Citizen Science in Switzerland: Contextual Analysis, Recommendations and Roadmap

A project of the Initiative Citizen Science of the Swiss Academies of Arts and Sciences 2021-24 (ICSA+)

1 Status

- The project was mandated by the Swiss Academies of Arts and Sciences (Board of directors of the Swiss Academies of Arts and Sciences on December 2nd, 2021)
- It will be managed by Tiina Stämpfli (chair) and by Jeanne Six (project leader, Science et Cité - *Schweiz forscht / Tous scientifiques*)

2 Initial Situation

Citizen Science (CS) in Switzerland has developed considerably and has gained attention and importance over the last years: among other things, through mutual learning within the community and the development of new projects and institutions. The burgeoning range of offerings and activities is both promising and challenging. Indeed, the diversity of the fields implementing CS goes hand in hand with the diversity of the challenges encountered. To date, neither a contextual analysis[1] (status quo) systematically and thoroughly exploring the already existing guidelines, activities, needs, gaps, and particularities of CS in Switzerland exists nor recommendations and a roadmap having been jointly developed with the CS-Community.

In the multi-annual planning 2021-24 of the Swiss Academies of Arts and Sciences, the value of Citizen Science has been highlighted. The project "**Citizen Science in Switzerland: Contextual Analysis, Recommendations and Roadmap**" is one strategic focus of the Citizen Science initiative of the Swiss Academies 2021-24 (ICSA+).

The project will be led by Science et Cité in a participatory process with a dedicated and high-ranking "Swiss Expert Group for Citizen Science" composed of representatives from several disciplines and working on different aspects of Citizen Science. The Swiss Citizen Science Network *Schweiz forscht / tous scientifiques* will also be involved.

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[1] N.B. In 2015, a first short report of the CS situation in Switzerland was published (see 4.1).
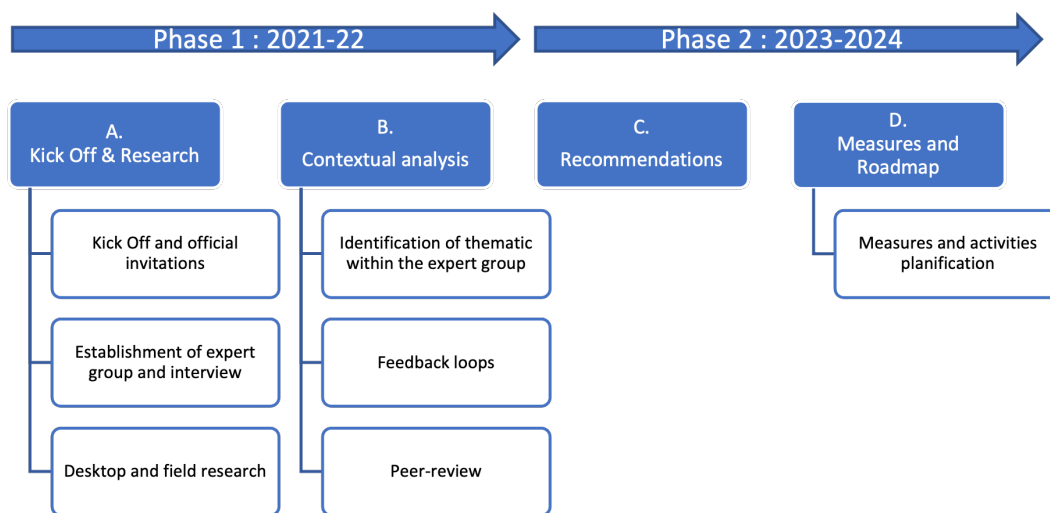
3   Project Aims and Phases

3.1   Project aims

Through a desk research and participatory process, existing activities and guidelines, gaps and needs in the field of CS in Switzerland are identified. This contextual analysis serves as a basis for the drafting of recommendations and a roadmap.

The aim of the project is to set a common ground and to encourage mutual learning.

This roadmap is the starting point for the implementation of measures to be discussed with CS actors in a second phase (Swiss Academies multi-annual planning 2025-28).

3.2   Project phases

Phase 1: CS Contextual Analysis - Assess the Status Quo of Citizen Science in Switzerland

Several relevant themes and open questions will be identified during personal interviews with Expert Group members and CS representatives, as well as through desk research. Based on this initial phase, themes will be exposed and explored with the Expert Group during a workshop. This will lead to the drafting of the CS contextual analysis. Several feedback loops and a workshop will enable frequent reviews from the expert group.

→ Deliverable: Report" Contextual analysis"

Phase 2: Recommendations and Roadmap

In this second phase, a scenario will be developed to answer the needs of CS in Switzerland, based on the status quo. During a workshop, the Expert Group will reflect on recommendations enabling and strengthening CS in Switzerland. Lastly, a final workshop will gather the Expert Group to reflect on suggestions for measures.

→ Deliverable: Roadmap "Recommendations and Measures for CS in Switzerland"

4 Portrait and Role of the Project Leader Science et Cité and the Network *Schweiz forscht / tous scientifiques*

4.1 Project leader: Science et Cité

Since 2014, Citizen Science has been one of Science et Cité thematics. At that time, Science et Cité published a first short report on Citizen Science (CS) in Switzerland and founded and developed the network and the online platform *Schweiz forscht / tous scientifiques* according to the needs of various providers of Swiss Citizen Science projects.

Since 2015, the Swiss Citizen Science Network and the platform *Schweiz forscht / tous scientifiques* have been encouraging mutual learning within the CS-Community, providing information, and working on the recognition of Citizen Science in Switzerland. In 2018 Science et Cité hosted the 2nd International Citizen Science Conference for the European Citizen Science Association in Geneva in partnership with the University of Geneva.

Within the current project, SeC is responsible for project management, initial research work, experts'management and organizing workshops as well as drafting and publishing the contextual analysis, recommendations, and roadmap.

4.2 Swiss Citizen Science Network *Schweiz forscht / tous scientifiques*

The Swiss Citizen Science Network *Schweiz forscht* / *tous scientifiques* was founded by Science et Cité in 2015 in response to a need expressed by various providers of CS projects in Switzerland. The aim of the network is to strengthen the exchange on the topic of CS in Switzerland, mutual learning and to ensure a better recognition by interested persons, promoters, and researchers. A group of representatives of this Network has accompanied the development of the activities of *Schweiz forscht / tous scientifiques* since its beginning.

To valorize their expertise and experiences, the Swiss Citizen Science Network *Schweiz forscht / tous scientifiques* will also be involved in this process in a to-be-defined way (e.g. consultation).

5 Expert Group and Tasks

5.1 Composition of the Expert Group "Swiss Expert Group for Citizen Science"

The 15-18 members of the Expert Group will provide their expertise in various fields immediately relevant to Citizen Science in Switzerland. The group will consist of representatives of the following fields:
- Representatives of citizen science and related fields (citizen science research, project providers, science communication, transdisciplinary research, and open science)
- Representatives of the Swiss Academies of Arts and Sciences (including the Swiss Young Academy)
- Representatives of funding agencies
- Representatives of the educational administration

The selected representatives were recommended during the participatory process within the academies. If needed, additional experts for specific inputs will be contacted.

5.2 Expert Group tasks

The Swiss Expert Group for Citizen Science will be heterogeneous in terms of field, disciplines, linguistic areas, and gender. Experts will attend a kick off meeting and workshops. Expert Group members will also work on specific thematic within defined working groups. They will also contribute to the edition of the reports by joining feedback loops and reviewing the contextual analysis, recommendations, and roadmap. English will be the project language (written and oral).

6 Timeline & Milestones (status 20.12.2021)

The project will start in January 2022 and last until spring 2024.
Experts will be invited to participate in approximately 3- 5 workshops online / or in presence.
The following list presents a few **milestones**:
- Q1 2022: Interview phase with all expert group members
- Q1-Q2 2022: Desk research
- **28.03.2022:** Kick off - save the date
- 14.06.2022: Workshop - Definition of thematic and working groups - save the date
- Q3-Q4: Redaction of the contextual analysis with several feedback loops session on the different chapters
- Autumn 2022: Workshop - Considerations on the 1st version of the Contextual Analysis
- **March 2023:** Conference CitSci Helvetia 2023 (29.-30.03.2023): The intermediate results will be presented during the national conference
- May 2023: Workshop - presentation and validation of the final contextual analysis and recommendations)
- **August 2023:** Intermediate report – contextual analysis and recommendations
- September 2023: Workshop - Considerations on measures
- September 2023 until Spring 2024: Redaction of the Roadmap and feedback loops
- **Spring 2024:** Official publication of the contextual analysis, recommendations and Roadmap.

7 Project Communication

Frequent and transparent communication on the process as well as interim results are very important, therefore a communication concept will be established.

The website (*Schweiz forscht* / *Tous scientifiques*) will serve as a Hub for information, documents, interim results and for possible consultations. The use of other channels has yet to be defined.

The language aspect is particularly important. While the communication within the Expert Group will be in English, the national languages must be considered equally for the communication and involvement of the CS-Community.

Bern, 20th December 2021