Citizen Science Project Template

# Why use this template:

* To begin planning a new citizen science project
* To assess an existing citizen science project, including its suitability for your needs
* To make sure citizen science is the best approach to achieve your goals

**STEP 1: Project Brief**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
|  | **Project name** |  |
| **Description** | **Style of project (underline)** | * Contributory (e.g. scientists developing projects engaging citizens in data collection)
* Collaborative (e.g. scientists and citizens involved in project planning)
* Co-created (e.g. projects initiated by citizens for their questions, supported by scientists)

N.B. One style is NOT better than another style. The style of a project should be chosen to support the desired outcomes of the project. |
|  | **Project aim** | What is the overall aim of the project (one paragraph only) |
|  | **Activity description** | What specific activities will be undertaken? (Dot-points are good, in chronological order) |

**STEP 2: Project Outcomes**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Strategic outcomes** | **Alignment with existing plans or strategies** | How will the project align with existing plans or strategies? Identify specific existing objectives within your organisation and articulate how the project will contribute to meeting these objectives.Will they inform decision or policy making? |
| **Project outcomes** | **Outcome categories** | **Importance\***LOWMEDIUM HIGH | **Description** | **Who will contribute to the delivery of this****outcome** (include internal or external collaborations) |
| **Research** |  | What are the research questions? | Who will contribute? |
| **Education** |  | What will citizen scientists learn about the issue by participating?Are the results expected to have educational value to the wider community?Will citizen scientists acquire any additional skills through this project? | Who will contribute? |
| **Engagement** |  | Who are you aiming to engage and why? (eg skill set, age group, community representatives)How many will be engaged?Through what medium will they be engaged (field, online, newsletters)? | Who will contribute? |

\*While citizen science projects can achieve research, education and engagement outcomes, it is not necessary or typical for projects to place ‘high’ importance on all three outcome categories. Most importantly, the outcomes should align with your organisation’s plans or strategies.

# STEP 3: Project Analysis (for existing or new projects)

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Description** | **Scale and complexity**Is the project local, regional, state, national, international? | Place a horizontal line where the project best fits this model:**Focused projects** are higher (more complexity but fewer people and smaller scale)**Large scale projects** are lower (typically: lots of people, little training, lower complexity, larger scale) | **Projects run exclusively by scientists**Number of Training / Scale (spatial Complexity participants Complexity / temporal) **Projects run in partnership with Citizen Scientists** |
|  | **Similar projects**Identify any existing projects that might achieve the desired outcomes (you can use this template to assess them). |
|  | **Engagement of citizen scientists**Identify how citizen scientists will be engaged in the project (i.e. how will they hear about it?). |
|  | **Data management**Identify how data will be collected, entered, stored and analysed by completing this DEWNR standard Managing Environmental Knowledge (MEK) form. Identify any technological requirements (e.g. online infrastructure or smart-phone apps). |
|  | **Communication & feedback**Communicating results back to community can have a large impact. Not communicating results can have a negative impact. Identify how results will be communicated? |
|  | **Logistics**Identify potential difficulties, e.g. weather, method, site access. |
|  | **Citizen Scientist commitment**Is the commitment short or long term? How many years? How will you maintain engagement if it’s a long term commitment? |
|  | **Agency commitment**Is the commitment short or long term? Is funding and or resources available? How many people? |
|  | **Costs**Identify costs, plus any existing and planned commitments for funding; include in-kind if appropriate. |

**Useful reading:**

* A UK guide to help decide if citizen science is right for a projec[t: http://j.mp/project-decision-guide](http://j.mp/project-decision-guide)
* A UK guide to developing projects[: http://j.mp/project-development-guide](http://j.mp/project-development-guide)
* A Cornell Lab paper (USA) on developing projects[: http://j.mp/CLO-project-development-paper](http://j.mp/CLO-project-development-paper)
* A Cornell Lab paper on the deliberate design of projects[: http://j.mp/deliberate-design-paper](http://j.mp/deliberate-design-paper)

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