HOWTO INSTITUTIONALISE CITIZEN SCIENCE IN YOUR INSTITUTION?

#AskTheExpert

TIME4CS aims at facilitating a way in which the scientific ecosystem could better take societal views into consideration by supporting Research Performing Organisations - i.e. research entities such as universities and research centres in defining and implementing institutional changes that can lead to a better and more effective engagement of citizens in research and innovation. Those institutional changes inside RPOs will entail transformation of their governance systems by taking into account both the social - mindset of people inside the organisation – and the organisational - norms, protocols, procedures, policy aspects of RPOs. To facilitate this process, TIME4CS has identified 4 Intervention Areas that alone or combined can stimulate the institutional changes necessary to promote public engagement in R&I activities:

Research; Education and Awareness; Support Resources and Infrastructure; Policy and Assessment.







https://www.time4cs.eu/



EDUCATION



ANY RECOMMENDATIONS FOR TRAINING? SOURCING OF ADEQUATE TRAINING COURSES/MATERIAL?

o convince your institution to set up a citizen science course, think about the orities of your institution (e.g. promotion of scientific excellence) and show how citizen science can benefit it.

bbe the interest and motivation of researchers in citizen science, public engagement, and democratization of science by running informal interviews

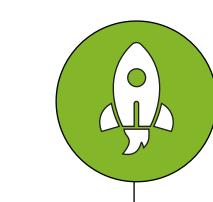
Start with proposing to embed citizen science in existing courses which already include parts on science communication, open science, and research integrity.

For PhD students, offer a citizen science course as early as possible in their career as implementing citizen science projects takes time!

enefit of already existing training material and courses, available on different platforms such as EU-Citizen.Science and other EU projects' platforms.

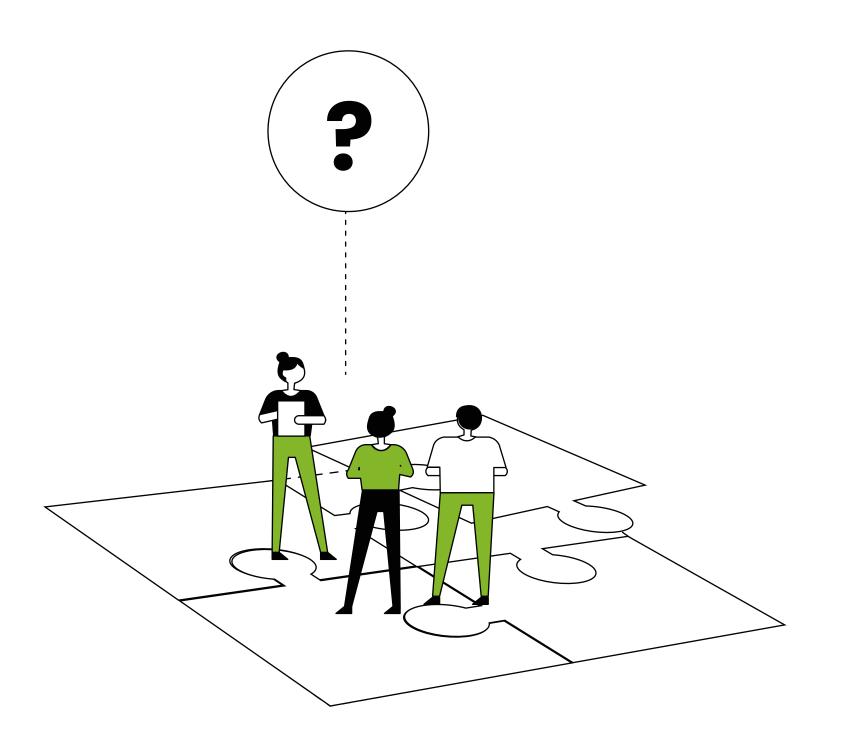
s such as the tools offered by the Citizen Science Center Zurich.

ave a look at publications that give tips on how to use citizen science appropriated as for example the Citizen Science Center Zurich's "CS handbook", and the Center for ecology and hydrology's guide.



HOW TO EVALUATE THE IMPACT OF NEW COURSES/TRAINING?

Use questionnaires to ask participants before the course about their motivations and interests, and after the course about their learnings, intentions, and acquired network. Repeat such questionnaires six months after the course to assess the long-term impact, including examples of how participants used the knowledge, what new contacts they made, follow up activities, etc.



RESEARCH



HOW TO OVERCOME A LACK OF INTEREST BY RESEARCHERS IN USING CITIZEN SCIENCE?

Acknowledge that citizen science is not the answer to all kinds of research available to explore with researchers their goals, their data needs and to help them assess if citizen science is the right choice.

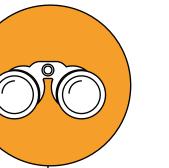
ve and show the benefits of citizen science for their research. Show good project examples and success stories in their domain. Also, use the terminology they are familiar with (e.g., patient involvement, action research, participatory approaches, volunteering etc.).

et inspiration and find good examples of citizen science projects for example at Zooniverse, EU-Citizen.Science or at national citizen science networks.

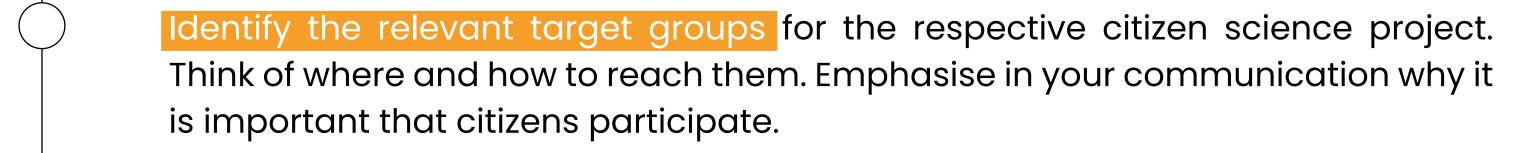
Raise interest by proactively reach out to departments and research groups in your institution and offer presentations, inspirational talks, networking events eminars et

ssign funding to researchers and students to engage with citizen science activities, as e.g. Seed Grants. Funds can come from the university or via international collaborations, including EU projects or local funding agencies.

Experience with citizen science and public engagement activities may be an important asset in researchers' CVs: make them aware of this!



HOW TO FIND CITIZENS TO PARTICIPATE IN PROJECTS?

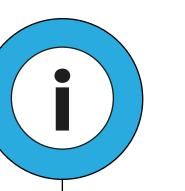


s to establish links with existing communities. Involve them as early as possible.

each out to your target groups via Social Media – there may be existing Facebook groups with an interest to participate. Consider engaging campaigns in coordination with libraries and museums.

enefit of existing collaborative spaces in and around your institution (such as maker spaces) or events (such as hackathons) to promote the citizen science projects or simply organize your own workshop!





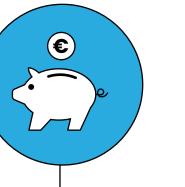
HOW/WHERE TO ESTABLISH A CS CONTACT POINT, AND WHICH ARE ITS RESPONSIBILITIES?

Place your citizen science contact point in "neutral" areas! Libraries and communication offices are the best choices!

Staff in the initial phase should include a person who provides support with the methodology and tools.

or hiring, explore the easiest solution for your institution. Financing an administrative position might be easier than a research position.

It is important to make the potential of a citizen science contact point for your organisation appreciated. Raising awareness internally is the key



HOW TO (SUSTAINABLY) FUND CITIZEN SCIENCE **ACTIVITIES?**



Some of these funds can be given directly to researchers to encourage the implementation of citizen science activities.

Citizen science activities bring more citizen science activities...and fundings! here are increasingly EU and national funding opportunities specifical ledicated to citizen science





HOW TO DEVELOP CITIZEN SCIENCE GUIDELINES AND POLICIES? WHAT SHOULD BE INCLUDED?

A general intro and tailored guidelines according to the needs of the audiences is the way to go!

The guidelines should be in line with the directives of the ethical committee c the institution: try to collaborate with researchers in an ethical group!

For general policies, start from what is already available in the institution's legal framework (i.e., GDPR, Open Science policies).

It is important to look at existing documents and policies where aspects of citizen science and public engagement can be mentioned or referred to, even if the word "citizen science" itself is not there!

