

Project Title:

Wikimedians at NYU: Pedagogy, Curriculum, and Community of Practice

Principal Investigators:

Lauren Kehoe

Undergraduate Instruction & Outreach
Librarian, Library Faculty
Division of Libraries - Bobst Library
70 Washington Square South - Office 1M-10
New York, NY 10012
(212) 998-2509
lsk221@nyu.edu

Alexandra Provo

Metadata Librarian, Library Faculty
Division of Libraries - Bobst Library
70 Washington Square South - Office 10th
Floor South
New York, NY 10012
ap180@nyu.edu

Lori Salmon

Head, Institute of Fine Arts Library, Library
Faculty
Division of Libraries - The James B. Duke
House
1 East 78th Street
New York, NY 10075
lls5@nyu.edu

Jennifer Stubbs

Reference and Research Services Librarian
for Social Sciences and Economics
Division of Libraries - NYU Shanghai Library
NYU Shanghai Pudong Building
jas58@nyu.edu

Kimberly Tarr

Head, Media Preservation Department
Division of Libraries - Bobst Library
70 Washington Square South - Office Lower
Level 2
New York, NY 10012
kimberlytarr@nyu.edu

Amount Requested: \$3,075.00

Project Term: Summer 2020-Summer 2021

Abstract: *Wikimedians at NYU: Pedagogy, Curriculum, and Community of Practice* curricular development project seeks to understand how Wikipedia and other Wikimedia projects are being used across NYU's classrooms and to expand the Division of Libraries' support of this activity. Building on the Division's established Wikimedians at NYU Community of Practice, the PIs will administer a survey to NYU faculty across the campuses to assess the curricular use of Wikimedia. The results of the survey will be used to develop library programming in New York and Shanghai, grow the community of practice beyond the Division of Libraries, and to build a curricular toolkit to support Wikimedia activities at NYU.

Project Statement

The Division of Libraries proposes a project to undergo an analysis of pre-existing Wikimedia activities across the NYU campuses to produce a curricular toolkit. What faculty, classes, or programs are already incorporating Wikimedia into instruction and curriculum activities at NYU? “Wikimedia” here refers to the suite of projects and services supported by the Wikimedia Foundation, in particular Wikipedia, Wikidata, and Wikimedia Commons.¹ After collaborating with WikiEdu for surveys and outreach,² the Division will hold focus groups and administer other qualitative data instruments to assess the current range and depth of activity on campus. Following analysis, the Division will convene a series collaborative programs to bring members of the NYU faculty together to discuss how they currently integrate Wikipedia in their curriculum. Building on connections made at conferences such as WikiConference North America, we will also invite a guest speaker from a peer institution to share insights about this area of work. This analysis will be shared within the Division and the larger NYU community. The Libraries will also plan and host Wikipedia Edit-a-thons salient to the pre-existing activity on campus and strive to make connections across schools and programs to connect faculty with other members of the community doing similar work. Finally, the Library will provide programming, workshops, and a toolkit to support a network of Wikipedia activity in the classroom. This activity will formalize our nascent Wikipedia community of practice and develop it outside of the Division of Libraries.

The NYU Division of Libraries has been deepening its engagement with editing and contributing to Wikipedia and related Wikimedia projects, such as Wikidata, over the last year and a half. This includes developing Wikimedians at NYU, a Community of Practice within the

¹ <https://www.wikimedia.org/>

² <https://wikiedu.org/>

Division to build skills and share expertise with library faculty, staff, and administrators. The Wikimedians at NYU Libraries meet bi-weekly throughout the academic year in a low stakes, supportive environment to discuss articles the members are currently editing, train new Wikimedia editors, and brainstorm articles of interest for editing. The activities of this group have led to community engagement activities like participating in the #1Lib1Ref campaign³, a Wikipedia and Wikidata Edit-a-thon convened by the Libraries' Archival Collections Management (ACM) unit as part of Archives Week 2019, and the recently convened Latinx Interventions: a Wikipedia Edit-a-Thon. The latter represents the group's first more faculty- and student-facing effort: held at Bobst and co-organized by the Wikimedians at NYU group and the NYU Latinx Project, the event was featured on WNYC News.⁴ As well, the library faculty have been strong advocates for Wikipedia's use in the classroom. NYU Shanghai Library has recently presented at faculty meetings on using WikiEdu in the classroom.

The Division will use CDCF funding to expand its engagement with Wikipedia in the classroom and to determine how the Library can support and develop curricula that incorporate Wikipedia. Since the Division of Libraries throughout the Global Sites serves as a central hub of scholarly activity across the University, it is uniquely positioned to convene educational and pedagogical activities happening around the University in regard to Wikipedia. Given our global presence, NYU is especially well-positioned to engage with questions of knowledge production and consumption from a multicultural lens. For example, NYU Shanghai is especially cross-cultural in bridging resources from one language's scholarly tradition to another's; simultaneously, Wikipedia encourages citations within the language of the platform, thus challenging students and librarians to locate quality sources in various contexts.

³ <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/1Lib1Ref>

⁴ <https://www.wnyc.org/story/documenting-latinx-culture-and-history-one-wikipedia-post-time/>

This project has the potential to make a significant and lasting impact on curricular support for Wikipedia in the classroom and around the University. The International Federation of Library Associations (IFLA)/UNESCO Multicultural Library Manifesto (2012) states,

The library staff is the active intermediary between users and resources. Professional education and continuing training focused on services to multicultural communities, cross cultural communication and sensitivity, anti-discrimination, cultures and languages should be provided. The staff of a multicultural library should reflect the cultural and linguistic characteristics of the community to ensure cultural awareness, reflect the community the library serves, and encourage communication.

NYU Libraries is the “active intermediary” across the campuses and global sites to provide access to resources so that the community can “ensure cultural awareness” and “encourage communication” through leadership in identifying and supporting Wikipedia activities across the campuses and sites. Furthermore, librarians are experts in navigating a variety of information resources, both unique to NYU and available outside of NYU. This project would support many high impact practices outlined by The Association of American Colleges & Universities⁵ such as common intellectual experiences, learning communities, writing-intensive courses, collaborative assignments and projects, undergraduate research, diversity/global learning, and community-based learning. As a collaborative encyclopedia that is used throughout the world and published in multiple languages, Wikipedia facilitates writing, intellectual engagement, research, global learning, and a community based approach to learning.

Additionally, the Association of College & Research Libraries has adopted a Framework for Information Literacy for Higher Education⁶ that outlines six frames, all of which can be applied to the use of Wikipedia in the classroom, but most relevantly: (1) *Authority is Constructed and Contextual* & (2) *Scholarship as Conversation*. The first frame, Authority is Constructed and Contextual, claims,

⁵ <https://www.aacu.org/leap/hips>

⁶ <http://www.ala.org/acrl/standards/ilframework>

Information resources reflect their creators' expertise and credibility, and are evaluated based on the information need and the context in which the information will be used. Authority is constructed in that various communities may recognize different types of authority. It is contextual in that the information need may help to determine the level of authority required.

When students actively use and contribute to Wikipedia, they will develop an understanding of how content is created, used, evaluated for its authority, especially within Wikipedia, and understanding content creation in Wikipedia has larger implications for understanding how information is created broadly. Students become active agents in applying their knowledge and expertise to a highly used tool. As community members of NYU, students have robust access to other information sources, i.e. book collections or databases in the Division of Libraries, to improve the overall authority of Wikipedia.

Likewise, by using Wikipedia in the classroom, students engage with ongoing scholarly conversations. The Scholarship as Conversation frame continues, "Communities of scholars, researchers, or professionals engage in sustained discourse with new insights and discoveries occurring over time as a result of varied perspectives and interpretations." An introduction to and discussion of Wikipedia talk pages, where editors post ideas, issues, and discussion about a given article's content activates Scholarship as Conversation. We have already experimented with this at NYU Shanghai, by introducing writing faculty to Wikipedia articles' talk pages and demonstrating how they (1) make source evaluation explicit and (2) capture part of the peer-review process so often invisible in scholarly communication.

This project proposes to identify current Wiki activities across the global sites and to unify and bolster these efforts by providing support, training, and access to resources in improving the content across cultures in Wikipedia. Furthermore, understanding and contributing to Wikipedia content will improve the reliability of this resource and build information literacy skills across the University. By supporting the use of Wikipedia in the classroom, the

Division can foster critical engagement with a highly used information source that strives to “Imagine a world in which every single human being can freely share in the sum of all knowledge.”⁷ Through application of high impact practices and the ACRL Framework, as well as providing structured support for contributing to Wikipedia, the Division can bolster the larger NYU community’s engagement with this tool and improve Wikipedia for all.

⁷ <https://wikimediafoundation.org/>