



Wikimedia
Foundation

The Voice of the World

Wikimedia Foundation 2011–12 Annual Report

Half a billion people use Wikipedia and our other free knowledge projects. / Today Wikipedia is the fifth most-visited website in the world. / All of the other top-40 websites are private-sector companies; we are the only non-profit on the list. / Each month, we generate 19 billion page views to more than 23 million articles in 285 languages. / More than 80,000 volunteer editors regularly contribute content to Wikipedia and its sister projects. / The Wikimedia Foundation's roughly 125 employees support our community of editors and manage the software and technical infrastructure of our projects. / Wikipedia belongs to everyone and it is funded by over a million donors from every part of the world.

Your support

The Wikimedia Foundation is supported the same way Wikipedia is written: with millions of small contributions. That keeps us independent and able to deliver what readers need and want from Wikipedia. Which is exactly as it should be.

Financial contributions in 2011–12:

A total of 1,130,700 people donated the equivalent of more than \$30 million US dollars in over 80 currencies.

Volunteer contributions in 2011–12:

Individual contributors made 139.4 million edits, added 3.3 million Wikipedia articles, and uploaded 2.9 million images, audio files and video files.

Participation

Total cash expenditures in 2011–12
\$27 million
in US dollars

Global collaboration starts with a thriving community of volunteers and a streamlined platform that makes contributing to our projects faster and easier. The Foundation works with our community to better understand the challenges our volunteers face in making a project like Wikipedia. Through research initiatives, simplified software, and broad outreach, we're working to increase the size of our editing community and to support the long-term growth of our projects.

Reach

The Foundation focused this year on meeting the next generation of global Internet users where they are accessing our projects: on their mobile phones. That means supporting the thousands of different devices in use today. We want to deliver free knowledge to all the world's mobile devices, from the most basic mobile phones to the latest smart phones and tablets. We're partnering with global telecommunications operators and redeveloping our mobile platforms with an eye to the next billion users.

Innovation

Our global community of volunteers is rapidly changing, much in the same way our projects continue to evolve. The Foundation is working with our chapters, affiliates and volunteers to develop new ways to bring resources and technology to bear on the big ideas in our community. We're also testing new theories and concepts relating to the challenges our community faces, and bringing new data and insights to our technical and programmatic work.

Infrastructure

In 2011–12, our servers handled more than 6,000 page requests per second. Since 2001, they have been faithfully storing every single edit to the projects—a total of 1.7 billion. Every year we are supporting thousands of updates and bug fixes for the open source MediaWiki software. The world relies on this critical infrastructure and our team works 24/7 to keep it running at peak performance.

I'm a volunteer. No one pays me. But helping edit Wikipedia has become my life's work. Even though I'm not in the classroom, I'm still doing what I care about most: helping a new generation of students learn, in the language I love.
— Poongothai Balasubramanian, Wikipedian

Wikipedia's victory was getting the rules—and importantly, the rules for making rules—right, and trusting that the process would lead to substance.
— Ethan Zuckerman, researcher and entrepreneur

And I tell myself every time I contribute to Wikipedia, I'm building a library. I'm able, from my couch, to build a library every day of the year.
— Andrea Zanni, Wikipedian

Wikipedia is perhaps one of the few truly global endeavors that really brings together people from all races, religions, nationalities, points of view.
— Alfonso Luna, donor

I still maintain that this Wikipedia project made a world of difference in being able to write well. And unlike a term paper, which is thrown away at the end of the semester, all the work that goes into a Wikipedia article continues to help people even after the class ends.
— Karl Whalen, student

"Das größte Werk der Menschen" ("The Greatest Work of Human Beings")
— Headline in Die Zeit, Germany's largest weekly newspaper, on an article about Wikipedia, January 2011

For me, Wikipedia underscores an evolutionary lesson. We've always gotten farther as a species collaborating than going it alone.
— Mariette DiChristina, science journalist

It's not just about getting something working for next week, it's about keeping Wikipedia healthy for the next decade, for the next generation.
— Ryan Kaldari, Wikimedia Foundation developer

This is my wish and one of my dreams and many peoples dreams to make a real change in the world, to make a difference in the world. I think Wikipedia gave me this chance to make a huge difference in this world. It's like an investment for your future, for your children's future.
— Ravan Jaafar, Wikipedian

Visual Editor

The Foundation began developing a *visual editor* in 2011–12; it will launch in 2012–13. Our research tells us that the need to learn wiki markup is a substantial barrier for people who might otherwise edit Wikipedia, and so the visual editor will eliminate the need for it, making the editing experience much easier and more natural.

Wikipedia Education Program

In 2011–12, at more than 100 universities in 25 countries, professors assigned their students to develop and improve Wikipedia articles as part of their coursework. Instead of writing essays that would have been read by only a few people and then forgotten, these students made Wikipedia better for readers around the world. The professors say that teaching Wikipedia editing skills is a good way for students to gain topic expertise, to improve their information processing abilities, and to become more conscientious world citizens.

Editor Engagement

We are committed to a variety of projects that encourage participation in the Wikipedia community. They include work aimed at keeping existing editors, as well as engaging new contributors.

This year we launched the *Article Feedback Tool* (AFT), a new way to involve Wikipedia readers and encourage contributions. AFT helps editors improve articles based on reader comments and provides a low-barrier way for readers to join our community. We also developed new *Page Curation* software to help the volunteer editors who each day check thousands of new articles for quality. It includes the *New Pages Feed*, an overview of newly created pages annotated with information that helps to assess them more efficiently.

With our *Editor Engagement Experiments*, we seek ways to attract and retain new Wikipedia editors through small, rapid improvements. We use a data-driven approach, deploying trial versions of features, measuring their effectiveness at engaging and retaining contributors, and then iterating based on the results. Recent projects include new types of notifications on the site and redesigning core experiences like account registration.

Wikipedia Zero

Mobile devices now allow hundreds of millions of people around the world access to the Internet, but the cost of mobile data remains a significant obstacle for many who would benefit most from that access. Under an initiative called *Wikipedia Zero*, the Foundation is making deals with global telecommunications operators, particularly in the Middle East, Africa and Asia, to offer Wikipedia for free to their subscribers. So far, operators in 28 countries with a total of 205 million customers have signed up. *Wikipedia Zero* aims to significantly expand in 2012–13.

Mobile Engineering

In 2011–12 the Foundation continued developing our mobile web offering, launching a new mobile site, better device detection software and an Android app. Future mobile apps are in development. In April 2012 we exceeded 2 billion monthly page views to the Wikipedia mobile site, which represents an increase of 187 percent over the previous year. As of June 2012 the mobile site attracted 2.1 billion page views, about 12 percent of all page views for Wikipedia. Mobile traffic is growing even faster in Portuguese (primarily Brazil, from 5 million to 24.9 million); in Arabic (from 2 million to 11.4 million); and in Turkish (from 1.3 million to 8.1 million).

Language Support

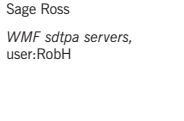
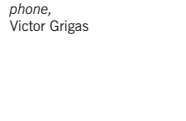
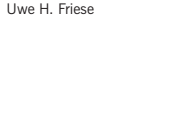
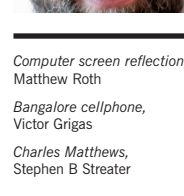
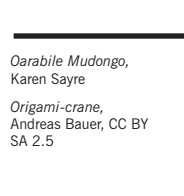
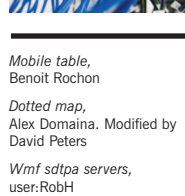
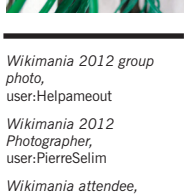
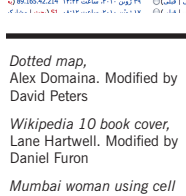
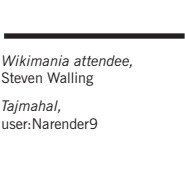
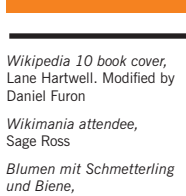
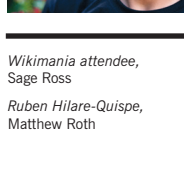
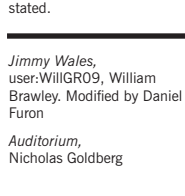
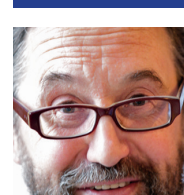
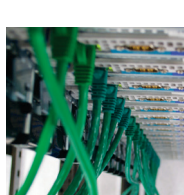
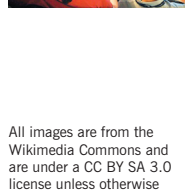
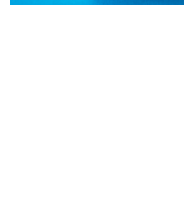
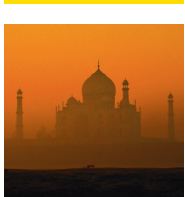
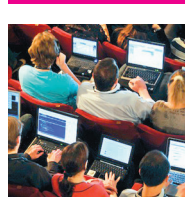
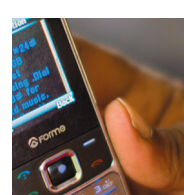
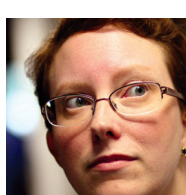
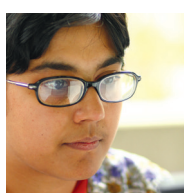
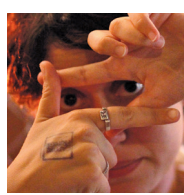
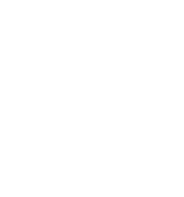
A dedicated team at the Foundation is working with our global community to ensure that Wikipedia and its sister projects are able to support hundreds of languages. This year we developed interfaces for non-Latin scripts (such as Hindi), and right-to-left scripts (such as Arabic), user interfaces for language tools like the Universal Language Selector and the Translate extension, and a collaborative, on-wiki translation system for our projects.

Wikimedia Labs

Launched in October 2011, the new *Wikimedia Labs* are opening up access to our site infrastructure as widely as possible. In this cloud computing environment, volunteer operations engineers can work with an exact replica of the live server system, and thus contribute directly to improving the computing and networking infrastructure of a top-5 website. Like the source code of our MediaWiki software, we have published our complete server configuration files (minus sensitive data like passwords), enabling other sites on the Internet to learn from the solutions that Wikimedia engineers have found over the years to handle a gigantic amount of traffic on a shoestring budget.

FDC and Grantmaking

Launched in March 2012, the volunteer-driven *Funds Dissemination Committee* (FDC) helps the Foundation make decisions about how to effectively allocate funds inside the Wikimedia movement, with the goal of helping the movement achieve its mission, vision and strategy. Via this new process, eligible entities in the Wikimedia movement submit funding requests, which are publicly posted and reviewed by the FDC for strategic fit and potential impact. The FDC is a team of seven volunteers from seven countries and eight Wikimedia projects, speaking 13 languages, and with long track records in the Wikimedia movement, including governance at five chapters. Through the FDC process, nearly \$10 million will be distributed during the 2012–13 fiscal year. The Foundation also supports an active smaller *grants program* that distributes funds to individuals and groups. In 2011–12, we distributed 54 grants totaling over \$1.1 million to 39 organizations and projects supporting the Wikimedia mission. The launch of the FDC is a big step forward for the Wikimedia movement in devolving power to volunteers, and increasing transparency, collaboration and accountability.



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Wikimedia Foundation 2011–12 Annual Report

This was the year the free knowledge movement found its voice.

For nearly 12 years, we've been building a world where information is freely available for people everywhere. In 2011–12, for the first time, we felt that world was seriously under threat. The Stop Online Piracy Act (SOPA) and the PROTECT IP Act (PIPA) were pieces of proposed legislation in the US that might have seriously damaged the free and open Internet, including Wikipedia.

That's why in January 2012, more than 1,800 Wikipedians made a collective decision to black out Wikipedia for 24 hours in order to raise awareness about SOPA and PIPA. The protest was a huge success: more than eight million people used our look-up tool to find their elected representatives, millions more made their voices heard on social media, and thousands of journalists published news stories. The bills were dropped.

We hesitated before we blacked out the site, because we know how important Wikipedia is to people, and we didn't want to lightly take it away from them. Plus we didn't want to squander the goodwill that people feel for the site. Readers trust Wikipedia because they know that, despite our faults, our heart is in the right place. We're not trying to sell a product or a point of view; we just want to provide useful, neutral, reliable information.

We may never do anything like the anti-SOPA/PIPA protests again. We don't consider ourselves to be political, and we're not an advocacy organization. But we're proud that when it really mattered, we spoke up. We believe January 2012 was when Wikipedia found its public voice, speaking up for those who write and read Wikipedia—and for the ability of ordinary people to share and learn together.

Beyond SOPA and PIPA, in 2011–12 the Foundation focused on its core priorities: improving quality, increasing participation, expanding our reach, stabilizing our infrastructure and supporting innovation. We expanded some of our most successful programs, including the Wikipedia Education program, and we launched Wikipedia Zero. We made significant steps forward developing new features like Wikipedia's visual editor, the article feedback tool, and new interfaces and apps serving a rapidly growing audience of mobile users.

We've got more great work ahead in 2012–13.

We want to thank our donors. The fact that you pay the costs of the site keeps us independent of outside influence, and able to deliver exactly what you want and need from Wikipedia. As it should be.

And we want to thank the people who create Wikipedia—writing it, taking photographs for it, copyediting, working to resolve disagreements, fighting vandalism, creating code, responding to reader questions, and all the other tasks involved.

You are making information freely available for a half-billion people around the world, and they—and we—are grateful. Thank you for everything you do.

Sincerely,
Sue Gardner, Executive Director
Kat Walsh, Chair, Board of Trustees



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Financial Performance

Statement of Activities

The Wikimedia Foundation's 2011–12 fiscal year took place from July 1, 2011 to June 30, 2012. *in thousands of US dollars*

Support and revenue		
Donations and contributions	\$	35,067
In-kind equipment donation		965
In-kind service revenue		297
Other income, net		666
Investment income, net		44
Release of restrictions on temporarily restricted net assets		1,441
Total revenue		38,480

Expenses		
Salaries and wages		11,749
Awards and grants		2,107
Internet hosting		2,487
In-kind service expenses		297
Operating		9,199
Travel and conferences		1,533
Depreciation and amortization		1,889
Total expenses		29,231

Increase in unrestricted net assets **9,219**

Temporarily restricted net assets		
Contributions		2,959
Release of restrictions on temporarily restricted net assets		(1,441)
Increase in temporarily restricted net assets		1,518
Increase in net assets	\$	10,737

Balance Sheet

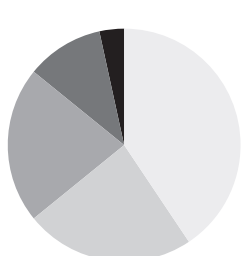
as of June 30, 2012
in thousands of US dollars

Assets		
Cash and cash equivalents	\$	21,797
Contributions receivable		3,084
Accounts receivable		495
Investments		3,600
Prepaid expenses and other current assets		1,257
Total current assets		30,233
Property, plant, and equipment, net		5,168
Nonconcurrent portion of contributions receivable		1,806
Total assets	\$	37,207

Liabilities		
Accounts payable	\$	745
Accrued expenses		1,034
Deferred revenue		294
Other liabilities		205
Total liabilities		2,278

Net assets		
Unrestricted net assets		29,991
Temporarily restricted net assets		4,938
Total net assets		34,929

Total liabilities and net assets **\$ 37,207**



Functional allocation of expenses 2011–2012

Engineering	\$	11,922,096
Global Development		6,911,256
General and Administrative		6,271,656
Fundraising		3,150,480
Governance		1,005,164
Total	\$	29,260,652

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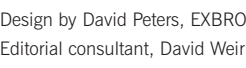
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