IMPROVING
WIKIPEDIA

I t's the fifth most viewed website in the world, but *Wikipedia has often had its accuracy called into question. Librarians in Queensland, however, are pulling out all stops to improve the accuracy of this universally consulted and increasingly trusted repository of knowledge with their contribution to the #1lib1ref campaign, as JACINTA SUTTON reports.*

'Imagine a world where every librarian added one more reference to Wikipedia.' This was Wikipedia's bold mission for the global #1lib1ref campaign, held over three weeks from 15 January to 3 February 2017.

Wikipedia and libraries are natural allies; we share an ideologically aligned purpose of providing free access to knowledge and cultivating its transmission. Initiatives like the Wikipedia Library and GLAM-Wiki recognise that libraries are fundamental in building information literacy skills, and they work to expose collections and provide access to vital, reliable sources in a post-truth world.

With over 500 million views each day and more than 40 million articles in 293 languages, Wikipedia is a ubiquitous starting point for research. It's where collaboration truly manifests online, encircling knowledge one keyboard at a time, fed by curious minds from all over this beautiful blue marble.

State Library of Queensland embraced the #1lib1ref campaign this year, and State Librarian and CEO, Vicki McDonald supported an ambitious challenge to contribute 1000 citations. A lofty aim, but a target, a deadline and a library are a favourable combination.

Kerry Raymond, Wikipedian extraordinaire and former SLQ Wikipedian-in-Residence, mentored us through the five editing sessions we held on-site. Staff also participated at their desks and in their own time. We cheered everyone on via our internal networks and across social media.

By the last day of #1lib1ref, we had added 1028 citations to 148 Wikipedia pages. Of those citations, 97 per cent were made on pages with Queensland content. Citations were added by 35 staff, including two fieldwork students and one volunteer. Worldwide, the campaign generated 4238 revisions, meaning that

SLQ staff getting Wiki with it during one of our #1lib1ref editing sessions in January 2017. Left to right: Jacinta Sutton, Colin Crosbie, Jane Cowell and Anna Raunik.

SLQ's effort constitutes almost a quarter of all citations contributed worldwide.

#1lib1ref demonstrates the capacity of libraries to make Wikipedia a more robust research ecosystem. The more that Wikipedia engages with libraries, the more that democratisation of knowledge and collaboration need not be counterposed to veracity and quality.

Capitalising on the enthusiasm, new skills and greater confidence of staff working with Wikipedia is the next step for SLQ. We are riding the wave of #1lib1ref and recently held the inaugural meeting of #QWiki, a monthly Wikipedia editing club for the Queensland GLAM community. Every GLAMmer is welcome to join us on the first Monday of every month (except on public holidays) to learn about editing Wikipedia, become more confident in their skills, and edit Wikipedia pages around a different theme each month. Kerry Raymond is our lighthouse, sharing her extensive knowledge with everyone who attends and building on an already strong relationship with SLQ. The theme of our first meeting was International Women's Day, and 10 staff made 49 edits to pages about Queensland women – our contribution to increasing the coverage of women across Wikipedia.

Information literacy is crucial to our professional development, and becoming a Wikipedian is a great example of how we can apply and strengthen these skills. Next time you've researched information in your role, ask yourself, Is this something that can be added to Wikipedia?

For more information about #QWiki, email discovery@slq.qld.gov.au.

Read about opportunities for public libraries and Wikipedia at bit.ly/2boDBXF.

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