Contribution ID: **10** Type: **Presentation**

Wikidata - structured information for Wikipedia and what this means for research workflows

Wednesday, 11 November 2015 17:20 (20 minutes)

There have been several attempts at bringing structured information together with Wikipedia. The most recent one is Wikidata, a MediaWiki-based collaborative platform that uses dedicated MediaWiki extensions (Wikibase Repository and Wikibase Client) to handle semantic information. It started out in late 2012 as a centralized way to curate the information as to which Wikipedia languages have articles about which semantic concepts.

Since then, it has been continuously expanding in scope, and it now has structured information about 14 million, including about some that do not have articles in any Wikipedia. It is not only the content that is growing in extent and usefulness, but the contributor community is expanding too, making Wikidata one of the most active Wikimedia projects.

The use of Wikidata in research contexts has only begun to be explored. For instance, there are Wikidata items about all human genes, and they have been annotated with information about their interaction with other genes, with drugs and diseases, as well as with references to pertinent databases or the relevant literature. Another example is the epigraphy community, which uses Wikibase to collect information about stone inscriptions and papyruses.

In this talk, I will outline different ways in which Wikidata and/ or Wikibase can and do interact with research workflows, as well as opportunities to expand these interactions in the future, especially in the context of open science and citizen science projects.

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Session Classification: Open Data workshop