Monthly Report, January 2024

Programs

Chief Programs Officer LiAnna Davis led a hiring process for a new Communications and Outreach Coordinator position, mostly funded through our new Mellon Foundation grant. As a result of the process, Colleen McCoy will join Wiki Education's staff in February.

In January, our Speaker Series examined How Wikipedia tackles the climate crisis. Senior Wikipedia Expert Ian Ramjohn hosted five experts and friends of our programs—Dawn Bazely (York University), Su-Laine Brodsky (Wikipedia editor), Julio Postigo (Indiana University Bloomington), Jenna Tipaldo (CUNY), and Marilyn Waite (Climate Finance Fund)—who discussed the importance of Wikipedia in communicating critical information about climate change to the public. When a topic is as politically charged as this, having a high quality source that is generally accepted as unbiased is particularly important.

Wikipedia Student Program

Spring 2024 in numbers:

- 337 courses were active on the Dashboard.
- 2,940 students were enrolled in a Wikipedia assignment.
- Students added 70,900 words and 738 references to Wikipedia. They edited 338 articles.

Performance at a glance: With 337 courses on board, we are on track for our overall goal of 400 courses.

January marks the beginning of our spring term. While most of our classes begin later in the month, a number of courses on the quarter system got going right after the new year. For most of our students, January is the time when they begin to enroll on the Dashboard and learn that they will be participating in the chance to contribute to public knowledge creation.

As classes got started, Helaine Blumenthal, Senior Program Manager, and Andrés Vera, Equity Outreach Coordinator, continued to recruit for the spring term. Wikipedia Experts Brianda Felix and Ian Ramjohn finished reviewing all of our classes from the fall as part of our process to learn how we can provide better support to our faculty and students. Helaine and Brianda ran a virtual session for faculty introducing them to their Wikipedia assignment — the first in a series of video sessions the two will run throughout the term to support our program participants. Helaine also started weekly office hours for instructors — an initiative that has proven to be a productive endeavor for both faculty and Wiki Education staff.

Scholars & Scientists Program

Courses in progress:

- Wikidata January 2024 Institute: We're kicking off another Wikidata Institute with 12 new editors. We're excited to have representation from both the University of Amsterdam and University of San Diego. Keep an eye on this Dashboard to see their impact on Wikidata.
- WITH-4: We are starting another WITH course. The purpose of these courses is to focus on disability and disability-related articles on Wikipedia. We are looking forward to the impact these 26 participants will have in this subject area.
- Elections and Campaigning in the United States: This is another course in our series of civics/democracy-related courses. We want articles that US voters will be interested in reading for the upcoming election will be well-sourced, up to date, and contain relevant information. We will be conducting these courses in a non-partisan way, following Wikipedia's reliable source guidelines.
- State Politics and Policy: We're excited to kick of another democracy/civics-related course. This one will be led by a guest instructor, Carter Ross, who has facilitated these courses in the past. We're excited to be working with him again and we're eager for the impact these twenty participants will have on these important articles.
- Idaho OPAL Fellows Wiki Scholars: After our successful inaugural OPAL Fellows course last year, we're excited to be working with another round of OPAL scholars. These professors, representing schools from across Idaho, will be trained on Wikipedia rules and guidelines. They will be editing two articles of their choice.

Advancement

Fundraising

Kathleen Crowley, Director of Donor Relations, spent a lot of time this month on stewardship of the new grants and donations Wiki Education received at the end of 2023. This included writing and arranging acknowledgement letters, drafting grants announcements for the Mellon Foundation and the Bernard and Audre Rapoport Foundation for social media and our website, reviewing social posts from the Broadcom Foundation's communications contact, and submitting the final grant report to the Nielsen Foundation covering the outcomes of our 2023 equity portal project. This month, we received the first installment of the grant from the Mellon Foundation for $625,000. We also created a campaign on the Dashboard to track the outcomes for the Guru Krupa Foundation's grant in support of our Communicating Science initiative, which was well-received by the president of the Foundation. Kathleen began work with our design consultant, David Peters, to create a marketing pitch for potential corporate funders who may be interested in our work in STEM in either the Scholars & Scientists Program or our Wikipedia Student Program. Kathleen had a great phone call with the grants manager at the Cedar Tree Foundation. She responded well to the pitch on our Wikipedia Student Program and our current project with the Horne Family Foundation to improve the coverage of environmental topics on Wikipedia and to tackle misinformation. She said that the Board has some discretionary funds to play with and passed along information from Kathleen to the Board. Kathleen spoke with Megan Price, the Executive Director at the non-profit HRDAG, about their relationship with the MacArthur Foundation. Megan shared insight about her contact in the Technology in the Public

Interest funding program and offered to connect her to him in the spring or summer this year, depending on how smoothly their grant renewal process goes. To wrap up the month, Kathleen and Will Kent, Scholars & Scientists Program Manager, met with two directors of grantmaking in the Nielsen Foundation's Data for Good program via Zoom. We fully answered their questions about the successes and challenges of the project and learned the timeline of their budgeting and announcing the next Data for Good request for proposals.

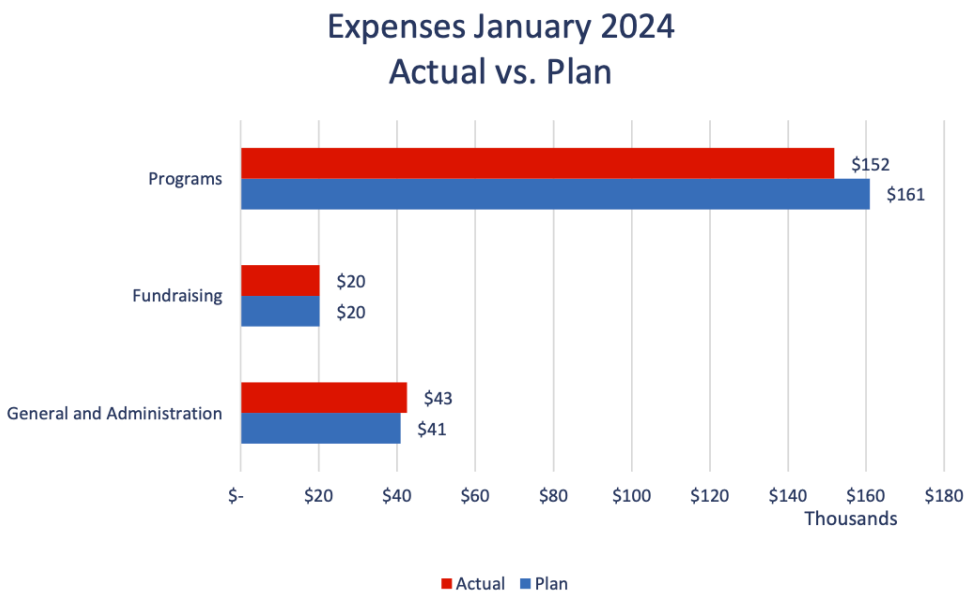
Technology

Our two Outreachy interns Gabina Luz and Esther Ibom were busy this month. Esther updated more written documentation, and also completed a script draft for her upcoming video about the Dashboard's Article Scoped Program features. Gabina implemented the integration between her new reference-counter API service and the Dashboard, which we will test on a live staging server in February.

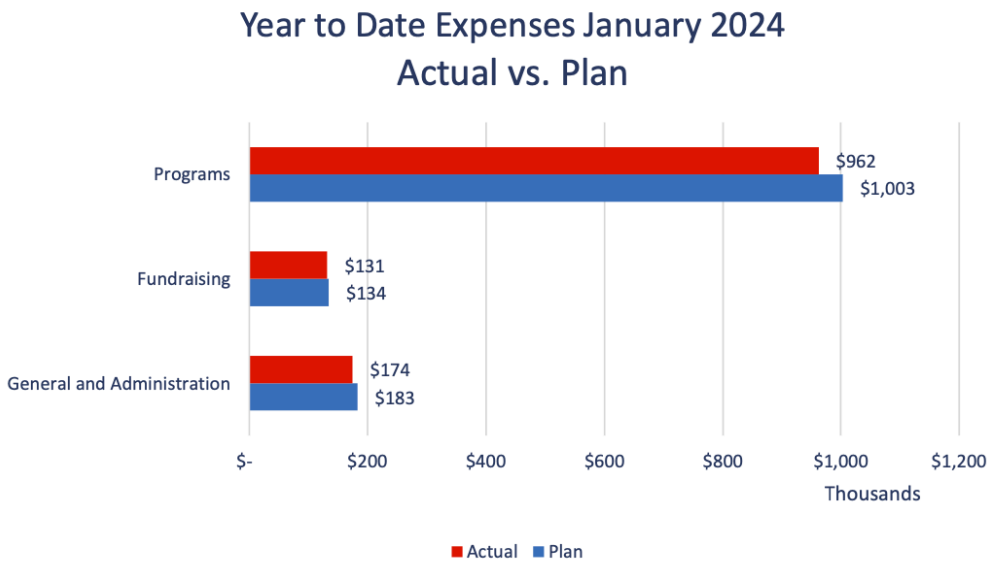
We deployed the alpha version of our Impact Visualizer project this month: https://impact.wikiedu.org. The current version of this tool lets us see the development over time of any set of articles, separating out contributions from a specific group of editors (such as our program participants). The machine learning side of this project — intended to develop a system that would let us use AI to generate sets of articles that represent arbitrary categories as input of the Impact Visualizer — has proved more technically challenging than anticipated. We shifted our strategy this month to focus on building a tool to more easily draw from existing Wikimedia data sources such as Wikidata and categories, which will be integrated into the Impact Visualizer so that we can efficiently launch new impact dashboards focused on high-priority topics. Recent Google Summer of Code intern Amine Hassou is working as a contract developer on this new strategy.

Finance & Administration

The total expenditure for the month of January was $215K, ($7K) under the budget of $222K. Fundraising was on target. General & Administrative were over +$2K due to overspending +$2K in meetings, +$2K in accounting, and other direct expenses while under ($3K) in payroll and ($1K) in indirect expenses. Programs were under ($9K) comprised of underspending ($25K) in consulting services, ($3K) in travel, ($2K) in communications while overspending +$19K in Payroll and +$2K in software.



The Year-to-date expenses were $1,268K, ($53K) under the budget of $1,321K. Fundraising was under by ($3K), underspending ($5K) in payroll, ($3K) in travel and ($1K) in communications while over +$6K for accrued software. General & Administrative were under ($9K) due to overspending +$8K on travel and +$4K in accrued insurance while under ($8K) in meetings, ($4K) in audit and accounting services, (5K) in payroll, ($3K) in indirect expenses and ($1K) in communications. Programs were under ($41K) comprised of underspending ($43K) in professional services and ($17K) in communications while over +$13K in payroll and +$6K in computer equipment.



Office of the ED

In January, Frank, LiAnna, and Sage attended Wiki Education's in-person board meeting in San Francisco. The board meeting started on Saturday with reports about the first half of the fiscal year, and also with an outlook on the second half of the fiscal year. Then, Frank outlined the

general direction for fiscal year 2024–25, so that the board members could gain an understanding of what to expect in the annual plan document to be delivered to them in May / June of 2024. Also, San Francisco-based Programs staff Helaine (Program Manager Student Program) and Will (Program Manager Scholars & Scientists Program) talked about their work. Afterwards, Wiki Education's long time partner Dr. Amin Azzam, University of California, San Francisco, gave a presentation about his efforts to improve health-related content on Wikipedia with his students. On Sunday, and given that this year marks the 10th anniversary of Wiki Education, board chair PJ Tabit and Frank shared the board's and staff's favorite moments of the last ten years with the group. The official part of the meeting concluded with an update on the plans for the Global Education Hub by LiAnna and Frank, with a presentation about generative AI and Wikipedia by board member Bob Cummings, and by a discussion about Wiki Education's future role in the Wikimedia Movement. After the in-person board meeting in San Francisco, Frank and board member Sue Gardner met with Richard Gingras, Vice President of Google News in Mendocino County.

Also in January, Frank conducted Zoom calls with Kaarel Vaidla, Wikimedia Foundation, and Nicole Ebber, Wikimedia Deutschland, to discuss Wikimedia movement matters

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