



LERU Doctoral Summer School, 9-14 July 2017, University of Zurich

13 December 2016

Citizen science – nexus between research and public engagement

Theme

Citizen science – the involvement of non-professional scientists in research – is generating broad attention across and beyond the scientific community. Activities range from small-scale local projects, largely with layperson participation, to large-scale international projects, which may involve professional scientists and research institutions. Though laypersons have been actively assisting in scientific discovery to varying degrees for centuries, in our current digital age, citizen science is experiencing a boom thanks to rapidly developing technologies made available to a wider public. For example, Galaxy Zoo, an online tool that allows volunteers to classify galaxies, and Zooniverse, a citizen science portal, use technology and citizens' interest to conduct research. Citizen science thrives in an open and transparent environment, and it is widely seen as a cornerstone of a broader open science movement. Citizen science is a phenomenon that is multilayered and comes in many hues. However, many questions remain unanswered, such as legal, ethical, commercial and privacy issues.

The LERU Summer School “Citizen science – nexus between research and public engagement” addresses these and other related issues concerning citizen science and deals with the resulting implications for research and science in general. To this aim, participants will be able to directly experiment with informal learning and scientific creativity.

Participant requirements:

The summer school is for intermediate to advanced doctoral candidates from LERU universities. Participants should be interested in developments in science in general and in science with and for society questions in particular, and be willing to actively work on a project which deals with new ways to interact with non-academic citizens. Programming skills are beneficial but not essential. We strive for a diverse group of participants with different disciplinary backgrounds. All sessions will be conducted in English, and therefore fluency in both spoken and written English is essential.

Take-aways:

What ethical, legal and commercial aspects are to be considered when engaging in citizen science projects? Are there any guidelines? Will citizen science transform science and its communication? What skills are useful to manage a citizen science project? To achieve a deeper understanding, participants will have sufficient time to exchange ideas, and to visit and learn about local existing citizen science projects. Participants will also engage hands-on in a citizen science hack day and present their projects to a jury. The summer school will include short training workshops on project management and science communication.



Doctoral candidates will leave the summer school with a better understanding of citizen science, including opportunities and challenges. Furthermore, we strive to prepare participants to act as emissaries with regard to conducting high-class citizen science projects.

Content and activities:

Inputs: Introduction to citizen science; historical contextualization; ethical, legal and commercial questions; principles and recommendations; getting to know existing citizen science projects and their tools.

Project development: skill identification; pitching session for hack day; citizen science hack day; presentation and nomination of winners; participating at the Graduate Campus Annual Ceremony with presentation of best projects.

Skills: workshops on project management and science communication.

Social events: evening walking tour of the city of Zurich; excursion to Uetliberg (Zurich's local mountain) with a traditional fondue dinner; reception and networking.

Organizing team:

Graduate Campus, University of Zurich, www.grc.uzh.ch:

Dr. Claudine Leysinger, General Manager

Dr. Birte Lembke-Ibold, Events and Communication

Eric Alms, MA, Transferable Skills Courses

Participation costs:

There is fee of a 500€ per participant. This covers course materials, accommodation in Zurich for five nights from 9 to 14 July 2017 (Sunday night to Friday morning), meals and transportation within Zurich. Participants will have to cover travel to and from Zurich, as well as any additional social activities undertaken.