

Challenge 2: Cities for Life

Europe is highly urbanised. Currently, according to the European Commission, our urban areas are home to around 75% of EU citizens, and estimates predict that this will rise to 80 % by 2050. Therefore, urban areas play a key role in ensuring a good quality of life for the majority of European citizens.

Cities are complex systems, bringing communities and the environment together in a living, continuously evolving setting. They are social, cultural and economic centres, embedded in the regions surrounding them. Despite these commonalities, each European city and town is unique. They have unique features developed through history, shaped by their geography, inhabitants and socio-political systems. Consequently, the challenges faced by cities vary significantly.

Despite their unique features and challenges, there are transversal issues that all cities face: they need to prepare for climate impacts, contribute to climate neutrality, circular economy and biodiversity objectives, while ensuring a cleaner and healthier environment and providing better social and economic opportunities for their inhabitants.

Citizen Science initiatives based in an urban context can be crucial, especially to addressing local issues caused by the unique features of their cities, or to counter misinformation about the cities. Local communities, NGOs, research institutes and other local stakeholders are often best placed to take local action, provide evidence and have impact on policy-making, and tackle and resolve local challenges, whatever their nature.

What we are looking for

This IMPETUS challenge calls for Citizen Science projects that have the capacity to help make European cities more liveable, productive and resilient, for a more sustainable and inclusive Europe. It will focus on three key challenges that cities face, and can be addressed through Citizen Science:

1. Tackling **health issues** (including but not limited to the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic),
2. Dealing with the **climate and ecological emergency**, and
3. Addressing **social and economic inequalities**.

Applicants should support and accelerate the socio-cultural, socio-economic and technological transformation of an urban context in at least one city or town in an eligible country. Projects that address topics in social and health sciences are explicitly included in this call. We want to support local communities and empower them to take an active role in accelerating local developments in their cities, as a contribution to wider social and green transformation.

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, and openness.

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 six-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.