

Regional Cooperation Initiative

for

IBERO-AMERICA



Versión original en español por Galileo Vidoni

The present is a provisional, *on the fly*, English translation. Spanglish may be expected.

This is an official proposal from the Comisión Directiva of Wikimedia Argentina, devised with Delphine Ménard's valuable advice, whose collaboration and enthusiasm we kindly thank.

June 2010

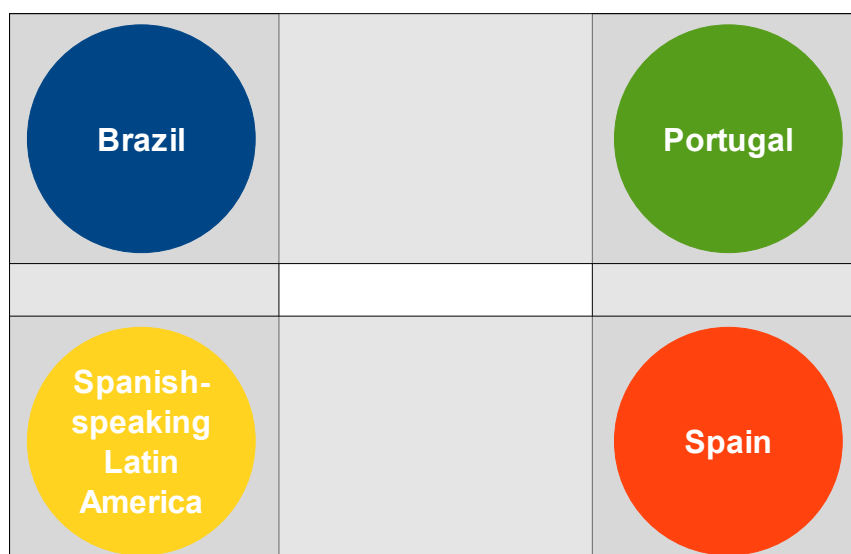
- **SUMMARY**

The project on a Regional Cooperation Initiative for Ibero-America is aimed at linking together the local chapters and working groups looking to establish a chapter in the region, thus fostering collaboration and experience sharing. Ibero-America supposes a strategic area where the organization of the Wikimedia movement is still a big challenge. We believe that an initiative considering not only established chapters but also the existing informal working groups will enable us to overcome it.

- **GEOGRAPHIC GROUNDS**

The region contains overlapped but complementary identities:

- Most of South and Central American countries share between them and with Spain the Spanish (Castilian) language, history and culture;
- Brazil has strong political, commercial and cultural ties with its neighbours, but even stronger ones –the same language– with Portugal;
- Promoting Wikimedia projects and strenghtening local communities must face up to the common social and economic challenges that Latin American countries share as a region;
- Spain and Portugal, on the other hand, do also share a common geographic reality and strong cultural and historical bonds;
- Ibero-America is thus the concept that permits us to put together this set.



- **PRACTICAL GROUNDS**

- Up to date, namely June 30, 2010, only Argentina and Portugal have Wikimedia Foundation chapters. The proposal on a Spanish chapter is in advanced stages of development. Working groups already exist in at least Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Mexico and Uruguay.
- Wikimedia Argentina has tried to collaborate in the establishment of Wikimedia España, experience that is now repeated with Chile and Uruguay. It will be more productive to share this experience in an horizontal way with all the interested parties instead of limiting it to individual contacts with each group.
- In Brazil, despite having a strong community, there have been some difficulties in establishing a chapter recognised by the Wikimedia Foundation's Chapters Committee. Regional cooperation can be of help, as can be the advice and guidance that the Portuguese chapter could give.
- This Initiative is aimed at fulfilling the main conclusions of the Chapters Conference held last April in Berlin: (a) Having existing chapters to advise new groups, (b) Strengthening regional cooperation between chapters.

- **WORKING DYNAMICS**

In a first phase, the proposal is to implement the Regional Cooperation Initiative (RCI) via a mailing list, which could be complemented by other platforms decided later by its participants.

- Participation is voluntary and not binding for interested chapters or groups. Its only goal is to strengthen cooperation and joint work to promote Wikimedia projects in the Ibero-American sphere. Taking part does not exclude a chapter or group to participate in any other cooperation initiative.
- The RCI is *not* an instance above chapters and working groups nor a formal space of decision making as a *bloc*. No chapter compromises its internal dynamics. The RCI can nevertheless work, and we expect it to do so, as a space for sharing views and discussion.
- Each official chapter or working group present in Meta-Wiki may join the RCI voluntarily. It is suggested for the mailing list to have a limited number of representatives per group.

- Work will be conducted, as far as possible, in either Spanish or Portuguese. We believe that the closeness of both languages turns it feasible.

- **PROPOSALS**

The RCI is inspired by the Wikimedia Asia project, a similar initiative started by Wikimedia Hong Kong whose aim is to link together established chapters in the Asia-Pacific sphere. We divide work into the following areas:

- **ORGANISATION**

Advice and direct collaboration between chapters, from chapters to working groups, and between working groups. We consider a priority the establishment of local chapters in the region. What is each group's situation? What difficulties do they face? How can they tackle them? What has been others' experience in a similar scenario?

- **OUTREACH**

Pooling together for promoting and disseminating Wikimedia projects. Exchange on GLAM activities. Coordination and experience sharing towards the education sector. Joint negotiations with national or regional organisations in search of content liberation.

- **EVENTS**

Wikimedia Argentina proposes, taking profit of its experience with Wikimania, to host in the mid-term an Ibero-American conference. This will enable us to gather together the existing groups, to work in developing joint actions in the region and to provide the Wikimedia Foundation with input for its regional strategy.

We propose the conference's planning, as well as the specific topics to be discussed, to be decided within the RCI framework.

- **RELATED EXPENDITURES**

The expected costs to develop the Regional Cooperation Initiative tend to zero. Only a communication platform is needed (a mailing list), as well as the additional platforms for collaboration that its participants may define in the future

(wiki, etc.). If any project coming from the ICR would need to be funded by the Wikimedia Foundation, the interested chapters will present the corresponding application by themselves.

- **GLOSSARY**

- **CHAPTER:** Organisation on a territorial basis recognised as a local chapter by the Wikimedia Foundation's Chapters Committee.
- **WORKING GROUP:** An informal association of editors from Wikimedia projects aimed at forming a local chapter within a certain period.
- **REGIONAL COOPERATION INITIATIVE:** Common framework for informal communication and collaboration between chapters or working groups, which are subject to the approval and supervision of the Wikimedia Foundation's Chapters Committee.

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