

## Empowering Citizens to Address Global Challenges



Citizen science is an important vehicle for democratising science and promoting the goal of universal and equitable access to scientific data and information.

Researchers from the International Institute for Applied Systems Analysis (IIASA) have recently published a primer aimed at established and aspiring practitioners of citizen science to highlight critical issues and how to address them.

Citizen science has a long history. Volunteers have participated in scientific inquiry for centuries, leading to some of the most extensive datasets and sources of information on public health, pollution monitoring, ecology, biodiversity tracking, etc. It offers unique opportunities to interested individuals to join science and research across the globe and empowers people to participate in the scientific process, gather and share data and information, and contribute to collective action to address important challenges we face today, such as environmental pollution, food security, biodiversity loss, and the climate crisis.

Citizen science is earning recognition within the scientific establishment as a valid and valuable approach. It offers the opportunity to showcase the breadth and depth of citizen science possibilities to a wide range of scientists and researchers who are not yet familiar with it. One of the most significant advantages of citizen science is that it promotes open data practices and contributes to innovation by opening science up to society and advancing collaborations between various actors, including citizens.

The authors point out that the fields of application for citizen science methods and approaches continue to broaden in terms of subject matter and deepen in terms of the advancement of methodologies as more examples of citizen science research enter the mainstream scientific literature.

Source: [International Institute for Applied Systems Analysis](#).

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