

GV Decentralized Publishing Guide - DISCUSSION VERSION

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LIVE PAGE:

<https://community.globalvoices.org/guide/editorial-guides/toolbox-for-editors/decentralized-publishing/>

USE THIS DOCUMENT TO DISCUSS AND PROPOSE CHANGES TO THE PUBLIC GUIDE

Title: Decentralized Publishing

Tagline: How we collaborate on original stories written in languages other than English.

This guide explains “decentralized publishing” where a GV article is first written on [a Lingua site](#) in a language other than English, then subsequently translated into English and reviewed and edited by the newsroom on the GV English site. We'll outline below the circumstances when this can happen and the procedures to follow to ensure a smooth process.

Decentralized publishing started in 2010 as [a resolution](#) of the Global Voices Summit in [Santiago](#). It generally involves more work than a typical English-first editorial workflow, but it offers the important benefit of enabling authors who don't have English writing skills to have their voices heard.

Please note that this is a different process from [Lingua Content](#), in which Lingua sites are allowed to publish their content without the need to translate it into English.

Summary of the decentralized publishing workflow

The steps below outline the day-to-day process of creating a typical decentralized post. **If you are new to decentralized publishing, please read this document in full, so you understand these steps!**

1. A story is pitched to the relevant person in the newsroom and written first on a Lingua site.
2. The original draft text is fetched via the **GV Lingua Translation** box into the main English site, using the “preview” URL, and clicking the blue “Fetch Post Data” button.
3. The fetched draft text is then translated into English.
4. The English translation is copy-edited.
5. Any significant edits made to the English version are also made to the original story on the Lingua site.
6. The original story is published on the Lingua site.
7. After the source post is published, the English translation is published.
8. Double-check that the “Written by” and “Translated by” credits are correct in the original story and English translation. See [Understanding author and translator credits](#) for tips.

Are you thinking about starting decentralized publishing?

Ask these questions first:

- **Does the newsroom have the language capacity to assess and edit stories in the non-English language?** For decentralized publishing to function, an editor from the [newsroom team](#) must be comfortable and confident editing in the respective language.
- **What is the existing relationship between the Lingua and newsroom editors?** Ideally, there should be a good collaborative relationship between the two groups. Otherwise, one needs to be developed.
- **Are translators and authors all in one joint group for communication or separate groups?** Good communication and team-building are essential! But they also require care.

The simultaneous editing workflow

To ensure non-English stories meet GV standards for writing and reporting, a newsroom editor must thoroughly edit them before they are published. Once both versions are ready and match each other, the original, non-English post is published first, then the English translation.

The editor working on the story should ensure that any relevant corrections, deletions, or additions made to an English translation of an original non-English-language story (such as missing context, attributions, or factual corrections) are made in the original story as well.

Throughout the editing process, the editor working on the story should include the original author in discussing significant changes as much as possible.

Changes after the posts are published.

Any post-publication changes should be reported through the [Edit Request Form](#) so that all translations are also updated.

Changes to headlines, excerpts, and certain stylistic elements in the English translation do not have to be reflected in the original story post-publication unless it is a matter of factual accuracy, given that different languages have different conventions and different headlines may appeal to different audiences.

Organizing a decentralized publishing team

A key difference between a decentralized publishing team and a Lingua translation team, is that all English translations of content originally written in a non-English language must go through the newsroom editor. In the case of Lingua teams, Translation Managers oversee the translation of stories into non-English languages.

Building a volunteer authors team

Recruiting volunteer authors who write in a non-English language depends on the editors' networks. However, it is generally easier to find volunteer authors from non-English-speaking countries who write in their native language, compared to English!

Building an into-English translation team

Having an organized team of translators who can translate original posts from a non-English language into English can be very useful!

More tips

- As you decide to write in your language, it is great to have a call with the respective Translation Manager to understand the Lingua team's current status and ask for their help.
- Keep in mind that Lingua sites are volunteer-run and volunteer-managed. Therefore, it is always good to manage expectations appropriately according to the volunteers' interests, especially to avoid burnout.
- To find volunteers, whether for writing or translating, the first thing to do is ask. Then, publish a post in the community blog announcing your need for volunteers. It can be as simple as [this](#).
- Share your announcement post with different communities online and your extended networks, which includes the [Community Google group](#). Communities (translation, students, activists, media, academia, etc.) exist on various platforms, on social media, or independently.
- Ask the Translation Manager, or alternatively the Lingua Manager, to forward your call for volunteers. Historically, Lingua contributors are well suited to GV technical workflow and will require very little onboarding. They might even double as into English translators!
- The Lingua Manager will help you find into English translators, and depending on your need, will help establish a workflow for a continuous flow of applicants.
- The Google Slides in the [Translators Guide](#) will help onboard into English translators.

Understanding author and translator credits

Decentralized publishing can lead to confusion about who is marked as "Written by" and "Translated by" on the different versions of the post. Before publishing the source and translation, you should always review the authorship credits and make any changes needed.

Here are some tips to keep in mind:

- On a "Source" post (one with no URL in the **GV Lingua Translation** box of the editor), all users selected in the **Authors** box will be marked as "Written by" on both the "Source" and "Translation" post.
- On the "Translation" post, all users selected in the **Authors** box will be marked as "Translated by" on the post, along with the "Written by" credits from the source.

- You can also see these credits inside the **GV Lingua Translation** box while editing the post.
- Note that non-editor users (with limited permissions in WP) can't see the box called **Authors** in the WP editor where the credits are controlled, so this is a job for users with editor or administrator-level permissions.
- If you find you're seeing the wrong credits, and especially if they are *inverted* (translators show as "written by" and the original author shows as "Translated by") then you probably have the "Source" set as the "Translation" and vice-versa. See instructions to fix this below.

How to fix an *inverted* translation/source pair

- Click the **Remove** button in the **GV Lingua Translation** box on the post that has it, removing the **Target URL** and severing the connection between the two posts.
- Edit the "translation" post (in the case of Decentralized Publishing, this is the English version) and insert the URL of the "source" post (non-English) as the **Target URL**.
- Click **Update** (Not **Fetch**!) to link the two posts without re-importing the content.