

# Freecyclopedia contest Stage 1: Wikipedia Decentralized & Partitioned Governance Specification

## Contest dates

30 June - 18 August 2021, 23:59 UTC.

## Voting time

20 days

## The general problem

The current rules and social mechanics of Wikipedia discourage people from contributing. The existing community is much smaller than it potentially could be. Many Wikipedia mechanics and bureaucratic procedures are easy to abuse. That leads to a lack of trust between community members. These problems lower user engagement and turn potentially very experienced and seasoned professionals and knowledgeable individuals away.

## Reference & motivation

[This document](#) was used as a reference piece to help identify the requirements listed below. Please familiarize yourself with the major problems it illustrates with the current state of Wikipedia. This will help you get a better understanding of the background behind the need for this contest.

This [BFTG](#) consensus PDF can give you some great insight about how such a problem can be approached in order to solve it. Please download and read it.

## Requirements: straightforward

1. Your solution must take into consideration that Freecyclopedia must continue working over the course of many years and retain high quality work at all times; thus, your solution must present a means for longevity and sustainability, while also maintaining high quality community work over the long term.
2. Your solution must be resistant to political and commercially motivated attacks.
3. Maintain an uncomplicated (“soft”) entry threshold for new experts who want to contribute while retaining and maintaining quality requirements through a

community-driven work analysis that is unbiased. Please also reference point 5 below under “Specific requirements”.

4. Your submission should take into account that all Freecyclopedia discussions and statistics must remain transparent.
5. Freecyclopedia authors, users and readers must have a simple channel of communication with one another at all times.
6. In the event -- and ONLY in the event -- of community deadlock on any particular subject, your solution should allow for varying articles to be written about the subject in dispute and causing said deadlock.
7. Your submission should provide a means of qualifying reputation against expertise; for instance, through tags... or think of a better way if you know of one.
8. Your Freecyclopedia solution should also address and solve the issue of differing article versions based on varying languages, i.e., they should be consistent across all languages despite misinterpretations, and also be resistant to cultural differences as well as politically and commercially motivated influence. Also see point 2 above.

### **Requirements: descriptive**

#### **1. Grandfathered-in “old timer” bias.**

Wikipedia logs every action and stores every version of every page but provides little statistical data for analysis. As of May 2021, no publicly available software provided deep knowledge of what’s going on. That leads to a situation when decision-making is based on individual experience and personal bias of those who have been grandfathered in and are difficult (if not impossible) to remove, as well as those of administrators, WMF officials, etc., and nothing that is based on the actual, factual data.

- **Find a way to permanently remove this issue in a decentralized way.**
- **Please also reference point 7 of this section below and take that into consideration when creating your submission.**

#### **2. Uneven development.**

The coverage of topics varies a lot because people don’t contribute to articles outside of their interests. The Wikipedia-style solutions are edit-a-thons (editorial marathons) and other scoring competitions with virtual and real-world rewards.

The problems are: such events are short-term, take lots of time and effort to organize, and often result in quality vs. quantity issues since participants are ranked based on the number of articles created. The outcome varies a lot and is often low.

- **In solving this issue, please address how to focus community efforts on underdeveloped topics without dedicating too much time to the organization of events and contests.**

### 3. **Low quality of articles.**

Good articles take a lot of time and effort. Good articles are usually found in most popular topics where many people cooperate to make one good text. But many Wikipedia articles are poorly written, incorrect, or outdated. Not because of the sabotage, but because the minimal standards for article quality are actually low.

Wikipedia has almost nothing to offer to motivate people to write better articles. In the current meta, Wikipedia offers a carrot and a stick. First is an opportunity to earn virtual medals for improved articles. The second is the article deletion procedure. It's actually being misused to find someone to improve a weak article. Both the carrot and the stick are borderline ineffective.

- **Solve this issue!**

### 4. **Low value of contributions.**

People who actually create content are the most valuable contributors to any content project. But Wikipedia takes editorial work for granted, and the most productive writers have the same influence in the community as anyone else, and all too often, perhaps even less than a person who socialized through the forums and climbed up the Wikipedia hierarchy. That's a major issue that dismantles a necessary system of checks and balances.

- **How can the most valuable members of the encyclopedia community be rewarded for their contributions? How should the different productive work (writing, editing, cleaning up, illustrating) be graded?**

### 5. **Real expertise with no way to influence.**

Proven experts in certain subject areas have a hard time contributing to Wikipedia. They have to follow rules that may seem often times illogical; for example, when it comes to notability and/or significance, Wikipedia's notability  $\neq$  real-world experience notability. Discussing complicated subject matter with amateurs who are pushing their own points of view and who are more focused on formalism and bureaucracy make for toxic Wikipedians. That ultimately demotivates real experts from contributing.

- **How can we make a community-driven online encyclopedia a comfortable place for real experts eager to share their knowledge to come and engage, participate, add their expertise and continue to do so?**
- **Think of a way to make the hold of entry and participation simple enough to make it attractive to new experts.**

## 6. **Significance.**

Wikipedia has a set of rules to decide what's significant enough to warrant an article, and what isn't.

The basic rule is great:

*A topic is presumed to be suitable for a standalone article or list when it has received significant coverage in reliable sources that are independent of the subject.*

But as the subject-specific significance guidelines come into the realm of authority, things start to get complicated.

A good example are the notability (significance) guidelines for companies and organizations. To prevent attempts to game the rules via marketing and public relations professionals, it provides a detailed list of what works toward notability and what doesn't. In practice it becomes a formal list of reasons not to allow an article about an actually notable/significant organization on Wikipedia because its coverage doesn't fit some generalized standard.

- **Significance requirements can be replaced by format requirements that limit the way a subject may be described, or come up with your own ideas.**

## 7. **Bureaucracy.**

Wikipedia is a bureaucracy with unreasonably complicated rules and ineffective procedures that make improvement extremely hard and sometimes borderline impossible. Mastering them is a key to success in Wikipedia disputes while being a good writer is much less important. An experienced bureaucrat can literally claim ownership of articles and topics. One example are blockchain/cryptocurrency-related topics on English Wikipedia, strictly controlled by Wikipedia old-timers and cryptocurrency haters like David Gerard. Such people have large support groups that allow them to push their agenda using particular pages.

- **Present a solution using meritocracy and consensus instead of bureaucracy.**

- **Please reference point 7 above in this same section in your approach.**

## 8. **Consensus.**

Wikipedia is obsessed with walking about consensus mechanics, but doesn't implement them well. It's good on paper, but every discussion in Wikipedia can grow almost out of control and consume absurd amounts of time and effort that could be used for better things.

The longest disputes such as naming Danzig v. Gdansk on the English version of Wikipedia, and Kiev Rus v. The Old Russian State on the Russian version of Wikipedia. These disputes have gone on for years. A more subtle discussion can still be several hundred replies long with zero outcome. A disagreement over the content of an article can literally turn into a war of attrition, which only ends when one of the sides gives up and switches focus to something else.

- **Your solution should emphasize consensus while considering points 1 through 7 of this section above.**

## 9. **Lack of onboarding.**

Wikipedia isn't a friendly place to newcomers. The old-timers expect new users to read and understand all the complex rules, master encyclopedic writing style, and follow the local norms of behavior that were set by them. With no onboarding and little assistance, newcomers are prone to make rookie mistakes and receive inadequate punishment as a result.

- **Kill the "grandfathered-in" seniority complex from point 1 while maintaining and retaining real talent that deserves it.**

## 10. **No truly collaborative effort.**

Collaboration on projects were designed to help editors with similar interests work together more effectively. The idea was to create small groups with more knowledge on the subject matter at hand in order to resolve disputes within the scope of the project and develop guidelines. In practice however, none of this happens. These "projects" are mere clubhouses and most of them have zero activity.

- **Free TON has sub-governances.**
- **How can we use our community resources to make collaboration more useful and fun, but most of all productive, so that they will help focus participants on the subjects that they enjoy participating in?**

## 11. Patrolling.

The idea of patrolling was to let users check new and recently edited articles for rule violations, false statements, and markup mistakes. For some reason patrolling was considered a privilege that only the more experienced users should request through an additional procedure. In the end, it just didn't work as intended.

As Wikipedia grew, the number of edits greatly exceeded the capabilities of the patrolling system. Articles left unpatrolled for some time became unpatrollable, because they would require the patroller to proofread, fact-check, and correct the text (and patrolling unworthy articles can be sanctionable).

- **Free TON has a decentralized system of governance. We DO NOT patrol! What we can do is implement a social validation-like system by pooling groups of interested participants. How can we accomplish this in a decentralized ecosystem, and what is the best approach to organize something like this?... Or, let's not make suggestions on how to do this. How would YOU do this keeping it decentralized? Please provide your solution to this issue.**

### Evaluation metrics

This Stage 1 contest: Create a Freecyclopedia specification that best addresses all of the above requirements. Best specs win!

Stage 2: Implementation contest TBA after stage 1 is complete

### Voting requirements

- Jurors must have a solid understanding of the described technology to provide a score and feedback. If you are a juror and feel that you do not completely comprehend any given submission, you should choose to "Abstain".
- Jurors or whose team(s) intend to participate in this contest by providing submissions lose their right to vote in this contest.
- Each juror will vote by rating each submission on a scale of 1 to 10 or can choose to reject it if it does not meet requirements or vote "Abstain" if they feel unqualified to judge.
- Jurors must provide feedback on submissions or forfeit their reward.
- The Jury will reject duplicate, sub-par, incomplete, or inappropriate submissions, as well as any submission that do not meet the listed requirements.
- Any disagreements, misinterpretations or ambiguities concerning the requirements by participants in chats and on the forum should be addressed by members of this jury

BEFORE voting. This will require that you monitor the respective chats and the forum thread on a regular basis throughout the life span of this contest. Please reference “The jury” section below for help in identifying which Free TON chats and sub-governances will be involved in voting.

- Each contestant has the right to provide several submissions if they are all original and differ from one another significantly enough to be considered different. This scale of difference has to be determined by the jury subjectively as there is no clear way to define it; however, here the operative phrase is “common sense shall prevail”. If multiple submissions seem too similar, or if they in any way appear to be partially the same work done twice, or if they appear to be one whole body of work divided into parts to create the illusion of several submissions, jurors have the right to reject such submissions without question, as long as feedback is provided to explain the decision.
- If a contestant makes an additional submission or submissions to replace a previously published submission, the contestant must inform the jury about this fact and indicate which submission is the one to be judged. In this case, only the indicated work will count. If the contestant fails to indicate which submission to judge, only the first submission made will count. The Jury will reject all others.

### **Stage 1 Rewards**

1st place.....	30,000 TONs
2nd place.....	27,000 TONs
3rd place.....	24,000 TONs
4th place.....	21,000 TONs
5th place.....	18,000 TONs
6th place.....	15,000 TONs
7th place.....	12,000 TONs
8th place.....	9,000 TONs
9th place.....	6,000 TONs
10th place.....	3,000 TONs

**The minimal score threshold to pass in order to qualify for a reward is a score of equal to or greater than 4.99**

### **Jury rewards**

An amount equal to **10%** of the total sum of all total tokens awarded to contest winners will be distributed among jurors who vote and provide feedback. This percentage will be awarded on the following basis:

- The percentage of tokens awarded to the jury will be distributed based on the number of votes each juror casts. For example, if one juror votes 50 times and another juror votes 5 times, the juror who votes 50 times will get 10 times more tokens than the juror who votes 5 times.
- Feedback is mandatory to collect any rewards.

### **Procedural requirements**

**Accessibility.** All submissions must be accessible for the jury to open and view, so please double-check your submission. If the submission is inaccessible or does not fit the criteria described, jurors may reject the submission.

**Timing.** Contestants must submit their work before the contest clock for submissions runs out. **NO EXCEPTIONS!**

**Content.** Please submit in PDF format. If all or a portion of the original content cannot be in the form of a PDF, simply submit a PDF with links to your original content.

**Contact.** Each submission must have an identifiable contact that can be matched with your description. If you have not provided a forum description for discussion, then your submission should contain links to your online persona, for example, a Telegram ID (preferred) or other direct contact information that can confirm that the submitted work is yours. In the absence of confirmation by the contestant of the authorship of the submitted work, the submission is rejected.

### **Multiple submissions.**

- Each contestant has the right to provide several submissions if they are all original and differ from one another significantly enough to be considered different. This scale of difference will be judged by the jury subjectively as there is no clear way to define it. The operative phrase here is to “use your common sense”. If multiple submissions are deemed to be too similar by the jury, or if they in any way appear to be partially the same work done twice, or if they appear to be one whole body of work divided into parts to create the illusion of several submissions, jurors have the right to reject such submissions without question. Again, common sense and honesty will prevail in the event of discrepancies.
- If the contestant makes an additional submission or submissions in order to replace a previously published submission, the contestant must inform the jury about this fact in their correct submission PDF, indicating which submission is the correct one to be

judged. In this case, only the indicated work will count. If the contestant fails to indicate which submission is to be judged, then said contestant leaves it in the jury's hands. NO EXCEPTIONS!