Vespucci Training School

Digital Transformations in Citizen Science and Social Innovation

A training school co-funded by JRC (www.vespucci.org) and COST Action 15212 Citizen Science to promote creativity, scientific literacy, and innovation throughout Europe

Contribution to CS participation practices with regard to global grand challenges (Task 2), WG 4 COST Action 15212

Funded by the Horizon 2020 Framework Programme of the European Union

General Information

Date: January 21-25, 2019
Venue:
Fattoria di Maiano, Via Benedetto da Maiano, 11, 50014 Fiesole FI, Italy
Website: http://fattoriadimaiano.com/
Nearest airports: Florence and Pisa; Nearest railway station: Florence.

Language of the training school: English

Organization Committee:

- Sven Schade, European Commission DG Joint Research Centre (JRC), Ispra, Italy
- Marisa Ponti, European Commission DG Joint Research Centre (JRC), Ispra, Italy
- Cristina Capineri, University of Siena, Italy (local organiser)

Lecturers/Facilitators (confirmed) - more to be added when confirmed:

- Muki Haklay, University College London, UK
- Mara Balestrini, CEO Ideas for Change, Barcelona, Catalonia, Spain
- Stefan Daume, Founder and Chief Data Wrangler at the Scitingly Project, Stockholm, Sweden
- Sven Schade, JRC
- Cristina Capineri, University of Siena, Italy
- Marisa Ponti, JRC

More to be added when confirmed

How to Apply and Key Dates

Important Dates:

- Application deadline: 31 October 2018
- Notification of acceptance: 21 November 2018
- Start of the Training School: 21 January, 2019

Number of participants: max. 20

Financial support for travel and accommodation:
This training school will be limited to 20 participants from the COST Member and Cooperating States and from the Near-Neighboring Countries, whose participation has been approved by the Action Management Committee of this Action.
The selected trainees will receive a grant of 750 Euro as a contribution to the overall travel and accommodation for seven nights and meal expenses. The grant will be received one month after the completion of the training school. Trainees from Italy will receive a grant of 550/600 euros due to smaller travel expenses.
Participants are expected to arrive at the Fattoria di Maiano in the afternoon/evening on January 20th (Sunday) and depart on January 26th (Saturday) after breakfast. Successful candidates must arrange their own travel. Accommodation (six nights) will be offered at the Fattoria di Maiano to encourage a full immersion/group work and exchange among trainees.
Applicants should read the COST Rules (Vademecum) for funding eligibility (www.cost.eu/download/COSTVademecum)

Who can apply?:
Early-Career Investigators (ECI) (individuals who are within a time span of up to 8 years from the date they obtained their PhD/doctorate (full-time equivalent) in different fields, for example, Science and Technology Studies, Citizen Science, and Public Policy; researchers, policymakers, civic entrepreneurs, designers, and civil servants.
Applications will be assessed by the Steering Committee and about 20 participants will be invited. We aim to achieve a balanced representation of disciplines, gender and countries, with particular emphasis on ECI and applicants from COST Inclusiveness Target Countries (see the list here) http://www.cost.eu/about_cost/strategy/excellence-inclusiveness.
Accepted participants are recommended to bring their laptops and VGA adaptors for the projector. We will provide Internet connection and lunch! Fluent English is required.

How to apply?
Applicants are requested to:

- Fill out the application form
- Prepare and upload a 250-word motivation letter where they "Make their case": why is this Training School important for them, and how they think they can use it to involve citizens to support social innovation in their country.
- Prepare and upload a short CV - max 2 pages. In the same document, if applicable, also describe their role/contribution in/to the COST Action 15212 (e.g., Working Group Member, contributor to a publication, etc.).

  CV and motivation letter can be uploaded in the application form!

The organizing committee will assess the eligible contributions following these criteria. - Scientific/technical quality of contribution (max. 10 score points).

- Level of involvement of the participant in the Action (max. 5 score points).
- Interest of the submitted contribution to WG and Action goals (max. 5 score points).

Contact for further information regarding applications:

- Sven Schade <s.schade@ec.europa.eu> EU Joint Research Centre, Ispra, Italy
- Marisa Ponti < marisa.ponti@ec.europa.eu> EU Joint Research Centre, Ispra, Italy
- Cristina Capineri <Cristina.Capineri@unisi.it> University of Siena, Siena, Italy

Aim and Goals of the Training School

This training school is a five-day event for doctoral students, researchers, policymakers, civic entrepreneurs, designers, and civil servants who are interested in exploring and learning about:

1) how citizen science can be understood and/or used as a strategic or intentional approach to social innovation;
2) the intertwinement of social innovation with socio-technical developments, including the impacts of digital transformation;
3) the relationship between policy framing, participatory research, and social innovation.

Context: Citizen Science Beyond the Narrow Framing of Public Engagement in Scientific Research

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Citizen science has gained popularity not only in the scientific community but also with the public. It holds the promise of fostering an open and participatory approach to science, reducing the distance between science and society and contributing to the goal of an inclusive society. While citizen participation in citizen science projects is still often reduced to collecting or processing data, the citizen science landscape is much broader and diverse. When considering the full potential of citizen science, not only should we pay attention to answering scientific questions and generating valid data, but also to the possible pressures, drivers and effects on society and social innovation.

Drawing on Soule, Malhotra, Clavier (https://www.gsb.stanford.edu/faculty-research/centers-initiatives/csi/defining-social-innovation), we define social innovation as the practical development and implementation of new products and services which meet social needs and support social progress, and often require the active collaboration of constituents across government, business, the nonprofit world, and civic organizations. Instead of emphasizing science communication, data collection or the framing of research policy, we see a strong need to address and examine issues of social value, social progress and the foundations for systemic changes.

So, what is the relationship between citizen science and social innovation? In the context of social innovation, the idea that citizen engagement is critical to the development and implementation of new solutions is often regarded as a self-evident truth, in order to build trust in public institutions and lend greater legitimacy to public decision-making processes (Davies & Simon, 2013). However, most potential participants are citizens and not citizen scientists, and when we need to develop solutions that meet social needs, we need to develop solutions for all. The role of citizen science in supporting social innovation to tackle social challenges and lead to more effective and more legitimate solutions needs to be examined.

The Role of Digital Technologies in Engaging Citizens (not only Citizen Scientists) in Social Innovation

With the widespread availability of cheap, ubiquitous and powerful tools like the internet, the world-wide web, social media and smartphone apps, new ways of carrying out both citizen science and social innovation have become possible. Often this means that barriers for citizens to engage in both science and social innovation have been lowered in terms of communication, outreach and scaling and thresholds for participation have also been lowered.
There is an enormous potential for these technologies to strengthen the role of intermediary civil organizations and communities, and thereby to re-balance the playing field in favor of a broader range of actors - even those who do not use Information and Communication Technologies (ICT) (Millard & Carpenter, 2014). ICTs can also help citizen engagement in policy framing by facilitating their involvement throughout the policy cycle, from agenda setting to service design and provision up to policy impact evaluation, creating new roles for stakeholders and enabling new power relations (Misuraca, 2017).

However, digital technology should also be put in context, as it is often not leading edge but existing off-the-shelf technologies that are used in social innovation. Thus, technology must always be seen in its close intertwinement with the actual world of people, places, and digital skills people may or may not have.

Participants in this training school will learn about the relationship between citizens and research, the opportunities and challenges of citizen science for social innovation, the role of digital technologies in engaging citizens in social innovation, and the impact of new technologies on existing projects of social innovation involving citizens. Participants will also learn about the relationship between citizen

science, social innovation and policy framing, in terms of defining problems, questions and roles of stakeholders, and the role of regulation for the development and implementation of solutions. During the training school, time will be devoted to design socio-technical spaces that involve different stakeholders (e.g., citizens, civil society organizations, scientists, policy makers, and industry) with the aim to enable new solutions that meet social needs. In the design of these spaces, attention will be paid to "putting citizens in the loop", enhancing public engagement in research and innovation and policy-making, and developing more inclusive and accountable governance of research and innovation.

Outcome(s) of the Training School:
Participants will learn about new forms of collaborative socio-technical development for social innovation, analyze case studies, and apply what they have learned by building a real collaborative socio-technical development for involving citizens and other stakeholders. As a result, participants will learn new skills and, more importantly, they will know new people, peers to collaborate with and/or other professionals who can help their projects.

Program Overview

The program is built upon three main tracks. The first three days will be devoted to introduce participants to these tracks (one track per day). The last two days will be devoted to group work. A detailed schedule is in preparation and will be available at the end of November 2018.

1. Overview of citizen science in research and innovation. This track will explore the following aspects:
   a. Participation of citizens, e.g., RRI and citizen engagement in scientific research.
   b. The relationship between citizen science and social innovation: what is social value, and how do citizens go about creating it? How do we see the role of citizens in the process of social innovation? What are suitable strategies for effective engagement of citizens in social innovation at different administrative levels? Do we need citizen science to foster social innovation?

2. Citizen science, social innovation, and policy-framing. This track will explore the following aspects:
   a. The relationship between citizen science and policy: post-fact world, post-truth politics, and evidence for policy.
   b. Mechanisms to be put in place to move further from knowledge to action.
   c. The policy-framing cycle: differences at administrative levels, geographic scales, informality vs formality.

3. Digital technologies in citizen science and social innovation: opportunities and risks. This track will explore the following aspects:
   a. The relationship between different types of digital technologies and the social innovation outcomes that can be delivered: for example, by examining the focus of the innovation, i.e. is it in digital technology itself? Is it in how this technology interacts with other activities? Is it in how social needs are being met, etc.?
   b. The different combinations of actors, roles and relationships in different types of social innovation, as well as which actors use what types of digital technologies and in which ways.

c. Inclusiveness: how can we make it possible for a broader cross-section of society to participate? How can we lower the "entry level"?

References

Davies, A., & Simon, J. (2012). Citizen engagement in social innovation – a case study report. A deliverable of the project: "The theoretical, empirical and policy foundations for building social innovation in Europe" (TEPSIE), European Commission – 7th Framework Programme, Brussels: European Commission, DG Research.

Millard, J., & Carpenter, G. (2014). Digital technology in social innovation. A synopsis. A deliverable of the project: "The theoretical, empirical and policy foundations for building social innovation in Europe" (TEPSIE 290771), European Commission – 7th Framework Programme, Brussels: European Commission, DG Research.

Misuraca, G. (2017). Policy making 2.0 & social policy innovation: rebuilding trust in the digital era. [PowerPoint slides]. Retrieved from https://icspconference.files.wordpress.com/2016/12/36_misuraca.pdf