Wiki Indaba
Planning Pack

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Best practices for hosts

Version 1 (2019)

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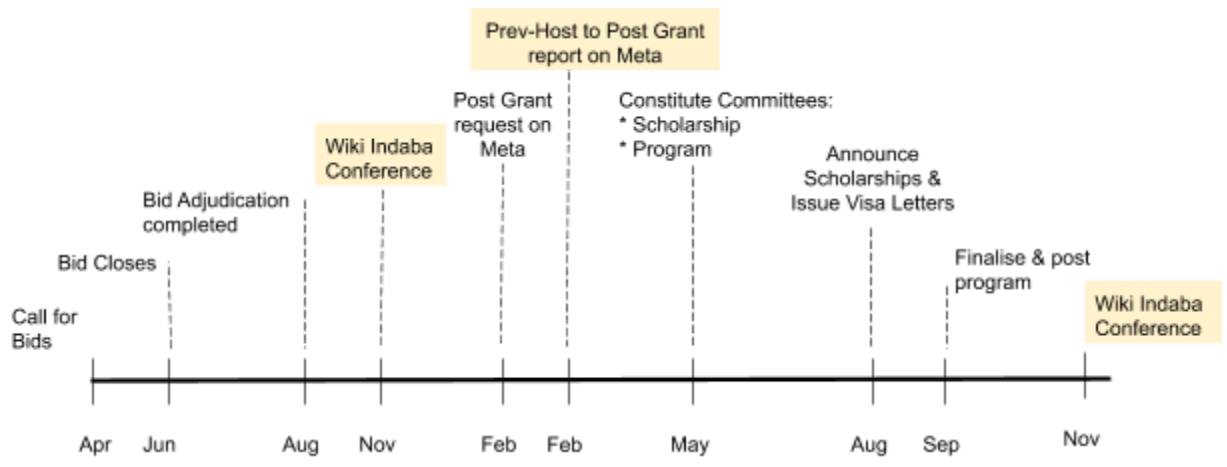
Introduction & timelines

This is a proposed working document to create a best practice checklist for planning future Wiki Indaba conferences in Africa. This document is meant to be a guide and therefore is not exhaustive. Once input has been received from committee members, the document should be transferred to Meta/Wiki.

Wiki Indaba Hosting | Timeline



Bidding for Hosting

Wiki Indaba conference shall be hosted in November each year. Since this is after most of the Wikimedia annual events (Wikimedia Summit, Wikimania, Wikiarbia & Wiki Convention francophone), it allows for regional reflection on all these events as well as planning for the coming year. WISCom shall open call for hosting shortly after the Wiki Indaba conference and as follows:

- Call for bids: April - June
- Adjudication: July - August
- Announcing: November (At Wiki Indaba)

Where Bids shall be kept.

Bids to host Wiki Indaba shall be done on meta and linked to the WISCom page.

Grant Proposal

The selected host country shall upon announcement by WISCom, begin the process of requesting for grant funding from Wikimedia Foundation and post the grant request on meta within 3 months (i,e by the end of February).

WISCom will assist the host country where necessary to complete any of the following:

- Review of baseline cost and advise on any adjustments.
- Facilitate fiscal sponsorship, where the host country has no financial capacity.
- Provide additional assistance where required in finalising grant facilitation.

Event Sponsorship

Institutions, companies, and universities would love for a chance to be associated with a regional event like Wiki Indaba. The host country shall work to secure a sponsor for the event, where possible. The host is encouraged to search in a related industry, such as technology or education. Some of the sponsorship may be in the form of:

- **Direct funds:** Money that can be directly transferred into event/Affiliate bank account. Some sponsors in the past have preferred to:
    - Sponsor direct funds in return for having a corporate table at the event to advertise their service.
    - Buy event tickets which can then be given away to other attendees or their employees.
    - Sponsor a cocktail mixer evening for the delegates, where they can advertise or present their services.

- **In-kind:** Services or resources that would otherwise cost money for the host to offer delegates as part of the event. Some in-kind sponsorships in the past have included:
    - Day passes for Museums
    - Swag giveaways for delegates
- **Media:** sponsors agree to advertise the event through any of their channels that may include television, radio, print and social media channels.

The Wikimedia Foundation has worked with teams to pursue big or international sponsors and can help work with sponsors on behalf of teams, but it is up to every host to pursue at least local and in-kind opportunities.

It is advisable to dedicate a team member of the LOC to work on this as soon as the event dates and budgets have been fixed.

Travel Scholarships

The host shall constitute a scholarship committee within 6 months (i,e by the end of May) of being awarded the bid, to adjudicate the awarding of travel scholarships. The Scholarship committee shall consist of 7 members constituted of LOC members (2X), WISCom members (3X) as well as Wikimedia Foundation staff (2 X , Grants Officer/Events manager & Liaison to WISCom).

Travel scholarships are an important part of the conference as they ensure participation by community members who otherwise would not be able to attend the conference on their own. It is therefore an important tool that must be handled with utmost care and sensitivity.

International Scholarships: These scholarships shall be offered to attendees applying the following allocation principle, in close co-operation with WISCom and the Wikimedia Foundation.

- **African Continent: 75%** of international scholarships shall be awarded to active wikimedians who reside in the African continent and are either members of a Wikimedia Affiliate or an independent Wikimedian.
- **African diaspora: 20%** of international scholarships shall be awarded to active Wikimedians who are of African descent in the diaspora.
- **International allies: 5%** of international scholarships shall be awarded to active Wikimedians who have special interest in Wikimedia projects conducted on the African continent.

Local Scholarships: These scholarships shall be offered to active wikimedians who reside in the host country/countries. The aim of these scholarships is to activate community growth.

> Analysis and tracker of previous scholarships and how they map to the above allocations has been created and is maintained by WISCom.

Since this is a regional event, the quantity of scholarships shall be biased to favour international scholarships, by aiming to achieve a **30 - 70%** split and representation of head counts, Furthermore the scholarship allocation shall strive as far as possible to achieve **gender parity**.

The scholarship committee shall announce recipients within 9 months (ie the end of August) of awarding bid, to allow at least 3 months for the facilitating travel Visas. The host shall at the same time issue Visa invitation letters as well as all other documentation that may be helpful for delegates to apply and obtain travel visa where required.

Conference Program

The host shall constitute a program committee within 6 months (i,e by the end of May) of being awarded the bid, to facilitate conference theme planning as well as conference talks. The program committee shall consist of 7 members constituted of LOC members (2X), WISCom members (3X) as well as Wikimedia Foundation staff (2 X , Grants Officer/Events manager & Liaison to WISCom).

The program committee shall design the program under the following themes:

- **Wikimedia Movement Strategy:**
- **African community activation & development:**
- **Online Content & Projects:**
- **Technology and infrastructure:**
- **Outreach and education:**
- **Legal and Activism:**
- **Wikimedia Research & Showcasing:**
- **Community case studies:**

NB: We acknowledge that these themes are not permanent and may change to meet the dynamic needs of our community. When the need for a change arises, the issue must be brought forward for discussion at the next WISCOM meeting with all key stakeholders.

> Analysis and tracker of previous programs and how they map to the above themes has been created and is maintained by WISCom.

The program allocation shall strive as far as possible to achieve **gender parity** amongst speakers.

The program committee shall finalize & announce recipients within 10 months (ie by the end of September) of awarding bid, and a month after travel scholarships have been announced.

Conference Planning

The host must take all aspects and permutations into consideration when finalising details of the conference itself, in order to provide a seamless experience from the time delegates lands at the airport, getting to the hotel, attending the conference and then getting back to the airport.

Conference days

The conference is a three days event and to be scheduled as follows:

- **Thursday** : Arrival & welcoming event
- **Friday**: Conference day 1 (*Optional sponsored reception*)
- **Saturday**: Conference day 2 (budgeted Group Outing/Excursion)
- **Sunday**: Conference day 3 (Half day, check-out + Optional group tour)

The host shall liaise with Wikimedia Foundation for any pre-conference events such as Learning days and other Training.

Flights & travel

The host shall confirm all travel and flights for delegates within 11 months (by the end of August). It is advisable to contract a travel agent to provide travel bookings, to ensure competitive pricing for ticketing and support for any flight changes. It is advisable for the host to start shopping around for these services as soon as they are awarded, in order to have a cost estimate that is realistic to be included in the grant request.

The host shall note that Wikimedia Foundation and other Wikimedia entities wishing to send their staff personnel to attend the conference shall arrange their own flights. The host may, upon request assist with any pre-arranged airport transfers.

Conference Venue

The conference venue must provide all conferencing amenities necessary for facilitating memorable conference and meeting experience. The following items should be kept in mind when looking for conference venues:

- **Conference rooms:** The venue shall have a minimum capacity to hold 100 delegates for the keynote as well as at least 7 breakout rooms (each with minimum capacity to hold 20 people) to suit program themes.

- **Audio Visual:** Each room shall be equipped with audio visual equipment (i,e Sound system as well as projector and white board). The host shall conduct test runs with the venue personnel to ensure that the rooms are properly equipped. The host shall also insist that the venue provide a dedicated technician throughout the conference to ensure smooth operation of AV systems.

- **Breaks:** The conference venue shall provide break facility for two (2) short intermissions during the day. These breaks shall provide; Tea, Coffee or Water and light snacks shall be available to delegates.

- **Lunch:** The conference venue shall provide lunch for delegates as required. Where the delegates are sharing lunch space with other patrons, there shall be clear cordoning and reservation of space for delegates.
- **Command Centre:** The conference venue shall provide a dedicated room/office for the Local Organising Committee to use as operations nerve centre. The LOC shall use this room to organise volunteers and to handle day to day planning.
- **Quiet room:** The conference venue shall provide a quiet room for delegates that may suffer from sensory overloads or just need some down time. This space may also be shared with Trust and Safety team from Wikimedia Foundation.
- **First aid response:** The conference venue shall provide first aid desk/room for minor incidents as well as clear facility to contact emergency response.

Accommodation

The host shall contract the services of a hotel/hostel to provide accommodation for the conference delegates. The hotel/hostel shall provide shared rooms for delegates as required. In principle all room sharing shall be by same sex room mates. The host shall be responsive to delegate request for a different room mate where such a request is due to serious concerns/complaints. The hotel/hostel shall also provide:

- **Breakfast:** facilities for delegates to have breakfast for each day of stay. Complete with different dietary options. Check if Outside Catering is acceptable where dietary requirements cannot be met.
- **Wifi:** The hotel/hostel shall provide wifi connectivity for each day of stay.
- **Rooms:** the hotel can provide shared and single accommodation for delegates with different needs (eg: Paraplegic)

The host shall note that Wikimedia Foundation and other Wikimedia entities wishing to send their staff personnel to attend the conference shall pay their own accommodation. The host can upon request assist with room booking and reservations.

Wifi connectivity

The conference venue & hotel shall provide high speed Wifi connectivity required for video conferencing. The host shall test capacity and speed of the Wifi connectivity at the conference as well as hotel. It is recommended to provide a dedicated Wifi Connectivity for the event to ensure high speed connective and good signal strength. It is also advisable to procure a backup internet source to provide an alternative option during emergencies.

Conference documentation

The host shall plan for documentation of conference talks and including live streaming of at least the Keynotes. It is tradition to request and encourage delegates to assist in documenting talks using Etherpad. The program committee shall set-up etherpads for each of the talks, for this purpose.

Social Activities

The host shall plan for any social events for the conference and as follows:

> **Opening functions (Arrival & Welcoming Event):** The host can plan for an opening function for the delegates to have a social mixer with each other and with special sponsors. This party is traditionally conducted a night before the beginning of the conference.
>
> **Sponsored reception/Outing/Party:** The host shall plan for a group outing or party traditionally on the second night of the conference. This party can take a form that locally makes sense to the host. It can include forms such a cultural night out, a club setting, a typical night out from that country, etc.
>
> **Other Social excursions/Tours:** The host can plan for group tours or excursion for the delegates on the last day of the conference. This should be an optional tour which is not part of the budget and must be sponsored separately. This could be backstage tickets to GLAM institutions, etc.

The host shall maintain security of the delegates when organizing social activities.

Friendly space policies

The host shall actively enforce friendly space policies throughout the conference event, at the hotel and the conference venue. There shall be zero tolerance to harassment of any kind. The host shall select a dedicated officer within the Local Organizing Committee to work with Wikimedia Foundation's Trust & Safety team that will be deployed to the conference.

Additional Items

Wiki Indaba Event page on Meta

The bids as well as actual events pages shall be hosted on meta wiki. Although the first event had a dedicated website, this has become ineffective and expensive to maintain. *WISCom shall investigate dedicated Wikimedia hosting of Wiki Indaba as done for Wikimania.*

Communication & Social media

The host shall upon award, take over the effective communications relating to the conference and ensure that the community is kept up to date of events building up to and during the conference. The following platforms are available:

- **Wiki Indaba Facebook page**: This page shall be used to post about the conference building up to and during the event. The outgoing host shall provide login details to the new host within 2 months (i,e end of January) of awarding.
- **Wiki Indaba Twitter page**: This page shall be used to post about the conference building up to and during the event. The outgoing host shall provide login details to the new host within 2 months (i,e end of January) of awarding.
- **African Wikimedians Mailing list**: The host shall use the official African Wikimedians mailing list to make important announcements to the community, including finalization of scholarships and the conference program.

Event Branding

The event banner design shall be that of a local/national tree. It would be good to tell the story/folklore behind the chosen tree and how this relates to the theme of the conference. Herewith past banner designs and the story behind:

2014: The Baobab tree - The tree of wisdom in Southern African countries, hurled down by the gods and buried upside down to teach it humility. This tree fit the theme of humble beginnings.

2017: The Baobab tree - The tree of Life in west African countries, the tree's fruit symbolises zero waste, as it does not drop, but dries up on the tree & can stay preserved for more than 6 months waiting to be harvested. The tree fits the theme of revival and resilience.

2014: The Olive tree - The tree of peace and friendship, Tunisia has the oldest olive tree at 2500 years old. This tree fit the theme of longevity and abundance through peace and friendship.

Awareness & Media publicity

Event awareness & publicity is often a neglected but important part of planning a successful event, as well as being beneficial in improving the general perception of the community locally. Where a media sponsorship has not been secured, the LOC shall allocate a member to handle communications with media outlets, press releases as well as keeping abreast with social media outlets. This need to be done in a co-ordinated and harmonised manner.

Close Out and Reporting

Project reporting

The host in conjunction with WISCom shall prepare conference reporting to be submitted to the Wikimedia Foundation within 4 months (i,e by the end of March) after the conference. The host shall ensure that best financial practices are followed when paying for services and shall keep meticulous records of transactions and proof of payments. It is recommended that all receipts and invoices are scanned immediately and physical copies kept safe for future use and presentation.

Follow up with Participants

The host shall design in conjunction with WISCom a follow-up plan with delegates to check on any personal or group resolutions.

Conference hosting Check-list:

#	Item description	Status Y | N	Notes
1	Grant proposal complete & posted on Meta		
2	Event sponsorship drive initiated		
3	Program & scholarship committee initiated		
4	Flights & Travel agent/Team contracted/constituted		
4.1	Invitation letters issued (with hotel name & reservation ref)		
5	Hotel/Hostel accomodation checks:		
5.1	- *Sharing rooms for delegates allocated*		
5.2	- *Rooms for WMF & other delegates paying for themselves reserved*		
5.3	- *Wifi & breakfast facilities confirmed*		
5.4	- *Hotel/Hostel negotiation concluded & contract signed*		
6	Venue Checks:		
6.1	- *Conference rooms & plenary capacities checked*		
6.2	- *Audio Visual systems per rooms checked*		
6.3	- *Catering for breaks and lunch confirmed*		
6.4	- *Command office for LOC & WISCom meetings confirmed*		
6.5	- *Quiet room for Trust & Safety + Delegates use confirmed*		
6.6	- *First aid and emergency facilities confirmed*		
6.7	- *Conference venue negotiation concluded & contract signed*		
7	Event wifi connectivity secured & tested		
8	Social excursions confirmed (Venue & transportation)		
9	Media & awareness plan confirmed		