

# **WIKI TECHSTORM**

# **2019**

# Content

<b>Introduction</b>	3
<b>Wiki Techstorm 2019</b>	3
<b>Organization - members</b>	3
<b>Promotion and outreach Wiki Techstorm</b>	3
<b>Participants Wiki Techstorm 2019</b>	6
<b>Participants - their evaluation</b>	8
<b>Mentors evaluation</b>	10
<b>General conference statistics</b>	11
<b>Objectives &amp; Outcomes Techstorm</b>	11
<b>Extra outcomes</b>	12
<b>Framework for the organization of the Techstorm - approach and ideas on how to organize a Wiki Techstorm</b>	12
<b>Lessons learned</b>	14
<b>Documentation Wiki Techstorm</b>	15
Wiki Techstorm on Wikimedia Commons	15
Presentation slides	16
Recorded sessions Techstorm - available on Youtube	16
Podcast Wikipedia Podden - by Jan Aniali	17
Practical sessions in Phabricator board and on posters	17
<b>Budget Wiki Techstorm 2019</b>	17
<b>Conclusion</b>	19

## Introduction

Wikimedia Nederland has a longstanding history organizing hackathons and GLAM camps. Previous events were held in 2011, 2012, 2013, 2014 and 2018. We organized our first Women Techstorm in May 2018 in order to encourage women and people who identify as non-binary or gender diverse to take their first steps into the Wiki coding world and hopefully become Wikimedia volunteers. Figures from past Wikimedia Hackathons show a turnout of between 20-30 percent in non-male categories, demonstrating the gender gap that exists at this type of event.

In October 2018 we organized a follow-up event - for a slightly bigger crowd - that was open to all genders: we aimed for a gender diverse representation of all genders and backgrounds. For more information about the previous Techstorms and lessons learned from those events - please read the [report on Mediawiki](#).

## Wiki Techstorm 2019

For 2019 we organized a Wiki Techstorm again, open and inviting to everyone but still with an emphasis on attendance of women, non binary persons and newcomers to the community. The Wiki Techstorm 2019 also distinguished itself once again from the better known Wikimedia hackathons by offering a program that was largely aimed at newcomers. Of course there was also enough room for the more experienced developers.



*Mx Lucy, CC BY-SA 4.0*

This time the Techstorm had three main tracks:

Wikidata, Wikimedia Commons and a tool & apps track. Apart from Wikimedians who want to learn how to code and (non-Wikimedia) coders who want to learn about Wiki projects, we also invited Glam professionals who want to open up their collections to the world and expert developers who want to help the Wikimedia community develop and renew apps and tools.

The most important new approach that the organization team introduced during the Wiki Techstorm 2019 is the introduction of pre-prepared practical sessions. These sessions were collected and set up in the months prior to the Wiki Techstorm, both independently and in cooperation with GLAMs that participated in the 'Share your Data trajectory'. Some seventy practical sessions had been prepared beforehand.

## Organization - members

Organization team: *Ciell, RonnieV (Ecritures)*

Advisors: *Maarten Dammers, Sandra Fauconnier, Siebrand Mazeland*

Staff / support WMNL: *Danielle Jansen, Denise Jansen, Kirsten Jansen, Michelle van Lanschot*

## Promotion and outreach Wiki Techstorm

We have reached out to recruit participants via:

- Wikimedia Chapters in Europe, situated in Europe
- The central notice on Wikimedia projects
- former participants

- our GLAM partners
- relevant Educational institutes outside our network
- Woman network organizations
- Tech network organizations
- relevant journals, magazines and websites
- Meetup Groups
- Personal invites in Wiki network



*Group photo, Mx Lucy, CC BY-SA 4.0*

## Location

There were several considerations for finding a suitable location. In 2018, we were twice invited to the National Library in The Hague.

At the Women Techstorm in 2018, we expected 30 guests, and at the first Wiki Techstorm in 2018 we expected 45. Because there was now another target group added, the more experienced programmers, the number of participants scaled up to 60: with mentors, organizers and any guests, we counted on about 90 visitors. The National Library of the Netherlands indicated that they did not have the capacity for this, so we started looking for a new location.

A new location had to be easily accessible, both by train and by plane, as we were expecting visitors from all over North-Western Europe. The location also had to be accessible for people with reduced mobility, and we wanted to take into account people's diverse needs for meals, rest and social activities. In addition, there had to be overnight accommodation nearby, at a reasonable price. The internet had to be able to handle traffic from about 60 computers, with at least one other device (e.g. mobile phone). There had to be the possibility of catering two lunches and one evening meal on site. A room that was accessible for (24-hour) internet access, even after the end of the first day, was a plus.

The previous hackathons in the Netherlands were organized satisfactorily at the StayOkay in Amsterdam-Oost. In 2015 this location was thoroughly renovated and also a new internet network was installed. The location is a hostel, which means that there are enough sleeping places in different price ranges. The organization can also stay on location. The hostel has several rooms suitable for people in wheelchairs: the wheelchair toilet on the ground floor is easily accessible. The hostel is easily accessible with a train station nearby and a tram stop almost at the door. Door-to-door to Schiphol Airport takes no more than 60 minutes. The hostel has a bar with a small restaurant, which serves meat, vegetarian and vegan options. The disadvantage of the StayOkay hostel in Amsterdam-Oost is that hotels are a bit further away. If you want a bit more luxury, the nearby hotels (in a reasonable price range for Amsterdam of ~100 euros per night) are about a 20-minute walk away.

The advantage of catering on location is that participants can choose whether to sit down and eat, or to finish off their work. At the first Women Techstorm in 2018, we left the location for lunch and the rooms were locked. This was very stimulating for the social cohesion in the group and people enjoyed seeing a bit of The Hague. However, there were 30 of us then and walking to the location together with a large group is expected to have had a different outcome.

The StayOkay hostel wants to be sustainable, and therefore offers plain glasses instead of plastic cups, and porcelain coffee cups instead of cardboard ones. Breakfast was free for everyone, lunch was vegetarian and the evening meal was, on our initiative, vegan. There was a wide choice of salads, soup, bread and pasta at all meal times.

The cooperation with reservations for the conference rooms went smoothly, both in the preparations and on the Techstorm days themselves. Arranging the beds was a bit tricky, partly because the deadline was moved several times and because StayOkay does not work with a single contact for the reservation of the beds. Telephone contact is difficult because of the call center; email went reasonably well.

## Social event/Culture Crawl

As with the two Techstorms in 2018, the Social Event was organized on the Thursday afternoon prior to the Techstorm. It is an opportunity for participants to get to know each other in a casual way. The idea is that by doing an activity together and having a meal, the first steps towards interaction by talking to each other and asking questions will be made easier on Friday and Saturday.

In Amsterdam we opted for a guided tour of the Rijksmuseum, entitled "Mother of God". After the guided tour (which ended at 3 p.m.) people had time until closing time (5 p.m.) to visit the museum further on their own. Of the 44 people who had signed up for this, 19 eventually took part.



*Ciell, CC BY-SA 4.0,*

In the evening we met at Lalla Rookh, a Surinamese restaurant not far from the hostel. We sat at two long tables and had the (small) restaurant to ourselves. Lalla Rookh was also chosen for its location (close to public transport and hostel), its varied menu and the possibilities of the kitchen to take into account all different wishes and diets, and its accessibility for people in wheelchairs.

## Participants Wiki Techstorm 2019

58 people enrolled in the Wiki Techstorm 2019. This was a big difference with our Techstorm in October 2018 when 286 people signed up to join. We have evaluated this and expect these are factors that might have caused the difference:

- the central notice was shown less frequently compared to 2018
- registration was open for a shorter period of time compared to 2018
- registration was closer to the start of the event, and in The Netherlands registrations started during Summer Holiday season (August & September instead of May).

We have deliberately chosen to register in a different, shorter time period. In previous editions we had too much time between registering and confirming a place at the Techstorm. Because of this, some participants were unable to attend when they were finally confirmed, which we wanted to avoid this year. On the positive side we were able to admit last minute participants who were unable to attend at first and therefore didn't register.

### Final number of participants

- 63 participants (4 no-show)
- 11 Wikimedians, 10 Experts, 11 GLAM, 11 Mentors, 11 Developers, 9 3/support
- 22 new Wiki contributors joined in this event.
- 5 new contributors did contribute in the four months after the event. (february 2020)
- 55% of participants identified themselves as woman/non binary/didn't want to disclose
- Participants represented: The Netherlands, United Kingdom, Germany, Belgium, France, Switzerland, Finland, Norway, Ukraine.

We did not meet the 80% women among participants that we had set as a goal for this Techstorm. When recruiting participants we did reach out to i.e. our women network. Unfortunately the organizations that have a women only network informed us that they do not advertise for events that are 'mixed' in gender. Therefore we could not reach out to the network that we used i.e. the Women Techstorm. Besides this, we noticed a general decline of registrations (see above), which of course also had its impact on the amount of women that registered.

Nevertheless we did welcome a majority of participants (55%) that are woman/non binary. Which is still much higher than regular Wikimedia Hackathons where in general women attendance is between 20-30%, with 19% in Lyon 2015, 29% in Jerusalem 2016 and 24% in Vienna 2017.

In our communication, we have emphasized that the Techstorm is open to everyone. We have explained that you are experienced enough if i.e. you know how to work with spreadsheets. This way of explaining in our communication encouraged people who have not worked with (the technical part of) Wikimedia to subscribe for the Techstorm, while they would otherwise have decided that attending the event was too ambitious for them.

### Reports from Participants

There are four reports from the participants available. Please read them on [mediawiki](#).

## Participants - their evaluation

Unfortunately our evaluation form was only filled out 6 times by participants. We still find it very important to share some information from the evaluation, as it shows the diversity of the group and it gives us information about the experience of the participants.

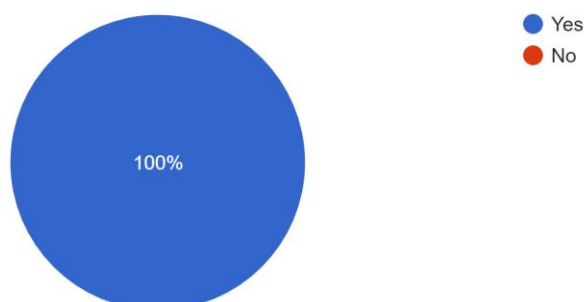
What is your opinion on the amount of workshops that we offered?

6 antwoorden



Was it easy for you to find a project or task to work on (together)?

6 antwoorden



### Most useful workshops according to the participants

Mapmaking was thorough; good step-by-step explanation and documentation for at home

Open refine and Wikidata

Pattypan – because it's super tiring to upload the same kind of pictures over and over again

OpenRefine = interesting tool + Copyrights= personal interests

Structured Data on Commons

As you can see, a very diverse public also has very diverse opinions.

### What do you consider to have been the best part of the Techstorm?

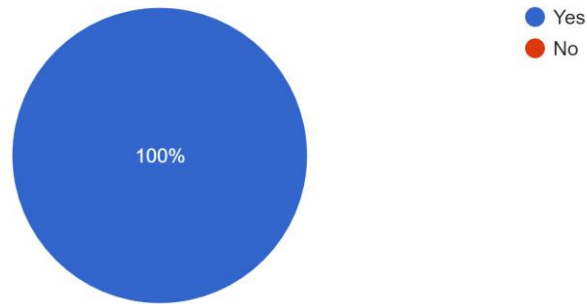
The ask-any-question-atmosphere



The community and sense of helping each other out  
Techstorming! Working together )  
Getting to know like-minded people  
Meeting interesting and nice people, and learning about tools  
To talk with people about their projects, their concepts and asking for help directly

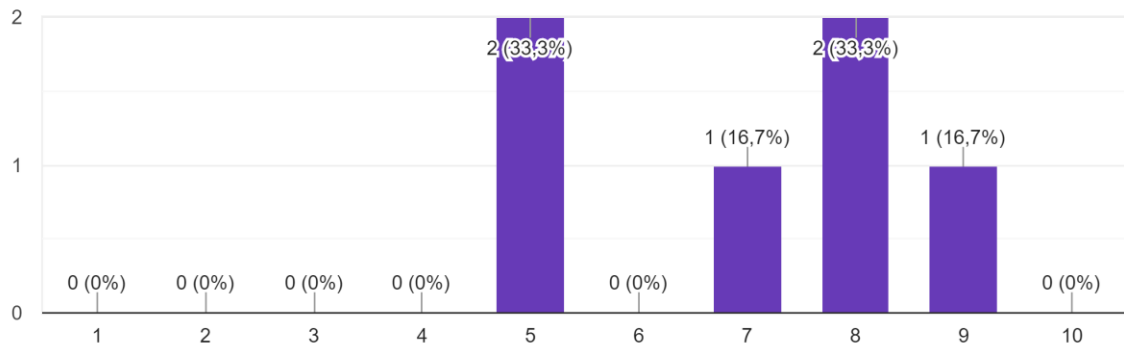
Did you feel welcome?

6 antwoorden



On a scale from 1 - 10 - How did the Techstorm help you improve your developing skills?

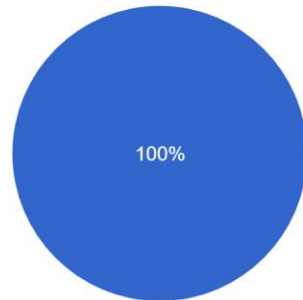
6 antwoorden



# Mentors evaluation

What is your opinion on the amount of workshops that we offered?

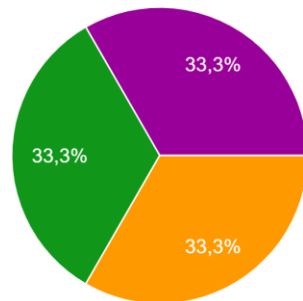
3 antwoorden



- Enough workshops
- Too much workshops
- I would have preferred more workshops

Did you have the idea that the participants could find their way, working with the provided tasks?

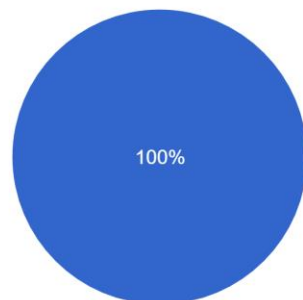
3 antwoorden



- Yes
- No
- Maybe
- Cant answer this, did not pay enough attention to this
- the only problem I had was that they did not synchronize between each other and worked on the same tasks independently - I should have been more proactive at ensuring they were...

Did you get enough opportunity to guide participants?

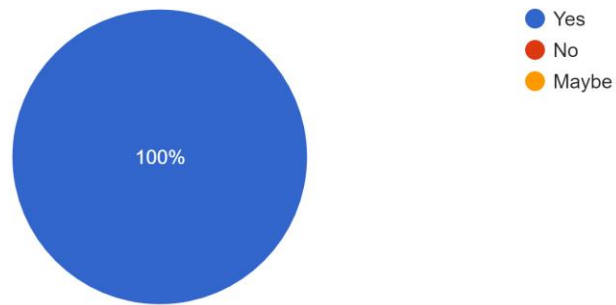
3 antwoorden



- Yes
- No

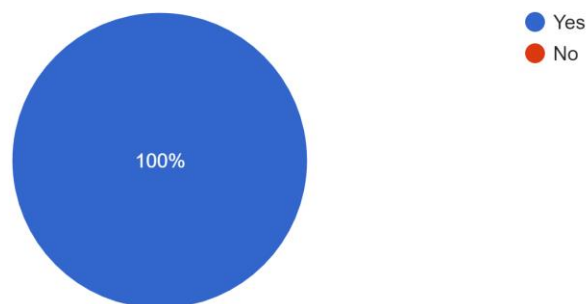
Did you have all the tools to help participants?

3 antwoorden



Did you feel welcome?

3 antwoorden



## General conference statistics

Two days of hacking and learning. Ten workshops were held during 2 days (see section: 'Documentation Wiki Techstorm'). In order to prevent people from spending all their time following workshops, two workshops were offered at the same time. This way there was enough time left to work together.

## Objectives & Outcomes Techstorm

- Stimulate the participation of women and gender diverse people, especially in the 'technical' side of Wiki projects. (5 new participants (participants who were not yet active within the technical side of the movement) are still active within the technical side of the movement six months after the Wiki Techstorm).
  - **Outcome: 22 participants were new in the technical side of Wiki projects (actually they were completely new to Wikiprojects), we cannot measure if these participants were women due to GDPR privacy law. 5 participants were still active after the event.**
- Increasing and improving technique-related knowledge in Wikimedians and increasing and improving knowledge about Wikimedia projects among programmers/coders/app and tool builders and digital content managers. (*10 people from GLAM organizations participate in the Techstorm*).
  - **Outcome: 11 participants from GLAM organizations**
- Connect Wikimedians with programmers/coders/app- and tool builders outside our current network to improve knowledge exchange in both directions. (*One tool or script will be developed for the gender gap project during the Wiki Techstorm 2019*).
  - **Outcome: A sparql query has been written for the distribution of occupations by gender over the centuries.**
- Attracting new Wikimedians to work on the various Wikiprojects. (*10 participants have not previously done a logged-in edit on a Wikiproject*).
  - **Outcome: 22 participants were attracted to Wikiprojects**
- Stimulating the reuse of accessible collections from the “Deel je data” project.
  - **Outcome: - From a total of 464 images related to the Deel je data/Techstorm project, a reuse of more than 23% was measured in January 2021.**



DDJJ, CC BY-SA 4.0

## Extra outcomes

In addition to the above desired goals and results that were set for the project, there is a huge list of tasks that were started and worked out during the Techstorm. On [this page](#) you will find an overview of these tasks in Dutch.

## Framework for the organization of the Techstorm - approach and ideas on how to organize a Wiki Techstorm

Below are the starting points that are considered to be the basis for the event. These starting points are based on our experience with organizing previous Techstorms and will help to achieve a diverse Wiki Techstorm, open and inviting to everyone:

- In view of the over-representation of men in both the technical ICT world and within the wiki projects, we place the emphasis on attracting women and non-binary people. The goal is to achieve at least an 80%-20% ratio; where 80% of the participants consist of

(cis)women, transgenders, transversal women or gender-diverse persons and 20% cis men. For mentors and trainers our starting point is to attract as many women and gender-diverse people as possible with a target of at least 50%-50%.

- We try to recruit as many participants as possible based in the Netherlands and surrounding countries in Europe, in order to make possible follow-up events more feasible.
- Within the target group of programmers we mainly focus on semi-experienced persons. The participants are preferably not yet die-hard hackathon visitors.
- By means of integrating an improved coherence between preparation, theory and practice sessions into the program, we try to connect the knowledge of all participants as well as possible.
- We offer a safe, instructive and above all inspiring environment for all participants despite for example gender, color, religion, race, sexual preference, etc.

## Lessons learned



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### **Participants recruitment - timing**

Changing the registration period to August/September and making the registration period shorter may have resulted in a reduced number of registrations, we received less registrations than we expected. Another reason for this reduction might be the change of policy in publishing the central notice.

### **Inviting participants**

It can be worthwhile to have some last places available for last minute registrations from participants you otherwise would have missed. But never refuse a participant just because you want to keep an open spot. When there are still some spots available after registration is closed, it is useful to invite some people with a specific knowledge in order to get the mix of knowledge of people in the group even more balanced.

### **Communication before and during the event**

Because we worked with newcomers, GLAM employees and Wikimedians, we decided to use different channels for communication. Newcomers might get lost on Mediawiki pages. Wikimedians do not always appreciate communication through a website. That is why we used [www.wikimedia.nl](http://www.wikimedia.nl) and Mediawiki for communications. For participants we also used Telegram. This is not optimal.

For the next Techstorm we would like to invest in finding out what the preferred method of communication would be during the event. In previous evaluations we have asked for input, but we didn't get an exact solution from the answers. What works? An app, a microphone to make announcements? Telegram?

We do realize that it is difficult to find a channel that works for all groups, we do have to think about a better way next time.

### **Communication within organization team**

In our set-up we worked with different target groups among the participants. Among our participants were experienced Wikimedians, starters, Wikipedians, GLAM employees, developers, mentors. Each group had its own basic knowledge and needed to be informed about the upcoming Techstorm.

We tried to deal with this by splitting up the organization team. However, this caused confusion. The information transfer within the organizing team did not go as well as expected. Next time, we will have one person responsible for communication who will make the connection and who keeps control of all communication.

### **Logistics - streaming**

The sessions were streamed during the Techstorm. The network of our location couldn't handle this very well. Although it was quickly solved by the employees of the location by setting up a separate network for these streams, this is a learning point for next time. Provide an extra bandwidth when you want to stream sessions live. Another option is no livestream: only record the sessions and make sure you put them online the next day.

### **Program**

The amount of workshops was good, in topics and in the variation in experience levels. Programming two sessions simultaneously makes sure there is enough time available for working together. We learned this quickly in the first Women Techstorm: by forcing people to make a choice, and avoiding the option to only follow workshops the whole weekend, they were able to turn what they had learned in a session into an experience, guided by the mentors in place.

Make sure you give tips and suggestions for spending their free time after the main 3-day program ends. Participants who travelled from far might have to spend another evening in the country, and you can help them by giving some advice about hotspots, restaurants and evening attractions in town.

### **Tasks**

Working with tasks is highly recommended. When the tasks are in line with the workshops offered, participants can immediately get to work and put what they have learned into practice. Preparing the tasks does require capacity, make sure that you map out the tasks well in advance and contact institutions that have images or data available.

What is important as well, is to inform mentors about the tasks and inform the teachers about the tasks we collected for the weekend. They know their way on Phabricator and can direct people towards the right tasks for practicing what they have learned.

It is advised to have one team member at the physical scrum board, to help people towards new tasks, and connect them to a mentor if they need one.

### **Organization team**

This Techstorm was organized by a relatively small group of volunteers. For a new Techstorm with a similar program, we would recommend a group of at least 5 volunteers in the core team. Because there are so many elements we wanted to take into consideration and balance, the workload actually took quite a big strain on the team, and on the atmosphere within the team. With more people that help out on the practical and creative side of the organizing, it might be possible to avoid this.

We are very happy with the positive response and compliments from participants and mentors. We on our turn want to thank everyone for their enthusiasm and effort to make this Techstorm a success.

## **Documentation Wiki Techstorm**

Wiki Techstorm on Wikimedia Commons

Available on [Wikimedia Commons](#)

## Presentation slides

Available on [Wikimedia Commons](#)

## Recorded sessions Techstorm - available on Youtube

*Friday 22 November 2019*

09.45-10.15	<a href="#">Introduction Wikidata</a>	Ronald	<a href="https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gDA3GJh7wwU">https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gDA3GJh7wwU</a>	49 views - may 2020
09.45-10.15	<a href="#">Introduction Wikimedia Commons</a>	Ciell	<a href="https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zWuaMN2qHz0">https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zWuaMN2qHz0</a>	31 views - may 2020
10.30-12.15	<a href="#">Workshop Commons Pattypan</a>	MichelleVL	<a href="https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IG93PKzZB6w">https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IG93PKzZB6w</a>	36 views - may 2020
10.30-12.15	<a href="#">Workshop Wikidata Open Refine</a>	Antonin	video not available	
16.00-17.30	<a href="#">Workshop Commons Structured Data</a>	Sandra Fauconnier	<a href="https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=_1oL7smKNhs">https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=_1oL7smKNhs</a>	27 views - may 2020
16.00-17.30	<a href="#">Workshop Wikidata SparQL</a>	Edo	<a href="https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vkfg6J4Yopo">https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vkfg6J4Yopo</a>	44 views - may 2020
19.00-20.00	<a href="#">Workshop Scraping websites</a>	Hay	<a href="https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fnrte0eUg3w">https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fnrte0eUg3w</a>	42 views - may 2020



Saturday 23 November 2019

09.00-10.00	Q&A Copyright	Michelle, Ciell, Edo, Denise	<a href="https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=HzMvLDMXz24">https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=HzMvLDMXz24</a>	19 views - may 2020
10.00-11.00	Workshop Regex (Wikidata en Commons)	Vera	<a href="https://youtube.com/watch?v=N3Jy1_9FhLk">https://youtube.com/watch?v=N3Jy1_9FhLk</a>	27 views - may1 2020
10.00-11.00	Workshop Listeria (Wikidata and Wikipedia)	Edo	<a href="https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=STLPy6kpukl">https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=STLPy6kpukl</a>	37 views - may1 2020
16.00- 16.45	Showcase etherpad		<a href="https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=h2IIAidyLic">https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=h2IIAidyLic</a>	108 views - may 2020

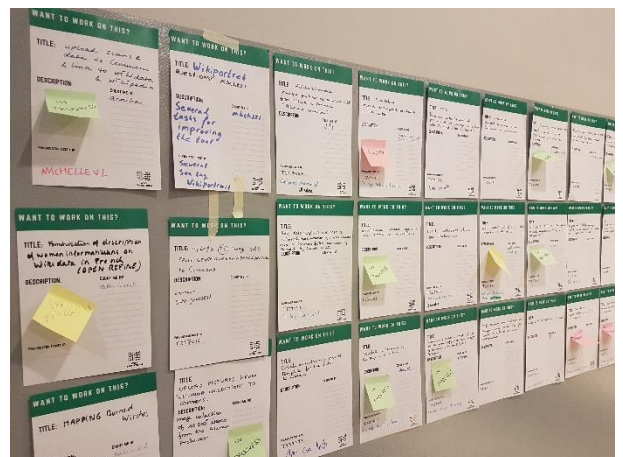
## Podcast Wikipedia Podden - by Jan Aniali

Jan Aniali made several podcasts during the Techstorm. The podcasts are available on [Wikimedia Commons](#). (file WP56 - WP60)

## Practical sessions in Phabricator board and on posters

The practical sessions that were set up for the participants are still available in [Phabricator](#). The participants did not work with the Phabricator board, the tasks were written on posters and mentors signed in as coach. Participants signed their name on a Poster if they started to work on a task. This made it easier for both mentors and participants to find each other and work together.

The Phabricator board was managed by the mentors and the 'Phabolous' manager from the organization team.



Ciell, CC-BY-SA 4.0

## Budget Wiki Techstorm 2019

<b>Techstorm Costs (in €)</b>	
Office Supplies	154,00
Printing	357,00
Venue	8.518,00
Equipment rental	557,00
Courier	168,00
Hire freelancer	2.517,00
Miscellaneous items (keycards, waffles, etc)	168,00
Badges	130,00
Presents	170,00
Social event	585,00
Dinermeeting org.team Techstorm	148,00
Travel, accommodation and other volunteer expenses	1.142,00
Support and coordination WMNL (443 hours)	<u>13.986,00</u>
	<b>28.600,00</b>

- 8 participants received a scholarship from their chapter: Norway (sponsored one participant from Norway + one from Finland), Ukraine, United Kingdom, Belgium, Germany, France

## Conclusion

This Techstorm 2019 has again been a very interesting edition. The mix of participants worked out well and we think bringing together GLAMS and Wikimedia volunteers has been a good step forward in introducing GLAM's to the Wikimedia Community and vice versa. It was amazing to see how participants found each other and supported each other while working on tasks. We think this concept offers great potential for the future.



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