

Participate in Africa's first-ever Wikipedia edit-a-thon on climate change

The Climate and Development Knowledge Network (CDKN) and Future Climate for Africa (FCFA) invite researchers to apply to participate in the first Wikipedia edit-a-thon to be hosted on climate change in Africa. The aim of the event is to enhance the quality and accessibility of information on climate change on the world's largest online encyclopaedia.

The edit-a-thon will bring together approximately 30 researchers, as well as veteran Wikipedia editors, to update and add content related to climate science and adaptation in Africa. The three-day event will be held from 30 July - 1 August 2019 at the SouthSouthNorth offices in Cape Town.

Why Wikipedia?

Although not traditionally seen as an important platform for research dissemination, Wikipedia provides readily accessible information to millions in the broader public, including policymakers and other stakeholder groups. It receives, on average, 16 billion page views a month.¹

Wikipedia can also boost the impact of research. Thompson and Hanley (2018) found that scientific articles referenced in Wikipedia receive more citations, suggesting that Wikipedia complements the traditional journal system by pointing researchers to key underlying scientific articles.²

Wikipedia has stringent guidelines to ensure accuracy of information on its platform. For example, all material must be attributable to reliable, published sources – Wikipedia does not publish original research and all content must be determined by previously published information rather than the beliefs or experiences of editors. One study on the accuracy and completeness of pharmacology found that Wikipedia was 99.7% accurate when compared to textbook data³.

What is an edit-a-thon?

An edit-a-thon is an organised event where a group of people consisting of editors, researchers, and online communities get together to edit Wikipedia on a specific topic. This may include adding new information or citations to existing pages, or creating new Wikipedia pages altogether. The edit-a-thon will include basic training for participants who have not edited Wikipedia before.

1 <https://stats.wikimedia.org/v2/#/all-projects>

2 https://papers.ssrn.com/sol3/papers.cfm?abstract_id=3039505

3 <https://journals.plos.org/plosone/article?id=10.1371/journal.pone.0106930>

With funding from:



Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the
Netherlands



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Why an edit-a-thon?

Africa remains the least covered continent on Wikipedia, both in terms of Wikipedia contributors per capita, and knowledge and perspectives related to Africa. Only 25% of edits to subjects about the sub-Saharan region come from within the region⁴.

Therefore this project aims to fill an important gap on Wikipedia – making African climate information more accessible, coordinated and representative of the research being done by African research programmes and universities.

Who will take part in the edit-a-thon?

CDKN and FCFA are inviting early to mid-career researchers to apply to take part in the edit-a-thon. Approximately 30 researchers from African countries will be selected from relevant research programmes, including:

- Building Resilience and Adaptation to Climate Extremes and Disasters (BRACED)
- Collaborative Adaptation Research Initiative in Africa and Asia (CARIAA)
- Conflict and Cooperation in the Management of Climate Change (CCMCC)
- Future Climate for Africa (FCFA)

These programmes have been selected because they are all recently completed or nearing completion. Therefore, an opportunity exists to enhance research uptake efforts to ensure the impact of these programmes is maximised. Research from other programmes will also be considered, providing they are completed or nearing completion.

The edit-a-thon will equip researchers with new skills related to how to edit and contribute effectively to Wikipedia, and therefore increase the global exposure and impact of their research.

Funding will be provided to cover all costs of attending the edit-a-thon, including flights, transfers, accommodation, visas and meals.

How to apply?

Complete the Google form by latest 17 May 2019:

https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSc1seTekG_hqMHnKn4NjdcVAxYluucgcMN2RxxNvZZcjsPzsA/viewform?usp=sf_link

If you have any queries, please contact Beth at beth@southsouthnorth.org or Emma at emma@southsouthnorth.org.

We look forward to receiving your application.

⁴ <http://wikiinafrica.org/?portfolio=wikipedia-needs-africa-->

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About CDKN

Established in 2010, the [Climate and Development Knowledge Network \(CDKN\)](#) has helped developing countries in Africa, Asia and Latin America to achieve climate compatible development goals, providing knowledge, technical assistance, and research services. CDKN launched a new phase in 2018, with a focus on further developing its knowledge and learning programme. In this new phase CDKN will be working with a range of global climate research programmes to enhance the uptake and use of their research at country and global levels, to support gender-responsive and socially inclusive climate action.

Since 2018, CDKN's core funding is from the Royal Netherlands Ministry of Foreign Affairs (DGIS) and the International Development Research Centre (IDRC), Canada.

About FCFA

[Future Climate for Africa \(FCFA\)](#) is a five-year international research programme jointly funded by the UK's Department for International Development (DFID) and the Natural Environment Research Council (NERC). The programme supports research to better understand climate variability and change across sub-Saharan Africa. FCFA consists of five research consortia, [AMMA-2050](#), [FRACTAL](#), [UMFULA](#), [HyCRISTAL](#), and [IMPALA](#) who's collective focus is on advancing scientific knowledge, understanding and prediction of African climate variability and change on 5 to 40 year timescales, together with support for better integration of science into longer-term decision making.

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