



# Wikipedia for Librarians

## 8 reasons Wikipedia matters for Librarians

### 1. Wikipedia is where your patrons already start their research

Wikipedia is viewed over 8,000 times a second and has over 500 million visitors each month. And they don't just visit for bar bets; studies show a majority of clinical professionals (including doctors) and professors at universities often start their research with Wikipedia.

### 2. Wikipedia is where discovery happens

Wikipedia not only summarizes knowledge, it cites it. Wikipedia's extensive references make it a top 10 referrer to all CrossRef DOIs across the entire internet. Often, modern research begins with a Google search, lands on a Wikipedia article, and ends with one of its cited references.

### 3. Wikipedia is a useful research tool

Wikipedia's Verifiability and Neutral Point of View policies require volunteers to represent and cite all of the major opinions about a topic. Wikipedia represents not just the core "facts" about a topic, but also the variety of perspectives key to gaining a *critical understanding* of a topic.

### 4. Using Wikipedia entails deepening digital literacy

Wikipedia has all of the merits and downfalls of web-based resources: teaching patrons how to evaluate and assess Wikipedia, understand how it is made, and critically assess the quality of the information, gives them a skill they can apply to any resource they use in their research.

### 5. Wikipedia is "free"

Unlike many expensive, paywalled databases, Wikipedia's content is freely available for anyone to use, reuse, or adapt. This means that patrons can access Wikipedia quickly and easily from anywhere, without payment or authentication. That means patrons use it, a lot.

### 6. Wikipedia has room for your community

Unlike other reference works, Wikipedia has no limits on who can participate. Your community's history, notable figures, and important collections are part of the encyclopedia's scope and you don't need a PhD to join in and share that knowledge.

### 7. Wikipedia isn't the only resource on 'Wikipedia'

Wikipedia contains thousands of images licensed to be free and reusable, hosted on the community's media repository Wikimedia Commons. Wikipedia has other sister projects like WikiSource, which provides public domain texts, and WikiQuote, a quotation database.

### 8. Wikipedia volunteers love librarians!

Did you know that the Wikipedia community has a yearly event called "Wikipedia Loves Libraries"? Wikipedians care about information, accuracy, and the sources that support it—we recognize that librarians are our natural allies in researching and sharing knowledge.

# 8 ways Librarians can get involved in Wikipedia

## 1. Contribute your reference expertise

Did you know that Wikipedia has a public reference desk? Every day, hundreds of people ask questions about doing research. Reference professionals can practice or show off their skills while helping the public. <http://enwp.org/WP:RD>

## 2. Add information and citations from your collections

Wikipedia runs on references! Why not add new information and references to a topic the next time you help a patron research the topic? Or train your students, interns, and staff to update Wikipedia with information you curate. <http://enwp.org/WP:TWL/CP>

## 3. Teach “Wikipedia as a Starting Point” Workshops

Wikipedia offers an excellent platform to teach students of all ages how to evaluate sources, find research using citations, and find those sources through your own library. You can start by teaching them basics of information literacy. <http://enwp.org/WP:DLG>

## 4. Run an Editathon

Wikipedia editing involves research and writing about topics. What better way to engage your patrons and staff with your resources than to teach them how to access the resources at your library while editing Wikipedia? Hundreds of editathons have proven the model.

<http://editathon.org/>

## 5. Help Wikipedia “take your city”

“Wikipedia-Takes” events are photo contests that get volunteers involved in their local communities. Document your local community so that the next time someone searches for it they find high quality images to match the articles. [https://enwp.org/WP:Wikipedia\\_Takes\\_Your\\_City](https://enwp.org/WP:Wikipedia_Takes_Your_City)

## 6. Use Wikipedia for your Exhibition displays

The Wikipedia community offers a free service called QRpedia that allows you to make multilingual, phone-scannable codes that automatically direct readers to the Wikipedia pages of topics covered by your collection. <http://qrpedia.org/>

## 7. Encourage teachers to incorporate Wikipedia in their coursework

Wikipedia doesn't have to be just a passive research tool. Did you know that every semester hundreds of teachers and professors assign their students to edit Wikipedia instead of a standard paper? Global reach and active community make assignments rewarding.

<https://enwp.org/WP:WEP>

## 8. Donate images

Your library and local community has a considerable number of cultural heritage text, images, and multimedia. If you upload them to Wikipedia, you can help illustrate the world's largest reference work, and help share your content with the whole world. <https://commons.wikimedia.org/>

**You can do even more as a research library!**

Check out: <http://enwp.org/WP:TWL/UNILIB>

[wikipedialibrary.org](http://wikipedialibrary.org)

[wikipedialibrary@wikimedia.org](mailto:wikipedialibrary@wikimedia.org)