Community Leaders Survey – 2020/1 – final report

Please note that questions 10-17 were asked only of those who identified as volunteers for Wikimedia UK, and 18-20 only to those who identified as leads at partner organisations.

The survey was open for two weeks, and sent to individuals who volunteer for WMUK, or are leads at partner organisations. Questions remained the same as last year. Questions are determined in part by KPIs and metrics as required by WMF for annual reporting.

Question 1 - How would you classify yourself?

#		Answer	%	Count
1		I am a volunteer for Wikimedia UK	37.50%	18
2		I am a member of staff at a partner organisation	52.08%	25
3		Both of the above	10.42%	5
		Total	100%	48

We had a total of 48 responses, down from 54 last year. However, we sent the survey to 356 individuals last year (15.17% response rate), and 230 this year (20.87% response rate), representing a 5% increase in response rate. The number of invites this year was lower for two reasons: being more focussed about who we sent these invites to, and a change in programme and volunteer engagement work due to C-19. Not all respondents answered all questions, however, with a drop off toward the end.

Question 2 - If you're a volunteer with Wikimedia UK, please indicate the activities in which you have been engaged over the last 12 months:

#		Answer	%	Count
1		Trainer (Wikipedia)	20.00%	10
2		Trainer (Wikidata)	6.00%	3
3		Trainer (Other Wiki project)	6.00%	3
4		Public speaking / advocacy	18.00%	9
5		Photographer	10.00%	5
6		Event organiser or host	16.00%	8
7		Communications (eg video, blogging)	8.00%	4

8	Office support	0.00%	0
9	Technical support	2.00%	1
10	Governance / Trustee	10.00%	5
11	Other (please specify)	4.00%	2
	Total	100%	50

Our volunteers are once again engaged with training and advocacy. We see an increase in the % involved in public speaking, and a decrease in the % organising events - given the events of the last year, this is unsurprising. "Other" included the Development Committee, and editing a minority language Wikipedia.

Question 3 - If you're a member of staff with a partner organisation, please indicate the activities in which you have been engaged over the last 12 months:

#	Answer	%	Count
1	Partnership lead or support	24.32%	9
2	Wikimedian in Residence / support	10.81%	4
3	Course leader / support	10.81%	4
4	Student or intern	2.70%	1
5	Trainer (any Wikimedia project)	10.81%	4
6	Event organiser or host	27.03%	10
7	Other (please specify)	13.51%	5
	Total	100%	37

In a change from last year, respondents from partner organisations are involved in more than one activity. In 2019-20 they were mostly only engaged in one type of activity. ("Other" activities included administering a grant, and discussion of a future project. 2 responses were not legible.)

Question 4 - Over the last 12 months, how often (on average) have you been involved in work relating to Wikimedia UK and its programmes? (please exclude time spent on general editing activity)

#	Answer	%	Count
1	Not at all	2.70%	1
2	Once or twice in the last 12 months	37.84%	14
3	Once every three months	10.81%	4
4	Once a month	18.92%	7
5	A few times a month	21.62%	8
6	Once a week or more	8.11%	3
	Total	100%	37

Our lead volunteers are relatively evenly split between occasional participation, and more regular participation. Last year we saw a stronger leaning toward occasional (66%).

Question 5 - How likely are you to continue engaging / volunteering with Wikimedia UK?

#	Answer	%	Count
1	Extremely likely	78.38%	29
2	Somewhat likely	13.51%	5
3	Neutral	2.70%	1
4	Somewhat unlikely	2.70%	1
5	Extremely unlikely	2.70%	1
	Total	100%	37

Most of our lead volunteers are extremely likely to participate again, with only 2 responding in the negative, this is broadly the same as last year.

Question 6 - How likely would you be to recommend to another person that they work or volunteer with Wikimedia UK?

#	Answer	%	Count
1	Extremely likely	64.86%	24
2	Somewhat likely	29.73%	11
3	Neutral	2.70%	1
4	Somewhat unlikely	0.00%	0
5	Extremely unlikely	2.70%	1
	Total	100%	37

94.59% of partner organisations would recommend partnership with us, an increase on last year (88.37%) and the year before (91.89%)

Question 7 - Was any training you received relevant to your needs?

#	Answer	%	Count
1	Yes, definitely	43.24%	16
2	Yes, a little	21.62%	8
3	Neutral	2.70%	1
4	No, not really	5.41%	2
5	No, definitely not	0.00%	0
6	I did not receive training	27.03%	10
	Total	100%	37

Of those who received training (72.97%), 88.88% found it useful.

Question 8 - Has engagement / volunteering helped you to learn new skills?

#	Answer	%	Count
1	Yes, a lot	52.78%	19
2	Yes, a little	33.33%	12
3	Neutral	11.11%	4
4	No	2.78%	1
	Total	100%	36

86.61% reported learning new skills.

Question 9 - Do you feel that you contribute to any of the following?

#	Answer	%	Count
1	Decreasing gender bias on Wikipedia	46.15%	30
2	Decreasing under representation of minority/indigenous languages in the Wikimedia projects	20.00%	13
3	Decreasing under representation of cultural topics	33.85%	22
	Total	100%	65

This year, we see a slight increase in % of respondents contributing toward decreasing gender bias, and in minority languages, and a slight decrease in under representation of cultural topics. Respondents are likely to contribute to more than one of these fields.

Question 10 - Do you feel that Wikimedia UK appreciates the volunteering work you do?

#	Answer	%	Count
1	Yes, definitely	72.00%	18
2	Yes, a little	28.00%	7
3	Neutral	0.00%	0
4	Not really	0.00%	0
5	Definitely not	0.00%	0
	Total	100%	25

All respondents to this question answered positively, and although that is gratifying we note the small sample size, and should take care not to take this as an indication that we cannot improve. Notably, this is an increase on last year's 83.87%, which itself was an increase on the year before (80%). Last year we identified the responses to this and the next question as indicating that although volunteers believed the work that they did was important, that there was scope to improve our stewardship of them so that they felt more valued, and it is hoped that these responses are indicative that we have been successful.

Question 11 - Do you feel that the volunteering work you do for Wikimedia UK is important?

#	Answer	%	Count
1	Yes, definitely	84.00%	21
2	Yes, a little	16.00%	4
3	Neutral	0.00%	0
4	Not really	0.00%	0
5	Definitely not	0.00%	0
	Total	100%	25

There is a slight increase this year in volunteers who believe that their work is "definitely" important.

Question 12 - Do you feel supported by the staff of Wikimedia UK?

#	Answer	%	Count
1	Yes, definitely	80.00%	20
2	Yes, a little	16.00%	4
3	Neutral	4.00%	1
4	Not really	0.00%	0
5	Definitely not	0.00%	0
	Total	100%	25

This year we see an increased sense that volunteers feel supported by Wikimedia UK staff, with an increased percentage feeling a higher level of support. Read in tandem with the answers to question 10, this should indicate that our stewardship of supporters has been more successful this year.

Question 13 - Has volunteering increased your confidence?

#	Answer	%	Count
1	Yes, a lot	28.00%	7
2	Yes, a little	36.00%	9
3	Neutral	36.00%	9
4	No	0.00%	0
	Total	100%	25

We see a slight increase on last year of those participants who feel that volunteering has increased their confidence a lot. Last year we identified this as a difficult metric, as it might not be appropriate to all volunteering opportunities; this remains the case and should be treat with some caution.

Question 14 - Do you enjoy volunteering for Wikimedia UK?

#	Answer	%	Count
1	Yes, definitely	92.00%	23
2	Yes, a little	8.00%	2
3	Neutral	0.00%	0
4	Not really	0.00%	0
5	Definitely not	0.00%	0
	Total	100%	25

In line with other responses throughout this survey, we see a general increase in the degree to which volunteers enjoy their time volunteering.

Question 15 - What do you like most about volunteering with Wikimedia UK?

I enjoy helping individuals and groups acquire new skills, and to gain familiarity with Wiki platforms, so as to better engage with their local communities and user bases.

friendly helpful staff

I enjoy having a feeling that I can influence fairness in policy. I enjoy meeting others across the sector. I enjoy learning about how the organisation works.

I usually enjoy it, but I haven't really got involved over the past year

I like the incremental improvements that come with every little change that I make.

Knowing that my efforts are magnified by involving and recruiting other people.

Meeting other Wikipedia users who want to become editors

The mission is of utmost importance.

I love the sense of collaboration! Of course this is here already when you're contributing to wikipedia, but it's lovely to have a more local, face-to-a-name community.

Helping to address gender bias and improve knowledge equity by ensuring that marginalised groups and diverse voices are reflected in the encyclopaedia.

Feel like I'm making a difference with a resource that is effectively the informational backbone of the internet

I find Wikimedia volunteering has helped me share the power of shared open knowledge, and create opportunities for others to contribute to that shared open knowledge.

Improving the quality of [...] articles relevant to A-level and UG degree students

You are very helpful and supportive. It is a pleasure working with you.

What comes over strongly here is a strong sense of community/collaboration, having impact in the wider world, and the importance of the mission - in some cases echoing Wikimedia UK's own strategic goals, which hopefully points to the success of our communication of, and work around, these goals. This is also useful information in that it speaks to motivation of volunteers, which may help us in future recruitment and stewardship.

Question 16 - Is there anything we could change to improve your experience?

Provide access to higher level training in Wikidata: advanced SPARQL querying, modelling concepts in Wikidata.

More training/instructions for tools I want to use

I have tried to keep up with training opportunities etc, but I haven't really engaged in events this past year for various reasons.

More and better press & comms

Set up a discord server for wikimedia uk community members? Or a channel in the Wikimedia discord server?

More support for diversity and contributors from marginalised groups.

Perhaps more training/events around using Wikimedia projects in education

Don't think so

I'd like support on inputting to Wikidata. It's difficult to learn more than the basics on your own. There are quite a few courses on editing Wikipedia, but I've not come across any on contributing to and editing Wikidata. I think this makes Wikidata less reliable as a database as editors are unsure which properties and values to use. The online help is often quite technical and you need to reach a certain level of understanding of Wikidata before much of it is intelligible.

No

Once lockdown is ended more regional events (outside London)

General reflections here are that more training for volunteers would be welcomed, particularly on more advanced wiki skills. This mirrors what we've seen in other elements of our work. Some comments, with regard to press / comms, and events outside London have come up before, and it should be noted that we have now recruited additional staff capacity into Communications, and events outside of London is a metric which we already measure, and which has scored consistently around the 70% mark in the last year.

Question 17 - Are there any rewards for volunteering that you would like to see Wikimedia UK provide?

Beyond more training? No

not for me, but in general maybe some kind of written thing people could use on their LinkedIn or something

I think the perks of travel would have been provided if it weren't for the current restrictions. I do think some face to face meetings are important though, especially for general users to meet decisionmakers, so I hope that continues.

Other chapters give swag such as Tshirts, hoodies, scarves, hats, bags, mousemats.

you could consider badges for volunteers

Things I can put on my CV, and cool pins.

I think volunteering is its own reward!

Responses here are very similar to those which have been received before. It should be noted that merch/swag has been infrequent in distribution this year due to C-19, and running down stock levels ahead of potential branding changes. (some responses omitted here as they simply said "no".)

Question 18 - When working with Wikimedia UK, how would you rate the quality of support you've had from us?

#	Answer	%	Count
1	Very good	70.37%	19
2	Good	29.63%	8
3	Neutral	0.00%	0
4	Poor	0.00%	0
5	Very poor	0.00%	0
	Total	100%	27

(This question, and the following 2, were asked only of leads at partner organisations)
This year sees 100% of respondents answering "very good" or "good", up from 90.32% last year.

Question 19 - If you would like to expand on your answer to the above question, please do so here

I've felt very well supported with organising staff training events

I've been working closely with Richard Nevell and he's been very helpful and able to answer questions as they come up, and put me in touch with the right people at Wikimedia for certain questions.

As a teachers' organisation, we are very grateful to receive a training session on how to use Wiki for translation and language learning.

I've been really impressed with everyone I've worked with from Wikimedia UK, especially through the pandemic - they very quickly worked out how to run effective online-only events, which participants enjoyed and felt a sense of camaraderie in joining.

Sara Thomas is a living legend! She is a font of knowledge for all things Wiki related and always has suggestions that improve our collaboration.

I have generally found WMUK relatively supportive of my initiatives.

I've run a couple of events for people new to wikipedia and the support from Wikimedia has been invaluable. Shout out to the wonderful Richard Nevell who is always a fantastic trainer, patient, and so great to work with.

Very responsive to requests or questions, educational support particularly good

The Wikimedia UK team are both incredibly knowledgeable and skilled as well as being friendly and approachable. We love working with them

I've had very good responses from individuals, but would like to see more online training e.g. webinars. It is embarrassing to repeatedly contact Wikimedia staff with queries as you feel that you are taking up a lot of their time. Online surgeries might be helpful e.g. how to create a basic dataset in Wikidata with a DOI. Also when I only have a partial understanding of Wikidata myself it is difficult to pass on my knowledge to other members of staff in my organisation. Learning in a more structured way would help with this.

Heartening to see broad satisfaction with staff support; and some interesting ideas with regard to training and helping lead partners feel more empowered and able to pass knowledge on within their organisations.

Question 20 - Is there anything that Wikimedia UK could do to improve your experience?

#	Answer	%	Count
1	Yes (please specify)	14.81%	4
2	No	85.19%	23
	Total	100%	27

Question 20a - If you answered "Yes" to the above please specify:

The documentation on Wikimedia projects is generally poor, WMUK could help improve these to make the work of volunteers easier

Better press relations

It would be nice to have a low-friction way of chatting with staff.

[...] my experience would be improved by the availability of more training on Wikidata.

This seems generally very positive. Interesting again to note that training around Wikidata has been raised. Documentation around Wikimedia projects is a perennial concern, and it's unsurprising to see it here noted by leads at partner organisations.

Demographic - Community Leaders 2020-1

A separate and optional survey on demographic is linked out from the end of the Community Leaders survey. All questions were optional. We received 27 responses and are conscious that this is a small sample size. Question wording is the same as last year, and was based on best practice from a number of organisations including Stonewall.

Question 1 - Do you have any comments you would like to make anonymously about your experiences as a volunteer for or partner of Wikimedia UK?

We received one response to this question which asked about being able to request a woman or non-binary person for particular events. This has been noted.

Question 2 - Which of the following best describes your gender?

#	Answer	%	Count
1	Female	48.15%	13
2	Non-binary	7.41%	2
3	Male	44.44%	12
4	Prefer not to say	0.00%	0
5	In another way	0.00%	0
	Total	100%	27

Question 3 - Which of the following best describes your sexual orientation?

#	Answer	%	Count
1	Heterosexual / Straight	59.26%	16
2	Bi / Bisexual	22.22%	6
3	Gay / Lesbian	7.41%	2
4	Prefer not to say	7.41%	2
5	In another way	3.70%	1
	Total	100%	27

Question 3a - If you prefer to use another term, please provide this here.

Asexual

Question 4 - Do you consider yourself to be a trans person? (Where trans is understood to be an umbrella term to describe a person whose gender is not the same as the sex they were assigned at birth)

#	Answer	%	Count
1	Yes	0.00%	0
2	No	100.00%	27
3	Prefer not to say	0.00%	0
	Total	100%	27

Question 5 - How old are you?

#	Answer	%	Count
1	13 or younger	0.00%	0
2	14–17	0.00%	0
3	18–20	0.00%	0
4	21–29	3.70%	1
5	30–39	25.93%	7

#		%	Count
6	40–49	22.22%	6
7	50–59	29.63%	8
8	60–69	14.81%	4
9	70–79	3.70%	1
10	80 or older	0.00%	0
11	Prefer not to say	0.00%	0
	Total	100%	27

Question 6 - What is the highest level of education you have completed? (Refer to https://www.gov.uk/what-different-qualification-levels-mean for examples.)

#	Answer	%	Count
1	Entry level qualifications or equivalent (e.g, an ESOL certificate)	0.00%	0
2	GCSE, A-level, HNC or equivalent	0.00%	0
3	Level 5 NVQ, Certificate of higher education or equivalent	0.00%	0
4	Foundation or bachelor's degree or equivalent	18.52%	5
5	Master's degree or equivalent	44.44%	12
6	Doctoral degree	37.04%	10
7	Prefer not to say	0.00%	0
8	Other (please specify)	0.00%	0
	Total	100%	27

Question 7 - What is your ethnic group or background? If your ethnic background falls into one of the categories including "any other", please give a brief description in the comment field in question 7a.

#	Answer	%	Count
1	White - English / Welsh / Scottish / Northern Irish / British	70.37%	19
2	White - Irish	0.00%	0

3	White - Gypsy or Irish Traveller	0.00%	0
4	White - Any other White background, please describe below	7.41%	2
5	Mixed / Multiple ethnic groups - White and Black Caribbean	0.00%	0
6	Mixed / Multiple ethnic groups - White and Black African	0.00%	0
7	Mixed / Multiple ethnic groups - White and Asian	7.41%	2
8	Mixed / Multiple ethnic groups - Any other Mixed / Multiple ethnic background, please describe below	3.70%	1
9	Asian / Asian British - Indian	0.00%	0
10	Asian / Asian British - Pakistani	0.00%	0
11	Asian / Asian British - Bangladeshi	0.00%	0
12	Asian / Asian British - Chinese	3.70%	1
13	Asian / Asian British - Any other Asian background, please describe	0.00%	0
14	Black / African / Caribbean / Black British - African	0.00%	0
15	Black / African / Caribbean / Black British - Caribbean	0.00%	0
16	Black / African / Caribbean / Black British Any other Black / African / Caribbean background, please describe below	0.00%	0
17	Other ethnic group - Arab	0.00%	0
18	Other ethnic group - Any other ethnic group, please describe below	7.41%	2
19	Prefer not to say	0.00%	0
	Total	100%	27

"Other" responses were Asian/Welsh, White/American & White/European.

Question 8 - Do you have a physical or mental health condition or illness lasting or expected to last 12 months or more?

#	Answer	%	Count
1	Yes	33.33%	9
2	No	66.67%	18
3	Don't know	0.00%	0
4	Prefer not to say	0.00%	0
	Total	100%	27

Question 8a - If you answered "Yes" to Q8, does your condition or illness reduce your ability to carry out day-to-day activities?

#	Answer	%	Count
1	Yes, a lot	0.00%	0
2	Yes, a little	66.67%	6
3	Not at all	33.33%	3
	Total	100%	9

Question 8b - If you answered "Yes" to Q8, does this condition or illness affect you in any of the following areas?

Responses here indicated a spread across vision, hearing, dexterity, mobility, learning & understanding / concentration, memory, mental health, stamina or breathing or fatigue, social/behavioural. **"Other"** responses indicated digestive, and "prefer not to say". Noting the latter, although all questions are optional, this should perhaps be included as an option on next year's survey.

Summary and reflections

In general we've seen an increase in Community Leader satisfaction and enjoyment, with the inclusion of some solid ideas around improvement which mirror our own thinking. It's also interesting to note the decrease in critical responses over the last three years, and it is hoped that this is due to increased performance in terms of stewardship and capacity.

Moving forward, there seem to be opportunities to assist all community leaders with regard to training, particularly around Wikidata. This mirrors the requests we've seen elsewhere for skill sharing and more technical training, as well as consistent frustrations around documentation.

Additionally, simple rewards for volunteers have been a consistent ask for the last few years. Budget and capacity allowing, this might be worth exploring, although my feeling would be that careful work around equitable distribution (perhaps by employing a cohort approach) would be needed.

Generally, our gender split is relatively even between female/male, with a small number of non-binary people, however it is notable that we had no trans respondents. We also saw a lack of younger respondents, with most falling in the 30-69 age range - most respondents also had postgraduate qualifications. Ethnic background is overwhelmingly white. ⅓ of respondents had a physical or mental health condition.

Although we are conscious of the small sample size here, and factors which may affect response rate, the skew toward over 30 / postgraduate / cisgender / white volunteers should be considered in the course of future work, particularly with regard to ongoing EDI work of the organisation.

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