



**HM GOVERNMENT OF GIBRALTAR**  
**Ministry of Tourism, Public Transport and the Port**  
**Suite 631**  
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**Gibraltar**

## **PRESS RELEASE**

No. 444/2012

Date: 13<sup>th</sup> July 2012

### **GIBRALTARPEDIA**

Her Majesty's Government of Gibraltar announces today that it plans to be the World's first Wikipedia City. Gibraltar's rich flora, fauna, history and culture make it an ideal site for such a project. Already, work has started in putting together a detailed multi-lingual Wikipedia pack of pages on these subjects, written by a mix of locals, academics, historians, cultural experts and Wikipedians from around the globe.

A major advantage in Gibraltar will be that it will open itself up to 485 million people a month, right across the world. The pages will also be accessible to visitors in any of these languages through QRpedia codes which give access to Wikipedia articles. They will allow visitors to use their smart phones anywhere in the territory and read all about Gibraltar's rich cultural heritage in their own mother tongue. This is a special feature of QRpedia codes as they sense the language that your phone is set to.

The idea for this project came from local Wikipedian Tyson Lee Holmes, who read about Monmouthpedia in Wales, and learnt how the town had involved local people in creating a comprehensive Wikipedia page-based record of its own cultural heritage.

He discussed the idea with Stewart Finlayson of the Gibraltar Museum who made the first contact with Wikimedia UK to start the ball rolling.

### **Reaching out into Africa**

Following from the preliminary contacts, the Hon Neil Costa, the Minister for Tourism, Public Transport and the Port, asked the organisers of the Monmouthpedia Project (the World's First Wikipedia Town) to Gibraltar for talks. In the course of these talks, Minister Costa laid out a vision that involved not only building Gibraltarpedia, but also reaching into North Africa to involve other custodians of cultural heritage in sharing in the benefit of opening up their information to the digital world. As Gibraltar is home to a variety of communities who routinely speak English, Spanish, Arabic, Hindi and Hebrew - the research and writing of the hundreds of Wikipedia pages for Gibraltarpedia will be rooted in multilingualism. So this project will reinforce Gibraltar and its status as a bridge between two continents: Europe and Africa. Minister Costa confirmed that through this project he is "inviting the Wikipedia community to help build an even stronger bridge between Europe and Africa". These sentiments were also welcomed by Professor Clive Finlayson, Gibraltar's Director of Heritage, who said: "Africa is just around the corner...Gibraltar is a bridge between two continents".

### **Rich in Cultural Heritage**

Dr Keith Bensusan, Director of the Botanic Gardens, said: "Gibraltar is a very small community of just 30,000 people but it is a city with two cathedrals ... and with a history stretching back to the Neanderthals". Crowd sourcing Wikimedia UK director, Roger Bamkin explained "Crowd sourcing is a very imprecise science but we know

that volunteers will create articles about things they know a lot about and in languages that they speak. It is only logical that Gibraltarpedia will provide a vehicle for volunteers to share knowledge on both sides of the Strait. Gibraltar already has millions of visitors each year. This project will mean people anywhere can visit virtually and contribute to deeper understanding of the rich treasures that the Rock possesses.”

Mohamed Amarochoan of the Arabic Wikipedia said “We can integrate Ceuta/Sebta, Tangier, Tarifa/Algeciras and Gibraltar City, which means more diversity, more Arabic and Spanish contributions, along with English as well.” Ashley van Haeften, Chair of Wikimedia UK said: “Wikimedia UK is looking forward to supporting the project, hopefully in collaboration with other chapters and social groups in countries that have yet to establish a chapter.”