StoryScapes101: Introduction to the StoryScapes platform

Module 6 - Collaboration & Community Building with StoryScapes

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Also, credit to GeoAcademy for inspiring this open course format.

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Introduction

In this Module, students will learn to use StoryScapes as a platform to support projects that are larger than what they can implement alone. StoryScapes is designed to be more than just a tool for individuals to manage their *own* data or produce their *own* map visualizations. It aims to be a platform where people can work together to crowdsource and improve data on an ongoing basis.

StoryScapes provides two special profile types to support collaboration among StoryTellers working on a common theme and StoryTellers working within the same organization.

This module includes the following lessons:

- Lesson 1 – Organizing Community Initiatives
- Lesson 2 – Managing Organization Accounts

Lesson 1: Organizing Community Initiatives

Objective

In this lesson, students will learn to start and lead a Community Initiative.
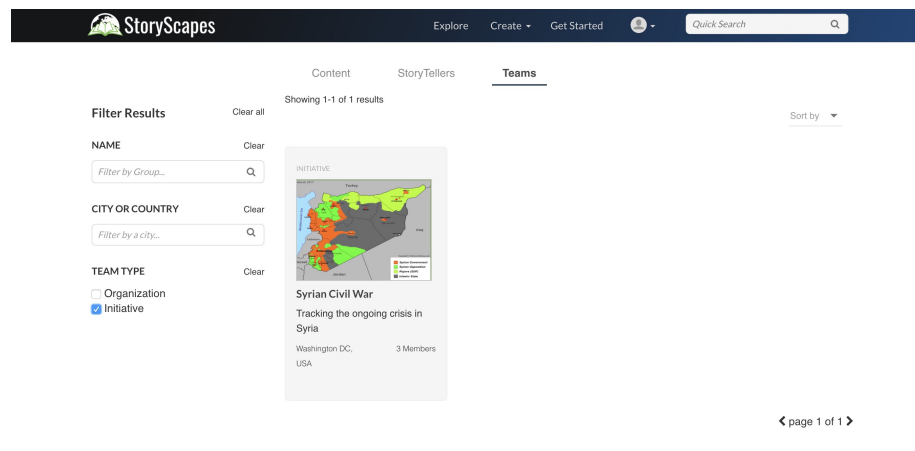
Lecture

A Community Initiative is an effort by StoryTellers to collect StoryLayer data around a common theme.

For example, when the ISIS movement gained prominence in 2014, a Community Initiative in StoryScapes could have helped analysts across the US Government quickly collect the spatio-temporal data available about ISIS into a single Community Initiative page. As the data accrued, analysts could quickly compose StoryScapes that help explain various phenomena apparent in the StoryLayer data.

A Community Initiative simply empowers crowdsourcing and collaboration around a topic of interest.

The Community Initiative Page

Community Initiatives are publically accessible via a special account page. They can be accessed by going to the StoryScapes `Explore` page and filtering for `Teams`.

On the Community Initiative page you will see the StoryLayers and StoryScapes that are associated with the Community Initiative, as well as the Organizers and Members of the Community Initiative.

Becoming a Community Initiative Organizer

Community Initiative pages are managed by designated Initiative Organizers. Organizers are simply registered StoryTellers that have been given Organizer rights by a StoryScapes administrator.

If you have a Community Initiative you would like to see launched on StoryScapes, or that you would like to organize yourself, you will need to email an administrator. An administrator will then create the Community Initiative and add you as an Organizer. This will give you the ability to manage the Community Initiative page.

Managing a Community Initiative Page

If you have been given Organizer status on a Community Initiative, click `Manage` on the Community Initiative page to customize basic information about your Community Initiative.

To add StoryLayers and StoryScapes to your Community Initiative page, you simply go to the StoryLayer or StoryScape page. You will see an option to add the content to the Community Initiative that you are an Organizer for.

StoryTellers can also request to become Members of your Community Initiative. This is simply a way for you to indicate people that are supportive of your Community Initiative and are helping with the work in some way. A StoryTeller can request to become a Member by clicking `Join This Initiative` on any Community Initiative page. You can accept or reject these requests from the management page for the Community Initiative.

Tasks

Now it's your turn! Complete the following tasks:

- [x] First, find a Community Initiative on the Explore page and request to become a Member
- [x] Second, think of a Community Initiative that you would like to see launched in StoryScapes and share your idea with a colleague.

The following tasks can be completed if your course instructor shares login information for a temporary user account with rights as an Initiative Organizer:

- [x] Log off from your current account and log back on to StoryScapes using the test account provided by your course instructor. Go to this Community Initiative page and make one improvement to the profile.
- [x] Add at least one StoryLayer or StoryScape to the Community Initiative.

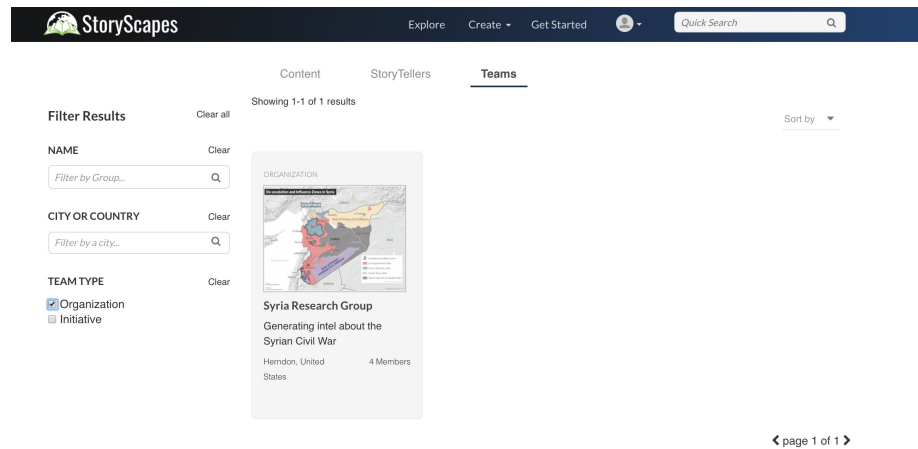## Lesson 2: Managing Organization Accounts

Objective

In this lesson, students will learn how to access and manage an Organization Account in StoryScapes.
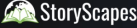
Lecture

Organization Accounts are very similar in structure to Community Initiative pages, although they have slightly different purposes. Community Initiatives are designed to promote collaboration around a single thematic topic that is pertinent for a period of time. Organization Accounts are designed for work units like agencies, teams, offices, departments and companies that benefit from a single place to represent their collective work on StoryScapes. The work of an Organization might span many different topics. For example, a regional desk inside the State Department may manage an Organization Account to host all of the StoryLayers and StoryScapes it produces over time.

Organization Accounts are hosted on a special account page inside StoryScapes. They can be accessed by going to the StoryScapes `Explore` page and filtering for `Teams`.

On the Organization Account page you will see the StoryLayers and StoryScapes that are associated with the Organization, as well as the Organizers and Members of the Organization.

Setting up an Organization Account

When you are ready to set up an Organization Account for your work unit, you will contact a StoryScapes administrator. An administrator will work with you, or the appropriate point of contact, to get the Organization Account created. Once this is done, this will give you, or the appropriate point of contact, the ability to manage the Organization Account.

Managing an Organization Account

If you have been given Organizer status on an Organization page, you click `Manage` on the public Organization page to customize basic information about your Organization.

To add StoryLayers and StoryScapes to your Organization page, you simply go to the StoryLayer or StoryScape page. You will see an option to add the content to the Organization that you are an Organizer for.
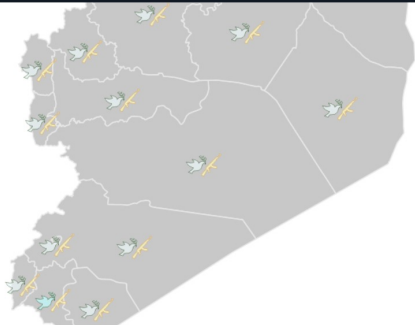
StoryScapes users can also request to become Members of your Organization. This is simply a way for you to indicate people that are involved in your Organization. A StoryTeller can request to become a Member by clicking `Join This Organization` on any Organization page.

You can accept or reject these requests from the management page for the Organization.

Tasks

Now it's your turn!

- [x] First, find an Organization Account on the Explore page and request to become a Member
- [x] Second, think of an organization that might benefit from having an Organization Account in StoryScapes. Share your idea with a colleague.

The following tasks can be completed if your course instructor shares login information for a temporary user account with rights as a manager of an Organization Account:

- [x] Log off from your current account and log back on to StoryScapes using the test account provided by your course instructor. Go to this Organization Account page and make one improvement to the profile.

- [x] Add at least one StoryLayer or StoryScape to the Organization Account.

Conclusion

In this Module you have learned how you can use StoryScapes to bring people together, whether by connecting people around a common interest in the form of a Community Initiative, or helping colleagues collaboration with an Organization Account.

Discussion Questions

Before moving on to the next Module, reflect independently or in a group on the following questions:

1. Are there topics that you think would make for a good Community Initiative? What are they?

2. What about an idea for an Organization Page?

3. StoryScapes aims to promote colloboration within the US Government. Have you seen examples of collaboration successes across agencies or offices. What causes do you attribute to these successes?

4. What other strategies might StoryScapes take to promote collaboration, in addition to providing Initiative and Organization accounts?

5. What other comments, questions or concerns do you have about this Module?