

The Wikipedia Library Digital Library Platform Development

Call for Developers

We are planning to create a *Digital Library Card Platform* for The Wikipedia Library (see *description below*). We are looking for a developer, or team, with a history of successfully developing web applications in open development frameworks (such as Mediawiki, Drupal, Angular, Ember, ruby, python, CiviCRM, etc.). Efficient production, clear communication, and well-structured and secure code are a must. Additional consideration will go towards applicants who have worked in the Library and Information Science field, on Open Source projects, or in the Wikimedia/Mediawiki communities. Our budget currently allows for \$5000-\$15,000 for development of a working version within 4- 6 months. We expect to expand the platform in two later phases to add additional functionality around standard online library services.

Qualified and interested applicants should fill out the following form *by September 30th [EXTENDED]*:

[Application Form](#)

The application includes instructions to email a Resume/CV, portfolio of completed projects, and code sample to wikipedialibrary@wikimedia.org.

About the Wikipedia Library

The Wikipedia Library is an open research hub, a place for active Wikipedia editors to gain access to the vital reliable sources that they need to do their work and to be supported in using those resources to improve the encyclopedia. We aim to make access and use of sources free, easy, collaborative and efficient. In part, we facilitate research access through donations by Publishers of access to their databases.

The Wikipedia Library is run by Jake Orlowitz ([User:Ocaasi \(WMF\)](#)) with an amazing team of [Coordinators](#) and funded by the [Wikimedia Foundation](#). We operate on a community-organized satellite model: we administer the global project but work with local coordinators in local Wikipedia projects to help each community set up their own branch of the library.

This year is one of scaling for us and growth creates new challenges. In the past, manual and separate processes for delivering access were appropriate. Now that we have over 3 dozen publishing partners, 2 dozen global branches planned for the next year, and we plan to support other TWL programs, we need to create a system that simplifies our [main database access process](#) in order to facilitate our expansion. This platform is among our top priorities for this year.

Digital Library Card Platform Description

The Problem We're Trying to Solve: Account signups and distribution

[The Wikipedia Library](#) (TWL) has given Wikipedia's top editors access to nearly 5000 paywalled research accounts through an array of 35+ partnerships. While we have considerable success obtaining access, the process for distributing that access to editors creates a bottleneck with unnecessarily complicated workflows for paid staff, volunteer coordinators and TWL patrons.

For a TWL user who wants to [register](#) for 4 TWL accounts they need to: go to 4 separate signup pages; submit 4 separate applications; fill out 4 Google forms with their email address; receive 4 password instructions; and manage 4 logins. For our TWL coordinators, because we are reliant on a manual process and a distributed network of coordinators, for each editor making similar request our coordinators: mark 4 separate signups as approved; send 4 separate emails to collect contact info; send 4 separate emails to provide this info to publisher partners and/or to distribute accesses to editors; and send 4 separate yearly reminder/check-in surveys. And each year after access expires for all 4 accounts, the process repeats 4 times over. To add inefficiency to injury, compiling metrics about the scale and usage of these accounts requires [at least] 4 separate spreadsheets, and manual gathering of data — unrewarding work which we have had to load off onto volunteers.

Further Concerns

While the example above clearly demonstrates annoying repetition, we are looking for a platform that encourages editors to easily sign up and utilize partner resources: English Wikipedia signups have slowed despite increasing access. We have received clear feedback that access to these resources is amazing but the process of getting and using access is frustrating, complex, and too slow. Without more streamlined systems that help track and facilitate distribution of access, we cannot ensure continued sustainable or efficient access to our partnerships.

Our Solution: Digital Library Card Platform

The solution to this problem is new for us but old technology for the reference world: a library card and digital system to track and distribute access to TWL patrons.

We have scoped a tool which allows an editor who meets the TWL signup requirements to go to a [Wikimedia Tools labs](#) hosted web application, from which they will be able to directly search and receive access to available accounts in TWL's network using only their Wikimedia login as confirmation using OAuth. This platform can be built from scratch, *or incorporate existing open source tools*, whichever is more practical. TWL coordinators will be able to

quickly approve multiple accounts at once, and automate repetitive but necessary tasks to facilitate access. Moreover, these tools remove a number of inefficiencies in our process: we will not have to collect email information multiple times over, because users will create a profile once that stores it; check-in surveys will auto-send 6 and 10 months after the approval date; and metrics will auto-aggregate, by signup and across the whole project, providing decision facilitating statistics at a glance. Building this requires a developer to create an [OAuth-integrated web application](#) that can begin to scale across all of our signups and the increasing number of global Wikipedia Library branches.

Our requirements anticipate our growing global scope (requiring translation and localization support) and create a framework which can be expanded, in a second phase of development, to incorporate other key library features, such as library-standard proxy access and search discovery. These phases may incorporate/use existing tools from OCLC.

Resources

- **Overview:**
 - [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Wikipedia:The Wikipedia Library/Processes/Library card platform](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Wikipedia:The_Wikipedia_Library/Processes/Library_card_platform)
- **System components:**
 - [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Wikipedia:The Wikipedia Library/Processes/Library card platform/Other specs](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Wikipedia:The_Wikipedia_Library/Processes/Library_card_platform/Other_specs)
- **User stories:**
 - [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Wikipedia:The Wikipedia Library/Processes/Library card platform/User stories](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Wikipedia:The_Wikipedia_Library/Processes/Library_card_platform/User_stories)

Steps to Building the system

Step 1: Define the problem and the solution: (status: DONE [link](#))
Step 2: Spec out the components of the system (status: DONE LINK NEEDED)
Step 3: Write out the user stories (status: DONE [link](#))
Step 4: Create a hub for managing the project (status: DONE [link](#))
Step 5: Get budget approval from Supervisor (status: Done in AUGUST)
Step 6: Hire coder (status: PENDING in AUGUST)
Step 7: Hire UI/UX consultant (status: PENDING in AUGUST)
Step 8: Begin coding (status: PENDING in SEPTEMBER)
Step 9: Complete alpha version (status: Pending in NOVEMBER)
Step 10: Release beta version (status: Pending in JANUARY 2016)

Budget, People, and Time

This is a lightweight but integrated piece of software that we are envisioning. In our discussions with a several experienced web developers who helped us spec out our plan, the following estimations were made:

- Budget: 5-15 thousand dollars
- People: 1 Developer, 1 UI/UX Consultant
- Time: 2-4 months

We anticipate being able to extend development of the tool within the next year, to include library standard tools for Institutional Proxy Access, Federated Search and Discovery, and integration of Open Access databases as search results.

***To contact The Wikipedia Library, email:
wikipedia.library@wikimedia.org***