

Aligning form to purpose: **meaningful public engagement** from the Open Science perspective

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Rathenau Instituut

Moving forward together with open science

Towards meaningful public engagement with research



Review

About the Rathenau Instituut

- Founded in 1986
- Independent institute: under the roof of the Royal Netherlands Academy of Arts and Sciences and funded (mostly) by the Dutch ministry of education, culture and science
- Mission: *We stimulate public and political opinion formation on societal aspects of science and technology. We perform research and organize debate relating to science, innovation and new technologies.*
- Target audience:
 - Dutch and European parliament,
 - general public (national and international),
 - academic peers

Main messages of the day

- To achieve the Open Science goals, **interaction between science and society** is needed
- Public engagement is meaningful when it contributes to the **democratization of science**
- **Meaningful public engagement** requires a coherent story of the **why, who, where, when and how**

Goals of Open Science

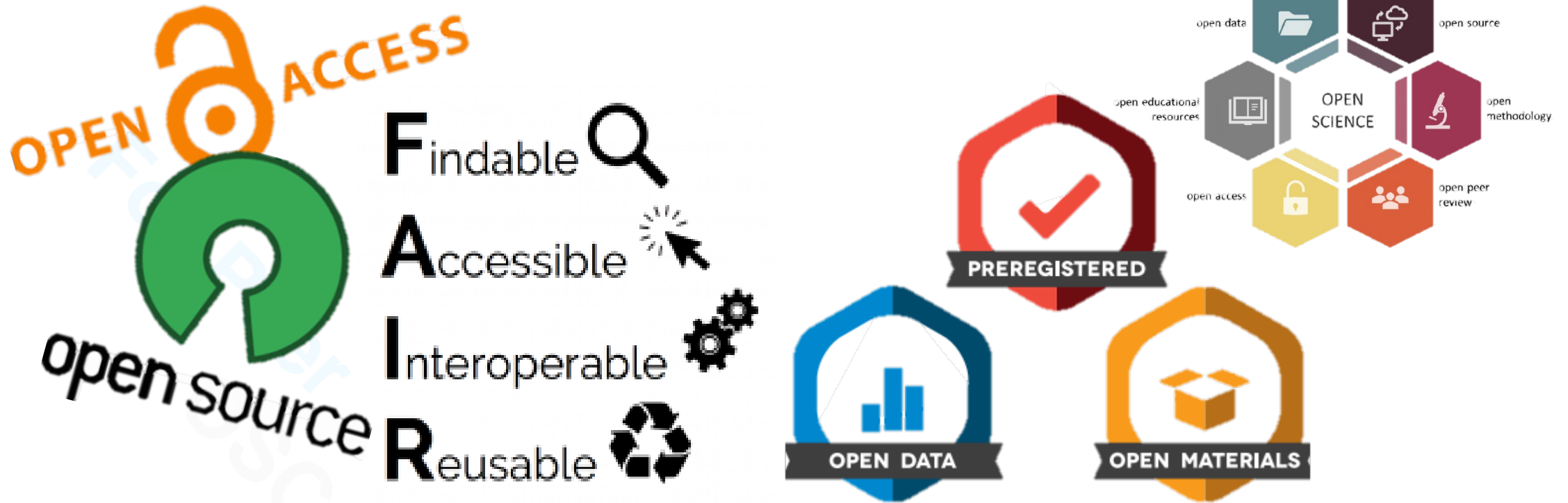


*Better science: more efficient,
more reliable, more responsive
to society's needs.*



*A new, more open and inclusive
way of conducting, publishing and
evaluating scientific research*

Operationalisation of Open Science



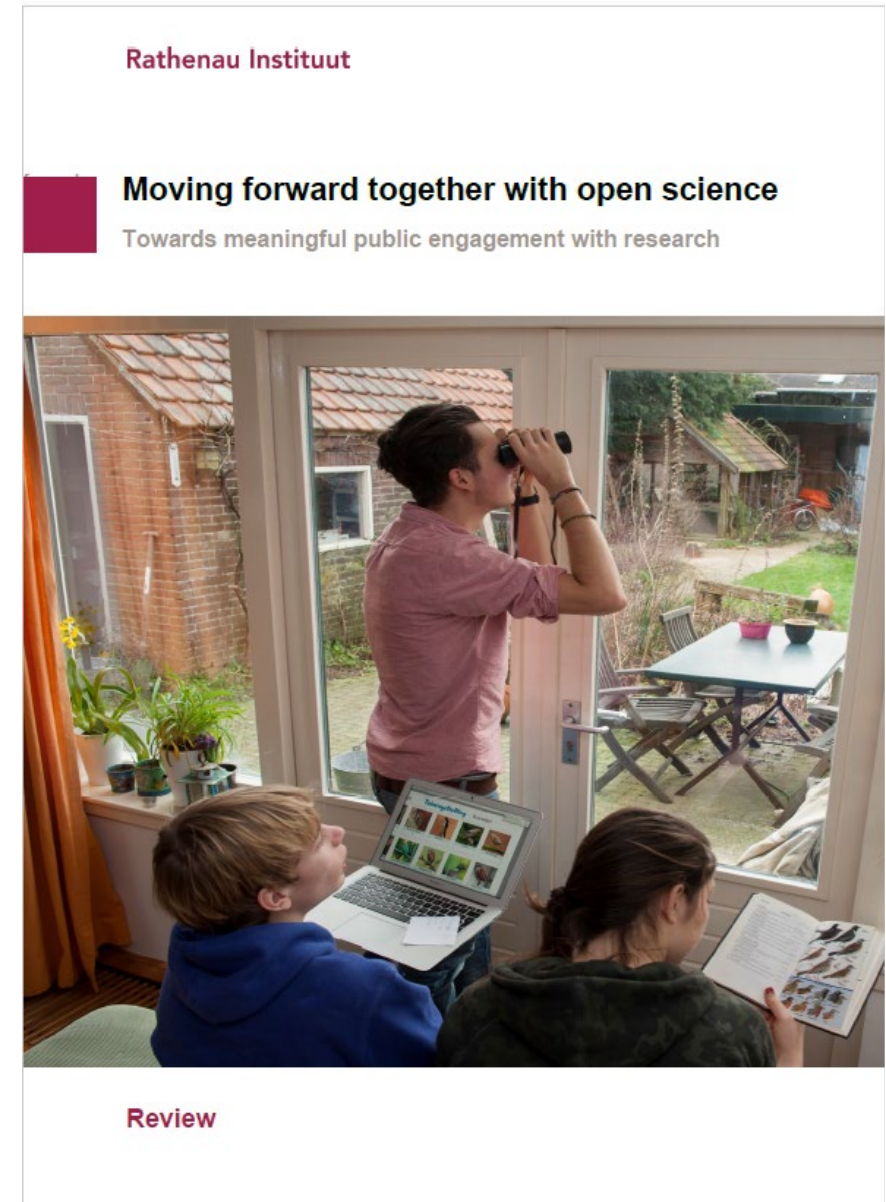
What happened in the debate to the promises to **open up science to society**?

(Jones, 2014)

Open Science @ Rathenau – delving into public engagement

- Public engagement =/ monolithic concept;
- Scientific domains can **learn from each other**'s engagement practices;
- **Tokenistic** public engagement is counter-productive;
- Aim: discern **lessons** for meaningful public engagement and provide **courses of action** for researchers, policy makers, and involved stakeholders to facilitate and foster public engagement with science

Open Science @ Rathenau



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Dangers of non-meaningful engagement (Scholvinck 2018; Felt 2017)

- Tokenism
- Bureaucratization



Meaningful public engagement

Public engagement is meaningful when it contributes to the democratization of science.

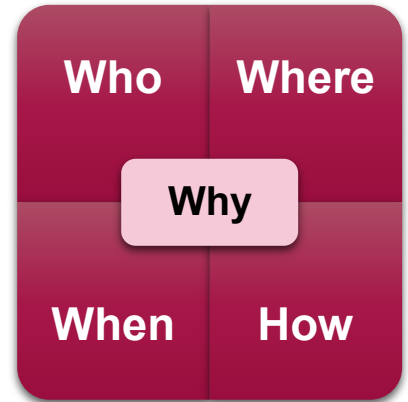
This involves;

1. **Accessibility** → how high are the thresholds for the public to influence research and research agendas?
2. **Inclusivity** → are all relevant stakeholders and interested parties involved?
3. **Control** → to what extent can stakeholders determine themselves the role they play in research and the contribution they make to research?

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- Public engagement is meaningful when it contributes to the **democratization of science**
- **Meaningful public engagement** requires a coherent story of the **why, who, where, when and how** to engage the public

Why public engagement?

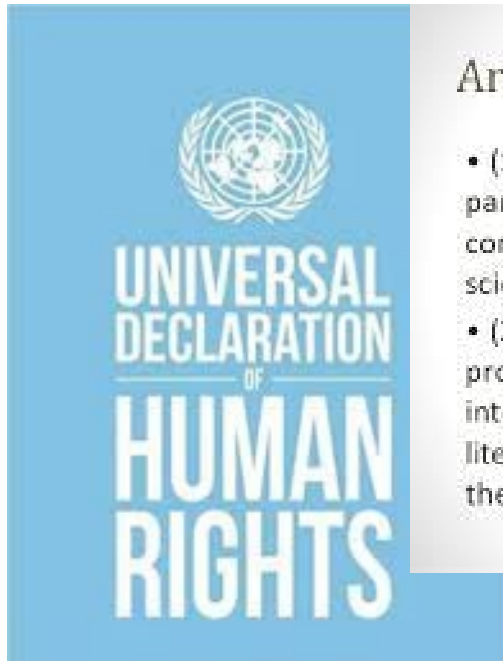
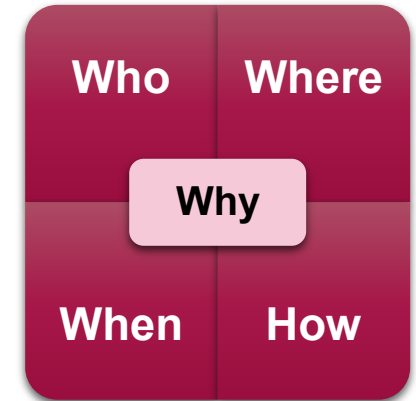


Instrumental arguments (European Commission, 2016)

- Increased scientific literacy of the public
- Introduction of new research perspectives
- Improved societal relevance of science
- Increased support and uptake of research

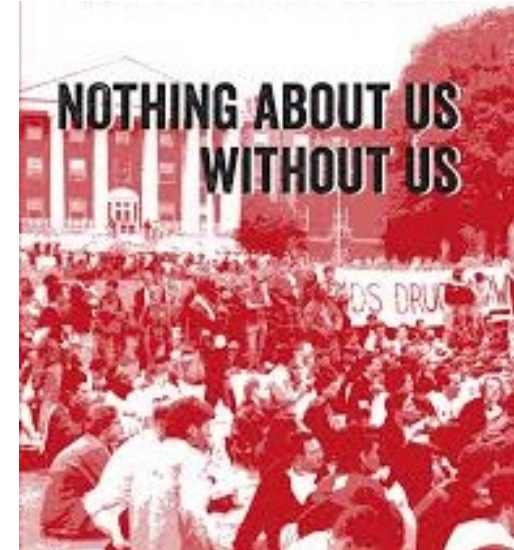


Why public engagement?



Article 27

- (1) Everyone has the right freely to participate in the cultural life of the community, to enjoy the arts and to share in scientific advancement and its benefits.
- (2) Everyone has the right to the protection of the moral and material interests resulting from any scientific, literary or artistic production of which he is the author.



Democratic arguments

- Right to access and sharing of knowledge
- Emancipation and democratisation
- Research affects people's lives

Who is engaged?



Citizens



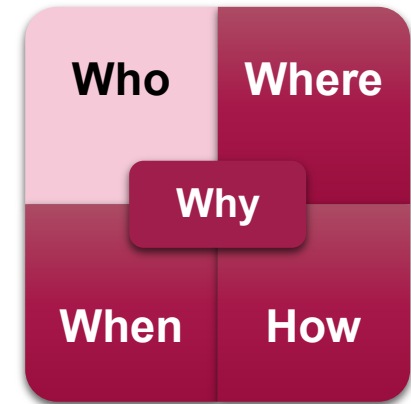
Amateur scientists



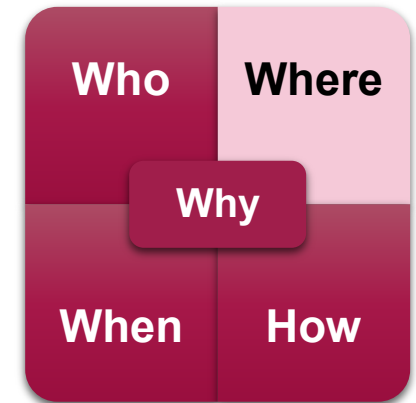
Professionals



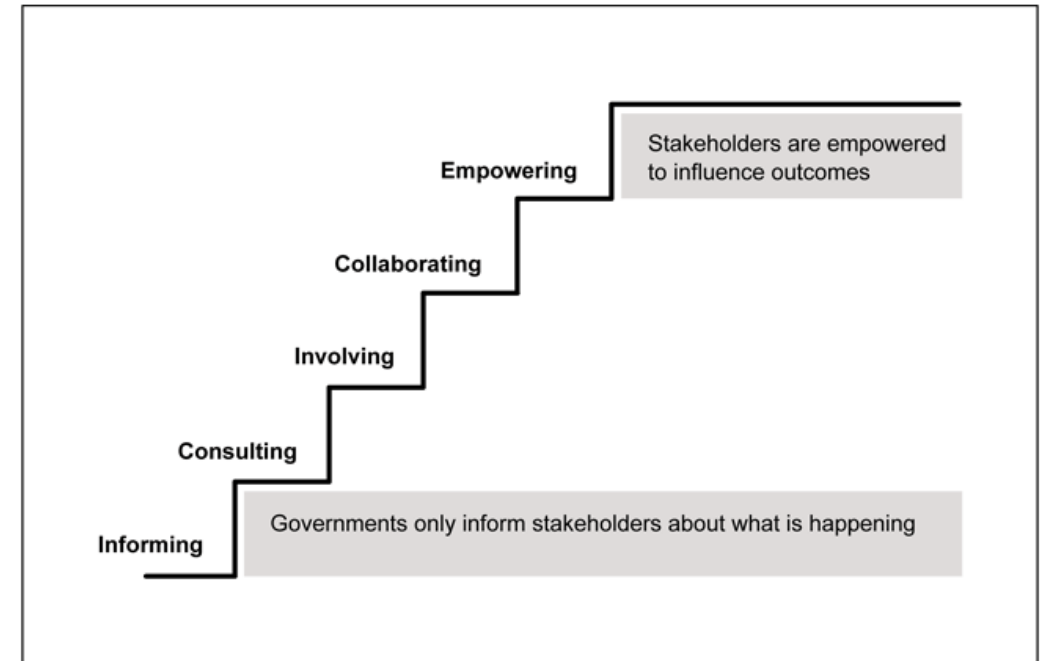
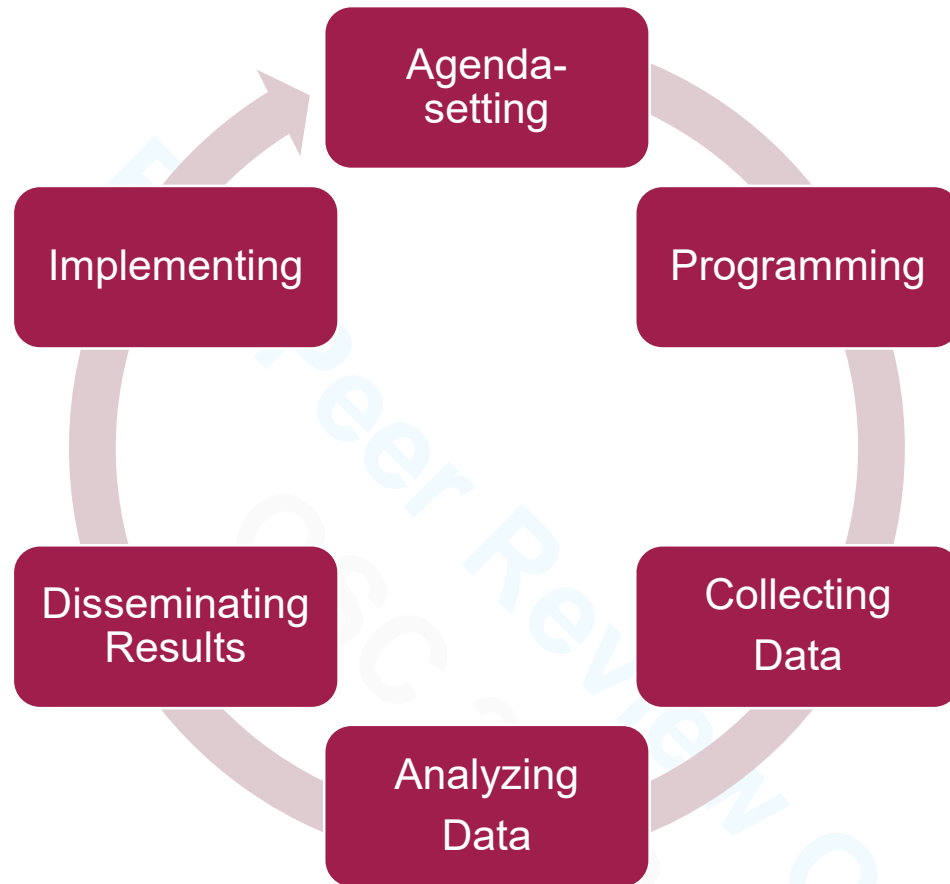
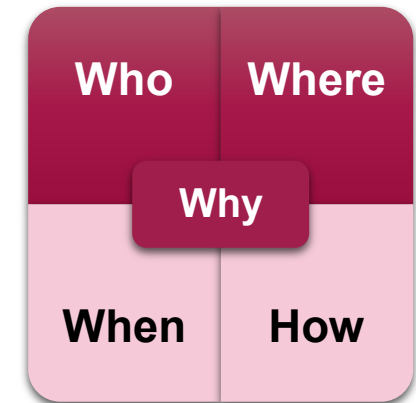
Activists



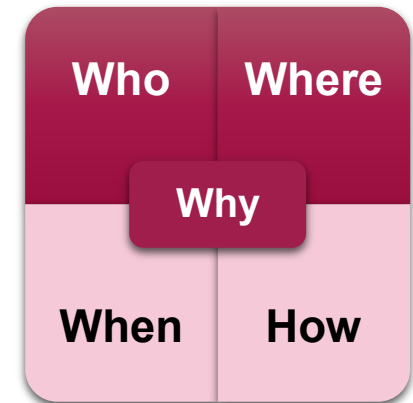
Where does the engagement take place?



When and how to be engaged?



When and how to be engaged?



	Informing	Consulting	Involving	Collaborating	Empowering
Agenda-setting					
Programming					
Collecting data					
Analyzing data					
Disseminating results					
Implementing					

Why, who, where, when and how – coherence



Five directives towards meaningful public engagement

- Make research **accessible and inclusive** for diverse publics
- **Coordinate diversity** of participation and provide insight into **added value**
- Make it **compelling** for researchers to involve publics
- Make **expectations explicit**, **evaluate** and **reflect on** public engagement
- **Give citizens a say** in their engagement with research

Questions?

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