

Recommendations

science and crowdsourcing

federal policies

citizen

The recommendations below build on over 12 interviews with experts in citizen science, both from within and outside of government. Based on these interviews and desk research, the Science and Technology Innovation Program at the Wilson Center developed the following 10 recommendations so the next Administration can continue to apply citizen science and crowdsourcing to advance scientific research, address societal needs, and improve STEM education.



Increase active support from the Executive Branch Office of Science and Technology Policy (OSTP) for the Federal Community of Practice for Crowdsourcing and Citizen Science (CCS) and the Agency Coordinators

The value of both communities cannot be underestimated as they provide a space for federal employees to share ideas, work on common legal and administrative concerns, and cross-promote and create various



Continue and expand support for citizen science and crowdsourcing through research grant funding calls

For the federal government to lead the way in scientific research and encourage the adoption of novel methods like citizen science and crowdsourcing in projects, their granting mechanisms must specifically

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Agency Coordinators should facilitate inter-agency discussion, initiatives, and community building

In addition to updating projects in the Federal Catalog, the Agency Coordinators are in an excellent position to identify and share knowledge from citizen science and crowdsourcing in areas such as: best practices, data quality and assurance, and different approaches to project development and evaluation. These individuals should consider their efforts complimentary with members of the Federal Community of Practice for Crowdsourcing and Citizen Science, to facilitate dialogue between agency leadership and other communities within and beyond the federal government. The Agency Coordinators should also explore opportunities to align citizen science and crowdsourcing partnership efforts with Agency-specific challenges and big ideas.

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Continue to leverage fellowships and early career government employees for citizen science and crowdsourcing research, programs and projects

A significant number of federal employees advocating for and promoting citizen science and crowdsourcing within their agency are often early career government employees or former or current fellows, i.e., American Association for the Advancement of Science (AAAS) Fellows, Presidential Management Fellows (PMFs), and Presidential Innovation Fellows (PIFs). These individuals play a vital role in bridging the academic, practitioner and governmental interests. This critical human resource should be expanded in the future.

PUBLIC-PRIVATE PARTNERSHIP

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New citizen science and crowdsourcing initiatives should leverage public-private partnerships to address national needs

Agency Coordinators, the Federal Community of Practice for Crowdsourcing and Citizen Science, and other open innovation communities should collaborate with the private sector to tackle 2-3 grand challenges of national interest. For example, national drinking water remains a huge concern as the ability to test water for toxins, including lead, cheaply and at scale is still out of reach. New initiatives should leverage public-private partnerships, for example, through Small Business Innovation and Research (SBIR) programs designed to engage the private sector in solving grand national challenges.