

PHILOSOPHY

ACADEMICS NEED TO RESCUE WIKIPEDIA

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Wikipedia represents something unprecedented: the only major platform on which truth emerges through transparent debate, rather than algorithmic opacity or corporate interests. Every edit is logged, every discussion archived. In an era of AI hallucinations, black-box algorithms and widespread disinformation, Wikipedia's radical transparency has become even more essential.

AI models have extensively grabbed all information without giving back anything as Jemielniak now [writes](#). But why does academia still treat Wikipedia with unwarranted scepticism? Why do many students trust it but not most scholars?

It's not mere snobbery as Jemielniak thinks, it is structural. First, there's no academic reward for writing on Wikipedia. Unlike journal articles or books, contributions don't count toward tenure, promotion, or funding. Second, edits by experts are often reverted or overwritten by anonymous users, sometimes less informed, leading to frustration and wasted effort. Third, while citations exist, the sourcing standards and editorial oversight fall short of academic norms in many fields.

Despite evidence that Wikipedia's accuracy rivals traditional encyclopedias – especially in science and medicine – academics remain hesitant. Some fear losing control over knowledge dissemination. Others dismiss it due to its open, non-peer-reviewed model. Yet Wikipedia reaches millions daily, far more than any academic paper. The irony is clear: scholars use it privately but won't engage publicly.

If academia wants real societal impact, contributing to Wikipedia may be the most effective way to share knowledge. But without institutional recognition, that shift won't happen – and the platform risks decline as AI extracts its value without replenishing it.

Academia could rescue Wikipedia now.

