



# Learning, and learning about learning, in Wikiversity

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Wikimania, 2007



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Wikimania, 4th August, 2007





# Wikiversity

- Officially launched in August 2006
- (Had been previously “incubated” in Wikibooks for 2-3 years)
- Process of defining project - 1 long year on Meta :-)
- Educational materials & activities (including research)
- All learner levels and languages





**WIKIVERSITY**

project page | discussion | view source | history

*Election results for the Wikimedia Foundation Board of Trustees.*

## Wikiversity:Main Page

**Welcome to Wikiversity**

*Set learning free*

**About** · **Browse** · **Community**  
**Editing** · **Help** · **Questions** · **Tour**  
**We take requests!**

**navigation**

- [Main Page](#)
- [Browse](#)
- [Recent changes](#)
- [Random page](#)
- [Help](#)
- [Donations](#)

**community**

- [Portal](#)
- [Colloquium](#)
- [News](#)

**search**

**What is Wikiversity?**

**Welcome, newcomers!**

**Wikiversity** is a community for the creation and use of free [learning materials](#) and [activities](#).

**Communications and community**

- **Community portal** — A listing

**toolbox**

- [What links here](#)



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[content page](#) [discussion](#) [view source](#) [history](#)

# Wikiversity

**English**  
*Free Learning Community*



**Deutsch**  
*Freie Forschungsgemeinschaft*

**Español**  
*Comunidad de Aprendizaje Libre*

**Français**  
*Communauté pédagogique ouverte*

**Italiano**  
*L'università libera*

search

English

Go Search



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Wikiversity  
Beta

navigation

- Main Page
- Root category
- Help
- Babel
- Recent changes
- Random page
- Donations

search

Go Search

toolbox

- What links here
- Related changes
- Upload file
- Special pages

[article](#) | [discussion](#) | [view source](#) | [history](#)

## Main Page

Friday, August 3 2007

### Welcome to Wikiversity beta

[العربية](#) | [Български](#) | [Česky](#) | [Deutsch](#) | **English** | [Ελληνικά](#) | [Español](#) | [فارسی](#) | [Français](#) | [සිංහල](#) | [עברית](#) | [Italiano](#) | [日本語](#) | [Kólsch](#) | [Libneneh](#) | [ᏍᏏᏉᏍᏏ](#) | [Nederlands](#) | [Português](#) | [Română](#) | [Русский](#) | [Svenska](#) | [Türkçe](#) | [中文](#) | [Polski](#) |

### What is Wikiversity beta?

This website is a central hub for coordination of all the language-specific Wikiversity projects. This **multilingual coordination** builds upon Wikiversity's [mission](#) and the [Wikiversity project proposal](#). This website hosts discussions about Wikiversity [policy](#) for original research.

Wikiversity beta is also an incubator for Wikiversities in various languages that are not yet separate projects. So far, [English](#), [German](#), [Spanish](#), [French](#) and [Italian](#) are [separate projects](#). See the [News from separate projects](#).

### Announcements

**June 2007**

 [10](#) : [Wikimedia Board Election](#) opens.

**May 2007**

 [31](#) : [m:Wikimedia brand survey](#) initiated by [Eric Moeller](#)

 [18](#) : [20:19: Italian wikiversity](#)



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# Wikis and education

What is the “wiki way”, and what does it mean for education?

- Discuss validity of information
- Store, manage, but also *construct* knowledge
- Create a Community of Practice around its activity
- People participate in the very definition of the space itself (policies, processes, structures, etc)



## Wikiversity so far..

- Some good materials and courses (eg. Filmmaking)
- Some sense of a learning model (learning by doing)
- Some active contributors (5-10 v.a; 50-100 a)
- Some new structuring 'namespaces' ("School", "Topic")
- Some policies (some adapted from Wikipedia) - NPOV
- Apprenticeship model of adminship ("custodians")
- Research guidelines
- Logo, motto & slogan



## However, Wikiversity lacks..

- Intuitive structure
- Good introduction (main page & support pages)
- Comprehensive tutorials about this wiki and the “wiki way”
- Focused and targeted search (not just subject, but level, etc)



# Problems

“ ...it's like climbing a mountain. From a distance it's clear where the peak is, but up close it's just a sheer cliff with no obvious route to follow.” (Mystictim)



## Wikis can be intimidating...

"In 1989 I brought home my first ever company car, a Toyota Camry with fuel injection and electronic ignition and all fuel and servicing provided, free. Up until that day I had usually done my own engine tune-ups because I liked fiddling with points and carburettors. After six months I decided to open the bonnet 'to see if it had an engine'. I noted the sealed systems and need for special diagnostic equipment and closed the bonnet on that area of interest. In a strange way wiki is like re-opening that bonnet." (Anon)



## But wikis offer new possibilities...

“ When I think about the ultimate goal of Wikiversity, I think about the historical origins of universities, collaborative efforts to facilitate learning that brought together learners and teachers. In a sense, we are starting over from that fundamental starting point but doing it in a new medium, a virtual world that is not constrained by the need to work in a restrictive physical space. We are able to explore what can be done in this new virtual space. ” (JWSchmidt)



## Wikiversity - a new paradigm?

- Wikiversity is moving in new territory
- Redefinition, or fresh look at “university”
- However, it is not working in a vacuum of learning theory & practice



## My/our research

- Focus on how a wiki impacts on the practice of education
- How the Wikiversity community organises itself around this activity
- Collaborative research (“Action research”)
- Multiple outcomes (PhD thesis, academic papers)...
- A community of practice, learning *about* learning



## Feedback...

Now :-), or...

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