The Bridgespan Group

Key themes:

- Need for experimentation/innovation within Wikimedia
- Need for prioritization and rationalization of Wiki projects
- Need for renewed efforts towards the charitable mission

What is your history with Wikimedia?

- Was on the first Board of Trustees, joined in 2003.
- Stepped down from that role and became Chair of the Advisory Board when that was set up.
- Husband is a MediaWiki developer on staff at Wikimedia (Tim Starling).
- Now working with Jimmy on Wikia.

What are your major concerns in thinking about Wikimedia's development over the next five years?

- Concern that as the WMF gets bigger, the connection to the community will be weaker.
- Big software challenges; and it is harder to try out new things since the site is so big
    - Difficulty trying out new things; concerned that the community will object to change
    - We need new processes, a way for the Foundation to say they need to try something out. For example, with flagged revisions, it was not clear how or whether it would will get rolled out, when it might live, who would be responsible for it, and whether it would be for a trial period only, and if so what metrics would determine success of the trial.
    - Too few technical staff at Wikipedia, and too few people to review the code of volunteers. Major changes, particularly user-facing ones, are less likely to happen. The tech staff is focused on management of volunteers – filling in other bits around the edges. Software development tends to rely on the personal interests of a developer rather than on any strategy.

What should be the Wikimedia Foundation's focus?

- The Foundation must increase focus on "charitable projects" – it is difficult to explain to some people why this is a charity, it doesn't look like a charity
- Foundation should think about distribution beyond the website; create partnerships with other organizations to help meet the mission.
    - Many types of project like this could be challenging due to community objections, especially anything which would cause changes to the content of the projects
    - Perhaps a need to create alternate versions of projects for use in these situations

Hopes for Strategy process?

- Thinks there needs to be some level of prioritization among the various projects. Some are not going well.
- Should meet the criteria of wiki suitability – the tone, type of writing, etc. that fits with wikis

Theories on why there is a lack of gender diversity within the community?

- How the problem manifests: there are fewer women editors; women don't show up at the face-to-face gatherings; on the main page of the English Wikipedia, featured articles are not selected by women. This is a problem because we are losing out on potential editors, which manifests itself in bias.
- Some of the problem due to women being less interested in confrontation – in participating in the type of editing wars that happen on Wikipedia
- Causes might include the wiki format or the community's approach

What do you see as the role of chapters?

- Easier to promote the charitable goals of the Foundation locally.
- Make people aware Wikipedia is not just another American web 2.0 site.
- More representative
- Hosting real life events, small scale projects like talking about Wikipedia in schools, forming local partnerships