

PRE AND POST TRAINING EVALUATION REPORT
AFLIA WIKIDATA ONLINE COURSE



PROMOTING OPEN KNOWLEDGE PRACTICES IN
AFRICAN LIBRARIES THROUGH WIKIDATA
PROJECT

NOVEMBER 2023

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY



The AfLIA Wikidata Online Course, implemented by AfLIA with funding from the Wikimedia Foundation, aimed to address the challenge of restricted access to African knowledge by training librarians in open knowledge practices using Wikidata. The course, conducted from July 2022 to October 2023, targeted librarians across Africa, focusing on Open Access, Open Data, and Open Science concepts within Wikimedia projects.

The training project employed a comprehensive curriculum, workshops, and edit-a-thons to enhance librarians' knowledge and skills in contributing to Wikidata. A pre- and post-training evaluation survey was conducted to assess participants' impressions, knowledge, and the overall impact of the training intervention.

Results from the anonymized survey, based on 150 unique responses, demonstrated the success of the course in transforming library and information professionals with little or no prior knowledge about Wikidata, its applications, and benefits into intermediate and advanced users of Wikidata. A direct outcome of this training is evident in the 2023 African Library Week, which saw the highest level of contributions on Wikidata since the introduction of the continental campaign in 2020, as part of the global 1Lib1Ref initiative.

Participants acquired practical skills, including creating and linking items, contributing to scholarly profiles, and collaborating on Wikidata. The course also fostered collaboration and information sharing among participants.

Challenges faced by participants included time constraints, internet connectivity issues, and the need for refresher sessions. Despite these challenges, the majority of participants expressed satisfaction with the course, indicating that their expectations were well met. They highlighted the practical applications of Wikidata and its relevance to their professional work, demonstrating a commitment to sharing knowledge within their communities.

Recommendations for future courses include providing internet data support for participants, offering refresher sessions, and considering physical training options. The success of the course was evident in increased contributions to Wikidata during the African Library Week, showcasing the potential long-term impact of the training.

In conclusion, the AfLIA Wikidata Online Course effectively empowered African librarians with the skills and knowledge to contribute to open knowledge practices, fostering collaboration and visibility for library collections on a global scale.

INTRODUCTION

Africa, rich in knowledge, culture, languages, and heritage, hosts a wealth of information documented in libraries, archives, and museums. Unfortunately, much of this valuable content remains either restricted or inaccessible, impeding the natural right to information and creating barriers to global knowledge contribution and access.

The significance of access to information is fundamental to achieving critical targets outlined in the African Union Agenda 2063 and the UN 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. Opening up knowledge therefore becomes not only a regional imperative but also a global commitment to ensure that no one is left behind in the pursuit of shared understanding and progress.

Despite this need, a cursory observation reveals that the ethos of opening up knowledge for the common good has yet to deeply take root among key actors of the African information value chain. Librarians, academia, and researchers in the region have inadequate knowledge of digital platforms promoting open practices, understanding of their advantages, and the requisite skills to effectively share knowledge. Interestingly, libraries in Africa, by default, are positioned to champion open knowledge practices, encompassing Open Access, Open Data, and Open Science.

Initiatives such as the Wikimedia projects, including Wikipedia and Wikidata, encapsulate these concepts, providing platforms for fostering openness, sharing, and linking of knowledge.

The African Library and Information Associations and Institutions (AFLIA) has recognized the need to bridge the gap and create opportunities to open up African knowledge and with funding support from the Wikimedia Foundation, the organization implemented a transformative 15-month training project titled "Promoting Open Knowledge Practices in African Libraries through Wikidata" (AFLIA Wikidata Online Course), running from July 2022 to October 2023.

While the primary focus of the AFLIA Wikidata Online Course was on addressing challenges within the African information landscape, it is crucial to recognize the global context of open knowledge practices. In an interconnected world, collaborative efforts on a global scale are integral to advancing the principles of openness, sharing, and accessibility. This project has contributed to a collective commitment to democratize access to information.

The project strategically targeted librarians from all five sub-regions in Africa, imparting essential skills on how to open up and link knowledge on Wikidata using their library collections. The primary goal was to enhance the visibility of library collections and promote their usability, thereby contributing to the broader accessibility of information resources stored in libraries.

The intended beneficiaries ranged from academia and researchers to diverse library user communities.

Key components of the project included the development of a comprehensive curriculum on structured and linked data practices, emphasizing Wikidata as an ideal platform for exploring these concepts. The initiative also focused on creating awareness, building the capacity of African librarians on the importance of open knowledge practices, and making library collections more visible through Wikidata. Additionally, pre-conference workshops and edit-a-thons served as essential networking and awareness creation platforms to foster closer engagements among librarians and the Wikimedia user communities across Africa.

As part of the project's commitment to monitoring, evaluation, and learning, a baseline and post-training evaluation survey were conducted. These assessments aimed to document key successes and failures, providing insights garnered directly from participants (cohorts 1 and 2) of the training intervention implemented by AfLIA.

This report delves into the findings of these evaluations, shedding light on the impact and effectiveness of the AfLIA Wikidata Online Course in advancing open knowledge practices in African libraries. It is expected that the insights and methods gleaned from this initiative is equally applicable beyond Africa.

AIM OF THE SURVEY

The pre- and post-training assessments were conducted with the primary objective of uncovering key insights into various aspects of the AfLIA Wikidata Online Course, centering on participants' perspectives regarding:

- ❖ Participation and completion of the course,
- ❖ Evaluation of course content, delivery, and facilitation,
- ❖ Assessment of participants' prior and post-knowledge and experience with Wikidata and Wikimedia Communities,
- ❖ Identification of key knowledge and skills acquired, as well as their practical application,
- ❖ Evaluation of the extent to which participants' expectations were met.

METHODS



To achieve the study's intended objectives, a well-structured questionnaire was built to gather data for subsequent analysis and reporting. This composite questionnaire captured both pre and post training information about course participants. The questionnaire featured a combination of both open-ended and closed-ended questions to ensure a comprehensive understanding of participants' perspectives.

The questionnaire also featured a blend of compulsory and optional questions. Compulsory questions were carefully assigned so that even if respondents ignored all optional questions, they will at least be able to provide evaluators with key information based on the objectives of the evaluation exercise. Prior to opening the survey, the questionnaire was subjected to a review process by the project team, during which period their valuable suggestions were incorporated. Additionally, to facilitate inclusivity, the final questionnaire was translated into French.

Subsequently, an online survey form was created using SurveyMonkey, offering versions in both English and French, as the training had been conducted in these two languages. This approach was adopted to afford every participant the convenience of completing the form and providing feedback in their preferred language. The survey was conducted anonymously to encourage participants to express their opinions freely and without fear of any repercussions.

Participants from each of the two cohorts were invited to participate in the post-training evaluation survey through invitations via WhatsApp, email, and announcements on the dedicated training platform established for the AfLIA Wikidata Online Course.

To accommodate varying schedules, participants were granted a three-week window to complete their evaluation forms. Once the survey period concluded, the collected data was exported to SPSS v26 for a comprehensive review, de-duplication, and further cleaning before analysis. Notably, responses submitted in French underwent translation using DeepL software into English, resulting in a composite dataset that facilitated both quantitative and qualitative analysis.

RESULTS



The results and discussions presented in this section is based on analysis of 150 unique responses received from participants of the course, representing a distribution of 70% English participants and 30% French participants. It is important to note that while the total number of course participants surpasses 150, the results presented in this document are specifically derived from responses received before the feedback submission deadlines. Nevertheless, these results and findings remain statistically representative of the participants in both cohorts. Comprehensive details of the data analysis, including frequency tables and results from descriptive analysis, are available in the Appendix of this document for further reference.

Characteristics of participants

The majority of participants in the course fell within the age range of 20 to 50 years, with 37.3% belonging to the 31-40 years age bracket and 29.3% falling between the 41-50 years age range. Participants in the 20-30 years age bracket constituted 20%, while approximately 13% and less than 1% were above 50 years and below 20 years, respectively.

A significant portion (58.7%) of these participants were female. Course participation was derived from all sub-regions of Africa. The English participants were from countries such as Botswana, (Northern) Cameroon, Egypt, The Gambia, Ghana, Kenya, Lesotho, Malawi, Namibia, Nigeria, Rwanda, South Africa, Uganda, Zambia, and Zimbabwe, with a few participants outside Africa, including Germany and India. In contrast, participants in the French cohorts came from Benin, (Southern) Cameroon, Democratic Republic of Congo, Cote D'Ivoire, Morocco, Senegal, and Togo.

The majority of participants were employed (87.3%), with 8% being students. Among them, 74.8% were librarians or library staff, primarily from academic institutions, while 6.7% were lecturers or educators, and an additional 6.7% were archivists. Another 11.8% represented diverse professions such as researchers, ICT managers, data specialists, and lawyers.

The diverse representation of countries in this training underscores AfLIA's extensive influence, reach, and ability to mobilize participation across all corners of Africa. The diverse backgrounds and managerial levels of course participants highlight the project's ability to attract a wide audience and underscores the enthusiasm among African library and information professionals for enhancing their competencies in the open knowledge domain, particularly with Wikimedia initiatives.

Given that these participants serve as ambassadors ready to disseminate their acquired skills and training to colleagues in their respective countries, this diverse representation also offers insight into the far-reaching awareness of Wikidata created via this project.

Moreover, it hints at the potential future impact of the training, contributing to the positive outcomes for the Wikimedia Foundation.

Table 1: General characteristics of course participants

Variable	Frequency (N=150)	Percent (%)
Age		
< 20 years	1	0.7
21-30 years	30	20
31-40 years	56	37.3
41-50 years	56	29.3
> 50 years	44	12.7
Gender		
Male	62	41.3
Female	88	58.7
Employment status		
Employed, employee	119	79.3
Self-employed	12	8
Unemployed	7	4.7
Student	12	8
Profession distribution		
Librarian	75	63
Other library staff	14	11.8
Lecturer/Educator	8	6.7
Archivist	8	6.7
Other profession	14	11.8
List of countries	Participants [English course]	Participants [French course]
	Botswana, (Northern) Cameroon, Egypt, The Gambia, Ghana, Germany, India, Kenya, Lesotho, Malawi, Namibia, Nigeria, Rwanda, South Africa, Uganda, Zambia, and Zimbabwe	Benin, (Southern) Cameroon, Democratic Republic of Congo, Cote D'Ivoire, Morocco, Senegal, and Togo

Source: Course feedback evaluation survey (2023)

Course participation and completion

The AfLIA Wikidata Online Course consisted of two cohorts, each lasting between 8-10 weeks. Participants in each cohort were required to attend or view a minimum of four live training sessions or session recordings, actively engage in at least four live learning circle sessions, submit all assignments, complete all training modules, and create a minimum of 15 items on a self-selected topic on Wikidata. Among the respondents to the evaluation survey, 53.8% belonged to Cohort 2, while 37.1% were from Cohort 1. Notably, 9.1% participated in both cohorts. To enhance course completion, Cohort 1 participants who had not met the course requirements were given the opportunity to join Cohort 2 and finish the course.

During course delivery, the project implemented a strategy to encourage more trainees to complete the course by allowing Cohort 1 participants to join Cohort 2. Interestingly, the percentage of repeat participants in the French cohorts was higher (14.6%) compared to the English cohorts (6.9%). Unfortunately, participants in Cohort 2 did not have the same opportunity for a repeat training, as the overall project duration concluded shortly after the completion of the Cohort 2 course.

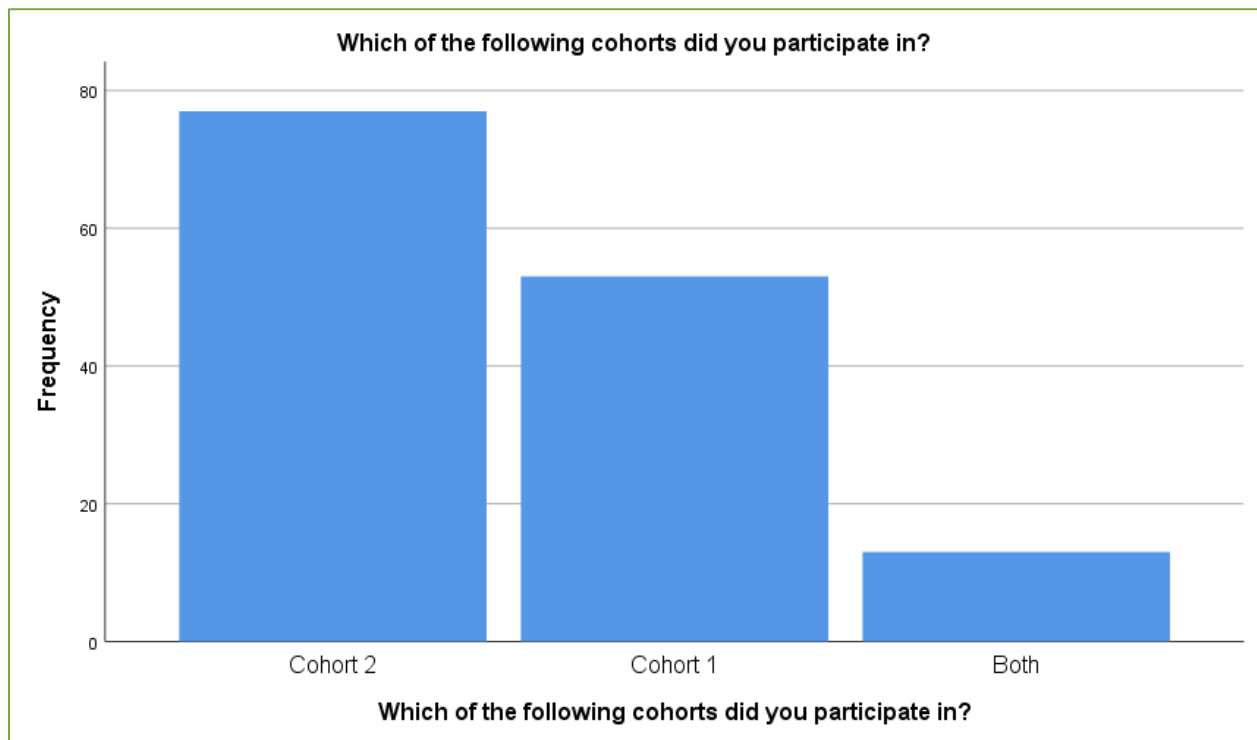


Figure 1: Course participation by cohort

The majority of course participants dedicated between 2-5 hours per week to the course, including assignments, reading course materials, and attending live training sessions or participating in learning circles. Specifically, 27.3% spent 2-3 hours a week, 26.6% allocated 3-4 hours, while 16.8% reported spending 4-5 hours weekly. Interestingly, 11.2% indicated dedicating more than 6 hours a week to the course.

Among the respondents, 75.5% successfully completed the course, obtaining their certificates of participation, while 24.5% partially completed the course. When examining the responses by language, the completion rate was slightly higher among English cohorts (78.4%) compared to French cohorts (68.3%). This discrepancy might explain the higher rate of repeat training among French cohorts compared to English cohorts. Intuitively, it was also observed that participants who dedicated more time—specifically, above 4 hours per week—to the course reported higher completion rates, averaging at 70.9%.

While completing the course would have provided participants with the opportunity to maximize its benefits, the disaggregated information on the sections where participants dropped off is instructive. The level of completion naturally declined as the course progressed from one section to another, and this pattern was consistently observed across all cohorts and even when disaggregated by language. (Fig. 2).

Notwithstanding their partial completion levels, most of such participants gained significant exposure and training on the Wikidata ecosystem, acquiring at least basic skills to collaboratively contribute to Wikidata.

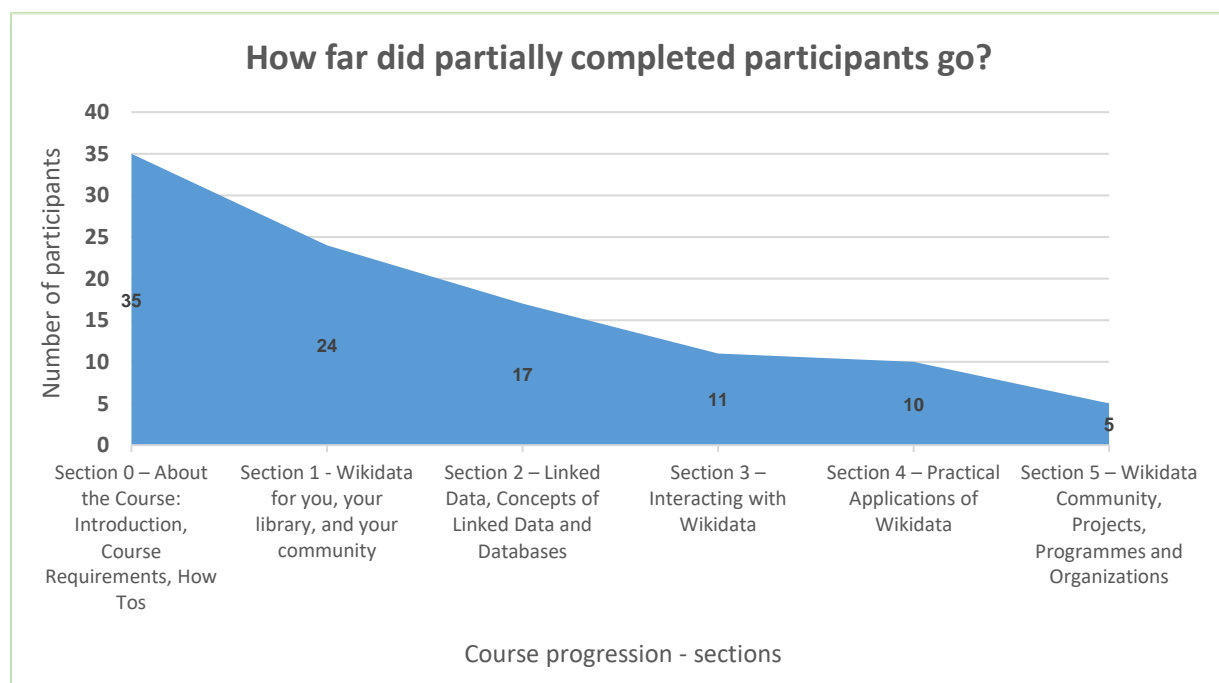


Figure 2: Course progression level for partial participants

Participants cited several reasons hindering them from completing the course. These reasons included challenges in balancing work or school responsibilities with course participation. Connected to this, some participants expressed that the frequency of live sessions posed a hindrance. With two live sessions (training and learning circle) scheduled each week, individuals who found it challenging to keep up believed that the sessions were too demanding. Notably, the number and duration of live sessions also translated into increased internet data requirements, posing financial constraints for some participants. Unsurprisingly, the cost of data emerged as the third most common reason for non-completion.

The most prevalent reason, however, was the issue of unstable internet connections. Given the virtual nature of the course, the absence of a stable internet connection led to considerable frustration, even when participants were willing to engage. Additionally, some participants found certain assignments challenging, marking it as the fifth most significant obstacle. Beyond these common reasons, a subset of participants faced frustration due to account blocks related to insecure IP addresses, preventing them from continuing with the course.

Table 2: Most common reasons for non-completion of course

Reasons (in order of importance)	
1	Missed some sessions due to unstable internet
2	It was difficult balancing work responsibilities and the course
3	Data cost to participate was unbearable
4	Live sessions were too many
5	The assignments were difficult

Source: Course feedback evaluation survey (2023)

That notwithstanding, many participants in this category hold the opinion that access to refresher sessions or the opportunity to join a potential Cohort 3 would enable them to successfully complete the course, as expressed by one participant:

"I think given another chance, I can complete the course since I am over some of the issues that led to me not completing the course."

Knowledge and experience on Wikidata

The majority of course participants, constituting 69.2% of respondents, had no prior experience or knowledge about Wikidata and how it could enhance library service provision. Even among the 30.8% who claimed some knowledge and experience with Wikidata, a significant majority acknowledged that their familiarity and abilities with Wikidata were at a basic level.

Upon examining the distribution by language, it was noted that the number of participants in the English cohorts who had no knowledge about Wikidata was slightly lower (67.7%) than those in the French cohorts (73%).

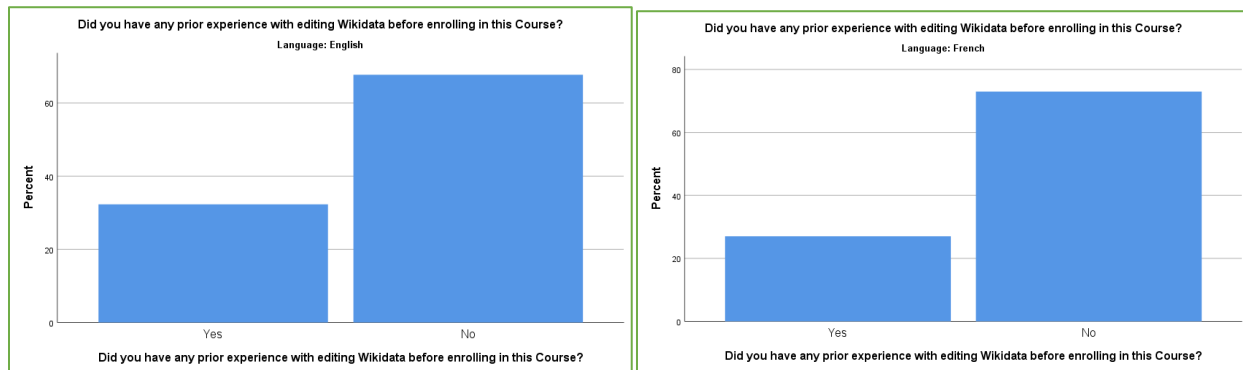


Figure 3: Prior knowledge/experience with Wikidata

Many participants who reported knowing or having some experience with Wikidata had initially learned about it through AfLIA's Wikipedia in African Libraries project in 2021, where Wikidata was briefly introduced as part of the course. As such, participants in this course typically belonged to a group of library and information professionals with little to no knowledge about Wikidata, its applications, and its benefits.

However, after completing the course, participants were asked to assess their capacity and competence in working with Wikidata. Only 14% of the respondents perceived their capacity or competence at the beginner level. Approximately 54% of the participants believed they had an intermediate knowledge and competence with Wikidata, while 32.6% considered themselves advanced users of Wikidata after the course (Fig. 4).

In essence, the AfLIA Wikidata Online Course succeeded in transforming library and information professionals with little to no knowledge about Wikidata, its applications, and benefits into intermediate and advanced users of this important open, structured, and linked data platform, Wikidata. A direct outcome of this training is evident in the 2023 African Library Week, which saw the highest level of contributions on Wikidata since the introduction of the continental campaign in 2020, as part of the global 1Lib1Ref initiative. This surge in activity underscores the impact of the training in promoting the participation of African librarians in Wikimedia projects.

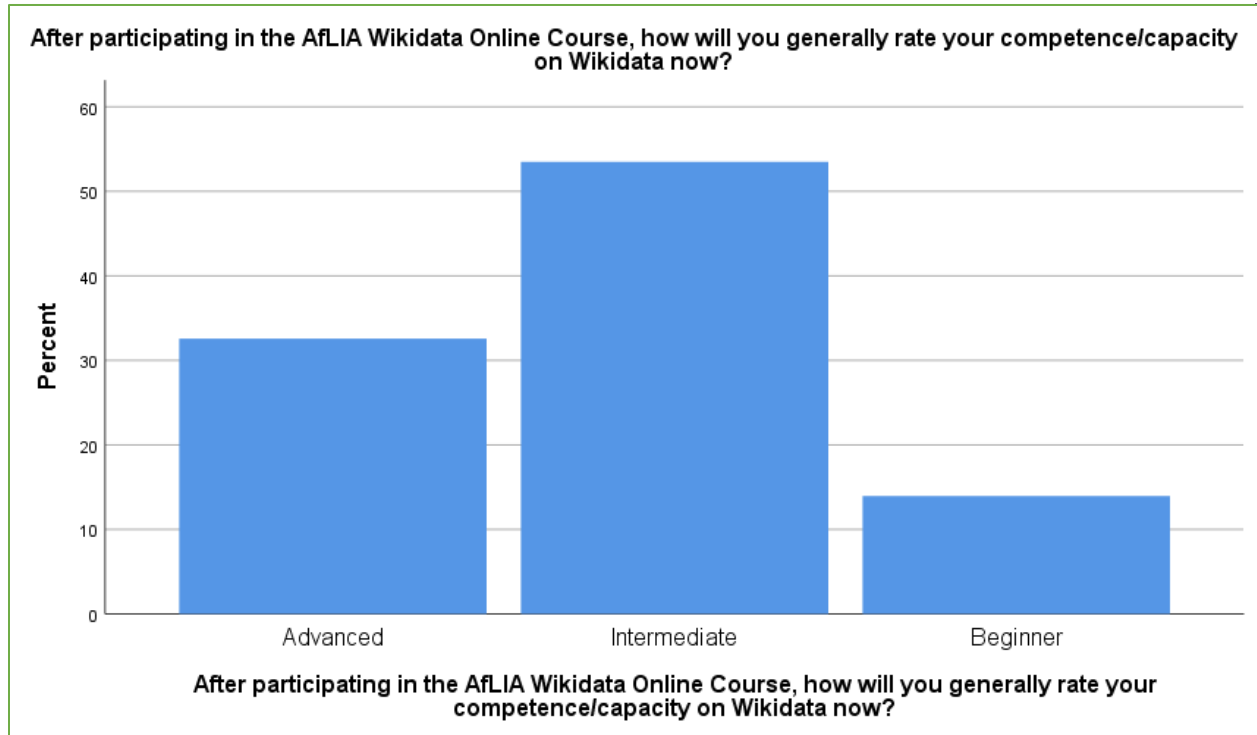


Figure 4: Perception of capacity/competence with Wikidata after the course

Knowledge/skills acquisition and application

Participants were assessed on their specific levels of competence with Wikidata using a 4-point Likert scale-based competence matrix. The matrix included a range of specific abilities, such as creating Wikidata accounts, editing on Wikidata (including adding labels, descriptions, aliases, statements, values, qualifiers, and citations), and utilizing the Wikimedia Outreach Dashboard. According to the competence matrix, the mean score for participants' ability to edit on Wikidata was 3.41, representing a good level of competence.

The competence score for using tools like SourceMD and QuickStatements to create/add items on Wikidata was computed to be 3.0, also indicating a good level of competence. As per the competence scores, participants' ability to use the Wikidata query service (SPARQL), write and understand basic queries in SPARQL, and visualize and analyze results from Wikidata queries through off-wiki tools like Scholia, were 2.57, 2.58, and 2.50, respectively. When approximated, these scores imply a good level of competence.

Table 3: Competence matrix for course participants

Knowledge / Skill	Mean score* (N=150)
Create a Wikidata account	4.25
Create a user page	3.51
Find credible sources as references for Wikidata items	3.88
Evaluate and identify Wikidata items that need revising or updating	3.11
Edit on Wikidata (adding labels, description, aliases, statements, values, qualifiers, citations)	3.41
Contribute to Wikidata in your local language	2.56
Manually create new items	3.49
Use tools like SourceMD, QuickStatements to create/add items on Wikidata	3.05
Use the Wikidata query service (SPARQL)	2.57
Use the Wikidata Query Builder	2.73
Write and understand basic queries in SPARQL	2.58
Save/share Wikidata queries	2.79
Save results from Wikidata queries	2.76
Visualize and analyse results from Wikidata queries through off-wiki tools like Scholia, Reasonator, SQID etc.	2.50
Utilize the Wikimedia Outreach Dashboard	3.55

Source: Course feedback evaluation survey (2023). *Mean scores were computed based on a 4-point Likert scale where 4=Excellent, 3=Good, 2=Fair, and 1=Not at all.

It can be inferred from the results that course participants in the AfLIA Wikidata Online Course demonstrated a commendable level of competence in various aspects of Wikidata usage. Specifically, participants showed proficiency in editing on Wikidata, using tools like SourceMD and QuickStatements, and utilizing the Wikidata query service (SPARQL). The mean scores and competence levels further suggest that the training effectively equipped participants with the skills needed to navigate and contribute to Wikidata, from basic editing tasks to more advanced functionalities such as querying and visualizing data.

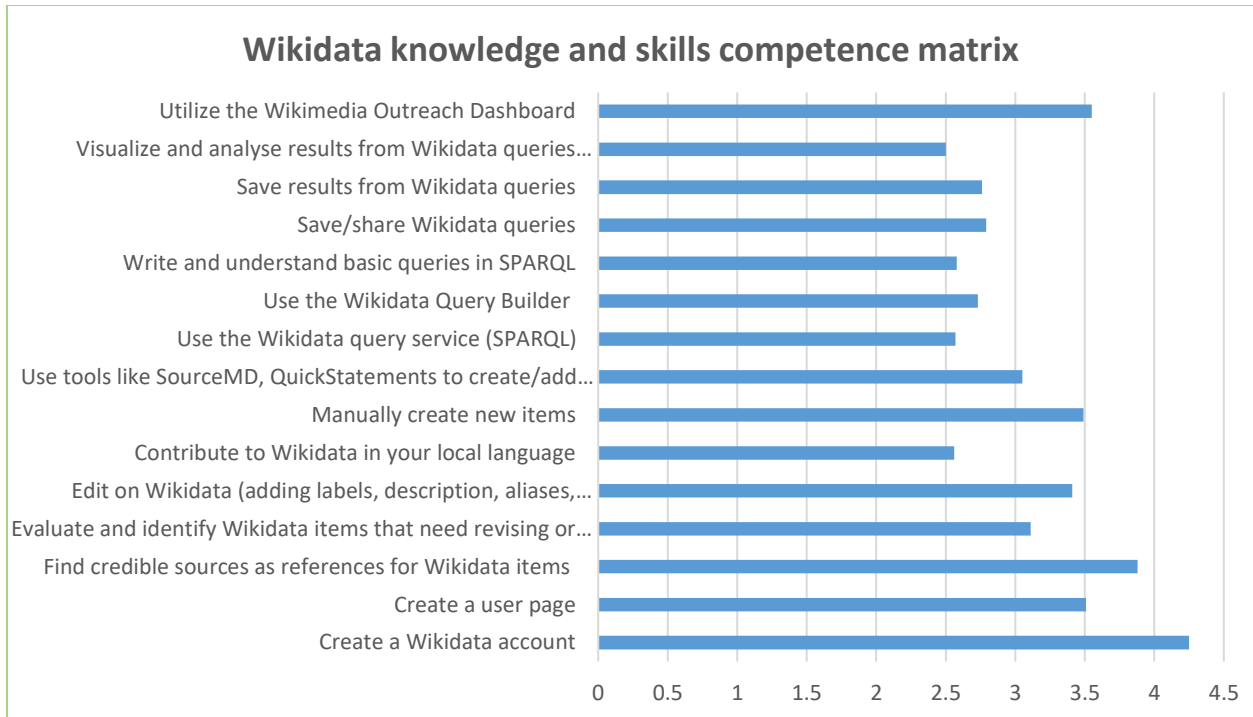


Figure 5: Competence matrix for participants

In addition to acquiring core competences in Wikidata, participants in the AfLIA Wikidata Online Course overwhelmingly agreed, with a mean agreement score of 2.7 out of 3.0, that they obtained other valuable skills by participating in the course. These skills include the ability to work collaboratively in online spaces, enhance the quality of metadata for library collections to improve discoverability, and gain insights into extracting, creating, and sharing structured information to support library research and teaching. Further details about the additional abilities acquired by course participants are provided in Table 4.

Table 4: Other key abilities acquired by course participants

Statements	Mean score (N=150)
1 The training taught me how to work collaboratively in an online space	2.7
2 The training made me understand the depths and potential of Wikidata as a linked open data platform	2.9
3 I can now improve visibility of my library's collections by linking them to Wikidata	2.8
4 The training has taught me how to enrich the quality of metadata for library collections for better discoverability	2.7
5 The training gave me insights on how to extract, create and share structured information to support library research and teaching	2.7
6 The training made it possible for me to cross-reference my library's collections data with Wikidata to validate and ensure accuracy in catalogue records.	2.5

Source: Course feedback evaluation survey (2023). *Mean scores based on 3-point agreement Likert scale where 3= Agree, 2=Neutral and 1= Disagree

The participants further noted that they had acquired other unintended skills through the AfLIA Wikidata Online Course. They reported newfound abilities such as knowing how to engage in nuanced and contextually appropriate conversations, mastering the art of taking screenshots, navigating MOOCs such as Moodle, understanding proper article referencing, coding, and searching for ORCID of researchers. One participant exemplified this expanded skill set by stating:

"First, I liked the Query Builder, which enables one to get answers for one's research questions, reveals gaps, and prompts one to act appropriately and well-informed, as it is a way of verifying accuracy, reliability, credibility, and authenticity of answers given. Secondly, after the use of the query service, being able to take a screenshot and display the results in a format that makes sense to analyze data, such as a table, spreadsheet, graph, photo, and including text, etc. Thirdly, I very much enjoyed identifying scholarly publications that were not included in the Scholia tool using SourceMD and the Quickstatements tool and adding to it, thereby contributing to building a scholarly profile. Last but not least, I enjoyed learning querying and visualizing using the tools Reasonator and Scholia, as already mentioned above."

Course Content, Delivery and Facilitation

Sections 4 - Practical Applications of Wikidata and Section 3 - Interacting with Wikidata emerged as the favorites among participants. Notably, 33.3% of respondents indicated that Section 4 was their favorite, followed by Section 3, which was favored by 25.4% of participants in the course. Section 1 - Wikidata for you, your library, and your community ranked as the third favorite, with 17.5% of participants mentioning it as their preferred section. This trend was consistent when the data was disaggregated by language.

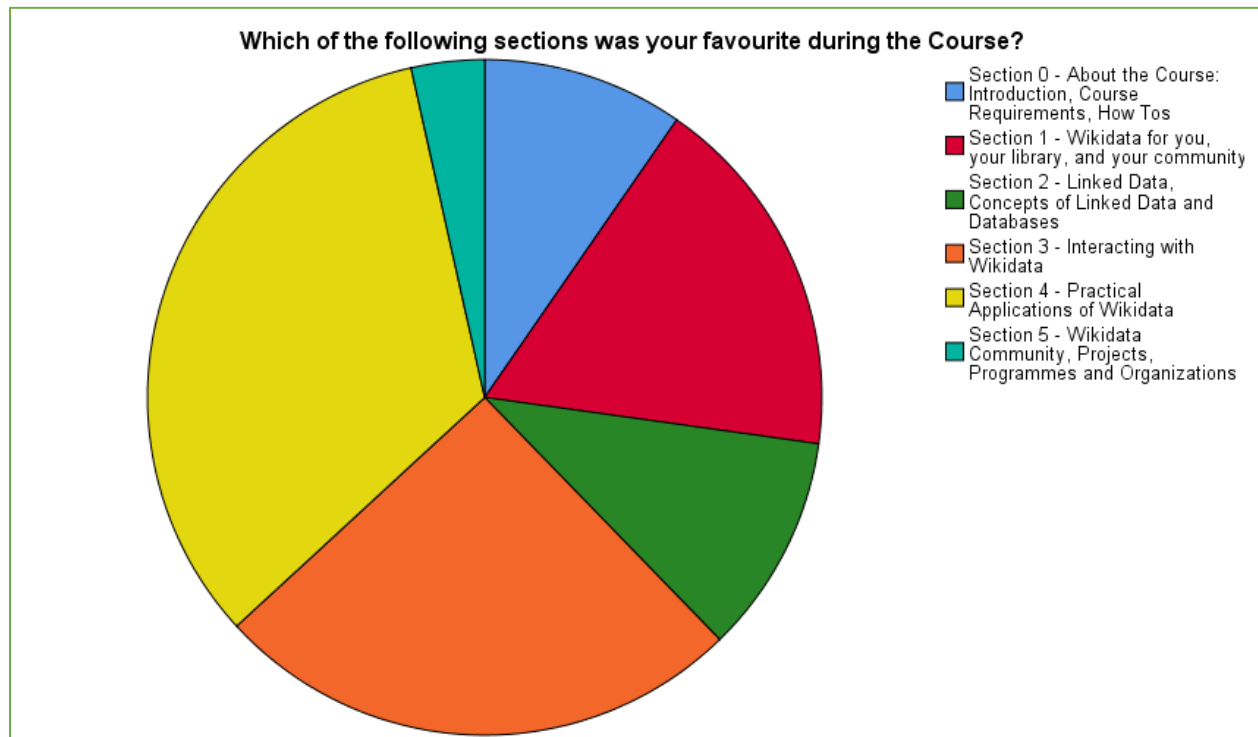


Figure 6: Favourite sections among course participants

The popularity of these sections (Section 4 and 3) can be attributed to their practical and hands-on nature. Participants expressed a strong interest in these sections as they directly connected with their professional activities within their libraries, particularly in terms of enhancing the visibility of library resources and gaining the confidence to create and edit items on Wikidata. Some participants also noted that these sections were directly linked to meeting the completion requirements for the course. One participant, appreciating the interrelationship between Wikidata and Wikipedia, commented;

"I thought it was difficult to understand the practical application of Wikidata, but it is even easier to understand than Wikipedia."

The project team implemented several complementary techniques to assist course participants in navigating through the content and ensuring convenient participation throughout the course. Participants were asked to share their opinions on the usefulness of these techniques. The feedback from participants on the various techniques implemented by the project team was overwhelmingly positive:

- ❖ 61.9% reported that the WhatsApp groups provided a continual opportunity to interact with other participants and found it extremely helpful, while 32.7% considered it helpful for understanding the course, sharing notes and ideas, and mutual motivation.
- ❖ 62.8% believed that the WhatsApp groups were extremely helpful in sustaining their interest in the course, and 34.5% found it helpful.
- ❖ 60.7% found the WhatsApp groups extremely helpful in facilitating interactions with the course manager/instructor, and 34.8% considered it helpful.
- ❖ A majority of 71.9% indicated that receiving real-time announcements and updates via the WhatsApp group platforms and Moodle was extremely helpful, with 26.3% finding it helpful.
- ❖ 60.7% found the WhatsApp groups extremely helpful in facilitating the sharing of challenges and seeking assistance from colleagues, course instructors, and the project team.
- ❖ A combined majority of 96.5% of respondents found the incorporation of the Learning Circles model as part of course delivery both innovative and extremely useful.
- ❖ Participants appreciated the opportunity to re-submit assignments and attend refresher live sessions to facilitate a higher completion rate. About 68.4% and 29.8% found this extremely useful and useful, respectively.

The overall feedback from participants is highly positive, with a combined majority of 91.2% indicating that their expectations for participating in the course were well met. Additionally, 9.8% reported that their expectations were satisfactorily met. This overwhelmingly positive response reflects the success of the course in meeting the participants' anticipated outcomes and learning objectives. The subsequent section in this document provides firsthand testimonies from both French and English cohort participants, offering further insight into how beneficial and impactful this training program has been for them.

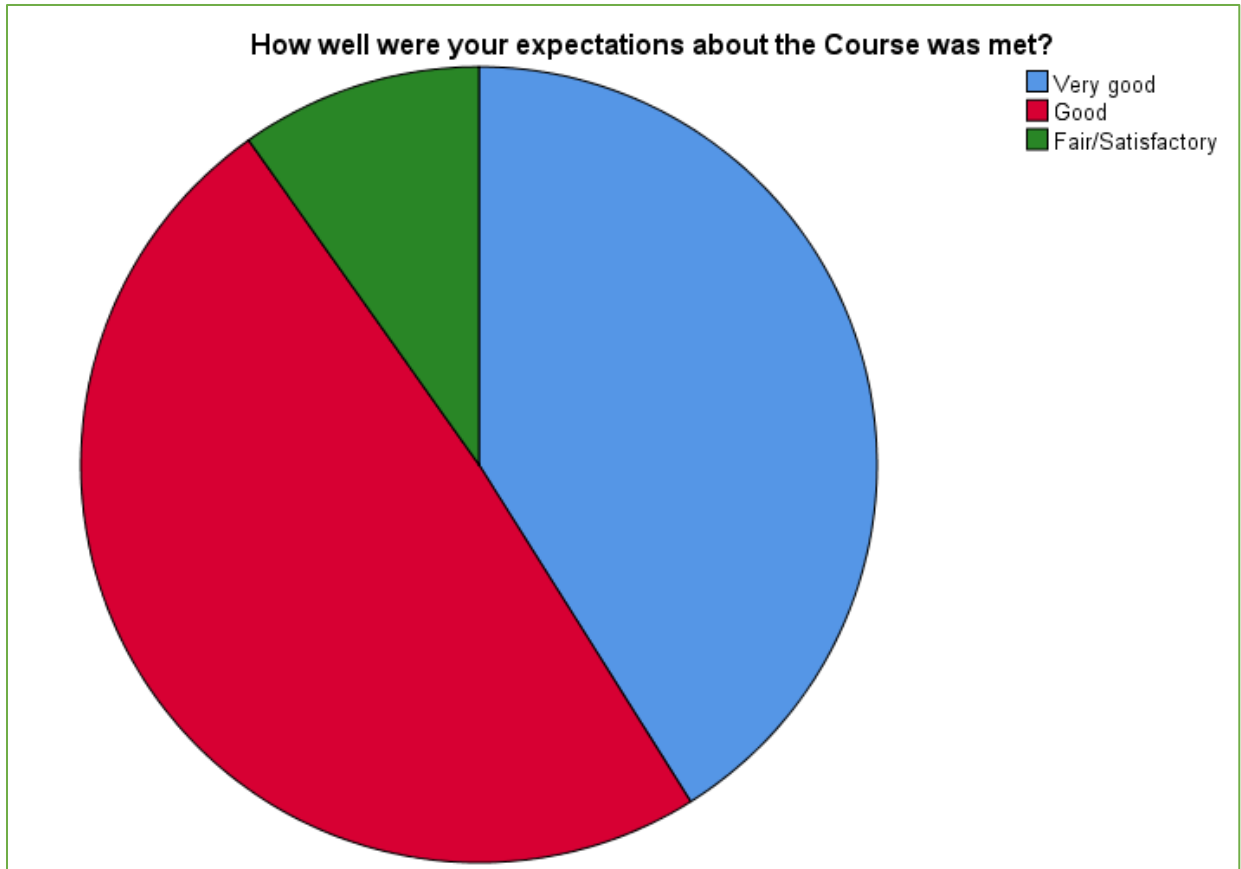


Figure 7: Extent to which participants expectations were met

How will participants apply the new knowledge and skills on Wikidata

In an open-ended manner, participants were asked to express how they will apply the knowledge and skills acquired in their respective roles as library and information professionals. After qualitatively examining their responses, two broad themes were identified as follows:

Commitment to share and disseminate acquired skills and knowledge within their professional spheres: One of the central themes that emerged from the participants' responses revolved around the commitment to share and disseminate the acquired skills and knowledge about Wikidata within their professional spheres. The participants expressed a strong desire to contribute to their local communities, libraries, and workplaces by actively engaging in knowledge-sharing initiatives.

They plan to organize training sessions, workshops, and edit-a-thons to educate their colleagues, students, and community members on the significance of Wikidata. Many participants emphasize the importance of continuous practice and teaching fellow librarians, showcasing a dedication to fostering a culture of learning and collaboration within their professional networks. Furthermore, the participants envision leveraging

Wikidata to enhance the visibility of information resources, improve data utilization in their communities, and sensitize students to the benefits of open knowledge platforms.

The commitment to mentorship, training, and community engagement confirms the participants' recognition of Wikidata as a valuable tool for research, data retrieval, and collaborative knowledge creation. Overall, participants' responses reflect a proactive and enthusiastic approach to stepping down their knowledge on Wikidata for the benefit of both their immediate environments and broader communities.

Mainstreaming Wikidata in the day-to-day professional activities: The second theme arising from the responses centers on the participants' intent to apply the knowledge and skills acquired in their day-to-day professional activities, particularly in cataloging, metadata work, and research visibility enhancement. A significant number of participants express their commitment to actively contribute to Wikidata by editing, creating items, and linking their library holdings to Wikidata entries. Their goal is to make library collections more visible, increase the discoverability of resources, and enhance the scholarly profiles of researchers.

Some participants highlight specific applications, such as using SourceMD to boost the visibility of African scholarly works online, adding valuable items from their programs, and updating library information on the Wikidata platform. Additionally, participants plan to populate Wikidata with information relevant to their libraries and user communities, ensuring comprehensive and up-to-date details about the materials in their collections.

Beyond individual contributions, there is a collective theme of promoting African work online, correcting information gaps, raising awareness about Wikidata, and seeking support from policy makers and community leaders to advance the objectives of Wikidata. In summary, participants now feel confident to leveraging Wikidata for the enrichment of scholarly profiles, research visibility, and the promotion of African contributions on the global stage. A participant shares in detail, his thoughts on how the new skillset will be applied:

“After completing this Online Wikidata course, I am excited to integrate the acquired knowledge and skills into my professional work in several ways. Firstly, I plan to leverage Wikidata's extensive database to enhance the quality and accuracy of data in my projects. This will not only streamline my research process but also improve the overall credibility of my work. Additionally, I see great potential in utilizing Wikidata for data visualization and analysis. The structured nature of Wikidata will enable me to extract meaningful insights and trends, which can inform strategic decision-making in my field. Furthermore, I aim to contribute to the Wikidata community by adding and editing information, thereby giving back to the wider knowledge-sharing ecosystem. Lastly, I intend to explore opportunities for collaboration and networking within the Wikidata community. Engaging with experts and enthusiasts will not only expand my own understanding but also foster

a collaborative spirit in my professional endeavors. Overall, I am confident that the knowledge gained from this course will be a valuable asset in advancing my work and contributing positively to the broader knowledge landscape.

What more did participants said about the course – testimonials

Participants express gratitude and commendation for AfLIA's continuous provision of skill development programs for African librarians and knowledge workers and to the Wikimedia Foundation for providing funding support for the project. They highlight the course's significance, finding it interesting, important, and extremely useful. The opportunity to learn and make valuable connections is acknowledged, with participants expressing pride in their newfound knowledge and contributions to the course assignments. Many express happiness and fortune in participating, pledging eagerness for future AfLIA courses.

Participants thank the organizers, course facilitators for their efforts, recognizing the overall enlightening experience. The course is deemed a great opportunity for virtual learning, collaboration, and international discussion. The course is described as enjoyable, inspiring, and eye-opening, with participants expressing gratitude for the insightful and trend-aligned training. Testimonials from three anonymized participants have been presented to capture the appreciative mood of all participants.

Testimonial 1:

“Thank you for this opportunity and thank you to the course coordinator for her perseverance and passion about the course it motivated me to do my best. Thank you to AfLIA for using a platform like Wikidata to put African Libraries, Researchers, Archivists, and Librarians on the map and to the world. Also, [it] enables us as Africans to write our own history.”

Testimonial 2:

I am grateful to AfLIA and the Wikimedia Foundation for making it possible for me to become a competent wikidata editor. Kudos to our trainers despite the multiple and busy schedules, they never gave up on us..... Continue providing such trainings because they are a vehicle for us to preserve our knowledge as society be it cultural, social, political through documenting such. Thank you for this opportunity to train and build our capacity on Wikidata. For this cohort 2, it's been a great learning, skills-building and networking adventure. If there are more opportunities like this I would love to be part of every single one of them.

Testimonial 3:

Dear course manager and course designers, I am writing to express my deepest gratitude for the incredible Wikidata course you have designed and led. Throughout the duration of the course, I have gained an invaluable wealth of knowledge that I know will serve me well in my future endeavors. Your dedication, expertise, and passion for teaching have made a profound impact on my learning experience. Alice, your guidance and insightful explanations truly made the complex concepts of Wikidata accessible and comprehensible. Your patience and willingness to address every question have been invaluable. To the course designers, your meticulous planning and structuring of the course have ensured a seamless and enriching learning journey. The materials provided were not only comprehensive but also engaging, making the learning process both enjoyable and effective. I am sincerely grateful for the time and effort you both invested in creating and delivering this course. It has been a transformative experience for me, and I am excited to apply what I've learned in my future projects. Thank you once again for your exceptional work. I look forward to any future courses or opportunities to learn from you both.

Conclusion and Recommendations

This report comprehensively examined both quantitative and qualitative feedback from participants in the AfLIA Wikidata Online Course. The findings suggest that the course has been largely successful in achieving its objectives, including:

1. Developing content on open knowledge practices and highlighting Wikidata as an ideal platform for exploring these concepts.
2. Raising awareness about the significance of open knowledge practices and enhancing the visibility of library collections by training librarians with the generated content.

While there is initial empirical evidence indicating the project's impact, a thorough assessment of its full effects should ideally be conducted after a few years, preferably two years post-project completion. Nonetheless, the report provides several recommendations for project implementers to consider in subsequent online training interventions, based on the feedback from participants.

1. **Organize session on External Identifiers:** Introduce a dedicated session on creating external identifiers to establish connections between a library's catalogue and Wikidata. This would enhance the integration of library resources with Wikidata and contribute to a more interconnected knowledge ecosystem.
2. **Consider Physical Training Sessions:** The importance of the course is acknowledged but organizers should consider making it more fruitful and understandable by offering physical training sessions. Running in-person training will improve comprehension and effectiveness.
3. **Further Improvements in Specific Skills Needed:** Identify the need for improvement in specific skills, such as using Scholia, ORCID, SourceMD, and entering coordinate locations and identifiers. Tailor future courses to address these specific skill gaps through targeted training sessions.
4. **Post-Graduation Interaction Channels:** Establish post-graduation communication channels where mentees can continue interacting and discussing various topics. This fosters a sense of community and ongoing learning beyond the formal training period.
5. **Extend Section 3 Duration:** Organizers are encouraged to allocate more time to Section 3 of the course, as suggested by participants. This recommendation aims to enhance the understanding and mastery of the content in that particular section.
6. **Organize Refresher/Recovery Sessions:** Organizers are encouraged to organize recovery sessions for those who may have faced challenges during the course, ensuring that participants have the opportunity to catch up on missed content or reinforce their understanding. It will also help to reinforce the knowledge and skills of participants after completing the initial training. This could serve as a supplementary learning opportunity

7. **Support for Blocked Accounts:** Organizers are encouraged to consciously provide assistance for individuals whose accounts are blocked on Wikidata, addressing issues related to account access and ensuring that all participants can fully engage in the training.
8. **Flexibility for Challenges:** Organizers are encouraged to acknowledge challenges faced by participants, such as work, internet, and power issues. Provide flexibility in submission deadlines to accommodate these challenges and ensure a fair learning experience for all.
9. **Internet data support for participants:** Organizers are encouraged to incentivize participants by providing them with internet data vouchers. This support will enable participants to purchase data, ensuring they have adequate connectivity to actively participate in live sessions during virtual courses.

APPENDIX

Age:

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Less than 20 years	1	.7	.7	.7
	20-30 years	30	20.0	20.0	20.7
	31-40 years	56	37.3	37.3	58.0
	41-50 years	44	29.3	29.3	87.3
	More than 50 years	19	12.7	12.7	100.0
	Total	150	100.0	100.0	

Gender:

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Male	62	41.3	41.3	41.3
	Female	88	58.7	58.7	100.0
	Total	150	100.0	100.0	

Employment status:

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Employed, employee	119	79.3	79.3	79.3
	Employed, self	12	8.0	8.0	87.3
	Unemployed	7	4.7	4.7	92.0
	Student	12	8.0	8.0	100.0
	Total	150	100.0	100.0	

Profession:

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Other (please specify)	14	9.3	11.8	11.8
	Librarian	75	50.0	63.0	74.8
	Other Library Staff (assistant, etc.)	14	9.3	11.8	86.6
	Instructor/Teacher/Lecturer	8	5.3	6.7	93.3
	Archivist	8	5.3	6.7	100.0
	Total	119	79.3	100.0	
Missing	System	31	20.7		
Total		150	100.0		

Which of the following cohorts did you participate in?

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Cohort 2	77	51.3	53.8	53.8
	Cohort 1	53	35.3	37.1	90.9
	Both	13	8.7	9.1	100.0
	Total	143	95.3	100.0	
Missing	System	7	4.7		
Total		150	100.0		

On average, how many hours a week did you spend on this course (including learning course materials, doing assignments, attending live sessions and office hours)?

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	About 1hr	14	9.3	9.8	9.8
	About 2-3hrs	39	26.0	27.3	37.1
	About 3-4hrs	38	25.3	26.6	63.6
	About 4-5hrs	24	16.0	16.8	80.4
	About 5-6 hours	12	8.0	8.4	88.8
	> 6 hrs	16	10.7	11.2	100.0
	Total	143	95.3	100.0	
Missing	System	7	4.7		
Total		150	100.0		

Kindly indicate your completion status for the course? (NB: Full course completion means qualifying to receive or receiving a certificate of completion).

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Fully completed	76	50.7	53.1	53.1
	Will be fully completed by the time of graduation (for Cohort 2 participants)	32	21.3	22.4	75.5
	Partially completed	35	23.3	24.5	100.0
	Total	143	95.3	100.0	
Missing	System	7	4.7		
Total		150	100.0		

Did you have any prior experience with editing Wikidata before enrolling in this Course?

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Yes	41	27.3	30.8	30.8
	No	92	61.3	69.2	100.0
	Total	133	88.7	100.0	
Missing	System	17	11.3		
Total		150	100.0		

After participating in the AfLIA Wikidata Online Course, how will you generally rate your competence/capacity on Wikidata now?

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Advanced	42	28.0	32.6	32.6
	Intermediate	69	46.0	53.5	86.0
	Beginner	18	12.0	14.0	100.0
	Total	129	86.0	100.0	
Missing	System	21	14.0		
Total		150	100.0		

After participating in the AfLIA Wikidata Online Course, how will you generally rate your competence/capacity on Wikidata now?

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Advanced	42	28.0	32.6	32.6
	Intermediate	69	46.0	53.5	86.0
	Beginner	18	12.0	14.0	100.0
	Total	129	86.0	100.0	
Missing	System	21	14.0		
Total		150	100.0		

Usefulness of Learning Circle / Weekly Office Hours

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Not useful	4	2.7	3.5	3.5
	Useful	46	30.7	40.4	43.9
	Extremely useful	64	42.7	56.1	100.0
	Total	114	76.0	100.0	
Missing	System	36	24.0		
Total		150	100.0		

What is your overall impression on the performance of the Course Manager?

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Very good	65	43.3	57.0	57.0
	Good	43	28.7	37.7	94.7
	Fair/satisfactory	5	3.3	4.4	99.1
	Poor	1	.7	.9	100.0
	Total	114	76.0	100.0	
Missing	System	36	24.0		
Total		150	100.0		

Are you a member of any local Wikimedia Community yet?

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Yes	48	32.0	42.9	42.9
	No	47	31.3	42.0	84.8
	No known Wikimedia Community in my country yet	17	11.3	15.2	100.0
	Total	112	74.7	100.0	
Missing	System	38	25.3		
Total		150	100.0		

If no, are you confident to be part of a local Wikimedia Community, if any?

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Yes	73	48.7	91.3	91.3
	No	7	4.7	8.8	100.0
	Total	80	53.3	100.0	
Missing	System	70	46.7		
Total		150	100.0		