



MULTI-STAKEHOLDER ROUNDTABLE ON CITIZEN SCIENCE POLICY AND PRACTICES IN INDIA

Organized by
DST-CPR, IISc

10 MAY 2022

16:00 HRS-
18:00 HRS
(IST)

DST-CENTRE FOR POLICY RESEARCH



INDIAN INSTITUTE OF SCIENCE

Schedule

1

16:00- 16:05
PM

Welcome address and introduction to the round table

Presentations by representatives of the Global and Asian citizen science associations

16:050 -16:25
PM

Remarks from practitioners of Citizen Science projects - Challenges, policy interventions required, and thoughts for building a citizen science network in the country

16:25 – 17:30
PM

2

Open Discussion: Remarks by representatives from the government, young science academy, and other stakeholders

17:30 – 17:55
PM

3

17:55-18:00
PM

Discussion Summary and Closing remarks

Organising Team

DST-CENTRE FOR POLICY RESEARCH



Dr. Suryesh Kr. Namdeo, Dr. Moumita Koley,
Dr. Kanchan Lala and Dr. Debanjana Dey.
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Background

Citizen science is usually described as the voluntary engagement of the public in the scientific enterprise. It creates a space for public engagement to garner innovative ideas in scientific research outside the confinement of laboratories and generate new knowledge. Such engagement of the citizens is voluntary and can be at various levels, capacities, and in diverse scientific areas, such as natural history, astronomy, biodiversity, etc. (Irwin, 2002). Depending on the complexities of a scientific project level of participation and engagement can vary. Some projects are more participatory, whereas some concentrate on collecting and analyzing data (Bonney et al. 2014). The activities involved can start from data collection to different action-oriented research and monitoring and management of natural resources. With the pressing need for participatory research to deal with different societal and environmental problems, the concept of citizen science has emerged as an important area of work. In doing so, the general practices of science have to be enlarged, moving beyond laboratories and academic institutions, as these projects vary in design, motivation, and output.

There is a need for an enabling framework to create a synergy between social and scientific communities to engage in different research activities. The UNESCO open science recommendations also suggest reforms in academic research practices and advocate for a more open, inclusive, and collaborative framework that can include societal participation whenever possible.

In India, there are several ongoing citizen science projects which involve scientists and citizens, but with no informal/ formal network between them. Also, due to the lack of a policy mechanism, these activities seem significantly delinked. Though India's 5th STI policy draft recommends expanding the boundary of science beyond the confines of research laboratories and academic institutions, inadequate policy responses hinder the citizen science initiative and have fragmented the citizen science practitioners in India.

Proposal for a Multistakeholder Roundtable

To initiate a discussion on these issues, the Department of Science and Technology's Centre for Policy Research (DST-CPR) at IISc, Bangalore, is organizing a roundtable on 10th May 2022 from 4-6 pm (virtual mode). Representatives from major citizen science projects across India will participate in this event. Additionally, citizen science groups from Global and Asian Citizen Science networks will participate and share their inputs.

Objectives

- To discuss the importance, barriers, and opportunities of doing citizen science in India.
- To compile policy recommendations for facilitating citizen science projects in India regarding how to actively involve citizens in long-term and high-quality science programs that generate new knowledge.
- To discuss the policy responses on ensuring that citizen science data are available, possibly in an open-access format.
- To discuss the possibility of a network of citizen science projects in India for setting standards and sharing resources and best practices.
- To discuss if such a network can also act as a policy advocacy group and engage with international projects.

We will prepare a report based on the discussions and submit to the relevant stakeholders

Date & Time

10th May 2022 at 16:00- 18:00 Hrs (IST)

List of Participants

- Dr. Ananda Hota, Assistant Professor, Center for Excellence in Basic Sciences, Mumbai University, and Director & Principal Investigator of RAD@home Astronomy
- Dr. Binoy V. V., Associate Professor, National Institute of Advanced Studies (NIAS)
- Dr. Debapriya Dutta, Scientist G, SEED Division, Department of Science and Technology (DST)
- Dr. Disha Sawant, Assistant Programme Manager, Citizen Science Projects at Pune Knowledge Cluster
- Gitika Goswami, Associate Vice President & Lead-Policy Research & Planning, Development Alternatives Group
- Prof. Krushnamegh Kunte, Professor, National Centre for Biological Sciences (NCBS), TIFR
- Dr. Libby Hebburn, Vice President, Global Citizen Science Partnership
- Dr. Mehar Wan, Scientist, CSIR-NIScPR and Member, INYAS
- Dr. Mendel Wong, Co-Founder, Citizen Science Asia
- Prof. Pankaj Sekhsaria, Associate Professor, IITB, Center for Technology Alternatives for Rural Areas (CTARA)
- Mr. Raghuvansh Saxena, CEO, Earthwatch Institute India
- Dr. Rajendra S. Dhaka, Chair, Indian National Young Academy of Science (INYAS), Associate Professor, Indian Institute of Technology, Delhi
- Ms. Remya Haridasan, Scientist-D, Office of the Principal Scientific Adviser to the Government of India
- Prof. Saradindu Bhaduri, Associate Professor, Centre for Studies in Science Policy, JNU
- Dr. Suhel Quader, Programme Lead, National Conservation Foundation

Meeting Link

https://teams.microsoft.com/l/meetup-join/19%3ameeting_OTVhYzY4ODItZTI2Yy00NGQ3LThhY2QtM2JkOTI0ZmJjN2Ex%40thread.v2/0?context=%7b%22Tid%22%3a%226f15cd97-f6a7-41e3-b2c5-ad4193976476%22%2c%22Oid%22%3a%22ef776e0a-e869-4051-8200-04d79b1ac476%22%7d

References

- Irwin, A. (2002). Citizen science: A study of people, expertise and sustainable development. Routledge.
- Bonney, R., Shirk, J. L., Phillips, T. B., Wiggins, A., Ballard, H. L., Miller-Rushing, A. J., & Parrish, J. K. (2014). Next steps for citizen science. *Science*, 343(6178), 1436-1437.
- Namdeo, S.K., & Koley M. (2021). Citizen Science in India: Introduction, Challenges, and Way Forward. *DIALOGUE-Science, Scientist, and Society*. link: <http://www.dialogue.ias.ac.in/article/30161/citizen-science-in-india-introduction-challenges-and-way-forward>