1. A Roadmap for Citizen Science

CIVIC EPISTEMOLOGIES Project

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Description

CIVIC EPISTEMOLOGIES (http://www.civic-epistemologies.eu/) is about the participation of citizens in research on digital Cultural Heritage (CH) and humanities, and its main outcome is a Roadmap or the implementation of an e-Infrastructure to enable citizens to participate in a range of research goals established at European level together with cultural institutions and universities.

The engagement of Europe's citizens in scientific research has just started to be exploited, thus representing an important opportunity for improving European competitiveness. The case of digital CH and humanities is particularly relevant because:

- Humanities play a major cross-cutting role in the evolvement of European research and innovation – as it is acknowledged also in the Horizon 2020 Programme of the EC.
- CH as such is an area in which citizens are particularly active (recording, cataloguing, and discussing things on an individual, group/voluntary/amateur basis).
- The potential of broadening e-Infrastructure deployment to support the participation of citizens in research activities is not yet fully explored, although holding a potentially strong impact on social cohesion and job development, both aspects being important drivers in the European policy context.

The project started with an analysis of the requirements and needs that existing experiences of citizen science demonstrated.

A Registry of Resources was developed gathering information about existing initiatives in the domain of citizen science, which can be used as reference and inspiration for new projects and which remain as a legacy of the CIVIC EPISTEMOLOGIES project after the end of the EC funding period.

A study about a shared multidisciplinary Strategic Research Agenda has

been conducted in order to correlate scientific objectives with the steps indicated in the Roadmap.

An iterative process started then for the production of the Roadmap. A first draft was prepared on the basis of the requirement analysis of the previous phase. This was then updated integrating comments and feedbacks gathered through the online consultations, meetings and other direct exchanges with stakeholders.

The aim of the Roadmap is to illustrate a path towards the engagement of citizens in the research and valorisation of CH, by using distributed services like digital tools and online communication offered by the e-Infrastructures. However, these services are meant not only for the participation of citizens - together with cultural and academic institutions - in the research processes. They shall also support the participation of creative industries in the exploitation of digital cultural content and, furthermore, artists in their role of mediator between sectors not used to working together, and providers of added value services for the benefit of the society at large.

The Roadmap is intended to be a living document, open to contributions from researchers, e-Infrastructure providers, cultural managers, artists, students, teachers, and citizens interested in the matter. An online version of the document is published on the website (www.civic-epistemologies.eu/roadmap/) where visitors can deliver their comments to improve and ameliorate; it is in other words an instrument offered to the community for free use and re-use.

Keywords

citizen participation, citizen scientists, creative industries, digital cultural heritage, e-infrastructure, skills development, strategic research agenda.