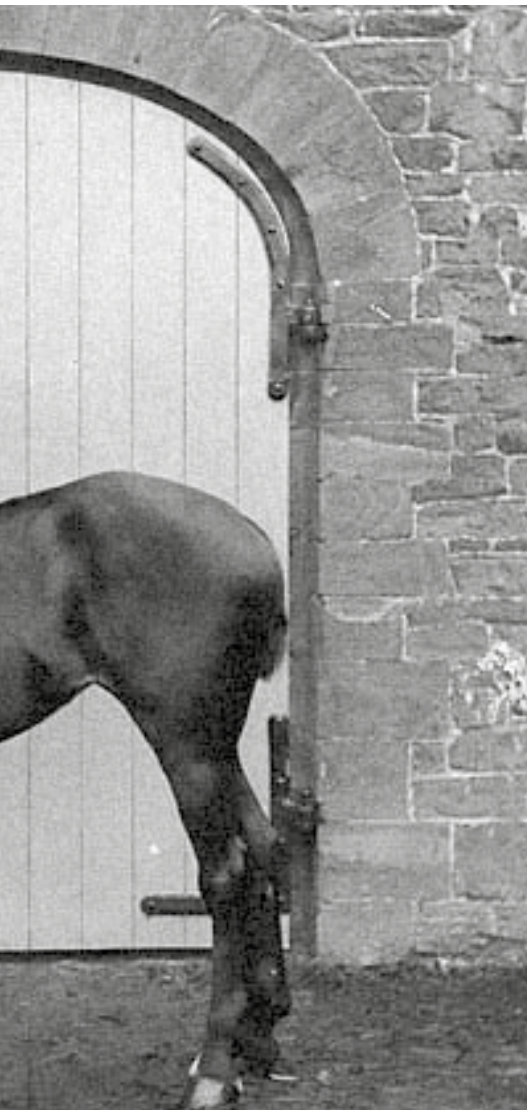
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The role of a Wikimedian in Residence

The Wikimedian in Residence programme is the key activity through which Wikimedia UK builds partnerships with major cultural and educational institutions.

The programme is made up of individual fixed-term residencies organised and facilitated by us, and delivered in partnership with other organisations. Each project is primarily delivered by a resident who is recruited and hosted by the partner institution with support and input from Wikimedia UK. Within this placement, the resident delivers a wide range of activities. These are guided by the specific goals of the project, but often include:

- Creating understanding of how Wikimedia projects work
- Advocating for open knowledge within the host institution
- Contributing to policies, systems and processes which allow greater engagement with open knowledge
- Designing and delivering training to enable host staff and volunteers to contribute their knowledge and expertise to Wikimedia projects
- Working with staff to identify areas of Wikipedia and sister projects that can be enriched with resources and knowledge from the partner organisation
- Working with staff to identify key areas of the organisation's collections and other content that could be released under an open licence
- Giving training in advanced digital literacy skills



The evolution of the programme

Residencies have been delivered with varying degrees of support and supervision from Wikimedia UK. The first ever Wikimedian in Residence position started at the British Museum in 2010. By 2012, Wikimedia UK had put in place a systematic Wikimedian in Residence programme supported by the charity's newly-established staff team. The British Library residency, which began in May 2012, can be seen as a transition case, with Wikimedia UK staff progressively more involved with project delivery. The British Library project also helped us understand what skills are needed for a successful residency. Initially technical skills were seen as the most valuable, but as the British Library project progressed, it became clear that facilitation, advocacy and knowledge transfer skills were even more important. The chapter developed documentation that could be used to support subsequent residencies, such as a partnership agreement clarifying expectations of the project. Over the period 2013–14 we also created job descriptions, inductions, monthly reporting templates, review meetings and other mechanisms to support, deliver, monitor and evaluate residencies.

Since then, new residencies have been preceded by in-depth partnership discussions to establish strategic and cultural synergies. Mutually agreed project aims form the basis of the partnership agreement¹, with these aims are usually incorporated into the job description for the resident. To help with knowledge transfer and sharing best practice, we organise extensive inductions for newly appointed residents and networking with other residents as well as the wider Wikimedia community. The anticipated programme outcomes form the basis of regular programme reviews, and allow for more focused reflection and evaluation.

¹ https://wikimedia.org.uk/wiki/File:Example_WiR_agreement.pdf



2014 programme review

In 2014, after two years of running the programme, Wikimedia UK undertook a research project which focused on improvements in efficiency and effectiveness of residencies while they were being delivered. The learning from that review fed into operational changes in how Wikimedia UK sets up, manages and supports Wikimedian in Residences in the UK. The key findings were:

- Longer residencies are more impactful. Residencies with an ambition to change the institution's culture should last at least six months for small institutions and at least nine months for larger organisations.
- Residents need dedicated Wikimedia support to be effective. This includes in-depth Wikimedia induction and training, coordination and knowledge exchange between residents, and support for using Wikimedia monitoring and evaluation tools.
- The host institutions benefit from more support to set clear expectations at the set up stage. Each residency should have individually set goals.
- Tighter monitoring processes, including regular meetings, help in managing a project's progress and in identifying outcomes.
- Sharing of advice, information and best practice between institutions and between residents strengthens the overall programme and reduces duplication of effort.



Animal doctor (electronic resource): birds and beasts in medical history an exhibition at the Wellcome Institute for the History of Medicine, November 1994. No known copyright restrictions. tinyurl.com/yxsuxy5h

— Communication and training skills, tactfulness and independence are essential for each resident.

The 2014 review helped to clarify our thinking about the programme and how it should be delivered, focusing on improving efficiency and increasing outputs rather than examining potential impact and sustainability. The review also summarised the outcomes of the Residencies to date (see summary of outputs).

The full report is available here: https://wikimedia.org.uk/wiki/Wikimedian_in_Residence_2014_review

2017–18 Evaluation

In this evaluation of our ongoing Wikimedian in Residence programme² we looked at a cohort of institutions whose residencies ended several years ago; enabling us to assess the longer term impact of the programme rather than focus on current initiatives and recent achievements. Our primary research method was a series of structured interviews with ten people from six organisations. Residents and host staff were invited to reflect on the impact of the programme, and to identify specific barriers and enablers to success. At a summit gathering in mid-2017 we also sought further qualitative feedback from past and current Wikimedian in Residences.

The 2017–18 research also referred back to the 2014 programme review to see how changes to delivery introduced at that point influenced the impact we achieved over the following three years.

Inevitably the evaluation is qualitative and based on the expert but subjective testimony of those closest to the Wikimedian in Residence projects. However, the consistency of themes around perceived barriers and observed impact that emerged through the research reassures us that the findings are robust.

² Listed here https://wikimedia.org.uk/wiki/Cultural_partnerships#Current_Wikimedians_in_Residence



Cree Indian. The British Library. Public Domain. tinyurl.com/y69lkude

Summary of outputs

This report focuses on the impact of Wikimedians in Residence several years after they have finished their placements. To give a flavour of what each residency involved, we summarise below the key achievements in a number of partner institutions at the point the project concluded.



Chinese artist, Hong Kong. Wellcome Images.
CC BY 4.0. tinyurl.com/yy2zjnrn

Organisation	Wikimedian in Residence in post	Outputs
British Library	May 2012 to April 2013 (12 months)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Substantial media coverage and publications – A series of guidance documents for academics produced – Over five thousand images from the British Library’s collections were made available on Commons – Around 3,000 Wikipedia pages used images related to the British Library – 62 Wikimedia awareness and editing training sessions delivered to around 400 people – Supported the three-day GLAM-Wiki conference in April 2013, hosted by the British Library for 120 attendees from the cultural sector
Tyne and Wear Archives and Museums	April to June 2013 (3 months)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Work on articles, and image releases was supported during the residency. Exact metrics of content creation were not tracked – External partnerships with several institutions e.g. for events – Wikipedia editing training for staff was linked to the internal ‘Learning at Work’ programme. 27 accounts were created

Natural History Museum/Science Museum	April 2013 to January 2014 (10 months)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – At least 15 projects run with external partners (e.g. Office for National Statistics) – A series of improved process documents created (several not finished) – A trial release of Natural History Museum archive content – The Science Museum has started to open its collection with 50 images of significant objects – 400 photos from the National Media Museum (part of the Science Museum Group) were released – 508 people attended presentations delivered by the resident. 202 were trained to edit – Advocacy work included producing documentation, pilot evidence, and delivering talks advocating open knowledge – The resident worked with Wikimedian in Residences in the US, some of whom don't have the same level of support as the UK residencies
JISC Wikimedia Ambassador	July 2013 to April 2014 (10 months)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Attracted significant mainstream media attention – A main output of the project was an infoKit <i>Crowdsourcing: the wiki way of working</i> – Series of key case studies produced with academics – Leveraging the unique position of Jisc in the education sector, and the Ambassador's existing networks, many links with key institutions were created – A series of workshops for universities about research impact and open education was delivered – Three editathons were organised
York Museums Trust ³	October 2013 to August 2015 (23 months)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Over 400 high-quality images were delivered to Commons, and many reused – Partnership with Museum Development Yorkshire established – All key curators at York Museums Trust were trained to edit Wikipedia. The resident also delivered a range of external talks reaching c. 80 people – The resident delivered three training sessions for staff and volunteers, and a high profile public editathon
National Library of Scotland	July 2013 to March 2015 (23 months)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Significant media attention – Guides for the Library were produced to help explain ways of engagement with Wikimedia – Work aiming to change Library's policy on releasing digitised content continued throughout the residency – Work aiming to change Library's policy on releasing digitised content continued throughout the residency – The project attracted much interest from external organisations, particularly libraries considering releasing content. Resident became a true spokesperson for open knowledge, and was e.g. invited to speak at CERN – An ongoing programme of training events for various departments was delivered – Vast range and amount of events – The resident was involved in attracting volunteers to Wikimedia UK in Scotland via supporting regular meetups, organising joint events, creating a mailing list

³ This project run in two phases – the first focused on York Museums Trust itself, and the second expanded to work on Museum Development Yorkshire, engaging with a network of cultural institutions in the Yorkshire region.

For a full summary of outputs, outcomes and earlier learning about impact see: https://wikimedia.org.uk/wiki/Wikimedian_in_Residence_2014_review#Project_delivery_-_overview_of_the_residencies
Individual end of residency reports are at: https://wikimedia.org.uk/wiki/Cultural_partnerships#Wikimedians_in_Residence

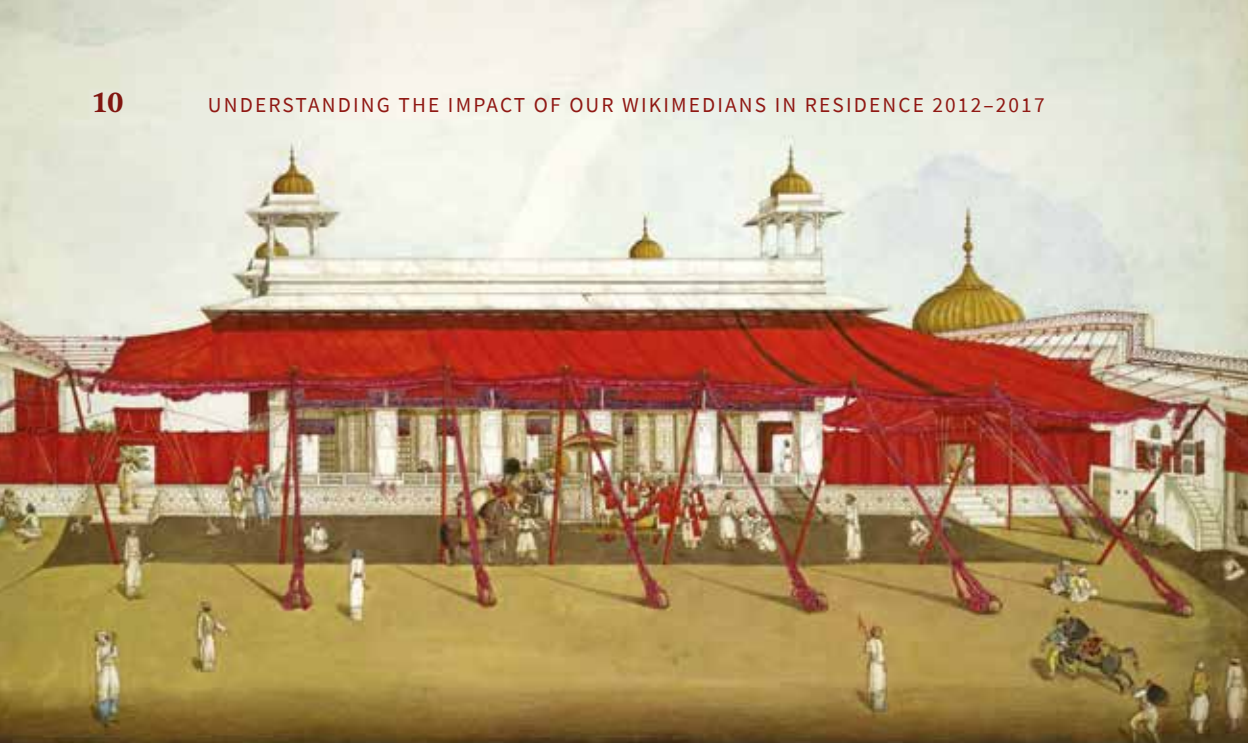
The longer term impact: Changes in institutions, their audiences and networks


Our research uncovered many narratives of change which took place at the host institutions during the course of the programme and after the residencies ended. Some preliminary observations are necessary as described over the next two pages.

There was a great diversity of partner organisations

- The institutions that hosted residencies varied significantly. Some were umbrella organisations looking to facilitate change in their members rather than within their own institution
- Every partner institution had a different starting point and very different attitudes towards open content
- Residents had different levels of support from the partner, for example in the levels of resource available for staff development or organisational learning






 Watercolour of the Divan-i Khass in the Palace in the Delhi Fort, by Ghulam 'Ali Khan, 1817. British Library. Public Domain. tinyurl.com/y3lq9mxw

Changing expectations and perceptions

By examining initial project agreements, final project reports and our recent impact interviews, we discovered that the perception of a residency's impact tended to change significantly with time. What we now see as the most significant impact of the residencies is in many cases quite different to what we thought the projects would achieve. In some cases the residencies didn't meet the expectations set at the beginning of the project. In many cases the interviews conducted several years after the end of a residency revealed different outcomes from those perceived immediately after the residency. Our view of the programme's impact evolved even beyond the formal ending of a project. The strategy of Wikimedia UK has also evolved, and we have redefined how the residency programme fits into our overall strategic framework⁴.

The residency at the British Library illustrates this point clearly. The residency had two main deliverables – the creation of Wikipedia articles and the transfer of Wikipedia skills to staff to enable them to generate content. But at the project's conclusion, the resident saw image releases and staff awareness training as the most significant outcomes⁵. Four years later however, the library believes the project's enduring legacy is that it helped to redefine its public and internal image. Staff training remained significant, but for a different reason. Rather than simply enabling library to edit the Wikimedia projects, it had the more significant effect of developing trust in open knowledge initiatives.



 John Cummings standing in front of a section of the trunk of a giant sequoia tree located at the Natural History Museum. Photograph by Katie Chan. CC BY-SA 3.0. tinyurl.com/y4nm9bmm

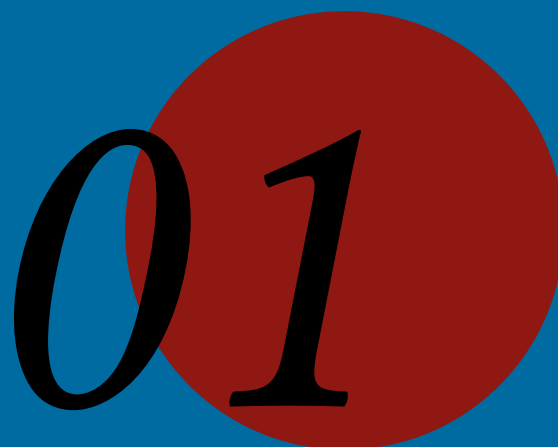
⁴ New strategy adopted for 2016 is here: https://wikimedia.org.uk/wiki/Wikimedia_UK_Strategy_2016%E2%80%9319

⁵ Focusing on information literacy and open knowledge awareness, rather than Wikipedia editing skills.

Understanding Impact

We understand ‘impact’ to mean the effects of a programme that go beyond the immediate changes brought about by the project. Impact is a complex phenomenon, and it is not always possible to establish a direct causal relationship between an action and its impact. Although we can say that the Wikimedian in Residence programme had an influence on the changes set out below, there were almost certainly other, independent contributing factors. In this report we were particularly interested in the impact after the Wikimedian in Residence ‘project’ had formally ended. During our impact interviews, for example, we asked the host institutions how the residency contributed to the subsequent understanding of and participation in open knowledge across the organisation.

We identified four kinds of impact:



Impact on reach

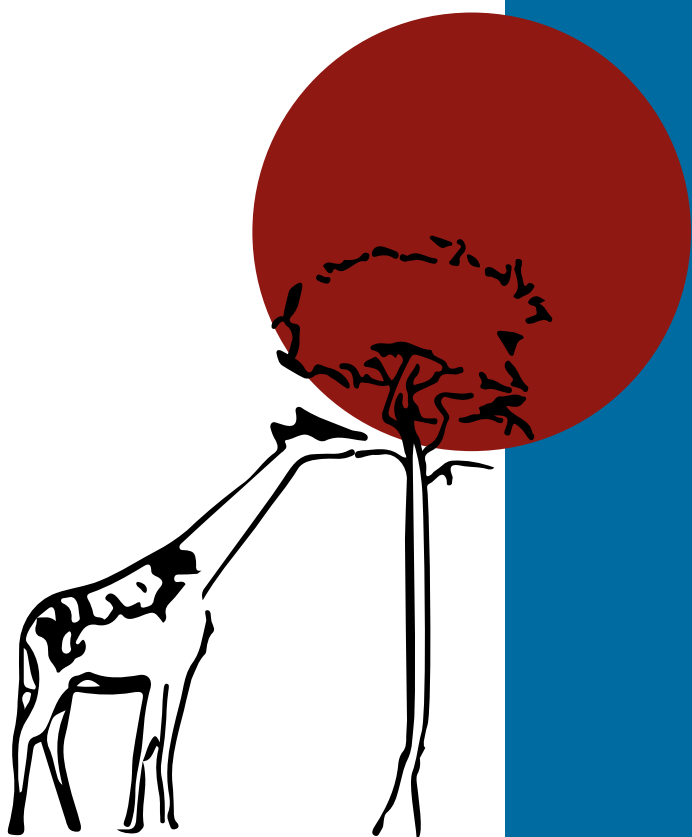
Partnering with Wikimedia, sharing institution’s collections, and uploading images and data to open portals significantly increased audience reach. This effect grows over time. Seeing the reach of collections when working with Wikimedia was recognised as a powerful argument for openness:

Wikipedia is ‘where the light is’, so it makes sense to put the collections there. Digitised and derivative works have had far more views than original works. e.g images uploaded from books (not the books themselves) are being viewed now, where anecdotal evidence suggests that many of the books have not been taken out before.

Mahendra Mahey (Head of British Library Labs, involved in the Wikimedian in Residence project), impact interview July 2017

The statistics of images reused on Wikipedia (released during the residency) are being counted via BagLAMA alongside YouTube views and uses on Internet Archive. These increased numbers are mentioned a lot within the organisation in different contexts, even in conversations with the government.

Gill Hamilton (Digital Access Manager, National Library of Scotland, Wikimedian in Residence’s line manager), impact interview June 2017



Two examples demonstrate the impact on reach. During the residency at the National Library of Scotland, from July 2013 to March 2015, around 1,200 images were uploaded to Wikimedia Commons. This opportunity arose partly because the Library was relicensing materials at the time and was exploring new ways of sharing its content. In the four years from May 2014 to April 2018, these images were seen 96 million times. Perhaps surprisingly, the annual number of views increased year-on-year, from just over 10 million in 2014/15 to over 37 million in 2017/18.

The Tyne and Wear Archives and Museums residency, from April to June 2013, also involved uploading files to Wikimedia Commons. After the residency, the museum made greater use of Creative Commons licensing on their Flickr stream, enabling a volunteer to import those images to Wikimedia Commons. This led to a greater reach for the images, with 71 million views between 2012 and 2017.

The effects of greater access to information doesn't just increase the host institution's metrics for outreach, but can lead to increased global awareness of major issues. This can directly serve an organisation's mission, for example in the case of the Natural History Museum, where the purpose is 'to challenge the way people think about the natural world – its past, present and future. We aim to stimulate public debate about humanity's future and equip our audiences at every level with an understanding of science'.

There are many man-made pressures on the natural world. Species are becoming extinct at 10,000 times the background extinction rate. Education can help to change this situation, to engender understanding and empathy for the natural world. Wikipedia is a powerful tool to educate people about the natural world and man's effects upon it. There are around 400 million pageviews a month of articles about species on English language Wikipedia.

John Cummings (Wikimedian in Residence, Natural History Museum), residency final report May 2014



Impact on external image

Through significant increases in the amount of accessible content, and other disruptive characteristics, the Wikimedian in Residence programme has had a major impact on how host institutions are seen by others. Several organisations believed that their external image moved from 'inaccessible' to 'modern, innovative and user-friendly'. Partners report that this shift in public perception moved the institution away from a persistent, historical image of being outdated and out of sync with the needs of its users and potential users. One example of this is at the National Library of Scotland, which published a book on open access that was deeply influenced and informed by the library's residency and their involvement with Wikimedia UK. This publication is now creating a stir within the community of library professionals in Scotland and signifies a significant change of direction for the institution.


This kind of change was amplified by the amount of media attention attracted by the residencies, both at the starting point and throughout the projects. In this context, press coverage helped to change external perceptions of host institutions:

British Library was seen in the sector as risk averse, but the fact that we hosted a Wikimedian in Residence was a signal that we are open to innovative projects.

Mahendra Mahey (Head of British Library Labs, involved in the Wikimedian in Residence project), impact interview July 2017

Through this change of image the institution can ensure that it is seen as relevant to the needs of modern audiences. The challenge is both to change the traditional models of operating by becoming more open, and to make sure that potential audiences are aware of this change. A residency can help with this challenge by demonstrating and launching projects that engage with a global audience.



 The Siege of Cork. Wellcome Images. CC BY 4.0. tinyurl.com/y4vboxjo



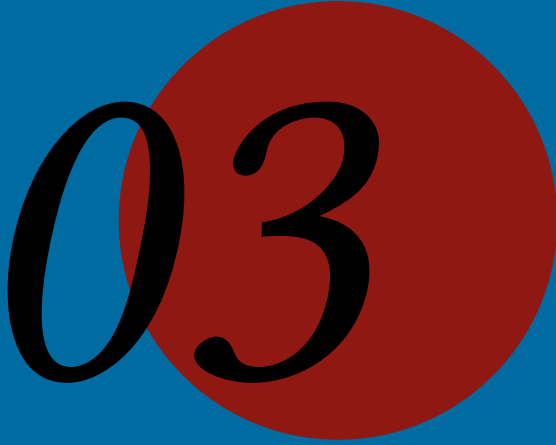
 DNA. British Library. CC BY 2.0. tinyurl.com/y4b4jkbk

One of the great challenges of a 21st century museum is how it embraces technological advances. Museums need to be conservative, to ensure that their holdings will be available (and useful) to many future generations. But museums must also maintain relevance to modern audiences, to scientists studying giant datasets, or to somebody googling information about a species. As a museum we have a clear ambition: to be a voice of authority on the natural world. Technology allows us to advance this ambition, reaching audiences far beyond those who can visit us. The projects run by Wikimedia allow us to engage with a global community who will use, reuse, interpret and add value to our content. In short: Wikimedia provides a platform that allows anyone to become a collaborator with one of the world's great museums.

Ed Baker (Data Researcher, Natural History Museum, involved in the Wikimedian in Residence project), residency final report May 2014

The National Library of Scotland is one of Europe's major research and reference libraries, offering world-class special collections as a rich resource to promote Scotland's unique heritage and distinctive culture. With the many millions of people worldwide who view themselves as Scots, this initiative offers an easy and user-friendly way for Wikipedia users to enhance their learning about Scotland, its people and its place in the world.

Fiona Hyslop (Scottish Culture Secretary), at the launch of the residency project, 2012



Impact on internal culture and perception

Residencies had a significant impact on how organisations see themselves internally. Our research demonstrates that residencies transformed participating institutions' culture and self-perception and allowed them to become more open. Changing people's attitudes and perceptions takes time and requires repeated discussion, refinement and improvement. This process is made possible by a residency, and makes change more sustainable compared with, for example, a one off training session with Wikimedia UK.

A residency can start a conversation on what it means to become a more open organisation, and can stimulate debate on the role of museums and collections within the digital world beyond the 'standard' museum websites. It can also move the argument faster, and become a catalyst for change:

Having a Wikimedian in Residence at the Natural History Museum coincided with a paradigm shift in how we think about our digital content and the start of a project to rapidly digitise the museum's collection of more than 80 million specimens at an industrial scale. Having an advocate for Open Science and a culture of reusable content helped us to frame these projects in a context that makes this work useful to a wider audience. We have also raised the institution's internal understanding of the benefits of open data.

Vince Smith (Research Leader, Natural History Museum), residency final report May 2014

The influence over institutional policy and culture has been enduring in the case of the Natural History Museum, where the Wikimedian in Residence sparked a debate about public engagement at the institution, and influenced a decision to openly license millions of its specimens, which are now being digitised.

Similarly, a residency can help shift culture to 'open by default', addressing scepticism and concerns from stakeholders across the whole of the organisation:

Having the resident hugely increased understanding within the organisation of its role in the open knowledge movement. By actively participating in this programme the Library drove its thinking about openness, policies, across the organisation. That's extremely long lasting and is continuing as the organisation moves towards embracing public domain.

Andrew McDougall (Organisational Development Partner, National Library of Scotland, involved in the Wikimedian in Residence project), impact interview June 2017

The work that a Wikimedian in Residence does is often disruptive in nature. It aims to break down barriers between audiences and institutions. In a traditional cultural heritage environment, those two groups are often very clearly delineated. However a resident will work to make audiences the co-producers rather than passive consumers of knowledge held by their host institution.

In January 2015, for example, the National Library of Wales began a collaboration with Wikimedia to release some of its digital content on an open licence to Wikimedia Commons. This led to an increase in the reuse of these digital images by members of the public, illustrating a need for openness and a global interest in the Library's content. In the two years after the start of the residency, released images were viewed 265 million times on Wikimedia.

Working with a Wikimedian in Residence can help to shift an organisation's internal approach to their own collections. Often the move is from the role of 'guardian' to the role of 'distributor' of knowledge. This will increase the potential for global reach:

The biggest change that the residency introduced was more focus on digital engagement for visitors and visitor co-creation of collections. That change of thinking and perspective was more important than reaching high targets during the residency.

Martin Fell (Digital Team Leader, York Museums Trust, Wikimedian in Residence's line manager), impact interview June 2017

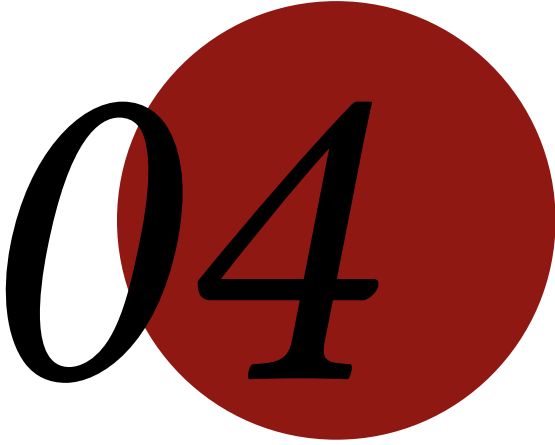
These changes can be consolidated by internal policy or procedure changes, as was the case with the Natural History Museum and its approach to data:

Open Data Exceptions Policy was influenced by Wikimedian in Residence, particularly by his work assessing the impact of Picture Library content versus the commercial value to the organisation. The residency questioned the commercial value of data, as some parts of the organisation strongly believed that all data has commercial value and that our data and digital assets should be closed by default. Now the policy includes official statements on our exceptions, along with examples, and a group responsible for arbitrating over internal disputes, should they arise.

Laurence Livermore (Project Manager, Natural History Museum, involved in the Wikimedian in Residence project), impact interview July 2017

This type of impact can take place in organisations even where there has been a lot of initial resistance to working with open knowledge. Embarking on a residency forces the organisation to discuss its attitude towards openness. Having a tangible project happening within the organisation, with Wikimedia UK regularly evaluating it for concrete outputs, creates a push factor for increasing an institution's commitment to open knowledge.





Impact at scale

One of the more surprising insights gained from this research is that the Wikimedian in Residence collaborations made a difference beyond the partner institutions themselves, with the evidence pointing to a sector wide impact. These impacts provide a multiplier effect. Through the process of running a Wikimedian in Residence programme, the host organisations, motivated by internal cultural changes towards openness, often became spokespeople for open knowledge, sharing their knowledge, skills and experience gained through the programme. This strongly supports Wikimedia UK's strategic objective of advocating for open knowledge at a sector-wide level, and amplifies the communications and advocacy work delivered directly by the charity and its staff, volunteers and trustees.

All of the institutions interviewed as part of this research are influential within their field or sector, and with some residencies a sector-wide impact was built into the expected outcomes. Museums Galleries Scotland, itself an infrastructure body, signed up to the Wikimedian in Residence programme in order to “improve awareness of the benefits of open knowledge through education within the Scottish museum sector”. This was achieved and is continuing⁶:

The biggest benefit of having the Wikimedian in Residence was building awareness of open knowledge within the museum and galleries sector in Scotland. Organisations are increasingly seeking advice from MGS on e.g. digitisation projects – that's become very popular, possibly because widening access is so important now in the sector. The advice given is linked to the open knowledge because staff have gained expertise in it through the residency. For MGS, the big change has been increased confidence in speaking about licences.

Kelly Forbes (Digital Manager, Museums Galleries Scotland, Wikimedian in Residence's line manager), impact interview June 2017

Another partner, National Library of Scotland, wanted to make a positive difference to access and understanding of Scottish culture, and in the course of the residency moved from direct delivery within the Library to advocating for open knowledge within Scotland. External and internal interest in open knowledge grew. This culminated in the residency managers at the Library writing a book, *Open Licensing for Cultural Heritage*, published in 2017⁷. Through their partnership with Wikimedia UK and their subsequent advocacy work to promote open knowledge, the National Library has therefore changed its internal practices, improved its external image and helped to increase awareness and understanding of the benefits of (and practical approaches to) the creation of free, open content. The Library also supported individual institutions to work on open knowledge – for example, their Wikimedian in Residence worked with Museums Galleries Scotland in setting up their own Residency, sharing her insight and experience and providing practical support. This was part of a growing programme of activities in Scotland.

⁶ Interestingly, because all MGS staff were involved in this sector advocacy work, they needed to receive in-depth Wikimedia training. After Wikimedian in Residence's departure the knowledge of openness and Wikimedia was retained, ensuing sustainability.

⁷ <http://www.facetpublishing.co.uk/title.php?id=301850#.WfMFkhNSzok>

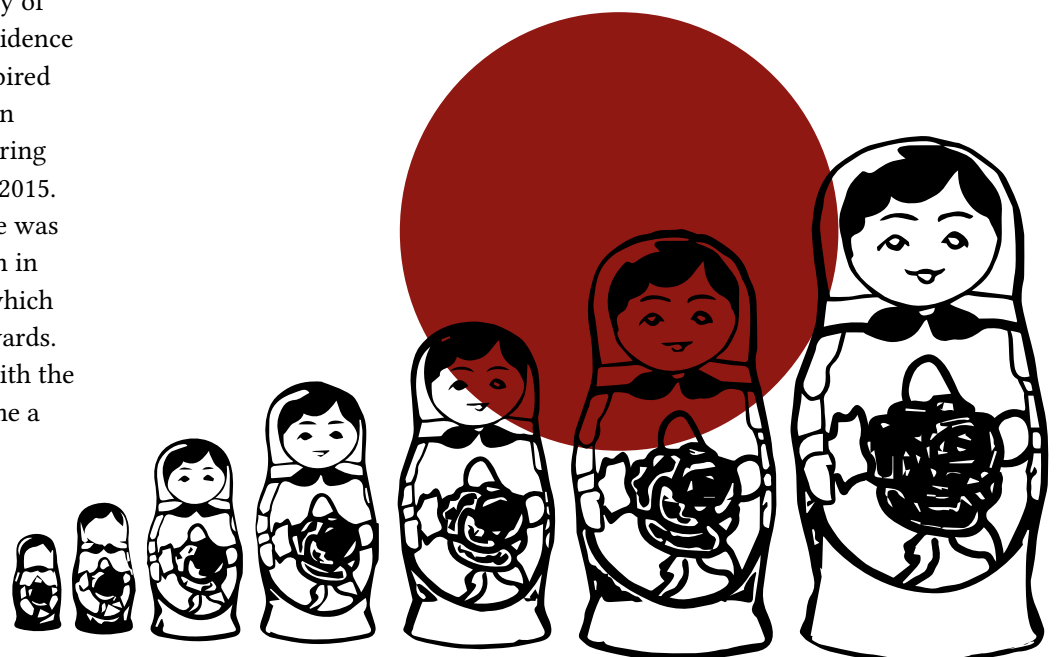
We can see evidence of the growing momentum and profile of the Wikimedian in Residence programme, and the sector-level awareness-raising and attitudinal shifts that it has supported, through various projects that have been established within the last few years, such as the residency at the University of Edinburgh. Back in 2011, Melissa Highton – Director of Academic IT at the University of Oxford at the time – led a team which attended a Wikipedia editing event to improve articles on the First World War. This event in itself was inspired by an editathon run by Wikimedia UK. In 2013, Oxford hosted its first editathon for Ada Lovelace Day, and in 2015 set up a Wikimedian in Residence partnership with Wikimedia UK which continues into the present day.

In 2014 Melissa had moved jobs to become Director of Learning, Teaching and Web Services at University of Edinburgh. There had not yet been any Wikipedia editathons at Edinburgh so Melissa brought some of her staff to the Edinburgh EduWiki 2014 conference – run by Wikimedia UK – to find out more. The National Library of Scotland’s Wikimedian in Residence spoke at the event, which inspired Melissa and her team to run an editathon at the university during Innovative Learning Week in 2015. Following this, a business case was put together for a Wikimedian in Residence at the University, which was implemented soon afterwards. This resident is still in post, with the likelihood that this will become a permanent position.

There are other examples. At Natural History Museum, the resident leveraged the prestige of his host institution to run collaborative projects with other organisations. These included Wellcome Collection and the Royal Society, both of which later appointed their own Wikimedians in Residence. The resident also supported and advised on Wikimedia events at the Medical Research Council, the Office for National Statistics, and the Collections Trust.

Wikimedia UK is well-placed to make connections between projects and residents, and to develop ideas and new links once a Wikimedian in Residence project comes to an end. We now place much more emphasis on networking between Wikimedian in Residences from an early stage as we have seen the extraordinary benefits of this, both in the quality of the work that happens within the host institution, and the potential to influence change beyond the immediate scope of the project.

Similarly, some residents started to focus more on external advocacy when they discovered that they couldn’t make changes within their host institutions unless they changed the external environment within which those institutions operated. For example, the Natural History Museum was bound by the conditions of its Department for Culture, Media and Sport funding. These stipulated that the performance metrics for their content could only be counted on NHM websites, and not externally. The reach of openly released images were therefore not included in NHM’s measures of its achievements; although these can arguably be a key indicator of success.



CASE STUDY

National Library of Scotland

Set up and delivery

Plans for appointing a Wikimedian in Residence at the National Library of Scotland first emerged out of a staff training session held in Edinburgh in 2012 and led by the British Library Wikimedian in Residence Andrew Gray. Wikimedia UK put out a call for potential partner organisations in 2012, to which the Library responded. Wikimedia UK worked with the Library to create a project brief, and in May 2013 we signed a partnership agreement. Ally Crockford was appointed as the Resident in July. The project was initially planned for eight months, but it was regularly extended and ultimately lasted for 20 months. It received a significant amount of positive media attention during its launch, and signalled that the Library was embarking on an innovative, disruptive project.

In terms of the Dimensions of Impact outlined above, feedback from the Library supports the view that the residency:

- extended the reach of the National Library's collections to new audiences
- changed the internal and external image of the Library in a lasting way
- sparked external collaborations, and
- facilitated wider sector impact



9
editathons
were delivered in Scotland



Gill Hamilton and Ally Crockford pose with the National Library of Scotland's GLAM of the Year award 2014, in the NLS Digital Access office. Photograph by Sam Wood. National Library of Scotland. CC BY-SA 4.0. tinyurl.com/y4687jqb





1,200
images

from the Library's digitised collections were placed on Wikimedia Commons as a pilot project

Extended reach of the National Library's collections to new audiences

- We delivered nine editathons in Scotland, to 115 participants
- As a pilot project, the Library released 1,200 images from the Library's digitised collections onto Wikimedia Commons. (At this time the Library was licensing all imagery as CC-BY-NC-SA or In Copyright). In the four years following May 2014 the images accumulated 96 million views.

The resident and managers also exerted internal influence within the Library resulting in the approval of a much more open Metadata and Digital Content Licensing Policy⁸ by the Library Leadership Team in March 2014. This strengthened the progress of internal changes towards open knowledge at a formal level. The Resident also facilitated less formal cultural changes, which were maintained and developed by the managers following the residency itself.

Without the input from and influence of our Resident, we would likely not have progressed so rapidly in terms of our thinking about being a more open organisation and in developing open policies.

Gill Hamilton, June 2017

Lasting changes to the internal and external image of the Library

Early on, the Library was unclear about how to engage with open knowledge. However over time it was able to lead and advise on openness in the cultural sector in Scotland, as demonstrated by Open Licensing for Cultural Heritage (Gill Hamilton and Fred Saunderson, August 2017). Working on practical projects through the residency helped the Library to clarify ways in which it could deliver on its mission to provide open access to knowledge.

Both Gill Hamilton (Digital Access Manager) and Andrew McDougall (Organisational Development Manager) believe that the residency significantly influenced internal and external perceptions of the organisation.

⁸ Policy (<https://www.nls.uk/media/1233752/2016-metadata-digital-licensing-policy.pdf>) stipulated that wherever possible, small resolution of Library's images should be openly released. Since this initial policy was developed the Library has continued to review and evolve its approach to open licensing.

The publicity received when the project launched made the Library think about its approach to collections, and illustrated the tension between being a custodian of collections and distributing the knowledge within these collections widely and openly. The project raised the Library's awareness of people's expectation that it should be open, instantly available, and close to its audience.

The Wikimedian in Residence, through its licence to disrupt, brought the outsiders in, and liberated boundaries of who is a part of the organisation. These conversations are continuing!

Andrew McDougall, June 2017

The residency affirmed the Library's internal view that it needed to be more relevant to people's needs, and that its users are not limited to the people who physically come to the Library. The audience is potentially world-wide. It helped the Library understand that to reach this global audience it must place its knowledge where users most often seek it – on Wikipedia and its associated projects. Finally, Wikimedian in Residence hugely increased understanding within the organisation of its role in the open knowledge movement. By actively participating in this programme the National Library of Scotland drove its thinking about openness across the organisation. This has been perhaps the longest lasting effect of the residency, and its impact is still being felt as the organisation moves towards embracing the public domain.

At her exit interview in May 2015, the Resident expressed the view that in effect she had been asked to "bring the Library into the 21st Century".

One of National Library of Scotland's key aims is to engage with knowledge – but that's hard to pin down and measure. It was felt that the Library forgets sometimes it's a knowledge organisation, and how working with Wikipedia is linked to it. Managers are trapped by their targets. But working with Wikimedia UK reminded the organisation of the real purpose of their mission.

Ally Crockford, May 2015

External collaboration and wider sector impact

Collaboration with several other GLAM organisations throughout Scotland, including Glasgow Museums, Jisc RSC Scotland, Edinburgh City Libraries, Scottish Poetry Library, Glasgow Women's Library, and the British Computer Society generated wider impact. There was also a renewal and growth of a Scottish community of Wikipedia contributors.

This residency was the first one in Scotland, and the first one for Wikimedia UK where advocating for open knowledge externally played such an important role within the project. Originally the project was very internally focused, but external advocacy eventually took centre stage.



Actress in dancing costume – Weir Collection. National Library of Scotland. Public domain. tinyurl.com/y6yhorv7

Compared to the original objectives of the residency, the thinking has changed a lot! Impact has been lasting, but in a very different way than we thought. For example, improving the outward influence of the Library has enabled it to make a positive difference to Scottish culture, and become more prominent in that regard.

Gill Hamilton (Digital Access Manager, National Library of Scotland, Wikimedian in Residence's line manager), impact interview June 2017

To build on this advocacy work, we organised a knowledge exchange workshop in 2015 with representatives from the British Library, the National Library of Wales and the National Library of Scotland to discuss intellectual property rights, open access, and their respective experiences with Wikimedia. The workshop led to ongoing communication between the three libraries regarding their open access policies and procedures. The National Library of Wales was at that point considering hosting a Wikimedian in Residence and this meeting enriched the discussions – and the library set up a residency in collaboration with Wikimedia UK not long afterwards. This was followed by a Gaelic Wikimedian in Residence project in partnership with the National Library of Scotland in 2017.

What enabled the impact at NLS?

In the interviews conducted as part of this research the Library staff most closely involved in the project reflected on what was most effective in the delivery of the residency. With a big organisation such as National Library of Scotland, the key was that the Resident trained many people across the organisation. This created networks of people aware of open knowledge, establishing an environment that was more conducive to innovation and collaboration.

The resident acted as a catalyst both by promoting innovative pieces of work and by supporting the delivery of these ideas. The project was understood by the Library Leadership Team, but its main support came from the staff team. This gave it momentum and reduced internal resistance to new ideas.

The shift in thinking about the role of the Library and a modern approach to engaging with audiences started before the residency, but the Library had not anticipated how much embedding knowledge and imagery from the Library's collections in Wikimedia projects would extend its reach.

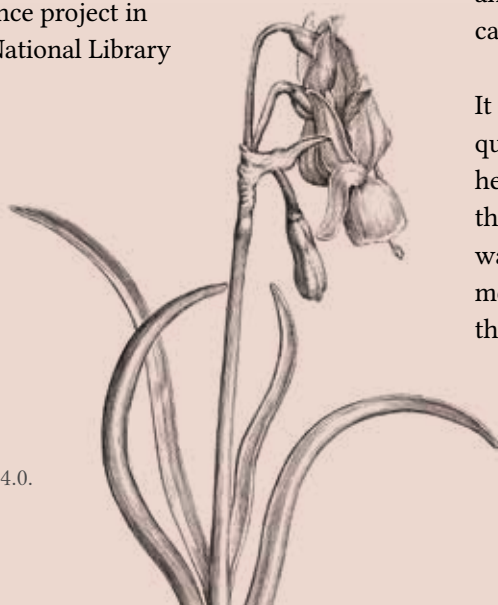
Wikimedia UK learned that establishing a flexible programme of goals and objectives and a willingness to re-evaluate the expectations of a residency (from both the host's perspective and Wikimedia UK's) are essential. This flexibility was instrumental during the National Library of Scotland residency, as it soon became clear that some of the initial aims were not feasible and that a different approach was needed.

The initial funding from Wikimedia UK made the project possible. Without that support it would have been much harder to get the project approved internally. Gill Hamilton stressed that the ongoing support (both in terms of finance and advice) from Wikimedia UK was key to making the case in the Library to continue to fund the role.


It was crucial that the appointed resident had the right qualities and skills. She was articulate and persuasive and her communication skills were essential for her work as the representative of the Library externally. In addition she was an experienced trainer and her academic background meant that it was easier to work with curators and change their perceptions of what a Wikipedian looks like.



Illustration of Narcissus.
Wellcome Images. CC BY 4.0.
tinyurl.com/y2v7cbe4



What we've learned about creating the right conditions for maximum impact



We reviewed the residencies periodically with our partners. This revealed barriers which prevented the projects from reaching their full potential and impact, and also the things that were enabling desired changes. We were able to use those reflections to adapt how Wikimedia UK delivers the Wikimedian in Residence programme and we present that learning here as principles of best practice.

01

Best Practice Principle 1: Agree clear objectives, but allow for flexibility

In our initial Wikimedian in Residence collaborations, Wikimedia UK did not focus on communicating our expectations to the partner institutions at the set up stage. We did not sufficiently articulate the strategic alignment of the project with the priorities of partner organisations. This is important in the context of sustainability, as the institutions which experienced the most impact were the ones which clearly saw how open knowledge maps to and elevates their own strategic priorities.

Jisc and Wikimedia UK collaborated on the residency with no particular outcome in mind, except to engage academics more deeply with Wikimedia Projects and the wiki way of working. Jisc was going through a major reorganisation, and Wikimedia UK, being only a year or two into existence as a charity, hadn't articulated its ambitions relating to education so clearly. It now appears that both organisations have a much clearer joint agenda and a similar vision for education.

Peter Findlay (Digital Portfolio Manager, Jisc, Wikimedian in Residence's line manager), impact interview May 2017



Extensive discussions during the project setup stage are crucial. It is helpful to talk to a range of people within a partner organisation. We found that it can be difficult to know fully the attitudes towards open knowledge within the potential partner organisation, if we only talk with the one team member who most supports openness. Being aware of institutional culture and attitudes, and having wide discussions, allowed us to check on the strategic alignment, and to raise awareness of the strategic benefits to the host organisation. Often the decision maker on the project within the host organisation isn't the best person to shape the project's objectives and expectations, since they are not close enough to the ground and may lack time to grasp the essence of working with Wikimedia. Being aware of that and working with the right people is key.

Residencies are necessarily experimental. They commit both organisations to a journey of discovery, and it may be that organisational strategies are not fully aligned at the start. The longitudinal nature of the residencies meant that a lack of attention to strategic alignment could be corrected later on. And sometimes the real alignment only emerged as the project developed. One example is our experience with the National Library of Wales, where the strategic

importance was clarified over time and became key by the second year of the residency:

Our successful partnership with Wikimedia UK which has led to over 200 million views of images from our collections will be further developed and we shall work with partners to extend the Welsh-language Wikipedia. We will continue to work with Wikimedia UK to develop and embed digital engagement with our open content on Wikipedia and other third-party platforms to increase views of the Library's content to 250 million by 2021 and actively contribute to the development of Welsh language content on Wikipedia.

National Library of Wales (Strategy 2017–2021)



© A View of the New Passage House on the River Severn with a view of the opposite Passage House and the Monmouthshire Mountains. National Library of Wales. Public domain. tinyurl.com/yyxn66cy

Wikimedia UK learning and delivery changes since 2014

- Time spent on 'setting up' is not wasted. We rushed to delivery in the past but now take time on this, managing expectations from both sides, setting effective objectives, offering better inductions and supporting better knowledge exchange to solve common problems.
- We have started discussing the strategic potential of the Wikimedian in Residence project from the outset, not just the practical benefits.

02

Best Practice Principle 2: Establish the digital skills level of the partner organisation and respond appropriately

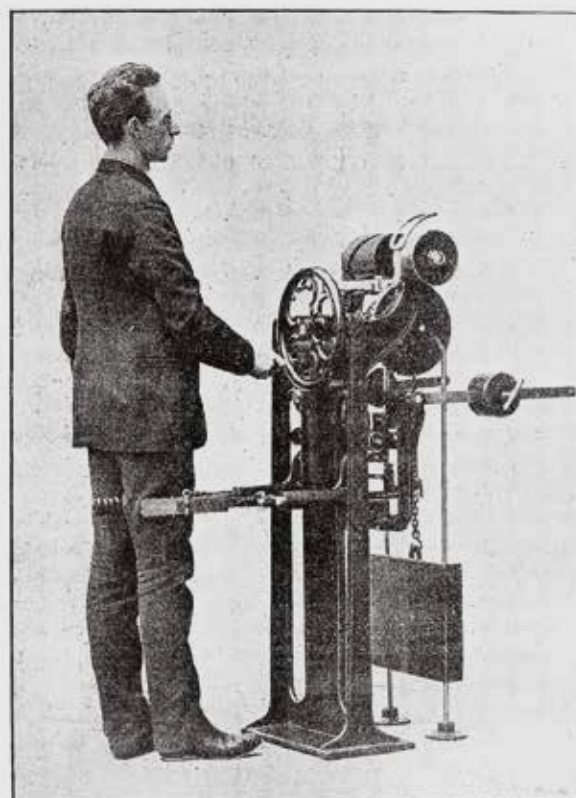
The projects within the Wikimedian in Residence programme – such as a mass image upload – presuppose a range of conditions such as internal copyright knowledge, clean databases and digital skills.

Several of our projects were impeded by a ‘skills gap’ within the partner organisations. This was particularly visible in our projects with ‘network’ organisations, where we collaborated with a main or umbrella body, which then sought to bring change to their members (individual museums etc). This change presupposed that the skills and knowledge were at the right level in the partner and their networks, which wasn’t always the case.

For Museums Galleries Scotland this process proved helpful. Shortly after the residency ended they embarked on a skills audit of the museum and galleries sector in Scotland, and the experience of the residency influenced the questions asked around a number of issues including copyright and digital skills.

MGS overestimated the skill level of museums, there was a shortage of data on what people on the ground are good at. We didn’t reflect on whether the staff can really deliver the open knowledge projects we were proposing. If we knew this now, we would possibly be much more selective in what organisations we worked with, picking the institutions with the best potential impact.

Kelly Forbes (Digital Manager, Museums Galleries Scotland, Wikimedian in Residence’s line manager), impact interview June 2017



Friction massage for the lower limbs, 1899.
Wellcome Images. CC BY 4.0.
tinyurl.com/y3o5wwrm

Wikimedia UK learning and delivery changes since 2014

Our partnership offer does not include development of core digital/curatorial skills. We need to establish the existing skill level at the organisation/network. Where the required skills are lacking, a residency may not be an appropriate engagement.

03

Best Practice Principle 3: Ensure early project visibility

Many partners stressed the value of having a breakthrough, tangible case study early enough in the project. They saw this as a powerful facilitator, which generated additional support for the project and helped to carry it forward. A successful case study project will illustrate the aims of a residency, especially for internal staff who are less directly involved in the project:

It was only towards the end of the project that we had produced a good case study, a 'breakthrough' with the Groam House. At that point we could have driven for more change, but the funding for the residency has run out, and the MGS' internal champion was away. The potential and interest was there, but there was nobody to champion the results and encourage further projects. It's felt that that moment has now passed.

Kelly Forbes (Digital Manager, Museums Galleries Scotland, Wikimedian in Residence's line manager), impact interview June 2017

It can take several months to prepare the ground for a successful editathon or an image upload; however, delivering something visible and successful early on can be hugely beneficial in generating internal support for the project. This in turn builds a larger supporter base, increasing the possibility of the aims of the Wikimedian in Residence project being carried forward once the residency is finished.



Cruise stereoscope by Hamblin. Wellcome Images. CC BY 4.0. tinyurl.com/yy3rf3n9

Wikimedia UK delivery changes since 2014

- Longer residencies are more effective. We now run projects for at least a year.
- We help partners plan for early showcase activity⁹.
- We dedicate more time to support Wikimedian in Residences in their metrics and reporting work, so we get a fuller picture of their outputs.
- We meet with partners more often to review, monitor, build trust and gain a better picture of what's happening beneath the surface.

⁹ For example, the Scottish Libraries Information Council set up a Wikimedian in Residence in 2017. The resident run a 'Hidden Gems' event, bringing in key future stakeholders and people involved in past Wikimedia activities to provide a powerful boost to awareness of the project.



Best Practice Principle 4: Build communication, transparency and trust

It can be hard to predict what will happen within an institution during or after the project, and what impact that may have. For example, we worked with several institutions who were going through a staff restructure, and in some cases those became enablers of change. Horizon scanning the sector was useful in this case, as was building trust and transparency with a partner institution at the set up stage. Open dialogue and regular review of progress should include exchanges of intelligence about upcoming changes (such as restructuring or a new strategic direction).

Timing is a crucial aspect affecting the long term success of the residency. In some cases it helped that the project coincided with a time of significant changes around openness at the institution:

York Museums Trust (YMT) and Wikimedia UK started collaborating on the Wikimedian in Residence project at a time when YMT was deciding on what open licensing might mean for the organisation. In that context, Wikimedian in Residence showed what could be possible (e.g. in terms of audience reach) if the organisation becomes very open. The timing meant that the advocacy work was incredibly important and impactful.

Martin Fell (Digital Team Leader, York Museums Trust, Wikimedian in Residence's line manager), impact interview June 2017

On the other hand, changes within the institution shortly after the Wikimedian in Residence project ends may mean that staff previously involved with the residency have moved to different projects, or that the organisation's focus

is changing or narrowing. General disruption can mean that any projects seen as luxuries and add-ons (as Wikimedia work is) are dropped.

A Wikimedian in Residence project can also coincide with external conversations and changes within the host organisation's sector. This can be a facilitator or a barrier, but the evidence suggests that it helped several of our projects:

The Museum has also radically changed its approach to licensing – this was a part of a bigger change happening around a new digital strategy. This move towards openness would have happened anyway regardless of the residency, it coincided with organisations in the sector were opening themselves up to this sort of a programme, thinking of widening access.

Jessica Bradford (Collection Engagement Project Manager, Science Museum, involved in the Wikimedian in Residence project), impact interview June 2017

Wikimedia UK delivery changes since 2014

- We became much more conscious of the importance of timing and of having open discussions about timings with the partner organisation. One practical outcome of this is that we have started discussing possible project extensions early on. Such discussions take a lot of time and should be started as soon as the project is showing potential.

05

Best Practice Principle 5: Staff skills matter

Wikimedia UK is uniquely placed to know that the work of a Wikimedian in Residence is difficult and requires a wide range of skills¹⁰. In every case reviewed, the skills of the resident proved to be a key factor in securing the success of the project, and in empowering people to carry on after the residency ended. If the resident lacked the inspirational soft skills, it was harder to generate significant or long standing change at the host institutions. Good soft skills made a real difference.

The resident was a force of nature and brought people along with her. [...] A key aspect of the sustained changes within MGS is the fact that all staff within the organisation were trained by the resident on Wikimedia and open knowledge.

Kelly Forbes (Digital Manager, Museums Galleries Scotland, Wikimedian in Residence's line manager), impact interview June 2017

Technical skills also matter, and should be passed on. They allow for partners to generate outcome metrics on their collections' reach and to demonstrate the impact of open knowledge activities.



Wikimedia UK delivery changes since 2014:

- We now give much more importance to the recruitment, induction and support of the resident, making sure host organisations see how much of the project's success hinges on finding the right Wikimedian in Residence. Shifting the emphasis from purely technical Wikipedia skills to interpersonal abilities meant that we now recommend that recruitment criteria include skills such as the ability to work sensitively, prioritise workload and use their own initiative, and the ability to support others learning to use Wikimedia projects. These skills are crucial in achieving long term impact of the Wikimedian in Residence projects.
- Inductions, similarly, have been expanded from a focus on technical skills to include a detailed introduction to open knowledge, linking up with the existing Wikimedian in Residence network, and discussions about the wider aims of the residency and how they could be achieved.

¹⁰ https://wikimedia.org.uk/wiki/Wikimedian_in_Residence_draft_job_description



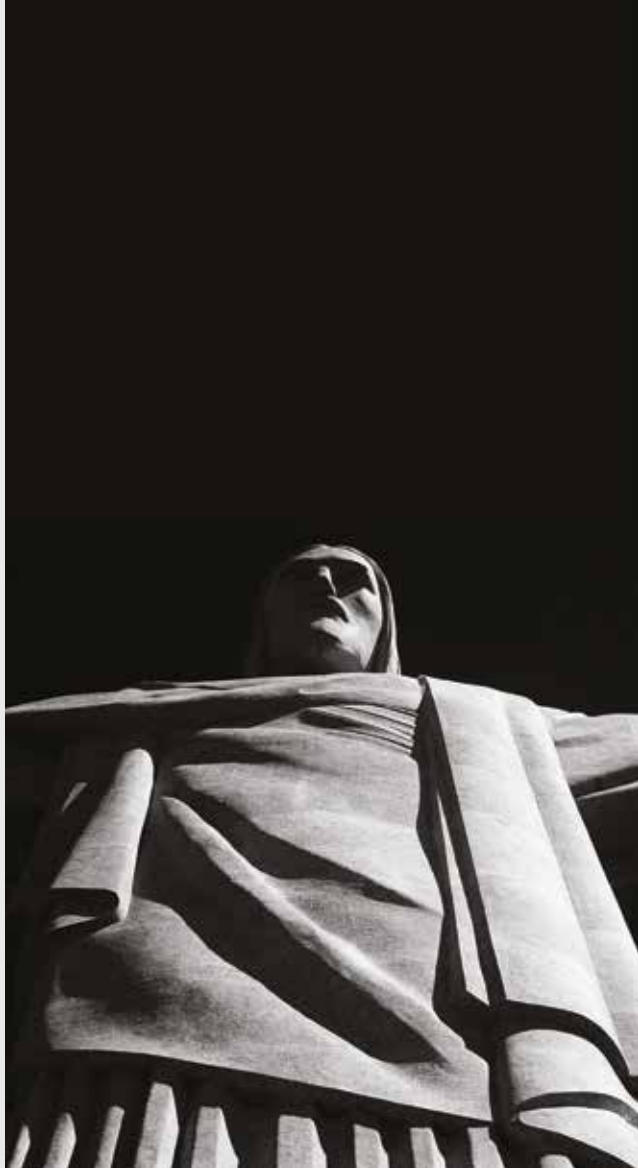


Best Practice Principle 6: Project design must deliver efficiency gains for the host

Residencies which impose demands on a host institution are less likely to succeed. The impact is greater where the project delivers, and is seen to deliver, efficiencies. Mitigation of efficiency losses after the residency must also be considered. For example, several partner organisations started experiencing higher demands on staff time and resources than at the time of the residency, which resulted in staff not having time to develop the work set up by the resident.

Demonstrating financial value is similarly crucial¹¹. Some institutions went through significant changes to their funding models, often leading to income generation pressures. Open knowledge is sometimes seen as a threat to income streams. Revenue pressures also meant that staff were more tightly constrained. In the absence of clearly defined outcomes, for example, staff were no longer permitted to run experimental, open projects. Managers and staff felt unable to justify the time spent on it in a pressured climate.

11 This can be a complex argument, but for example Chief Operating Officer at York Museums Trust Mike Woodward has said: “There is a lot of fear [in releasing content openly] – particularly about loss of revenue. In practice we were not generating sufficient income from image licensing before we took this step so this loss is more perceived than real. (...) Our approach to open access has driven visits and delivered value in terms of admission fees. Ultimately the strength of open access is that it drives more value towards our traditional business model.”
https://www.nationalmuseums.org.uk/media/documents/publications/striking_the_balance.pdf



Cristo Redentor, estátua erigida no Penhasco do Corcovado. Photography by Jorge Sato.
CC BY-SA 4.0. tinyurl.com/y2p5ucrc

Pressure on income generation still exists. On top of that, because of funding cuts, there is more pressure on staff time, thus simply less thinking time – e.g. to innovate, work with Wikimedia.

Michael Turnpenny (Museum Development Manager, Museum Development Yorkshire, involved in the Wikimedian in Residence project), impact interview June 2017

External pressures were often linked to funding sources. Organisations within the Museum Development Yorkshire network, for example, are often managed by Local Authorities, and tighter funding environment for public bodies in all sectors may have impacted on openness and the need to maximise income from collections.

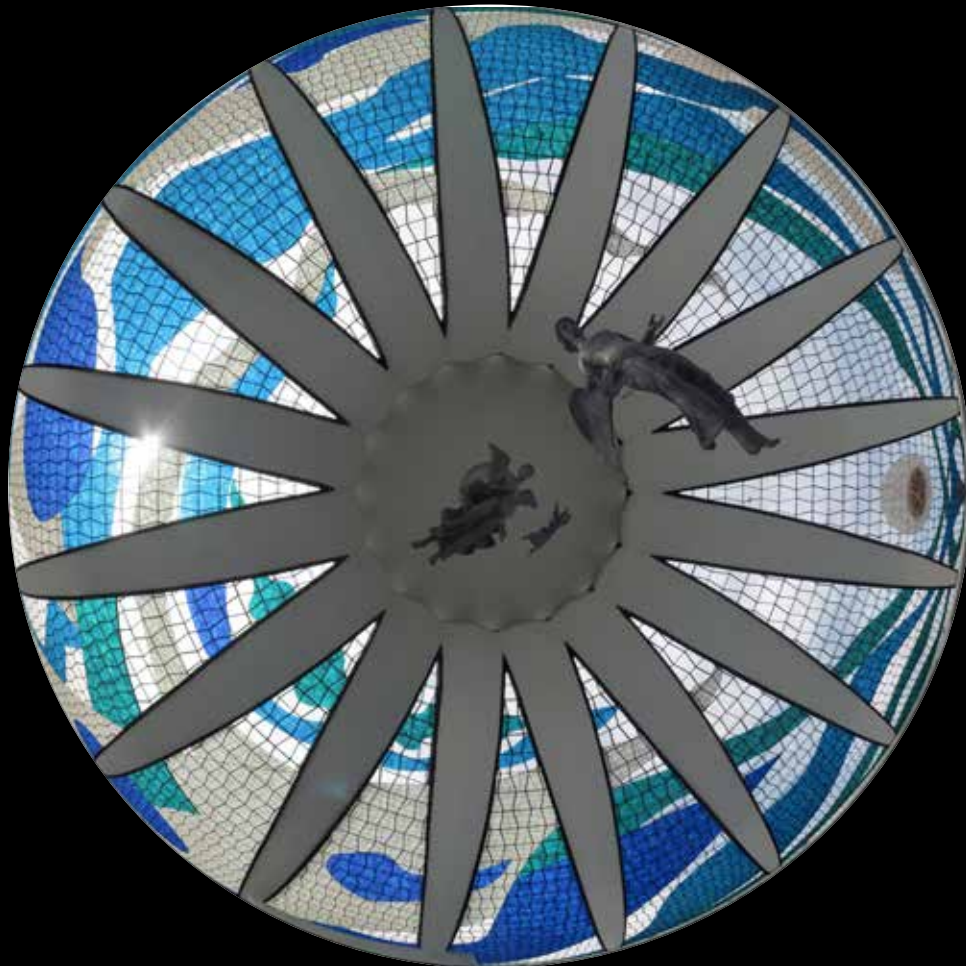
These factors may result in a lack of support for a Resident and the project from an organisation's leadership team, which can impact on the potential sustainability and continuation of Wikimedia work.

Wikimedia UK delivery changes since 2014:

- We assess potential partner institutions, and ask whether their context, culture or practices may pose barriers for a Wikimedian in Residence project.
- We are also now very conscious about where in the host organisation we place the resident. Picking the right, supportive department and securing appropriate infrastructure is key. The choice and positioning of the internal Wikimedian in Residence champion is key for sustainability of the Wikimedian in Residence project.
- We are aware that the positioning and trajectory of the programme is affected by whether the Wikimedian in Residence is recruited externally or internally. An external recruit seems to have more licence for disruption, but an internal Wikimedian in Residence can be more easily embraced and be better at navigating the institution's internal pressures.
- When framing and setting up residencies, we often use 'financial value' arguments, or we show very specifically where the project may deliver to the host organisation's KPIs.



Sustainability



Wikimedians in Residence have in many cases achieved impact within their host institutions. Both Wikimedia UK and our partner institutions want to ensure that the positive changes created through the project continue; this is what we mean by sustainability. We examined the views of partner institutions on whether this was achieved within their residencies, partly to understand sustainability better, and to create a better sustainability plan for future Wikimedian in Residence partners.

In many cases, sustainability is clearly seen in the willingness of hosts to re-engage with Wikimedia, and in the skills that were transferred within the organisation and the wider sector. In every case, an experience with Wikimedia increased institutional know-how about a range of things including mass content uploads, digitisation or data management projects. Open knowledge policies were also developed and maintained. Sustainability in this sense was therefore achieved in all the residencies that we scrutinised; however somewhat inevitably the actual activities being delivered by the resident tended to drop off, and materials created became out of date fairly quickly. Time and skills appear to be the key barriers, and even the best sustainability plan seems to be less effective than having an active resident. Active engagement is likely to decline after the residency due to costs, time and staff turnover.

'Info kits', one of the main deliverables of the project, are still available, but aren't being actively promoted. This means that people may come across it, but only accidentally, despite our hope that the users would just pick the kit up and use it. Sustaining the outcomes has proven challenging¹².

Peter Findlay (Digital Portfolio Manager, Jisc, Wikimedian in Residence's line manager), impact interview May 2017

The other challenge is that the gains in openness within the host organisation tended to come under pressure after Wikimedian in Residence's departure, so the changes achieved can feel precarious:

At the SMT level, the managers are doing a lot of balancing between openness and money generation. Attitudes are subject to change depending on internal politics, funding models, different departments looking at different ways to deliver.

Mahendra Mahey (Head of British Library Labs, involved in the Wikimedian in Residence project), impact interview July 2017

¹² There was never a plan to promote the kits, they are simply added to a database for people to come across. There was some uptake and members were engaged with the content – but perhaps stronger outcome metrics for the project would have put more focus on this work.



Casts of lungs, Marco resin, 1951. University of Edinburgh Image Collections. CC BY-SA 2.0. tinyurl.com/y3wksxka

In this context a lot depends on whether there remains an internal champion who can continue to argue for openness, and on Wikimedia UK helping to produce impact metrics to help the case for openness. In many cases we have seen that the activity has been sustained because of changes in policies, culture, as well as projects and people continuing to be active:

Because the Library had hosted the Wikimedian in Residence and it went well, they were open to working on another project – this gave rise to the Gaelic Wikipedia project which we are now collaborating on.

There is a lot being planned at the moment, especially around sharing content – plans for significantly upscaling digitisation programme on the horizon, combined with thinking about pushing it to external sites (thanks to the positive Commons/Wikipedia experience and huge reach during the residency).

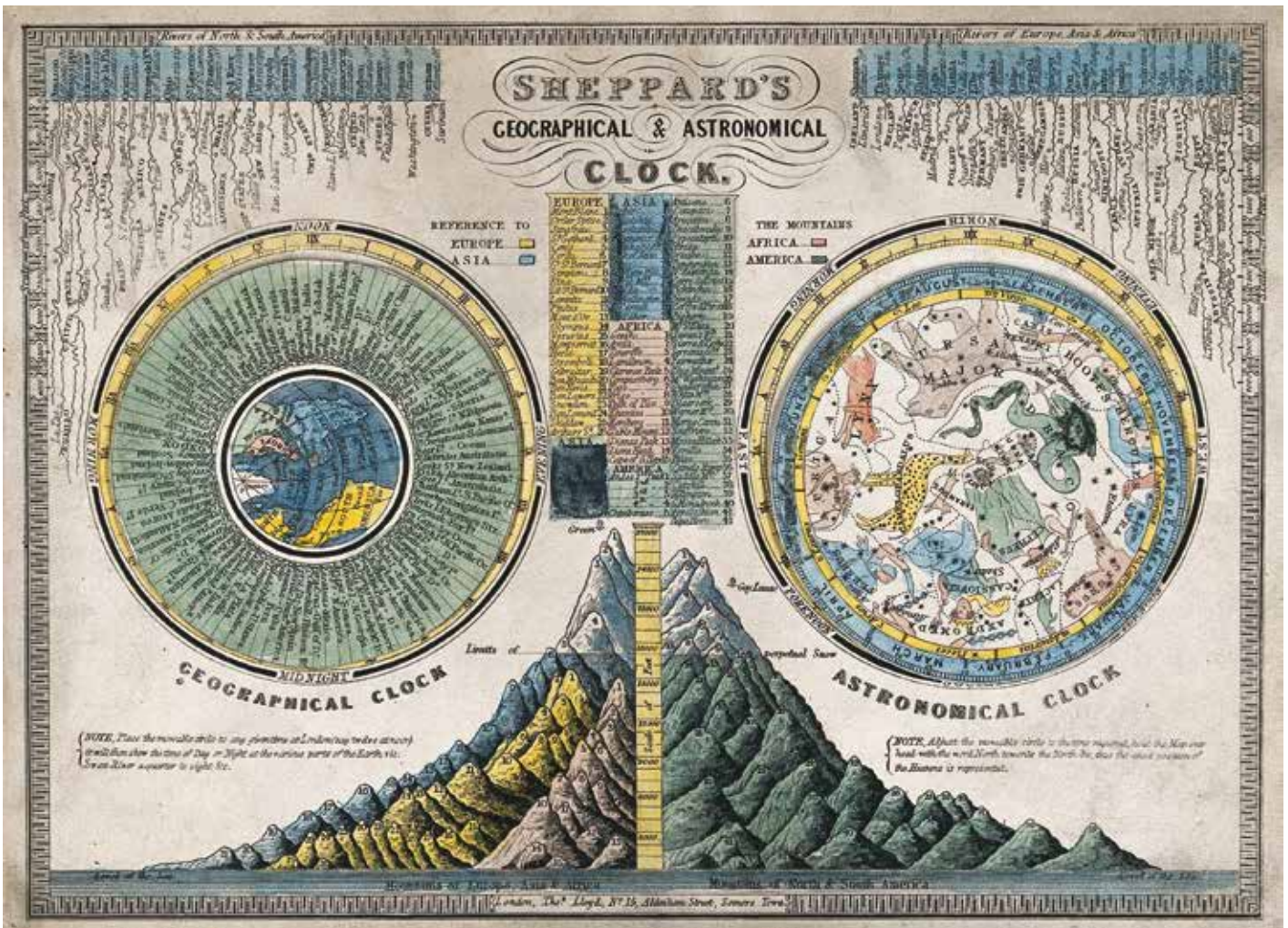
Gill Hamilton (Digital Access Manager, National Library of Scotland, Wikimedian in Residence's line manager), impact interview June 2017

A key aspect of the sustained changes within MGS is the fact that all staff within the organisation were trained by the resident on Wikimedia and open knowledge. At the time, this was to ensure they are all confident to be advocates for open knowledge while talking to the sector organisations, but a somewhat unintended consequence is that the engagement with Wikimedia continued after the project ended since people had the skills and understanding to do it.

Kelly Forbes (Digital Manager, Museums Galleries Scotland, Wikimedian in Residence's line manager), impact interview June 2017

These mechanisms could be set up while the Wikimedian in Residence is still in post. Asking residents to build sustainability plans into their projects requires careful handling. When the preliminary results of this research were presented to a cohort of current UK Wikimedian in Residences, they reflected on a tension this issue brings. Many residents get extended contracts because there is a continuous need for their services. If they build a sustainability plan effectively this can mean working themselves out of a job.

On the other hand, a sustainability plan needs to be overseen by someone, so it could be that the resident essentially upskills and looks after the implementation of Wikimedia-related activities in the form of 'business as usual' within the institution.



Opportunities ahead – permanent Wikimedian

Alongside other routes to sustainability, we have been exploring the possibility of embedding the Wikimedian role into a partner institution's staff team on an ongoing basis. There is, however, something of an inherent contradiction in the notion of a permanent residency.

The 'residencies' model might need a re-think if we are looking to encourage sustained involvement from institutions. [Melissa] is willing to consider continuing the residency but she feels constrained by the word 'residency' ie. that the role has only ever been couched as being for a temporary period. While this makes sense in terms of encouraging institutions to get onboard to 'test the water' it may be that some Wikimedian in Residences have already shown that sustained involvement for longer periods is no bad thing and that we may have to consider offering a different model if we want universities employing Wikimedians more generally as part of their digital skills teams.

Resident, Edinburgh University, April 2017

Elements of Wikimedia work could also be incorporated into existing roles, and it is something we're beginning to see in positions such as a 'Web Editor' or 'Learning Technologist'.

On the other hand, the Wikimedian in Residence model has disruption built in and that's partly why it can be innovative: institutions are expecting and are open to the changes it brings. As mentioned in the 'enablers' section, the time limit of the project brings urgency and entails a call to action. The view of the Wikimedian in Residence as being someone external can make it easier to propose significant changes. Would defining the role as permanent take the edge off and make it less impactful? Or would it make it more accepted internally and allow greater scope for sustainability?

Evolution of the strategic direction of the Wikimedian in Residence programme; benefits to Wikimedia UK

The first Wikimedians in Residence in the UK were put in place when the organisation was young and developing its overall programme. Wikimedia UK's first application to the Wikimedia Foundation for funding mentions Wikimedians in Residence, with the outcomes of the programme stated simplistically: 'Completion of at least 3 Wikipedian in Residencies. Demand for further placements.'



The lack of strategic direction to the programme meant that we ran it without defined outcomes in mind. Instead we focused on tangible outputs such as the number of image donations generated by the residents. However, the 2014 review of the programme highlighted the need for clarity in the strategic direction of the programme internally and in our communications with the potential host organisations. Since those early days, the charity has seen the development of two new strategic plans – covering the period 2014–16 and then, on the appointment of a new Chief Executive in late 2015, the period 2016–19. The way we capture progress against goals has also been overhauled in line with these strategic changes as well as our increasing experience in effective monitoring and evaluation.

The introduction of the new strategic framework in 2016 helped us to re-frame the purpose of Wikimedians in Residence, to demonstrate potential strategic alignment with partner institutions, and to orient the programme in terms of long term impact rather than immediate outputs. The organisation’s strategic goals for the period 2016–2019 are to:

- Increase the quality and quantity of coverage of subjects that are currently underrepresented on Wikipedia and the other Wikimedia projects
- Contribute to the development of open knowledge in the UK, by increasing understanding and recognition of the value of open knowledge and advocating for change at an organisational, sectoral and public policy level
- Support the use of the Wikimedia projects as important tools for education and learning in the UK

To strengthen the link between our strategic goals and the activities within our programmes and Wikimedians in Residences, we created initial logic models¹³ framed by the following theories of change:

- By developing partnerships with institutions with diverse collections, and other organisations that hold important information about diverse subject areas, we can produce and release material about under-represented subjects and help address systemic bias.

- By raising awareness of open knowledge, supporting institutions to overcome practical and cultural barriers to open, advocating for improved copyright legislation and developing WMUK reputation as an agent for change, we build the conditions for content holders within GLAM, STEM and Higher Education to make knowledge open and freely available.

The insights gained through this document clarifies these logic models, and offers a clearer view of the types of impact that can be achieved as well as the activities and conditions required to maximise impact.


Throughout this report we have stressed how host organisations found the Wikimedian in Residence programme to be beneficial. We also see more clearly the benefits of the Wikimedian in Residence programme for the wider community within the global knowledge ecosystem. We are producing high quality information, addressing existing knowledge gaps, and growing educational content for everyone.

The Wikimedian in Residence programme also grew as a brand and a flagship programme of Wikimedia UK, becoming recognisable and desirable within the education and cultural sectors in the UK. This has boosted the organisational awareness of our charity, allowing us to be increasingly influential in carrying the messages of open knowledge. Wikimedia UK is therefore committed to pursuing new residencies as an essential route to achieving its strategic goals as highlighted above.

¹³ https://meta.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Programme1_Logic_Model_diverse_content_WMUK.pdf
https://meta.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Programme2_Logic_Model_advocacy_WMUK.pdf

Further content – Wikimedian in Residence reports and materials

- 2014 programme review https://wikimedia.org.uk/wiki/Wikimedian_in_Residence_2014_review
- Current and past residencies, links to project portals and individual summary reports https://wikimedia.org.uk/wiki/Cultural_partnerships#Wikimedians_in_Residence
- Template Wikimedian in Residence partnership agreement https://wikimedia.org.uk/wiki/File:Example_Wikimedian_in_Residence_agreement.pdf
- Example monthly report from a Resident, with activities mapped to WMUK's strategic goals https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Wikipedia:GLAM/Oxford/Month_9_report
- WMUK strategic framework https://wikimedia.org.uk/wiki/Wikimedia_UK_Strategy_2016%E2%80%9319#Strategic_Framework



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