Diversity (doc)

Disclaimer: we are aware that the following “mountainous regions” in Austria are still way more developed than other parts of the world. The detail of the scoping questions appears to be a bit too detailed for these early stages and are difficult to give feedback to without including a global context. Recommendations for this working group should - in our view - differentiate based on the regional or local context.

- We welcome the emphasis in form of a scoping question concerning the diversity of languages on various platforms. It is an issue that the Austrian community has had to deal with since the beginnings of the German speaking language, often having to overcome ignorance and belittling comments when pointing out the pluricentric nature of the German language. It is our belief that establishing guidelines for platforms to acknowledge and nurture pluricentric languages will enrich those languages and the people who use those platforms.
- We also concur with the scoping questions in that raising awareness and use of our platforms in “low awareness regions” like the rural regions of Austria is only possible when acknowledging the demographic challenges (i.e. an aging society with a deteriorating infrastructure) we have to overcome in those regions. Anyone already on the Internet already knows about Wikipedia - the challenge will be how we also integrate those who have been left out in our information age.
- It is not clear from the document, whether and how the work of this group is also directed at the organized part of our movement (WMF and affiliates), particularly Wikimedia as an employer. Diversity and inclusion need to be addressed in a more systematic fashion here as well: E.g. How can we make sure that females* and people of colour have equal access to leadership positions and how can we avoid a gender pay gap?
- Wikimedia Austria believes that Diversity&Inclusion should be reflected in the structures and public appearance of movement entities and so they become the welcoming spaces that the Wikimedia projects often can’t be. Hence, we use inclusive language in all our official documents (e.g. bylaws), made sure the bylaws also represent and support the principles laid out in our friendly space policy and made efforts for better gender representation in our committees and expert groups. We hope that the strategy process will result in recommendations for affiliates which make less of an exception and more of a rule in the movement.

Resource Allocation (doc) & Revenue Streams (doc)

- The movement has only learned in recent years to embrace the international aspects that help us all improve our work and our understanding of who we are as an international movement. This should also be reflected in the way we approach a long-term strategy for collecting and distributing money. Every affiliate is knowledgeable in their local context, but does not necessarily have the expertise to use this to their

advantage. Other affiliates have built expertise in certain areas over the last 10+ years and are able to support and advise other affiliates in those areas. This is what we need to build on in order to advance our mission until 2030. Using the expertise we already have as building blocks for a long-term strategy will help us reach further than in any other case.

- From our experience there is a need on the side of some donors to connect on an local / regional level: They rather donate to an Austrian organisation and want to learn more about what is done with the money in their specific country. Some of them might be interested to become members of their local affiliate or contribute in other ways. Hence, we believe that even if not every affiliate / local group raises funds, we need to work together more closely to work on our donor relations. Currently the WMF does not share any information about local affiliates, their work and events with donors, so we are missing out on important opportunities for sustainable donor relations.
- Revenue streams: There are clear red lines in terms of revenue streams that would endanger the foundations of our projects: Advertisement on Wikipedia and other projects should be a non-starter (and it would be helpful if the revenue streams working group could set out some non-goals as soon as possible) and considering the setting up of a trust, this will alleviate any worries concerning funding the servers and operations. Paywalls are a similar non-starter for an open knowledge project and reducing openness in order to acquire grants or donations from certain organisations is similarly out of the question for us. In general, there should be a guide for what is acceptable as a grant and what isn't, because even receiving an unconditional grant might create a bias towards the donor.
- Resource allocation: Accountability within the movement has been an issue ever since certain affiliates started fundraising themselves. We have seen in past years that there is a very diverging view on what is money well spent and what is not. Spending money needs to follow a common understanding, signed by every affiliate, that should include values like financial prudence and acting in the common interest of the stakeholders involved in our projects. This common understanding can and should be expanded on on a regional and local level to accurately reflect views, laws and ethics that only exist in that region or country.
    - Furthermore, the working group should also take into account that internationally English is a barrier for many to access our resources right now. This puts an onus on native English speaking affiliates to explain and document their work much better than we would expect it from people who do not have this advantage. This would be an important step towards equity in terms of resource allocation.

Community Health (doc)

- We appreciate it that you tried to address critical issues. Consider also including thoughts about what runs well now and what can be built on. This could help strategically: when community is concerned, we can only work towards improvement and not reinvention. Besides it might be more inviting for community members to participate in this discussion if the descriptions of the status-quo don't only include their perceived wrong-doings.
- You focus on collaboration in a strict sense. Since a great deal of our communities' achievements for free knowledge has to do with "unsocial", secluded working environments, this aspect (and its enabling) could be labelled as equally important for a thriving community in our context.
- While you have clear thoughts about certain main topics, it remains unclear what we should consider as a "healthy community" in general. Is it a community that grows? Is it a community that is stable in its composition or a community which is a able to "reproduce" itself permanently? Is it a community which is open to everyone or which is able to replace "bad" with "good" elements? Is it a community that wants to attract the most suitable members in terms of skills or the most diverse and as many as possible members?
- The perception that low participation in "community decision making processes … is due to poor culture that exists in our community" neglects that being an integral part of our communities doesn't require to take part in these decision making processes. While no one with good faith should be excluded, using a higher amount of volunteer time for these activities is a goal which shouldn't be pursued at the expense of the creation and sharing of free knowledge.
- We agree with your thoughtful and detailed observation that the impact of existing guidelines is often hindered by slack enforcement and a lack of general awareness. To specify and amend these guidelines on a global level isn't a good idea, however. As our experience with friendly space policies has shown, there are some major and contradictory differences about what is regarded as unacceptable behavior even between America and Europe, although they are culturally close world regions. Imposing detailed behavioral guidelines which are not suitable for the given cultural context could create new social barriers instead of removing them.
- "The Wikimedia movement suffers from an over-reliance on insufficiently trained and resourced volunteer leadership:" Thank you for mentioning the important idea to offer more and better trainings and resources. Please make clear that you don't wish to scrutinize the leadership by volunteers in our projects or bring forward some arguments why we should discuss paid staff for these roles.
- The inclusion of "marginalised", or perhaps better "missing voices" is an important issue, thank for considering this as crucial for a thriving community. The perspective of us in the center and the others at the margins carries the risk of drifting to a paternalistic,

neocolonial attitude. So far you have mentioned examples in which we “act” and the marginalised groups “receive”. It could be beneficial to at least keep a blank space in mind, for input which derives from the voices unheard so far.

- Similar to our feedback for diversity, we would also encourage to explicitly include staff in considerations around community health: Some staff are very exposed members of our community, they have to be present on the projects under their real names and do not have the liberty to take breaks when things get to heated. From an employer perspective, we have to make sure, that we can protect them from toxic behaviour and harassment on- and offline. Trust and Safety is an important step into the right direction, but probably needs more resources and quicker ways to act.

Capacity Building (doc)

- The current structures and bodies put a heavy emphasis on the due diligence side that the WMF needs to justify how they spend funds in the first place. This necessity leads to a lot of paperwork and a funding model that values the justification of spending money more than the time of the volunteers and paid staff involved in writing this documentation in the first place. Effective capacity building surely should not work like that. The future relationship between the body that supplies resources (money, staff or otherwise) and the entities establishing themselves should take into account that we are all in this together. That we have the luxury of funding ambitious and unorthodox programs and ideas. And that we have the means to keep ourselves honest and learn from those mistakes in order to improve ourselves and the movement as a whole by sharing those experiences with each other.
- How do we make capacity building inclusive and equitable?
    - Peer to Peer learning in marginalised groups, instead of people from the outside stepping in
    - Support efforts for self-empowerment, highlight people from marginalised groups with the skills and passion to help others
    - Be critical of oneself and open up and learn from other groups. Promote self-assessment, be honest instead of trying to present a perfect facade on an international level -> Create channels where affiliates can ask for help without making it public if they do not wish to.
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