

## Collaborative heritage.

### Validated, shared knowledge creation on cultural heritage

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### Literature review and purpose

In the last two decades, there has been a very significant increase in collaborative knowledge on the web. Virtual platforms such as Wikipedia have played a key role in this process.

As a result, valuable knowledge is created by users who altruistically interact and choose to share their knowledge, delimited by the acceptance of the social norms of collaboration of these wiki platforms (Prasarnphanich, P., & Wagner, C. , 2009, pp. 33-41; Liao, C., To, P. L., & Hsu, F. C. 2013).

A *wiki* blurs the line between the reader and the content writer. They are encouraged to build knowledge together and participate in a learning community where the group builds knowledge and takes over that message. Wikipedia presents what the crowd perceives as the so-called 'truth', using a different set of epistemological standards that includes three policy thresholds for inclusion on its *wiki* (Caverly, D. C., & Ward, A., 2008, pp. 36-37).

Several recent investigations compare Wikipedia with traditional knowledge sources. Chesney (2006) compared Encyclopaedia Britannica and Wikipedia entries and found no substantial differences in their credibility. However, Rector (2008) compared Wikipedia with Encyclopaedia Britannica, The Dictionary of American History, and American National Biography Online and found inaccuracies in 8 out of the 9 entries analyzed. Wikipedia was 80% accurate, compared to 95-96% for traditional sources. Colbert (2006) was more critical and deliberately introduced erroneous information in Wikipedia to point out its vulnerability. He concluded that publications may present a certain version of reality depending on who writes the entry and on the naivety of the moderators, which he called "wikiality" (Caverly, D. C., & Ward, A., 2008, pp. 36-37).

However, *Wiki* has enormous potential in all fields of knowledge. For this reason, ICOMOS-Spain has launched a project that aims to create shared knowledge in the field of cultural heritage with the endorsement of experts and organizations in the sector.

On the other hand, ICOMOS is expanding its channels of dissemination to approach people interested in cultural heritage through multiple physical or digital platforms which are accessible to the general public.

Therefore, taking advantage of the powerful Wikipedia engine and the knowledge and dedication of its network of volunteer specialists, ICOMOS can promote its mission and help to fill in the gaps with quality entries on cultural heritage in all its dimensions (built heritage, cultural landscapes, intangible heritage, industrial heritage, heritage education, etc.).

The objective is to establish a permanent content creation group in these environments, to help ICOMOS and other cultural institutions to disseminate knowledge about cultural heritage, in a very accessible way.

## Methodology

In order to make a preliminary demonstration, an applied methodology has been used, developing a practical research case. In collaboration with Wikimedia Spain, a project has been developed in order to create and edit Wikipedia entries under the name of “Collaborative Heritage”.

The project is organised in three phases: Phase 1 consisted of an editing marathon (or *edit-a-thon*) that included a brief prior training on content creation in collaborative environments and the identification of heritage content that is not yet shared on Wikipedia or have not been scientifically supported yet (Littlejohn, A., Hood, N., Rehm, M., McGill, L., Rienties, B., & Highton, M., 2019, pp. 1-14; March, L., & Dasgupta, S., 2020, pp. 1-26).

The launch of the initiative was on the eve of April 18, International Day of Monuments and Sites (hereinafter, IDMS). The event was carried out entirely online by both members of ICOMOS-Spain and Wikimedia Spain, to strengthen synergies between these organizations and make quality entries according to the Wikipedia community standards.

In the next phase (autumn 2021), a permanent publishing group will be formalized within ICOMOS-Spain. To achieve that, more intensive training will be carried out, to allow ICOMOS members to be self-sufficient editors.

Likewise, it is planned to make a call to other cultural institutions to join the initiative and also to work in collaboration with ICOMOS-Jordan, (which is starting related activities in its committee) to be able to disseminate the initiative within in the international, multidisciplinary and intergenerational network of ICOMOS. The final objective is to be able to give support and assist other institutions that want to create collaborative content on cultural heritage backed by the professionalism that characterizes ICOMOS.

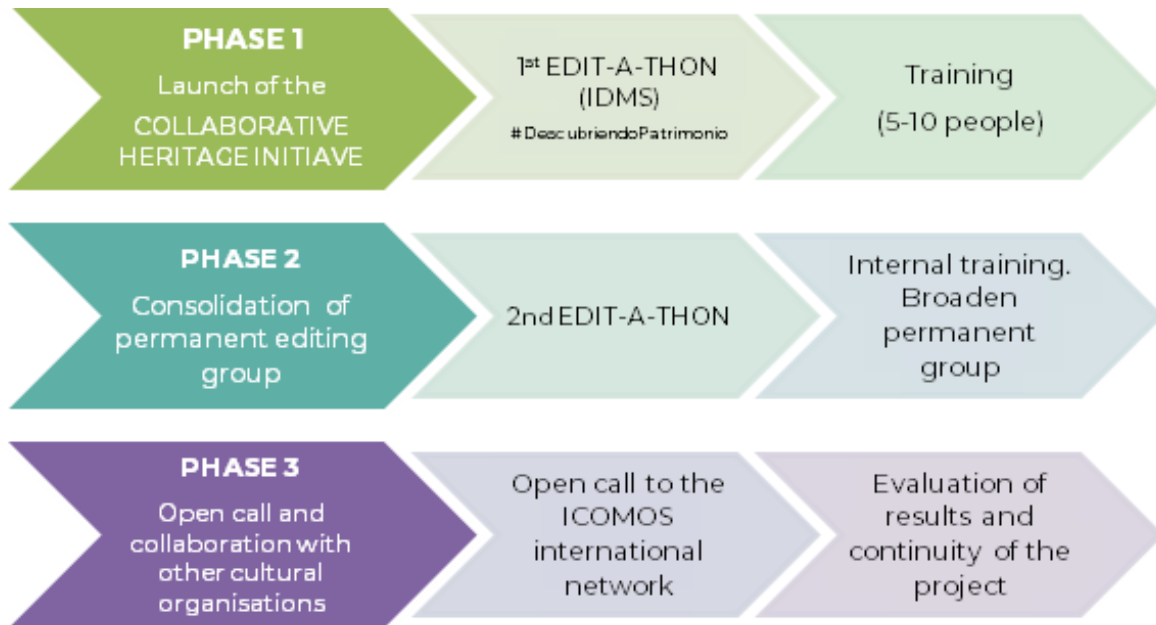


Fig.1. Phases of the initiative (ICOMOS Spain).

### Case study and preliminary results

The first Edit-a-thon was coordinated by the emerging professionals group from ICOMOS-Spain and was held on the occasion of the IDMS. Its theme was **#DescubriendoPatrimonio** (**#DiscoveringHeritage**), linking this event to a weekly section with the same name (or hashtag) that is published every Wednesday on the ICOMOS-Spain social media.

The event was open to a maximum of 30 online participants, to ensure fluid communications. The 30 places were soon filled and 29 of them created their Wikipedia accounts and collaborated in the edition of the articles.

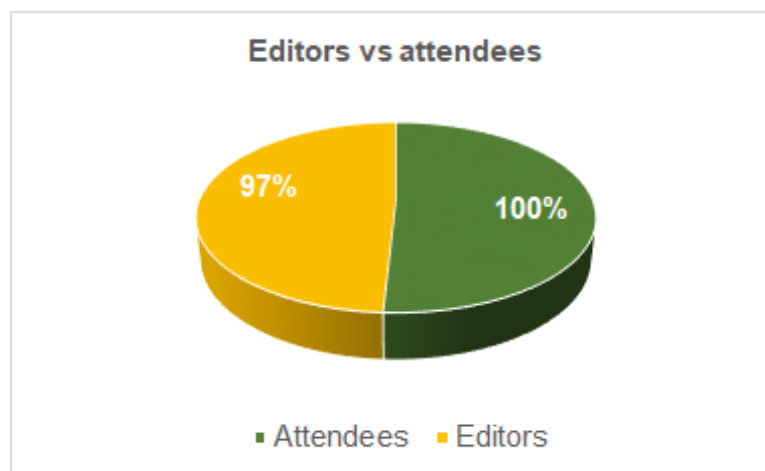


Fig.2. Participants in the first phase of the initiative (ICOMOS Spain).

Finally, 14 brand-new entries were created and 23 images were uploaded to Wikimedia Commons. As of April 18, 2021, there were already 1,270 views of the entries.

The attendees' engagement and results of the Edit-a-thon show that the collaboration between various cultural heritage experts, together with the knowledge of the Wikipedia community, has been key to create quality entries from the point of view of content, form, and the community norms. Therefore, it is also necessary to validate whether the creation of a permanent editing group can further help this process and become a valid methodology.

## Conclusions

Currently, ICOMOS-Spain works on the consolidation of a permanent group for the editing, creation and translation into Spanish of Wikipedia entries on cultural heritage (Phase 2), focusing on topics such as inclusion, all dimensions of tangible and intangible cultural heritage .

The celebration of new edition events (edit-a-thons) will help to train more members in order to move on to Phase 3 of the initiative and to extend the contribution of the permanent working group to other cultural entities that want to approach this high-impact collaborative environment.

## Author contributions

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