

BREAKING BOUNDARIES: ADVOCACY FOR CITIZEN SCIENCE IN EUROPEAN HIGHER EDUCATION LIBRARIES

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The libraries and the increase of Citizen Science Projects

The increase of citizen science (CS) projects in European universities reflects a growing trend towards integrating public participation in scientific research, enhancing both educational and research outcomes. European universities play a pivotal role in fostering collaborative knowledge creation and community engagement in higher education.

In this movement to change relations between science and society, higher education libraries serve as crucial hubs for collections, resources, and support, facilitating access to data literature. Their collections can serve as corpuses for participatory projects. And they even play a key role in reaching out participants, and in training and guiding them.

Libraries are certainly essential partners in the integrity and success of citizen science projects. But is it obvious to everyone?

A TIME FOR ADVOCACY

Considering that libraries need to gain recognition for the specific nature of their profession in implementing, supporting or disseminating participatory science, this poster aims to be an easy-to-grasp tools for arguing with university presidents and faculties, or other partners.

The arguments you need!

To convince the projects leaders, university managers or future partners, of the importance of libraries in citizen science projects, you need to have strong points to advocate. Here are 5 key arguments with illustrative examples!

1st Argument

CITIZEN SCIENCE AND OPEN SCIENCE

Citizen science is part of open science, as it facilitates the production and circulation of scientific information to the general public.

Libraries, because they play a facilitating role in the implementation of open science policies, can also facilitate the implementation of resources in their universities to develop such projects.

They did it!

- The Library of Edinburgh University has hired a CS officer to facilitate the development of CS projects.
- The library of Vrije Universiteit, Amsterdam has obtained funds to open a citizen science hub to promote CS in its university.
- The library of the University of Tartu prepared training materials, as an OA toolkit on CS for librarians, to strengthen their position as a support unit.

2nd Argument

CITIZEN SCIENCE AND DISSEMINATION OF KNOWLEDGE

Citizen science projects produce both academic (articles, data, etc.) and non-academic (comics, radio programs, blogs, etc.) knowledge.

As specialists in the dissemination of knowledge, libraries have a role to play in making this knowledge, produced in collaboration with citizens, accessible. Not only do they disseminate scientific knowledge, they also make the role of citizens in these projects visible.

They did it!

- The library of the University of Bordeaux offers a selection of documents to support the CS project Spipoll. The selection includes academic papers, dataset, but also technical and legal documentation, and non academic resources.
- The Réseau URFIST organized a study day on the transformation of scientific communication in citizen science and its impact on libraries and the dissemination of knowledge.

3rd Argument

CITIZEN SCIENCE AND INTEGRITY OF SCIENCE

Together with citizens, citizen science projects produce data which, to be usable and reusable, must be collected and managed with a high level of integrity.

Because they support researchers in their digital research practices and in disseminating their work, libraries have a role to play in training project leaders in data management issues: data management plans, metadata, data repositories, and so on.

They did it!

- The Pablo de Olavide University, in Sevilla, launched the Research Data Management Service to help project leader.
- The University of Helsinki proposes a Data Support for open science and trains faculties.
- The University of Montpellier organized a seminar on the topic of data collection and citizen science projects

4th Argument

CITIZEN SCIENCE AND VALORIZATION

Citizen science enhances the appreciation of scientific efforts within communities by involving the public in research processes and fostering a sense of ownership over scientific achievements.

Libraries are venues where citizen science projects are given value and recognition, fostering a collaborative environment for scientific engagement.

They did it!

- The CTK (Central Technical) Library at the University of Ljubljana offers a platform to promote projects, news and events related. They encourage the project managers to disseminate results through their library services.
- The Citizen Science Knowledge Center of South-Danemark University provides services to researchers to develop their CS projects and serves as community managers to promote events and reach out participants.

5th Argument

CITIZEN SCIENCE AND LIBRARY'S COLLECTIONS

From the perspective of citizen science, GLAM (Galleries, Libraries, Archives, and Museums) institutions can harness their resources to support and promote public participation in scientific research.

Libraries are supplying and curating collections that serve as foundational resources for conducting citizen science projects.

They did it!

- The University of Edinburgh's Library adapts its Heritage Collections for engagement and research in citizen science projects.
- Križevci University of Applied Sciences Library initiated the project 'Revitalization of Cultural Heritage at Križevci University of Applied Sciences' in collaboration with their Alumni Association, historians, and the general public.

Do you have additional examples based on your own experience? Add them here!



Thank you!

Thanks to the colleagues who agreed to answer our questions about their practices in the context of CS projects.

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LIBER Citizen Science Working Group: This poster is an initiative within the LIBER Citizen Science Working Group's Strategic Decision 3, delves into pioneering advocacy for the integration of Citizen Science. Learn more about the working group here:

