

Your First WordPress Contribution

Facilitator Guide

Overview

In this 60-minute activity, participants explore the Make WordPress contributor ecosystem, create the accounts they need to participate, and make their first real contribution to the WordPress open source project before the session ends.

Topic	Contributor Onboarding
Duration	60 minutes
Audience	Beginner — no prior contribution experience required
Prerequisite	A modern browser and access to your email during the session
Environment	make.wordpress.org — no installation required
Materials	This facilitator guide, slide deck, participants bring their own device

Version note: This guide references the Make WordPress contributor pathways hub (make.wordpress.org/handbook/pathways/), launched March 2026. The 'Before you begin' page was last updated May 14, 2026. Pathway URLs and account creation flows are stable but may change as the program evolves. Browse the pathways hub yourself before facilitating to confirm all steps are current.

Learning Objectives

By the end of this activity, participants will be able to:

- * **Identify at least two contributor teams that make up the WordPress open source project and describe what each one works on.**

- * **Explain the purpose of the WordPress contributor pathways and what types of contributions are available to beginners.**
- * Create the accounts required to begin contributing to Make WordPress teams.
- * Complete at least one real contribution to the WordPress open source project using an official contributor pathway.
- * Evaluate which contributor pathways best match their own skills, interests, and availability.

Green / bold = beginner entry points (Remember and Understand). All participants can achieve the first three objectives. Parts 3 and 4 build toward the Apply and Evaluate objectives.

What Participants Need

- * A device with a modern web browser (Chrome, Firefox, Edge, or Safari)
- * An internet connection
- * Access to their email inbox during the session — account confirmations will arrive during Parts 2 and 4
- * Willingness to create three free accounts: a **WordPress.org account**, a **WordPress Slack account** (via make.wordpress.org/chat/), and a **GitHub account**

Note: No WordPress installation is needed for this activity. Everything happens in the browser on WordPress.org and GitHub.com. Participants who already have any of these accounts can skip those setup steps and help their neighbors.

Facilitator Setup Notes

- * Browse make.wordpress.org before your session. Scroll through the team list and read a few recent posts. You do not need to know every team in depth, but you should be able to describe 4 or 5 with confidence so you can guide participants in Part 1.
- * Read through the contributor pathways hub at make.wordpress.org/handbook/pathways/ and open 2-3 individual pathway pages. Know which ones have Beginner-labeled tasks before the session starts.
- * Review the 'Before you begin' page at make.wordpress.org/handbook/pathways/before-you-begin/ to confirm the current account setup steps. This page was last updated May 14, 2026.
- * Have these URLs ready to project or share: make.wordpress.org (Part 1), make.wordpress.org/handbook/pathways/before-you-begin/ (Part 2), and make.wordpress.org/handbook/pathways/ (Part 3).

- * Remind participants before Part 2 that they will need access to their email inbox. GitHub and WordPress.org send confirmation emails. Participants using work email addresses with strict spam filters may experience delays.
- * WordPress Slack: once participants create a WordPress.org account, they go directly to make.wordpress.org/chat/ and sign in with their WordPress.org credentials. No separate invite is required. Note: this is where the contributor teams communicate regularly, so it is worth pointing out even if participants do not explore it during the session.
- * This activity does not use WordPress Playground. No installation or local environment is needed. The only technical requirement is a working browser and internet connection.

Activity Steps

Total time: 60 minutes | Parts 1 to 4 + 5 min debrief

Part 1: How WordPress Gets Made (10 minutes)

Open the session by exploring make.wordpress.org together. The goal is not to read everything — it is to see the range of people and skills that go into WordPress, and for each participant to find a corner of the community that resonates with them.

1. Open make.wordpress.org in your browser. Read the introductory line at the top of the page: "WordPress is made by a global community of contributors." Scroll down to see the list of contributor team blogs.
2. Scan the team list and notice the range of skills involved: Core (PHP/JavaScript development), Design, Documentation, Support, Testing, Polyglots (translation), Accessibility, Marketing, and more. WordPress is not just a developer project.
3. Choose **2 to 3 teams that interest you** and open their team blogs. Read their most recent posts. What are they actively working on right now?
4. Share with the group: which team caught your attention, and why? What would you be able to contribute to that team based on your current skills?

□ **Facilitator tip:** Do not try to show every team in 10 minutes. Point out 4 or 5 that represent different skill types: something for developers (Core, Block Editor), something for writers (Documentation, Marketing), something for non-technical contributors (Support, Testing, Polyglots). The goal is to break the assumption that contributing to WordPress requires knowing how to code.

□ **Facilitator tip:** If someone asks which team they should join: tell them to follow the work that already excites them. Someone who loves helping others belongs in Support. Someone who notices typos belongs in Documentation. Someone who wants to test the beta release belongs in Testing. There is no wrong answer.

Part 2: Create Your Accounts (10 minutes)

Three accounts unlock most contributor pathways. Participants create them now, during the session. Anyone who already has an account skips that step and can help a neighbor.

Heads up: Let participants know before this part starts that they will need access to their email. GitHub and WordPress.org both send account confirmation emails. If someone's email is slow, they can continue with the accounts that are ready and confirm the others after the session.

1. Create a **WordPress.org account** at login.wordpress.org/register/. You need a username, email address, and password. This account is your identity across the entire WordPress.org ecosystem, including the forums, trac, plugin directory, and Slack.
2. Create a **GitHub account** at github.com/signup. GitHub is where several contributor pathways live, including filing documentation issues, contributing to Core, and more. Use the free plan.
3. Go to make.wordpress.org/chat/ and sign in with your WordPress.org account. This opens **WordPress Slack** directly in the browser. This is where the contributor teams communicate regularly. Take a moment to browse the channel list and find your team.

□ **Facilitator tip:** Circulate during this part. Common sticking points: email confirmation not arriving (check spam), username already taken on WordPress.org (try adding a number or initials), and GitHub verification requiring a CAPTCHA. Encourage participants who finish early to explore the team Slack channels.

Part 3: Choose Your Pathway (5 minutes)

The contributor pathways hub gives every type of contributor a clear starting point. Participants read through the options and choose one to attempt in Part 4.

1. Open the contributor pathways hub at make.wordpress.org/handbook/pathways/. You will see 7 pathways: Build, Design, Write, Translate, Test, Organize, and Promote.
2. Read through each pathway's short description. Click on 1 or 2 that sound interesting and read the individual contribution items listed inside.
3. Choose **one contribution** to attempt in Part 4. Pick something you can start and finish in 30 minutes. If you are unsure, the facilitator can suggest a few beginner-friendly options.

□ **Facilitator tip:** Have 2 or 3 beginner-friendly pathway items ready to suggest for participants who are unsure. The Write > File a Documentation Issue pathway is a reliable choice: it uses GitHub, produces an immediately visible result, and does not require deep WordPress knowledge. Testing a plugin from the Test pathway and translating a string via the Translate pathway are also good beginner options. Avoid steering everyone to the same pathway, though — organic choices make the debrief richer.

Part 4: Make Your First Contribution (30 minutes)

This is the hands-on core of the activity. Participants follow the step-by-step instructions on their chosen pathway page and make a real contribution before the session ends. The facilitator circulates and helps anyone who gets stuck.

1. Open your chosen pathway page at make.wordpress.org/handbook/pathways/ and read the full step-by-step instructions for your selected contribution.
2. Follow the pathway's steps to make your contribution. Take it one step at a time. The pathway pages are written for beginners — follow them as written.
3. When you complete your contribution, capture the result: take a screenshot of your open GitHub issue, submitted translation string, test report, or whatever your pathway produced. This is your first contribution to WordPress.
4. If you finish with time remaining: go back to the pathways hub and explore a second pathway. Or browse the Slack channel for your chosen team and say hello.

□ **Facilitator tip:** Common sticking points by pathway: Write (Documentation) — participants may struggle to find something worth documenting. Suggest browsing to developer.wordpress.org and looking for pages with thin content, outdated screenshots, or missing examples. Translate — participants need to select a language and a project. Point them to translate.wordpress.org and suggest picking a string in their native language. Test — participants should follow the current testing instructions in the pathway, which link to the relevant test site or GitHub issue.

□ **Facilitator tip:** Not everyone will complete their contribution in 30 minutes, and that is fine. If a participant has made meaningful progress but not yet submitted, they can finish after the session. The important thing is that they started, they know the steps, and they know how to come back and finish.

□ **Stretch goal:** Participants who finish early can explore a second pathway from a different category. Encourage them to try something outside their comfort zone: a developer trying the Translate pathway, or a non-technical contributor reading through a Core trac ticket.

Debrief and Discussion (5 minutes)

Discussion questions:

1. What did you just contribute? Hold up your screenshot or share your screen.
2. Was the contribution process harder or easier than you expected? What surprised you?
3. Which contributor team would you want to get more involved with, and what would your next step be?

The win: Today you did not just learn about contributing to WordPress — you actually did it. You found the teams that make WordPress possible, created the accounts that connect you to that community, and made a real contribution that is now part of the project. You are a WordPress contributor.

Next steps for participants:

- * [Make WordPress contributor pathways hub](#)
 - * [Before you begin — accounts and setup](#)
 - * [WordPress Slack — join your team's channel](#)
 - * [Upcoming contributor days — WordPress events calendar](#)
 - * [An Introduction to Contributing — Learn WordPress](#)
 - * [Core contributor handbook](#)
 - * [Documentation team contributor handbook](#)
 - * [WordPress Polyglots — translation contributor handbook](#)
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Sources

All URLs verified as of May 2026. Check before running the activity.

1. [Make WordPress — Contributor Pathways hub](#): Official hub for all 7 contributor pathways. Launched March 2026. Primary reference for Parts 3 and 4.
2. [Before You Begin — Make WordPress handbook](#): Official guide to the three required accounts. Last updated May 14, 2026. Primary reference for Part 2.
3. [An Introduction to Contributing — Learn WordPress](#): Official Learn WordPress lesson. Overview of contribution types and the Make WordPress team structure.
4. [Set Up Your WordPress.org Account — Learn WordPress](#): Official step-by-step account setup lesson. Referenced in the Before You Begin page.
5. [File a Documentation Issue — Write Pathway](#): Beginner-labeled pathway item. Step-by-step guide to filing a documentation issue on GitHub.
6. [Make WordPress — contributor team blogs hub](#): Main page for all contributor team blogs. Primary resource for Part 1 team exploration.