

Press release, March 30, 2021

UNLOCK: Wikimedia Deutschland's Accelerator Boosts the Future of Free Knowledge

Berlin – March 30, 2021: UNLOCK, the Accelerator of Wikimedia Deutschland, is entering its second round on April 1, 2021, and reaches out beyond Germany. UNLOCK supports compelling ideas that open up knowledge for everyone. Throughout the remote three-month program, Wikimedia Deutschland will provide participating teams with tailored coaching, access to expertise of an international network, and a stipend. This year, the Accelerator program aims to create more transparency and trust in people, institutions and information, thus making knowledge widely available.

During its successful launch last year, the UNLOCK Accelerator has supported five teams over a period of three months in 2020. This year, the program widens its scope and is inviting applications from teams all over Europe.

“With the UNLOCK Accelerator, we aim to promote Free Knowledge through human-centered technology projects. We want to help teams of change makers, activists, technologists, and creative minds to open up structures of knowledge and increase the dissemination of information in the digital realm,” states Abraham Taherivand, Executive Director of Wikimedia Deutschland.

Topic of the Accelerator: (Re)building Trust in the Digital Age

The 2021 thematic focus of the UNLOCK Accelerator bears the title (Re)building trust in the digital age. In light of the information overload the world is experiencing online and offline, both access to knowledge and the informed use of sources, information and data by users are being increasingly challenged.

“We are calling for technical and non-technical solutions that counteract these trends and help strengthen our foundations of trust in information and technology. We are looking for people with a start-up mentality coupled with a social spirit, who want to make a lasting impact on our knowledge society,” says Kannika Thaimai, Program Lead of the UNLOCK Accelerator.

Application for Teams is Open

The program is open for teams of two to five members from across Europe with a concrete idea that addresses the thematic challenge of trust in the digital age. We invite applications at wikimedia.de/unlock from April 1 to May 16, 2021. All submissions will be reviewed by a

jury consisting of Wikimedia staff members, external Free Knowledge experts and coaches mentoring the program. This jury will also shortlist ten of the submitted applications. From this shortlisted group, up to seven teams will be selected through online calls to participate in the UNLOCK Accelerator. The program starts at the beginning of July and closes in early October.

About Wikimedia Deutschland

Wikimedia Deutschland is a non-profit association with over 85,000 members that promotes free knowledge. Since its founding in 2004, the association has supported various Wikimedia projects – first and foremost Wikipedia. The association advocates free access to Free Knowledge and is thus committed to a fundamental human right to education. Wikipedia, like other sister projects, is independent and free of advertising and only possible through volunteer work and donations.

Press contact

Julia Gebert or Elisabeth Gieseemann

presse@wikimedia.de

Phone: +49 30 219 158 26-0