

Citizen Science

Citizen science in a nutshell is the active involvement of non-professional scientists in research. Having scientific work undertaken by members of the general public, often in collaboration with or under the direction of professional scientists and scientific institutions.



Benefits

- There are several potential benefits in health research, raising awareness of scientific research among the wider public and enabling work to be performed that would not otherwise be possible.
- Research can be disseminated more broadly by use of blogs, social media, video-hosting sites, digital networks all owned or created by the public.
- It provides greater public understanding across all sections of society through greater access to information about the research process, using open research data and reading open research articles.
- In public health, crowdsourcing approaches have been used to develop interventions, spur community engagement, and facilitate consensus development.

How to get involved

When starting a citizen science project there are a few key elements that should be thought through: how are you going to engage citizens? how are you going to ensure data quality? how are you going to deal with ethics and legal issues?

Citizen science builds upon and has links with notions of co-creation: research is performed through active engagement and cooperation with participants to ensure that research is relevant to those involved. Participants can work together to produce research that recognises the equitable contribution of all, without privileging knowledge and expertise of specific stakeholders.

Further info

- [WHO/TDR Crowdsourcing in Health and Health Research Practical Guide](#)
- [University of Cardiff: Introduction to co-production and participatory research – Workbook](#)
- [LSHTM Public Engagement Champions mailing list](#)
- [LSHTM Machine Learning & Artificial Intelligence mailing list](#)
- LSHTM Centre for Evaluation webinar: [Crowdsourcing as a tool for developing sexual health and other public health interventions](#)
- LSHTM publications on citizen science, crowdsourcing and related topics may be found in [LSHTM Research Online](#)