Challenge 2: Citizen Science for Justice and Equity

Why this matters

Justice and Equity directly or indirectly affects us all: Gender, LGBTQIA+, regional and cultural backgrounds, skin colour and physical characteristics, and mental wellbeing can all contribute to inequities. All of these aspects are further influenced by persisting social inequalities, such as the rural-urban divide, economic and environmental fragility, disability, wealth, and many more. Rural communities especially are not only frequently underrepresented but also face specific challenges, such as depopulation, ageing, limited mobility and connectivity.

We focus on two related topics in this space where we believe citizen science can make a big difference: **Climate Resilience and Health**. Citizen science can contribute to these topics in many ways, such as mapping the impact of climate change on (vulnerable) people and the environment or monitoring and taking action on inequities in health care. Citizen science can also help make these topics more accessible to the public and help citizens not only understand them better but also engage in the development of solutions.

- **Climate Resilience**: Climate change related challenges affect almost everyone in every corner of Europe. We need to move from measuring climate impacts to adapting to the changes that are already occurring. Citizen science has already started this work and can be a vehicle to help citizens understand complex concepts such as pollution, biodiversity, or ecosystem solutions; only if they understand how these issues affect them and their communities are they in a position to contribute their views and be heard. We are looking for citizen science projects that focus on changing citizen behaviour, raising awareness of things individual citizens can do, and collectively affecting societies and moving them toward adaptation to the new climate situation and reducing vulnerabilities.

- **Health**: Health issues have an overarching impact in all areas of society, such as chronic diseases, the lasting effects of the COVID-19 pandemic, and social and economic determinants of health outcomes. Citizen science in this area often takes the form of data classification (e.g. Fold-It), trackers collecting and making citizen data available (e.g. AppleHealth, FitBit), and patient-led initiatives, often at small scale. There are many more areas where citizen science could contribute, especially related to patient experiences and equity and inequalities in health care provision and systems.

These two topics are also connected, for example, in areas such as environmental effects causing health crises and societal inequalities affecting both citizens' health and their capacity to deal with the effects of climate change.

What we are looking for

This IMPETUS challenge calls for Citizen Science projects that have the capacity to help make European society more just and equitable. It will focus on two key challenges that can be addressed through Citizen Science:

1. **Climate resilience**, and ways to improve existing responses to the effects of climate change, including effects on vulnerable groups; and

2. **Health**, and inequalities in health, including what causes them (e.g. underlying social inequalities, COVID-19) and promoting health through scientific research and health literacy.

Applicants should aim to implement projects that contribute to research that enables solutions to these issues. Projects that address topics in social and artistic research are explicitly included in this call.

How we select projects

We particularly welcome applications from projects that are led by women or non-binary persons, and that are run by, or actively involve, underrepresented groups and their public representation. This includes those belonging to groups at risk of social exclusion and discrimination, such as refugees, ethnic minorities, the LGBTQ+ community, those with disabilities; or from lower-middle income countries; as well as projects that focus on inclusion dimensions of their research.

All projects **will also be assessed against criteria of equality, diversity, equity, openness, and potential impact on policy.**

IMPETUS has an inclusive view of Citizen Science initiatives, which can have a wide-ranging scope of scientific and social activities that engage citizens and aim to deliver scientific advancement and social benefits, support communities, and foster an open and inclusive civil society.

Eligible projects could include but are not limited to:

- Citizen engaged in digital humanities research
- Initiatives that incorporate characteristics of Citizen Science as defined by ECSA
- Science and research communication with citizens
- Participatory artistic-led research
- Science education that engages citizens

What we offer

Successful applicants will receive funding and support to deliver a seven-month project. Support will include training and expert guidance from a range of experts within and beyond the IMPETUS consortium, as well as peer-to-peer support and exchange.

Projects can apply for two kinds of grants, depending on their current development stage:

- Projects that are no more than six months into their Citizen Science journey and are yet to establish a community and/or data collection and processing procedures, can apply for a **Kickstarting grant**, worth 20,000 €.

- Projects that are more advanced, with established processes, an engaged community, and initial evidence of impact, can apply for a **Sustaining grant**, worth 10,000 €. We expect these grants to be awarded for the continuation, enhancing of impact, and/or further establishment of existing projects.

The funds provided can be spent on salaries, equipment, consumables, travel, subcontracting to other entities, and indirect expenditure (calculated as 25% of the total direct costs), in accordance with Horizon Europe guidelines.

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