So your work is Open Access... what now?

It's great that research *can* now be accessed by anyone – but we can also make it a lot more likely that it *will* be accessed by a large and broad audience.

By writing just a sentence with a reference to an Open Access article on a popular website such as Wikipedia, or on a blog, or even in a tweet, you can:

- Make it possible for a huge audience to read and engage with ideas.
- Provide access to scholarship to communities who might not be able to afford access to paywalled journals, or know how to search academic repositories.
- Generate measurable impact for research.

For instance: Wikipedia

Did you know that Wikipedia is the 6th biggest DOI referrer? It refers even more people than Google (7th)! The journal *Nature* also found that Wikipedia's accuracy is on a par with *Encyclopaedia Britannica*: content is more reliable than you might have thought. And that content is used in some interesting ways – for instance, it's used as a source of healthcare information by up to 70% of physicians, and was the most used resource by 94% of medical students. In addition, in an initiative called Wikipedia Zero, data providers in 75 countries have agreed to waive charges to people accessing the site, so healthcare providers and others all over the world can get information without paying for data.

Open articles and content promote evidence-based policy, and make research significantly more accessible and useful on a global scale. So if we want people to find and use research, it's definitely worth considering making a few simple edits to Wikipedia…

You can now add information to Wikipedia quickly and easily. There's a Visual Editor, which enables you to see exactly how your changes will appear when you press "save," and it will even import references for you. If you've never edited before (or even considered it!), or if you've not edited since the Visual Editor came in, there's a simple guide to getting started on the Wellcome's Wikipedia project page and another tutorial here.

Then once you've added some information, you can type the page name into this webpage to see how many times the page that you've edited is viewed. You can view data over a fixed period, or see the average views per day, and change graph types to more easily compare or spot trends or spikes. You can even export the data to use elsewhere (for instance, to measure impact).

If you're still not sure why it would be good to put Open Access research on Wikipedia, here are some case studies:

Case Study: Gynecomastia in Patients with Prostate Cancer: A Systematic Review

On 1 September 2015, a sentence was added to the Wikipedia page on Bicalutamide (a medication used in the treatment of prostate cancer), advising under the subheading "Side Effects" that:

A systematic review of non-steroidal antiandrogen-induced gynecomastia and mastodynia concluded that tamoxifen, 10–20 mg/day, and radiotherapy could effectively manage the condition without relevant side effects, with tamoxifen showing superior effectiveness.

The sentence has a footnote reference to the open-access research, and this reference provides links to the original work via DOI and PMID.

This information on medication could be very useful to doctors – indeed, because of its relevance, the page is monitored by via Wikiproject Medicine and Wikiproject Pharmacology to ensure its accuracy, and has been updated more than 30 times in a single week. And with good reason, as the page is often consulted; in a single month, 9,371 people viewed this Wikipedia page – that's an average of 336 times per day!

Improving access to modern medical research such as this is obviously important. People are interested in engaging with lots of other types of research too though…

Case Study: What type of tremor did the medieval 'Tremulous Hand of Worcester' have?

In September 2015, a small section was added to the Wikipedia page about a 13th-century scholar who had notably shaky writing:

The weight of the evidence in the features of the handwriting of the Tremulous Hand points to "essential tremor" as his neurological condition. This diagnosis takes into account characteristics of the tremor including its regular amplitude and regular frequency, and that it exhibited fluctuations in severity. Evidence points away from other conditions such as Parkinson's disease, writer's cramp and dystonic tremor. The tremor also shows signs of rapid improvement, possibly due to a combination of rest and alcohol consumption, and this response is consistent with essential tremor.

This brief summary of a research finding on an otherwise quite small page is very likely to be read. Less than a year from the article's publication, two people engaged directly with the Wikipedia article by improving readability, and 1,959 people viewed the page – that's an average of 6 readers every day.

It's really quick and easy to add a few sentences (as in the case studies above), but it's also possible to create a whole page dedicated to something you found in the course of your research…

Case Study: LACTB2

In July 2015, a page was created for a gene that codes a human protein, LACTB2, along with a link to an open access article. At present, little is known about this gene, but it might play a role in certain types of cancer. Less than a year after the article's creation, 8 people had added to or edited the Wikipedia page, and it was viewed 520 times (an average of once per day). This early-stage research is now much more visible and accessible.

By Alice White, Wikimedian in Residence at the Wellcome Library