

# Grants Strategy Relaunch Proposal Community Engagement

February 2021



**WIKIMEDIA**  
FOUNDATION

# Why a Strategy Review

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## The Situation

- New movement-wide strategic direction, with recommendations to guide priorities
- Difficult to articulate the overall impact of grant programs to the community and within the Foundation
- CR grant programs have been in place since 2016 without any major revision
- Primarily US and Europe-based team who followed a low risk, incremental grantmaking approach
- CR process based on participatory grantmaking and Program Officers are trusted by community

## Our Objective for a New Grants Strategy

- To align to the new strategic direction and the movement strategy recommendations.
- To pilot new models and provide input for strategy implementation and Global Council.
- To align our team and processes integrating the use of information to learn and adapt

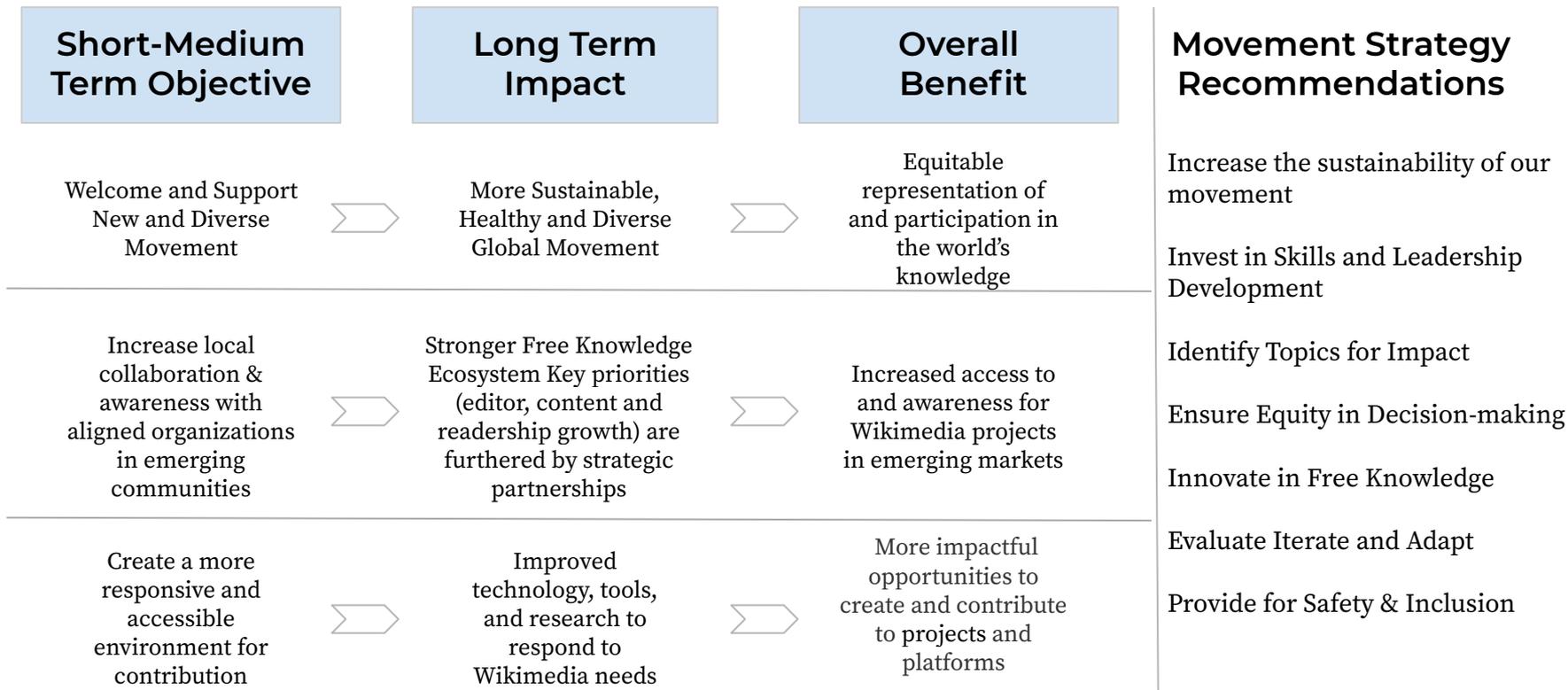
# What the process told us...

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## Major Themes of the Community Resource Grants Relaunch

- Transition to grant program that focus on areas of desired impact
- Decentralization - power sharing with a regional focus
- Equity central to every element of the relaunch and its success. Including a substantial increase of funding to emerging communities.
- Focus on capacity building /learning across affiliates and community members

# Proposed Focus Areas



# How We Will Do It

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## Equitable Funding

- **Regional and thematic committees**
- **Participatory decision making throughout grants cycle**
- Trust-based partnership
- Acceptance of the inherent knowledge and value grantees have about their communities
- Less conservative risk tolerance

## Knowledge Sharing & Development

- **Peer learning network for sharing knowledge and practices**
- **Dedicated Program Officer for Learning & Evaluation**
- Structured strategy for grantee prioritized areas of learning
- Coordination with Community Development

## Proactive Outreach

- **Outreach to communities that have been left out by structures of power and privilege**
- Communication plan to amplify community stories to inspire
- Expand reach of grants to aligned organizations
- More visibility on WMF.org

## Inclusive Environment - Local Focus

- **Regional & Thematic Program Officers, better context and cultural sensitivity**
- Embrace diversity and equitable processes
- Applications/reporting in any language
- Flexibility to adapt by region

## Foundation Initiative Alignment

- **Support Foundation teams to broaden access and maintain a supportive relationship with emerging communities**
- Tech, Research, Community Development, Partnerships and Programs have stated interest

# Focused Grant Programs

More Sustainable, Healthy  
and Diverse Global  
Movement

*Greater and more coherent support  
for Wikimedians*

- **Single program with different levels of support and funding for people working on wiki projects**
- **Clear pathways to growth focus on scale of impact, Strategic Direction alignment not structure**
- Focus on capacity building
- Commitment to long term multi-year investment

Stronger Free Knowledge  
Ecosystem

*Stronger Ecosystem in Emerging  
Communities*

- **Grants for mission aligned organizations and groups that support editor, content, or readership growth that are linked to local emerging communities.**
- Focus on amplifying our work and benefiting from work already being done by aligned groups

Improved technology,  
tools, and research to  
respond to Wikimedia  
needs

*Focus, Clarity, Foundation  
Technical Team Collaboration*

- **Specific technical grant program with clear goals**
- Criteria adapted to technical space
- Strong support with technical Program Officer and specific committees, agreed Foundation technical engagement
- Further thinking is needed to support sustainability for software projects

# Impact To Current Grant Programs

## More Sustainable, Healthy and Diverse Global Movement

- **Majority of current grant recipients would fall into this category**
- Annual Plan Grants
- Simple Annual Plan Grants
- Rapid Grants
- Project Grants - online and offline outreach
  - Global Campaigns
- Criteria for funding to broaden allowing for more staff and capacity building
- ~80% of overall increased budget for open grants

## Stronger Free Knowledge Ecosystem

- **A new specific program, take time to learn and develop with emerging communities**
- Limited number of partners receiving grants from Project grants would become part of this grant
- ~10% of overall increased budget for open grants

## Improved technology, tools, and research to respond to Wikimedia needs

- **Technical Project Grant would come into this grant category**
- We will have an iterative process with an initial scope for software grants that will evolve over time.
- Limited number of project grants would fall here
- ~10% of overall increased budget for open grants

# Principles for Programs

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- Subsidiarity & Self management
- Equity & Empowerment
- Collaboration & Cooperation
- People Centeredness - listening and reflection
- Efficient Data & Iterative Practices - promoting innovation and learning

# Measuring Impact & Learning

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- Creation of an overall framework for the Community Resources team and grantees to understand the impact of the new strategy in the short term and long term. Planned to be completed in Q4
- Recognition current grants metrics are incomplete need to shift focus to learning.
- Partnering to develop easier tools for grantees and Foundation to measure impact and effectiveness of campaigns and specific activities.
- Make aggregated information about grantees easily accessible to all - to promote awareness and connection.

# Next Steps

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- Community engagement - 1 month broad feedback, office hours, structured feedback form, talk pages
- Incorporate Feedback & Finalize proposal
- Develop strategy evaluation framework - collaborative process with grantees
- Finalize budget
- Develop implementation plan for Q1 FY 21/22 - **JULY 1, 2021 LAUNCH**

THANK YOU



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