Application Impulse Citizen Science NL

1. General information

Project title	Impulse Citizen Science NL
Applicant institution	University Leiden
Contact person	*Margaret Gold*
E-mail address contact person	m.j.gold@cwts.leidenuniv.nl
Telephone number contact person	(06) 29 35 30 75
Postal address contact person	CWTS, Leiden University, Kolffpad 1, 2333 AL Leiden

TITLE: *Expanding and Professionalising the Citizen Science Nederland Network (CS-NL)*
Author & Affiliation: *Margaret Gold, Leiden University*
The CS-NL network is a vibrant and active community of Citizen Science practitioners, initiators, researchers and participants from across all corners of society (Academia, Industry, Government, Civil Society, and Citizens) who come together to share knowledge and know-how for participatory research and societal engagement practices that partner with and for the benefit of society. CS-NL supports the effective consolidation, dissemination and further development of best practice and innovative new approaches, facilitates networking and capability building, enables the formation of new multi-stakeholder initiatives, and promotes the mainstreaming and embedding of Citizen Science within Open Science.

TITEL*: Uitbreiding en professionalisering van het Citizen Science Nederland Netwerk (CS-NL)*
Author & Affiliation: Margaret Gold, Leiden University
Het CS-NL netwerk is een levendige en actieve gemeenschap van Citizen Science beoefenaars, initiatiefnemers, onderzoekers en deelnemers uit alle hoeken van de samenleving (Academia, Industrie, Overheid, Civil Society en Burgers) die samenkomen om kennis en kunde te delen voor participatief onderzoek en maatschappelijke betrokkenheid die samenwerken met en ten behoeve van de samenleving. CS-NL ondersteunt de effectieve consolidatie, verspreiding en verdere ontwikkeling van beste praktijken en innovatieve nieuwe benaderingen, faciliteert netwerken en capaciteitsopbouw, maakt de vorming van nieuwe multi-stakeholder initiatieven mogelijk en bevordert de mainstreaming en verankering van Citizen Science binnen Open Science.

2. Description of intended activities

INTRODUCTION & BACKGROUND

As stated in both the UNESCO Recommendations on Open Science [1] and the NPOS 2030 Ambition for Open Science [2] , Citizen Science (CS) is essential to opening up the processes of knowledge creation to the participation of all societal actors, including citizens. A wide variety of participatory research practices from across all domains fall under the broad umbrella of CS, with the common characteristic that societal actors are engaged as genuine partners in knowledge production [3] . Science Communication, Public Engagement, and Societal Dialogue exist alongside CS practices within a fluid spectrum of societal engagement practices, where CS represents the co-production of science within and for society at the core.

The CS Programme Line within the National Programme for Open Science (NPOS) [4] had the mandate in 2021-2022 to co-develop the strategy for Open Science in the Netherlands such that a close collaboration between knowledge institutions, government, industry, and citizens can be achieved, in inclusive, efficient, and transparent processes of scientific (co-)creation, evaluation, quality assurance and communication. The vision for mainstreaming CS research practices is contained within the NPOS Ambition for Open Science, and the Rolling Agenda towards Societal Engagement was co-developed together with the wider CS community of practice. The Action Lines within that Rolling Agenda describe how participatory processes for knowledge creation initiated by both citizens and professional researchers can be better recognised, valued, supported, and embedded in mainstream research and teaching practices.

Central to achieving each of these Action Lines is the establishment of a strong and active national network of CS practitioners in the Netherlands, which has long been recognised as crucial to furthering the field and achieving the full potential of Citizen Science nationally. The launch of the CS-NL network was first recommended in the report of the NPOS CS Working Group 'Kennis & Krachten Gebundeld' [5], is highlighted as Strategic Goal 1.2 in the NPOS Ambition Document [6], and has since been reinforced as a key recommendation of the EU Mutual Learning Exercise on Citizen Science [7]. With a small amount of coordination funding from NPOS, the first CS-NL Network Day [8] was organised in 2022, and membership in the network has now grown to almost 400 members in the LinkedIn Group [9] , 450 subscriptions to the CS-NL newsletter [10] and 345 followers on Twitter.

With impulse funding from NWO in the 2024-2025 Open Science NL work programme, the CS-NL Network will continue the NPOS mission to embed CS within OS practices across the Netherlands, such that participatory processes for knowledge creation initiated by both citizen scientists and professional researchers are recognised, valued, and supported as part of 'mainstream' research. The main objectives of CS-NL are thus to:

1. Create awareness of the benefits of Citizen Science approaches for science, policy and society;
2. Facilitate knowledge exchange within and amongst members the CS community and adjacent OS communities, from across the Quadruple Helix;
3. Consolidate and further develop best practices for CS within all domains of research;
4. Embed CS practices in the system of rewards and recognition, as a valued research approach with valorised societal impact;
5. Promote the development of training and education resources, to increase appropriate support and execution capacities within research and higher education organisations and civil society partners;
6. Foster greater and enhanced cooperation, synergies, and crosspollination of practitioners among and between the Citizen Science, Open Science and Public Engagement communities, and between the Academic Universities and the Universities of Applied Sciences; and
7. Promote the development of supporting (technical) infrastructures and other aspects of an enabling environment for CS in the Netherlands, including through specific funding programmes and policy instruments.

ACTIVITIES AND INSTRUMENTS OF THE CS-NL NETWORK

Our vision for the CS-NL network is a strong, self-sustaining community that brings together all actors engaged in participatory research practices - from grassroots and citizen interest groups, through public authorities and

private companies, to academia and the professional science sector; and including all levels of education, from research universities to vocational education. The network will stimulate capacity building for CS and other societal engagement practices, with a particular focus on embedding CS in the research and education practices of Dutch research and higher education institutes so they can act as promoters of the necessary institutional and cultural changes required to fully embrace CS as a research practice. Given the similar skills, expertise and challenges experienced by all types of societal engagement practices it is important to identify the overlaps and synergies between the disparate fields, bring them closer together, and focus on common goals when offering support and capacity building activities. The CS-NL network will therefore seek synergies and shared activities with the NEWS Center, the SciComm-NL network, and other related networks engaging with Open Science practices for the benefit of society.

To achieve these aims and address the multiple objectives outlined by the NWO Open Science NL programme, we will make use of the following instruments and activities:

CS-NL Citizen Science Nederland	COMMUNITY BUILDING	NETWORKING	KNOWLEDGE EXCHANGE	VISIBILITY OF EXPERTISE	FINDABILITY OF RESOURCES	ORGANISATIONAL EMBEDDING
Members will gain awareness of other members of the community via interviews & news-sharing in **Communication Channels** such as the **monthly newsletters**, **social media channels** (e.g. Twitter, Mastodon), and the **LinkedIn Group** that contains member profiles and news items.	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
A **CS-NL Network website** will be built to provide static information about the network, its mission and activities, and how to become a member, along with **blog posts & articles**, **event listings**, and links to all other media channels.	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
Members are invited to form and join the activities of **Thematic Groups** (TGs) to discuss aspects of CS within specific domains (such as 'Nature & Biodiversity,' 'Data & Infrastructure', and 'CS4Health'), share knowledge & know-how, and form new collaborations.	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Members are invited to form and join the activities of **Working Groups** (WGs) to address needs in practice (such as 'Communications', 'Knowledge Platform', 'Governance, & 'Embedding-in-Institutes'), co-developing the supportive instruments of the network and co-producing new tools or resources.	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Operational Budget will be made available to the TGs & WGs to further their work (upon agreement with their members and meeting co-produced criteria) for example to cover venue & catering for workshops, or to produce new tools and resources of benefit to the whole community of practice.		✓	✓			
An annual programme of member-led **Webinars & Workshops** will be developed in response to the needs of the community-at-large and the topical focus areas of the WGs & TGs, to enable knowledge exchange, capacity building, and the identification of new areas for research and development.	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
The annual **CS-NL Network Day** brings members of the network together in a 'General Assembly' format, with the primary purpose of sharing and furthering the work of the WGs & TGs, facilitating any other business that the members of the Network wish to accomplish with each other, and observing any compliance aspects of the chosen governance structure.	✓	✓		✓		

Activity	1	2	3	4	5	6
A new annual **Participatory Research Symposium** will be developed to showcase the outcomes and outputs of initiatives, projects, and research in traditional conference session and poster formats, as well as more inclusive and welcoming 'un-conference' formats for knowledge-exchange in the fields of Citizen Science, Societal Engagement, and Science Communication, with attention to a diversity of voices from across the Quadruple Helix.	✓	✓	✓	✓		
The **CS-NL Knowledge Platform** will be built as a consolidated repository of multilingual resources for Participatory Research and Societal Engagement practices, tools for capacity building such as training and MOOCs, and a showcase of CS projects and initiatives across the Netherlands, which is interoperable with EU-Citizen.Science.	✓			✓	✓	✓
The **Annual CS-NL Grant Fund** will be established to provide financial support to initiatives outside of academia that do not otherwise have recourse to funding (such as grassroots activities, sensor & application development, and other needs), the criteria and application process for which will be co-created with the network to ensure it is fit-for-purpose and fully transparent.		✓	✓	✓		
The **CS-NL Ambassadors Stipend** addresses the need to get more coordination and support to the grassroots and SME communities, which are still relatively under-represented but have great potential. Matching the 'ECS Ambassadors' construct of the EU-funded European Citizen Science project, this stipend will support three ambassadors to perform a communication, coordination & support role with the aim of increasing the engagement of these target groups.	✓	✓	✓	✓		
An integrated **Knowledge Agenda for CS** will be co-developed with the multi-stakeholder members of regional CS Hubs, to valorise and promote the uptake of participatory research & engagement practices at RPOs & HEIs, embed CS in the system of rewards and recognition, and ensure long-term impact. (Implementing a Hub & Spoke model)			✓	✓	✓	✓
A **Mutual Learning Programme** of activities for knowledge exchange and capacity building between regional CS Hubs and participating RPOs and HEIs will be designed to consolidate and disseminate best practice, support the building of an enabling environment for CS practices within institutions, and promote institutional culture change. (Hub & Spoke model)	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓

THE CS-NL CORE TEAM

Coordination support for the activities of the CS-NL Network is embedded in a core team of personnel, who will undertake a range of tasks towards achieving the aims and objectives of the Network, namely:

(1) The CS-NL Network Coordinator (*Margaret Gold, Leiden University, 0.2 FTE - building on her role as NPOS CS Programme Line Manager and Rapporteur of the EU Mutual Learning Exercise on CS*)
- primarily plays a strategic networking role in engaging with the wide range of stakeholders in the Dutch academic community, connecting them with the European and global communities, and promoting the development of an enabling environment for CS at all levels,
- oversees the further development and execution of the Action Lines within the Rolling Agenda toward Societal Engagement, and strengthening the representation of CS in OS,
- liaises with Open Science NL, OCW, and other actors across the Dutch R&I landscape, to inform, identify & develop areas for strategic action to support and sustain CS in the Netherlands,
- can be called on to represent the Dutch CS community in global fora, such as within the CS Task Force of the OECD Global Science Forum, and the Open Science Policy Working Group of UNESCO,

- takes responsibility for establishing a governance structure for the network such that it is led 'by the community, for the community', within which the future direction and strategic aims of the Network can be directed by the members under the guidance of a One-Tier Board, and
- is responsible for all compliance, budget management, and annual reporting to NWO Open Science NL and the CS-NL One-Tier-Board.

(2) The CS-NL Community Manager (*Anouk Spelt, Leiden University, 0.6 FTE - continuing her role as CS-NL Community Manager in 2022 and 2023*)
- primarily plays a community building role to bring CS practitioners across the Netherlands together in activities to exchange knowledge and know-how, and strengthen participatory research practices across all domains,
- seeks out opportunities to promote the network and invite new members to join the community, from both within and without the academic community, with particular attention for the leaders of 'hidden' Citizen Science initiatives that do not publish in the academic literature or seek national press coverage,
- supports the activities of the Working Groups and Thematic Groups and their members as central contact point and facilitator,
- supports the activities of the CS-NL Ambassadors in engaging with the grassroots and 'bottom-up' members of the CS community and developing mechanisms for support,
- seeks synergies and joint-event opportunities with adjacent networks such as the Open Science Communities (OSC-NL), the 'Nationaal Expertisecentrum voor Wetenschap & Samenleving' (NEWS), SciComm-NL, and the nascent network for Art + Science,
- fosters collaboration and seeks knowledge-sharing and resource co-production opportunities with the neighbouring Flemish CS community, SciVil network, and Iedereen Wetenschapper platform,
- oversees the day-to-day operations of the CS-NL network, maintaining the momentum and growth of the community, and ensuring that members are provided with a range of ways to connect, meet, share knowledge and know-how, and engage in fruitful collaborations.

(3) The CS-NL Communications Manager (*Communication officer, University of Twente, 0.6 FTE*)
- fills a crucial communications support role, ensuring that a wide range of communication channels are maintained, and that bi-directional information flows are facilitated,
- develops and executes a strategic communication plan, and provides operational support for the communication and knowledge sharing activities of the CS-NL network,
- gathers and shares news from the members, and develops content for various channels such as the CS-NL website, social media platforms and the monthly newsletter, and
- facilitates the development and delivery of a year-round programme of workshops and webinars with and for the members.

(4) The National Coordinator of the CS Hubs Network (*Maya van den Berg, University of Twente, 0.2 FTE - transferring her knowledge and expertise from the European INCENTIVE and Time4CS projects*).
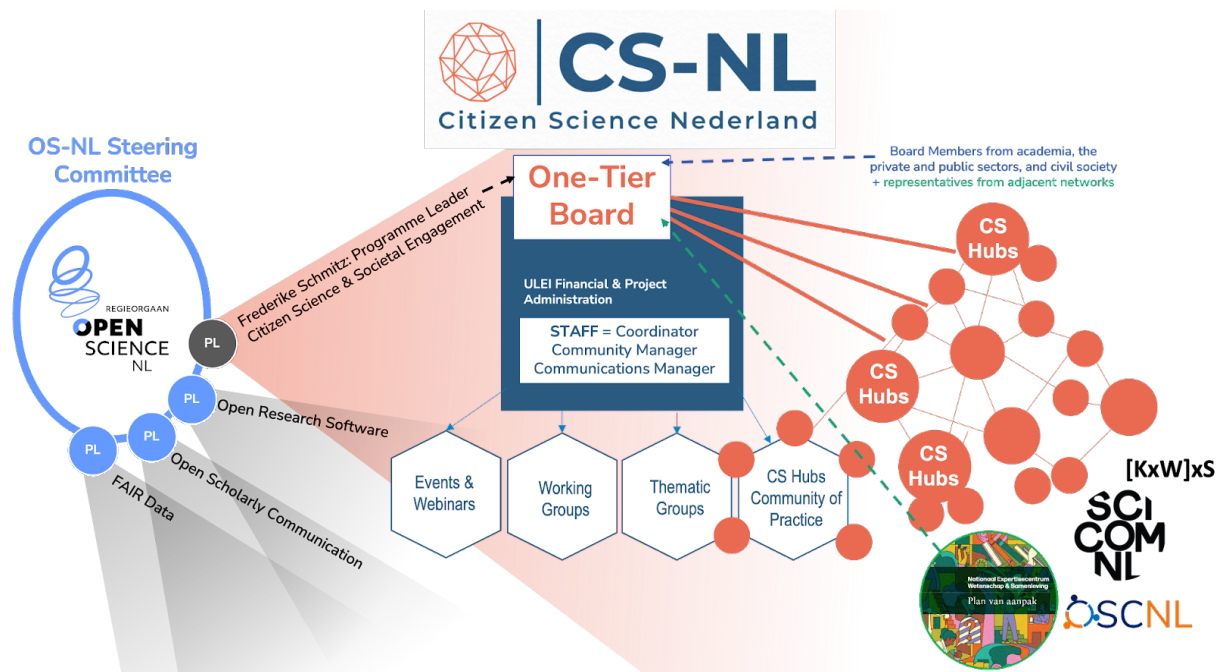- primarily plays a knowledge-exchange and capacity-building role towards the embedding of CS practices in Dutch research and educational institutes, most specifically as national coordinator of the regionally based CS Hubs that will be funded within the Open Science NL work programme, filling the central role in the 'Hub and Spoke' model,
- facilitates alignment and the efficient integration of knowledge between the regional CS Hubs, and the flow of information between Dutch and European CS Hubs,
- leads the co-development of a Knowledge Agenda for CS in the Netherlands,
- liaises with Open Science NL, UNL, the Chiefs Open Science, and Open Science Programme Managers at Dutch research institutes, working towards the embedding of CS in mainstream research and education practices, and
- liaises with the European community of practice to facilitate knowledge exchange with the European Citizen Science Association (ECSA) and its Working Groups (WG), such as the ECSA 'National Networks' and 'Citizen Science Platforms' WGs.

GOVERNANCE & LONG-TERM SUSTAINABILITY OF THE CS-NL NETWORK

Current members of the CS-NL network represent CS practitioners, initiators, participants, and researchers from across the 'Quadruple Helix', including Research Performing Organisations (RPOs), Research Funding Organisations (RFOs), educators and Institutes of Higher Education (HEIs), policy makers and other actors from the public sector, along with societal actors such as Civil Society Organisations (CSOs), the leaders of Grassroots CS initiatives, and individual Citizen Scientists. Attendance at the first two CS-NL Network Days showed an academic to non-academic ratio of roughly 50:50, of which we are very proud and will pay attention to maintaining.

Membership in the CS-NL Network is currently not formalised and invites anyone interested in CS and societal engagement practices to become engaged with the activities of the network by subscribing to the newsletter, joining the LinkedIn Group, and/or attending any of the events organised by the network and its members. Options and structures for formalising the network will be explored with the members, such as becoming a Membership Association (Vereniging) or Foundation (Stichting), as best fits the opportunities for operationalising the network over the long term. Possibilities include co-funding from the Association of Dutch Universities (UNL) and other former NPOS members and participating in consortia within the Horizon Europe funding programme.

Members will be provided with the opportunity to shape and influence the direction of the CS-NL Network at the annual Network Day, which fills the purpose of a 'General Assembly' or 'Ledenvergadering' and aims to shape the governance structure such that the network 'by and for the community'. The currently envisioned governance structure (as illustrated in the figure below) consists of a direct reporting line between the CS-NL Network Coordinator and Open Science NL to ensure strong communication and alignment with the NPOS2030 Ambition. A one-tier-board will be established to function as both Advisory and Supervisory body, in which we propose that NWO Open Science NL Programme Manager Frederike Schmitz fill the role of Chair. This Board will consist of a representative mix from the general CS-NL membership in a personal (not institutional) capacity, and liaisons from key adjacent networks such as NEWS and SciCom-NL. A central mandate within the remit of the Board will be consideration of how to sustain the coordination and operations of the CS-NL Network beyond the four years of Open Science NL impulse funding.

3. Financial information

3.1 Personnel costs (HOT tariffs)

Description	FTE	Months	HOT tariffs (scale)	Salary (€)	Total (€)
Network Coordinator	0.2	9.6 over 48	148,000 (13)	592,000	€118,400
Community Manager	0.6	28.8 over 48	118,000 (11)	472,000	€283,200
CS Hubs Coordinator	0.2	9.6 over 48	118,000 (11)	472,000	€94,400
Jr. Communications Manager	0.6	28.8 over 48	99,000 (9)	396,000	€237,600
Total					**€733,600**

3.2 Other costs

Description	Explanation	Costs (€)
Communication Costs	Comms materials, printing, basic website, other un-anticipated operational costs.	€17,000
CS-NL Knowledge-sharing Platform	Online knowledge-sharing platform with projects and resources.	€41,400
CS-NL Annual Network Day	Venue, catering, virtual conf network, travel comp, facilitation comp, etc.	€66,000
Participatory Research Symposium	Venue, catering, virtual conf network, travel comp, facilitation comp, etc.	€132,000
Conference attendance budget	Travel and accomodation costs for core team to represent CS-NL at conferences e.g. ECSA.	€21,000
Working Groups budget	Travel compensation, venue, catering for working group members.	€32,000
Grassroots Ambassadors Stipend	Costs for financing three people from outside Academia to perform a communication, coordination & support role towards CS participants and bottom-up initiatives.	€12,000
Annual CS-NL Grant Fund	A fund that can be awarded to a grassroots initiative, SME, or other non-academic actors, following a co-created criteria and application process, at the discression of the members, to meet a need that furthers the aims and objectives of a CS initiative that does not have recourse to other forms of funding.	€45,000
Total		**€366,400**

3.3 Total costs

Category	Total (€)
Personnel costs	€733,600
Other costs	€366,400
Total	**€1,100,000**

4. Statements and signature

Other financing
Have you applied for other funding for the CS-NL network?

☒ No ☐ Yes

Indicate here any additional grants you applied for.

By submitting this form, I declare that
☒   I have completed this form truthfully;
☒   I declare on behalf of the institution that the project will comply with the nationally and internationally accepted standards of scientific conduct as stated in the Dutch Code of Conduct for Scientific Integrity (Nederlandse Gedragscode Wetenschappelijke Integriteit)

Name and initials: Margaret Gold

Location: Leiden, the Netherlands

Date: 20 January 2024

END NOTES
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