

Community Building Program 2019: learnings, new projects, metrics & risk assessment

What have we learnt in 2018 and what impact does that have on our community?

2018 was the year in which we incorporated new ideas, strategies and projects in order to diversify the community. A lot of the learnings and challenges that we have addressed have helped us outline and deepen our objectives for 2019:

- We have worked strengthening small themed communities, which allowed our volunteers to get involved in projects that fit their interests. At the same time, our long-standing community found a new role as mentors that rekindled its commitment with Wikimedia Argentina. Organizing the community in diverse communities has allowed us to better define the projects and objectives of the program. This learning translates into one of the most important lines of work for 2019.
- The community is essential to reduce content gaps. Nevertheless, becoming an editor is not always the expected result. During 2018 we have designed new ways to get involved in our community so that everyone who joins us, can stay in the way that they choose. In 2019 we want to continue building an inclusive community, moving away from the idea that being a Wikimedia volunteers means becoming an editor. For that purpose, in 2019 we will define new spaces for participation.
- There is no standard use of the Wikimedia projects by the volunteers and Argentine society. In 2018 we worked in coordination with diverse communities, on very different topics that are socially relevant and positioned WMAR as an organization that promotes access to quality and objective information. For this purpose, we kept the program definition flexible and open enough so that it could adapt to the needs and demands of Argentine society.

Why is WMAR's Community Program still an innovative proposal for the movement?

WMAR's Community Program redefines what we understand as a volunteer of the Wikimedia movement. The traditional model of the Global North volunteer adapts neither to our local reality, nor to our times, nor to our way to build knowledge and communities. To base the program on thematic communities allows us not only to design projects with better defined objectives, but also to address a very usual problem in the developing countries: *the lack of time for volunteer work*. In this sense and in order to get committed volunteers we are changing the way we evaluate our impact moving beyond the well known metric “% of new editors retained” as one of our key metrics. Of course we want more wikipedists, but to make this happen, we need to respect the learning process of each volunteer and so they have to feel the desire to be part of WMAR. That is why we are designed a program with multiple participation spaces, according to the possibilities of each person and appreciating everyone's contribution in equal terms.

Last but not least, the program seeks the balance between *giving* and *receiving*. That is why we have promoted encounters and networking spaces that allow the community to connect with new open and collaborative projects and also with other communities and organizations, so -beyond Wikimedia- they can get involved in the national ecosystem of open networks.

Why are granted-metrics relevant to this program?

During 2018 we focused on measuring how the community feels as part of Wikimedia Argentina and the diversity within our community. In 2019 we will continue focusing in measuring how WMAR provides support to our community. However and compared to last year we are going to make some changes to our metrics because “providing support” is already cross-cutting the way we design the projects within the program.

In 2019 we consider new metrics to address our challenges:

- Diversity: Number new women and LGTBIQ+ members involved as active volunteers in the WMAR community.
- Impact: Number of new leaders, with diverse profiles, as part of the Wikimedia movement.

These changes answer to specific goals:

- Even though our gender community grew and consolidated during 2018, to add more diversity to the movement and specifically in leading roles, is still needed to bring innovation and new voices within the movement.
- Our community is growing a lot thanks to our work with diverse communities, external to the Wikimedia movement. In this context, new leaders are emerging, with new profiles and expertises, that bring new perspectives and ideas to WMAR. In 2019 we want to better address their needs to engage and position them as new leaders in the movement.

Also, we want to measure how our program is understood by our new participants, volunteers or allies. It is very common to ask to our community if they are satisfied with the support provided and with the activities we promote, but very rarely we ask how they evaluate our work and its impact on the society, as well as if they believe that our projects contribute to build more informed societies, per example. We want to understand this that it's key to continue defining the role of WMAR for the coming years.

What factors can affect our plans and how are we going to solve that?

- In Wikimedia Argentina, every year we work to expand our community. Particularly, 2019 presents a very complex outlook at a political level due to the presidential elections. This kind of context can cause our community to mobilize and organize, or it may be that our volunteers decide to volunteer in political campaigns, dedicating less time to our space. Our strategy will seek to attract our editors with the objective of editing on topics that engage them.
- One of our objectives is to work with different groups that conform the civil society, taking Wikimedia projects as a tool for citizenship construction. This is challenging as interests can be very diverse. To address it, we plan to define our agenda along with new potential partners from social and civil organizations an open the program to new roles and profiles as part of our community of volunteers. To engage them we will strengthen our mentoring program and better define new spaces of participation for newcomers. We will accompany this strategy with new trainings regarding topical issues and as of interest of the society.