

Translate-a-thon FAQ

Attendance/Participation

Can I take part remotely?

Do I have to attend the entire time? I can only participate for a couple of hours

I need proof that I attended Translate-a-thon for my class / community service, etc. How do I get that?

Language and Experience

What level of language skills are required?

Do I need to be a native speaker of the target language? Do I need to be a native speaker of English?

Do I need to have (much) prior experience as a translator to get involved?

I have a lot of translation experience and/or am a professional translator, can/should I still take part?

What if I want to be involved, but my language pairs are not represented in the available projects?

What if I want to be involved, but I don't know more than one language?

The Event

How can I get help with my translation if I have questions or problems while I work?

We did not finish our project, what happens now?

Will I be compensated for my work?

Translation beyond Translate-a-thon

How can I get involved in more translation projects?

Are there translation classes / programs at U-M?

I am an undergrad or graduate student and am interested in learning more about a career in translation, (how) can I use the Translate-a-thon to connect me with relevant resources and experience?

I am a faculty member, instructor or GSI (at UM or another institution) and want to incorporate the Translate-a-thon into a course I am teaching (now or in the future), what are some ways I can do that and/or whom can I contact to learn more?

Attendance/Participation

Can I take part remotely?

We highly encourage participants to participate in person, where it is much easier to connect with other translators, and we feed you! However, we realize that it isn't always feasible, so we will be offering remote participation. You may join us entirely online, you may come in-person for some parts, and join online for others, or you can attend entirely in person.

Do I have to attend the entire time? I can only participate for a couple of hours

Come when you can, stay as long as you would like. All of our projects are accessible online, so our volunteers will often continue to work on them outside our "official" hours.

I need proof that I attended Translate-a-thon for my class / community service, etc. How do I get that?

Please add a note to the organizers when you register, along with any criteria that your class/organization requires to be considered as having "attended". It is best to do this prior to the event so that event organizers can verify that you met that criteria. The LRC staff can provide verification on our letterhead, or sign documents required by your class/organization.

Language and Experience

What level of language skills are required?

Do I need to be a native speaker of the target language? Do I need to be a native speaker of English?

We have found that the volunteers who are the most successful are at an advanced stage of language development in their target language. However, there are roles for volunteers who are at a more intermediate level, helping us create glossaries and translation memories of the

projects. We encourage anyone interested in translation to participate, you can bring any language pair to the event. If you find that the work is too advanced for your comfort, you can bow out (no penalties or judgment -we are just happy that you have an interest).

Do I need to have (much) prior experience as a translator to get involved?

No! As much as possible, we facilitate work groups around projects, so that you are not working on a project alone. Many of our volunteers do have prior experience, and we have faculty, graduate students and staff with translation experience to assist you with any questions you have as you begin to translate.

I have a lot of translation experience and/or am a professional translator, can/should I still take part?

Yes! This is a great opportunity to put your skills into service for our community agencies, as well as mentor other volunteers with less experience. There is also a role in editing the initial translations, which is an opportunity to allow us to provide a higher quality translation, as well as hone your own translation skills.

What if I want to be involved, but my language pairs are not represented in the available projects?

We have projects that are open to any language. We also need volunteers to provide feedback on English and to proofread English translations. We encourage you to register for the event and see what may be of interest to you.

What if I want to be involved, but I don't know more than one language?

We are looking for proofreaders and editors for finished English translations. If this is of interest to you, when you register for the event,

The Event

How can I get help with my translation if I have questions or problems while I work?

We encourage and try to facilitate group work as much as possible. If questions arise that your group mates cannot answer, we have staff and other volunteers with expertise with whom we can connect you. You are not alone!

We did not finish our project, what happens now?

We encourage volunteers to continue to work on their projects until they are finished. Once translated, we seek volunteers to do a review, to make edits and corrections. This is usually done by a native speaker of the target language (and if you are interested in this role, let us know!). After a translation is reviewed, we return it to our community partner for their use.

Will I be compensated for my work?

No, this is purely on a volunteer basis. We work with community partners who provide a service to the community, but do not have the funding to have their materials translated professionally. Your work will go towards helping our partners provide better service to the members of the community who they support.

Translation beyond Translate-a-thon

How can I get involved in more translation projects?

We organize an ongoing service called the Language Bank. You can sign up through our website, and volunteer to work on additional projects at your convenience.

[University of Michigan, Language Resource Center Language Bank](#)

Are there translation classes / programs at U-M?

- Check with departments that teach the languages you are interested in. Several offer classes in translation related to specific languages.
- The Department of Comparative Literature offers several academic opportunities:
 - [Minor in Translation Studies](#) for undergraduate students
 - [Graduate Certificate in Critical Translation Studies](#) for graduate students
 - [Absinthe: World Literature in Translation \(magazine\)](#) for Literary Translation (run by comp lit PhD students and faculty)

I am an undergrad or graduate student and am interested in learning more about a career in translation, (how) can I use the Translate-a-thon to connect me with relevant resources and experience?

Professional translators as well as faculty who teach translation regularly participate in our event. This is a great opportunity to meet these individuals and start to develop your own professional network. Please make your interest known to the Translate-a-thon organizers, and we will do our best to connect you to translator colleagues. U-M offers a minor in translation and a graduate certificate in translation; you can learn more about the program on the website:

[Minor in Translation Studies | UM LSA Comparative Literature](#)

I am a faculty member, instructor or GSI (at UM or another institution) and want to incorporate the Translate-a-thon into a course I am teaching (now or in the future), what are some ways I can do that and/or whom can I contact to learn more?

Here are some ways you and your students can get involved.

- Advertise the event to students and encourage participation.
- Offer extra credit for participation (Please let us know if you will need any type of verification of participation from us)
- Bring your class to the event to work on a specific project.
- Claim a project to work on with your students.

If you have a very particular project in mind, we also host customized translation events for small groups during the year. For more information, please email lrc.contact@umich.edu