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ACTION

D5.8 INITIAL WEBINAR TO SUPPORT SUSTAINABILITY

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Abstract	This deliverable describes the goals and structure of the preliminary webinar on sustainability: an online event that will address different approaches to CS projects' financial sustainability. It is based on the work described in D7.4 Sustainability plan.
Keywords	Sustainability models for CS projects, sustainability, accelerator, ACTION toolkit.

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List of abbreviations

CS	Citizen Science
CSR	Corporate social responsibility
D	Deliverable
WP	Work Package

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This report presents the structure and the goals of the first ACTION webinar dedicated to sustainability.

In D7.4 “Sustainability plan” different, non self-excludent, approaches supporting the financial sustainability of citizen science (CS) projects have been described. Those are:

- Access to public funding;
- Access to private funding;
- Crowdfunding;
- Self-funding thought memberships, merchandising and donations;
- Service/product-based sustainability models.

For each model its level of novelty, its potential impact on sustainability and the support provided by ACTION was described.

The first webinar to support CS sustainability, titled “CS sustainability: finding the right mix” will take place on November the 19th from 10 to 12 CET. Will see the participation of 3 to 4 experts that will address one of the above-mentioned approaches each.

The webinar will be two hours long and will combine experts’ presentations, a panel discussion and exchange with the audience. It will be open not only to ACTION CS pilots, but also to other SwafS projects working on CS, their pilots and any other organisation interested in the topic. It will be recorded and made available on the ACTION website, ACTION YouTube channel and Zenodo and will be included in the ACTION CS toolkit. Also, the slides shown during the webinar will be made available through the ACTION website and Zenodo (and the linked ACTION open knowledge portal).

1. Introduction

The aim of this report is to describe the goals and the agenda of the first ACTION webinar on sustainability. It is based on the work done in D7.4 “Sustainability plan v01” which mapped different approaches to CS financial sustainability. The most diffused and interesting approaches we identified:

- Access to public funding;
- Access to private funding;
- Crowdfunding;
- Self-funding through memberships, merchandising and donations;
- Service/product-based sustainability models.

From the exchanges carried out with the ACTION pilots during the interviews carried out for the impact assessment activities it is possible to say that public funding (regional and national but also European) is a well-known approach to financial sustainability. The other paths are less common and will be, therefore, the centre of the first webinar.

During the webinar interested ACTION pilots will be able to learn more on these models thanks to dedicated speeches of experts. Interested pilots will be also able to briefly pitch their project and the related sustainability plan and receive feedback and suggestions.

The webinar will be open not only to ACTION pilots (as initially planned) but also to pilots of the other SwafS projects in the field of CS and to any other organisation interested in the topic.

The webinar will be titled “CS sustainability: finding the right mix” and will take place on November the 19th from 10 to 12 am CET. The recording of the webinar will be made available on the ACTION website and will be included, later on, in the ACTION CS toolkit.

2. Webinar goal and structure

The goal of the webinar is to present different options/channels/approaches for increasing CS projects' sustainability and promote discussion and reciprocal learning among CS pilots/projects.

Invited speakers include:

- responsible of corporate social responsibility departments in large enterprises,
- CEO of crowdfunding platforms focusing on projects with social and environmental positive impacts
- representatives of CS projects that represent good practices in terms of sustainability
- representative of social venture capital organisations
- researchers in the field.

The invitation letters to the speakers is ongoing at the time of writing, around 10 persons have been invited and if more than 3 will be made themselves available a selection will be done with the support of ACTION partners in order to identify the most relevant ones.

The webinar will last two hours and will be structured as follows:

- Introduction to ACTION and to the webinar, including a brief description of the sustainability models defined in D7.4 (approximately 15 minutes)
- 3 experts talks dedicated each one to a different sustainability model and the key aspects to be considered for succeeding in it. (approximately 15 minutes each)
- Panel discussion (20 minutes)
- Open discussion with the audience, including the possibility of ACTION pilots to pitch their project and related sustainability model and get feedback and suggestions (30 minutes)
- Closing remarks (10 minutes).

3 Webinar promotion and practicalities

The webinar was initially planned as an internal to the ACTION consortium event and only open to ACTION pilots. However, the topic might be of interest also for other projects working with and on CS, especially the other projects financed under SwafS with whom ACTION collaborate on different activities. CS teams participating in the ACTION second open call could be also interested in joining the webinar and start reflecting on this crucial topic while writing their proposal.

Therefore the webinar will be open to all interested actors. A dedicated news will be available on the ACTION website and disseminated through the ACTION social media channels. A dedicated email will be sent to sister projects within the SwafS program and a news will be sent to EU.citizens-science.eu in order to have the invitation available also on their project website.

Interested participants will register through Eventbrite and will receive the link to the online webinar a few days before the event.

The event will be recorded and made available through the ACTION website, the ACTION YouTube video and Zenodo and, later on, in the ACTION CS toolkit together with a summary of the results and lessons learned. The slides used during the webinar will be also made available through Zenodo and the ACTION website.

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4 References

Passani, A., Thuermer, G., Gonzalez, E. (2020), D7.4 Sustainability Plan v1.