



Global and Local Perspectives on Democratising Knowledge with Wikimedia

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Slides



Background

Wikipedia can reinforce and reproduce knowledge inequalities. How can we edit to ensure that it more accurately reflects the sum of human knowledge?



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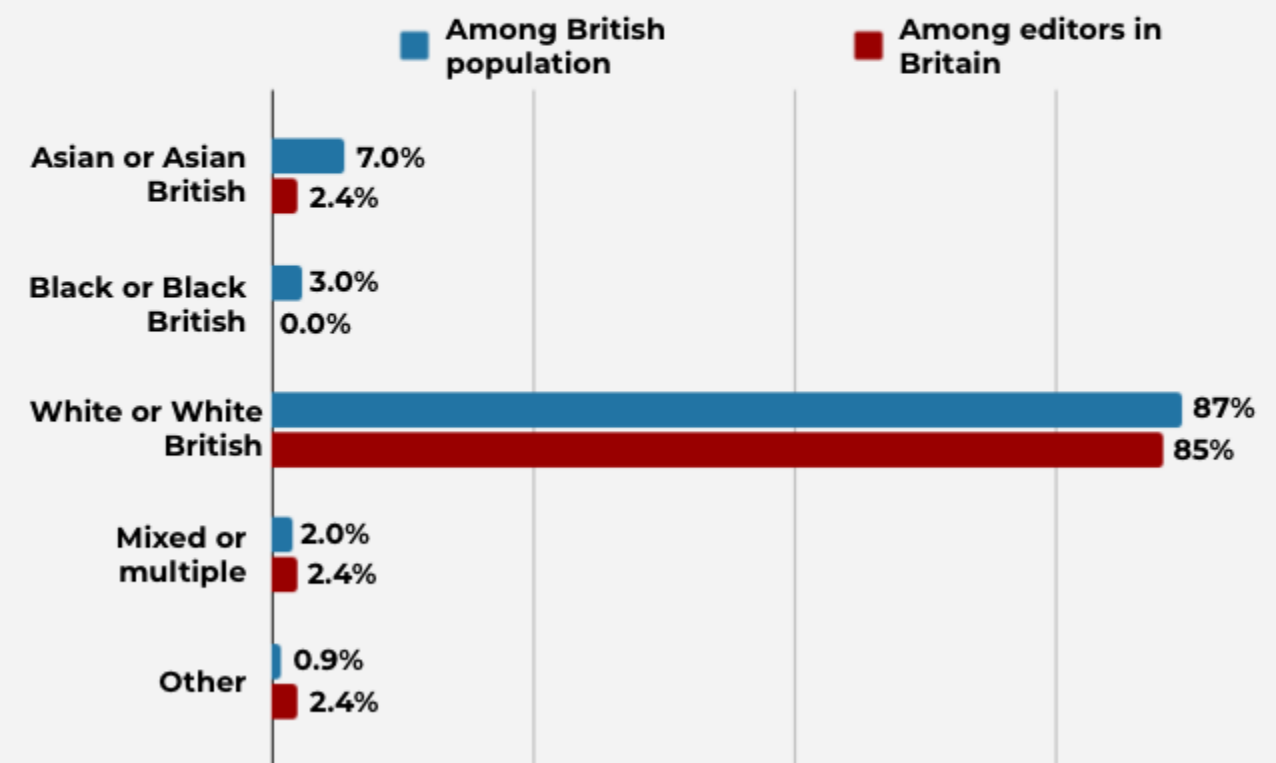
Lucy Moore

Curator, researcher and volunteer
Wikipedia editor

Editor gaps

Wikimedia Projects are not neutral. Who edits - and what they choose to focus on - matters.

We also see significant underrepresentation for **Black or Black British and Asian or Asian British** contributors **living in Britain.**



A survey of Wikipedia editors in 2021 shows that there is still significant underrepresentation from non-White editors in Great Britain.

Community Insights/Community Insights 2021 Report/Thriving Movement - Meta.
https://meta.wikimedia.org/wiki/Community_Insights/Community_Insights_2021_Report/Thriving_Movement. Accessed 1 Mar. 2023.

Search

Non-Western art and artists heavily under-represented on Wikipedia



The intricate artwork inside Sultan Ahmed Mosque Dome, by Ank Kumar – Own work, CC BY-SA 4.0

New research identifies a strong fixation on the Western canon in Wikipedia's coverage of visual arts, but offers ways towards a more truly global perspective.

If you were asked to name artworks or artists, how many would be non-Western? You might visit the free encyclopedia Wikipedia to support your search; after all 1.7 billion visitors per month do just this. However, new research highlights that even with Wikipedia's approach – ensuring anyone can edit and add content – there is still a bias towards Western artworks and artists.

Artist and scholar Waqas Ahmed and veteran Wikipediaian Dr. Martin Poulter were well-placed to investigate Wikipedia's perspective on the visual arts. For example, they observed with the English language version of Wikipedia, "its 'List of sculptors' is 99% Western, 'List of painters by nationality' is around 75% European and its 'List of contemporary visual artists' is 80% European". They probed whether this was just a problem with those articles, or just with the English language Wikipedia. "There appears to be a systemic cultural bias against non-Western visual art and artists across all Wikipedia platforms and in various languages", Ahmed says. "We hope that this research will remind people that the Western artistic canon is but one of many worldwide – each deserving respect and appreciation on its own terms."

With a commitment to identifying and overcoming barriers to diversity online, Wikimedia UK, the national charity for the Wikimedia open knowledge movement, funded the research. Director of Programmes and Evaluation Daria Cybulska says "The vision of the Wikimedia movement has always been 'a world in



Khalilli Collections

CONTEXT

Art from all Islamic
countries & eras
Wikimedian is English
monolingual

MULTILINGUAL

Translations
Use across 80 different
language Wikipedias

CHALLENGES

Finding translators &
translations

Wikipedia:GLAM/Khalili

Add languages

Contents [hide]

(Top)

Progress reports

Key metrics

Featured images

Did You Know?

Wikidata-driven visualisations

On-wiki resources

Wikidata

Coverage

Effect of the COVID-19 lockdown

Project page [Talk](#)

Read Edit View history Tools

From Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia

< [Wikipedia:GLAM](#)

The [Khalili Foundation](#) is partnering with [Wikimedia UK](#) to share a unique set of cultural content on and to promote cultural diversity on Wikimedia platforms. The partnership was announced at Wikimania 2019 in Stockholm.

The [Khalili Foundation](#) is a UK-based charity promoting interfaith and intercultural understanding through art, culture and education. As part of its cultural philanthropy, it freely shares images and data from the Khalili Collections. [The Khalili Collections](#) are eight collections of cultural treasures acquired by Professor Sir [Nasser David Khalili](#) -each the largest and most comprehensive of its kind. They include:

- [Islamic Art \(700-2000\)](#)
- [Hajj and the Arts of Pilgrimage \(700-2000\)](#)
- [Aramaic Documents \(535 BC-324 BC\)](#)
- [Japanese Art of the Meiji Period \(1868-1912\)](#)



<https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Wikipedia:GLAM/Khalili>

MIXED
MUSEUM

&



FOCUS

Open licensing
20th century images

BARRIERS

Unknown photographer
Complex family relationships

IMPACT

Legal frameworks like licensing
and copyright can reinforce and
reproduce systemic exclusion



Children of African American soldiers and white British women born during World War 2 who lived at [Holnicote House](#) in Somerset until they were 5 years old. These photographs were unable to be uploaded to Wikimedia Commons, but were uploaded to Wikipedia.

Photo source: The Mixed Museum, [Brown Babies Exhibition](#)



Oceania Museums

DURATION

Ongoing

METHODOLOGY

Recuperation

IMPACT

Addition of national
museums

Interested?



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EVENTS

- Wikithon trainings

CONTACT US

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Connected Heritage [2021-23]

Developing open knowledge skills, tools and communities of practice for sustainable digital preservation



Richard Nevell - Project Lead

Lucy Hinnie / Leah Emary - Digital Skills
Wikimedians

#HereForCulture



PREVIOUS PARTNERSHIPS



National Library of Scotland

Leabharlann Nàiseanta na h-Alba



The British Museum



SCIENCE MUSEUM GROUP





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