

Wikipedia Summit Comes to London - Largest ever gathering

Featured speakers include Wikipedia Founder Jimmy Wales, and new Wikimedia Foundation Chief Executive Lila Tretikov; Thousands of Wikimedia volunteers; Leaders in Technology, Culture and Society. From August 8th to 10th at the Barbican Centre; Tickets go on sale today.

Wikimania programme to focus on Social Machines, The Future of Education, Democratic Media, Open Scholarship & Open Data

Wikimania's 2014 team today announce the programme for this year's historic event. Wikimania 2014 will be held at the Barbican Centre in London from 8th to 10th August, with a two day pre-conference held August 6th and 7th. Over 4,000 attendees are expected; more than twice the number at any previous Wikimania.

The future of Wikipedia, and other Wikimedia projects, forms the central theme. As technological advances promise big changes on the platform, Wikipedia founder, Jimmy Wales will delve into what the future has in store for the world's fifth most popular website.

"Wikipedia is the largest knowledge base in the world, consulted by over half a billion people each month," says Wales. "However, we've only just begun to scratch the surface of what can be done with it. Through international expansion, a new focus on open data, and a big investment in technology development, our movement is charting exciting new territory."

Attendees will also welcome Wikimedia's new executive director, Lila Tretikov. Her keynote will focus on the impact of Wikipedia in our changing world and its potential for our future.

Tretikov sees Wikipedia, a top five website, as an opportunity to for unlocking and democratising knowledge globally: "I'd like us to think beyond what we know today. Think beyond our accomplishments, towards opportunities. Opportunities for all our collective minds to build the future of knowledge, collaboration and trust." Recent developments have included plans focused on overhauling Wikipedia's user experience for readers and editors, a programmatic approach to grant-making and community, and establishing a development platform for knowledge building.

Open to the public, Wikimania is a five-day, community-organised event focusing on new projects in the world of MediaWiki, transparency, and open knowledge. Themes include collaborative working, natural language processing, crowdsourcing, education, journalism, scientific and medical research, open data, and multimedia.

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Programme Summary

The conference is organised around five questions with massive implications for the future.

Social Machines: How Can Online Communities Unlock Humanity's Potential?

The Future of Education: Now That Wikipedia Has Done Everyone's Homework, What's Left to Teach?

Democratic Media: Must All Media Be Commercially Driven?

Open Scholarship: What Happens When The Cutting Edge of Human Knowledge is Available To All?

Open Data: What Can We Build When The Sum Of All Human Knowledge is Machine Readable?

Lectures from prominent leaders across technology and media will include the following.

Jack Andraka – Using Wikipedia & the scientific research he found there, Andraka invented a possible new test for pancreatic cancer - at 15 years old.

Professor Yaneer Bar-Yam – President, New England Complex Systems Institute, an examination of Wikipedia as a complex system concept, and how it applies to exposition of scientific enquiry and socio-cultural issues.

Dariusz Jemielniak - Talking about his book "Common Knowledge? An Ethnography of Wikipedia." An academic's perspective on Wikipedia's cultural and community structures.

Benjamin Mako Hill - Peer production researcher, giving an overview of all research relating to Wikipedia in the past year.

Elizabeth Marincola - Chief Executive Officer, Public Library of Science. PLOS is the world's largest open access journal. (big announcement apparently)

Carl Miller - Research Director, Centre for Analysis of Social Media at Demos, a leading U.K. think-tank working to bring the people into politics, and lift the voter participation rate - experimenting with using Wikipedia-like systems.

Cameron Neylon - Advocacy Director, Public Library of Science. Neylon is a longtime advocate for open access and unrestricted online access to peer-reviewed scholarly research.

Lydia Pintscher - Product Manager for Wikidata, a free knowledge base that can be read and edited by humans and machines alike and the newest official Wikimedia Foundation project. Wikidata centralises access to, and the management of structured data.

Sir Nigel Shadbolt - Chairman and Co-Founder of the Open Data Institute (ODI); Professor of Artificial Intelligence and Head of the Web and Internet Science Group at the University of Southampton, and Principal Investigator for the Theory And Practice of Social Machines Working Group.

David White - Head of Technology Enhanced Learning at the University of the Arts, London

Lila Tretikov - Executive Director, Wikimedia Foundation.

Notes to editors

The conference takes place from 8th to 10th August at The Barbican Centre, London, with a programme of fringe events already underway. Alongside will run a pre-conference on education (6th and 7th August) and a hackathon (6th to 10th August), with the opening ceremony on the evening of the 7th. The main conference website is: www.wikimaniainlondon.org; where tickets are now on sale for £30/45/55 (1 day/3 days/5 days).

There are a number of complimentary tickets available for journalists who would like to attend. Please contact press@wikimaniainlondon.org

The conference is being supported by the Wikimedia Foundation, Google, Ask.com, Mathworks, Tupperware, and Wikimedia UK.

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For Wikimedia Foundation (non UK) press enquiries please contact Katherine Maher, Chief Communications Officer, on kmaher@wikimedia.org

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Jimmy Wales - https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Jimmy_Wales#mediaviewer/File:Jimmy_wants_you.JPG
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Lila Tretikov - https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/Lila_Tretikov#mediaviewer/File:Lila_Tretikov_April_2014_%285%29.jpg

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