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Citizen science practices: on the field with the social sciences and the humanities

Alessia Smaniotto

EHESS-OpenEdition/OPERAS

Università di Macerata, 01/10/2024



This project has received funding under the Horizon Europe Framework Programme under Grant Agreement No 101079608. OPERAS received funding under the Horizon Europe and Horizon 2020 programmes and from its members: www.operas-eu.org/funding-information



Citizen science definition(s)

“Citizen science is a common name for a wide range of activities and practices.”

ECSA’s characteristics of citizen science (April 2021)

“Citizen Science refers to the engagement of the general public in scientific research activities.

Citizens actively contribute to science through their intellectual effort or by supporting knowledge with their tools or resources.”

Green Paper on Citizen Science: Citizen Science for Europe (2014)

“Les sciences participatives sont définies comme les formes de production de connaissances scientifiques auxquelles des acteurs nonscientifiques-professionnels, qu’il s’agisse d’individus ou de groupes, participent de façon active et délibérée.

Rapport Hullier (2016)



What Is Citizen Science? The Challenges of Definition

[Mordechai \(Muki\) Haklay](#) , [Daniel Dörler](#), [Florian Heigl](#), [Marina Manzoni](#), [Susanne Hecker](#) & [Katrin Vohland](#)

Chapter | [First Online: 12 January 2021](#)

22k Accesses | 33 Citations | 24 Altmetric

Abstract

In this chapter, we address the perennial question of *what is citizen science?* by asking the related question, *why is it challenging to define citizen science?* Over the past decade and a half, we have seen the emergence of typologies, definitions, and criteria for qualifying citizen science. Yet, citizen science as a field seems somewhat resistant to obeying a limited set of definitions and instead attracts discussions about what type of activities and practices should



Describing a practice

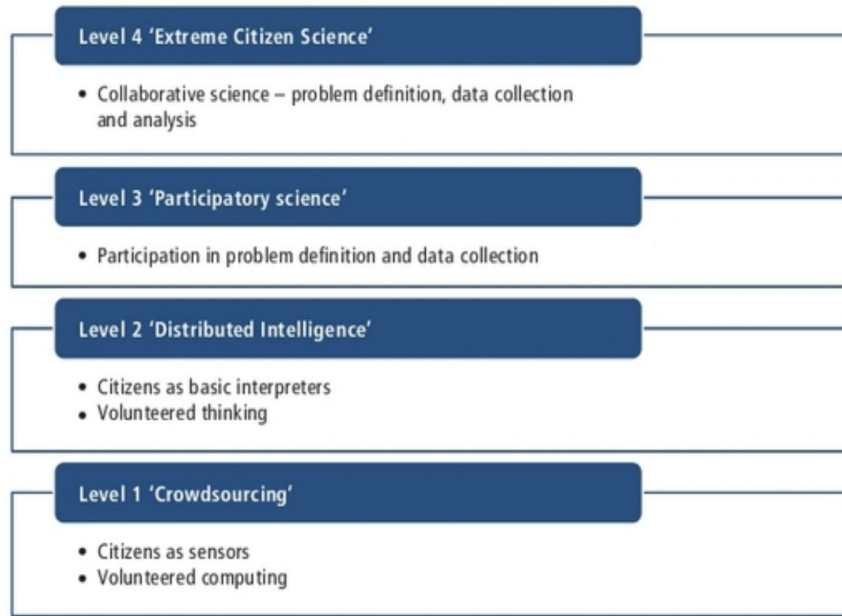


Fig. 4.1 Levels of participation in citizen science (Haklay 2013)

From an educational perspective, PPSR models differ chiefly by involving the public in these steps to varying degrees and by altering the amount of control that participants have over the different steps. For this report we have divided PPSR projects into three major categories:

- 1) Contributory projects**, which are generally designed by scientists and for which members of the public primarily contribute data
- 2) Collaborative projects**, which are generally designed by scientists and for which members of the public contribute data but also may help to refine project design, analyze data, or disseminate findings
- 3) Co-created projects**, which are designed by scientists and members of the public working together and for which at least some of the public participants are actively involved in most or all steps of the scientific process.

Impacts of Public Participation in Scientific Research

To investigate the educational impacts of PPSR we reviewed ten projects including examples of each model type—five Contributory, three Collaborative, and two Co-created. To standardize our methods

fluence and insight to describing the complexity of citizen science, as well as highlighting the evolution of typology development itself. It also reinforces the need and desire to employ a multi-faceted view when characterising, describing and analysing citizen science practice more generally.

(ii) Descriptive aspects of citizen science

In addition to the typologies and discussions in the literature, we have further identified the following aspects that can be relevant when describing a specific citizen science initiative:

Types of participants: Citizen science activities can engage a wide range of participants and members of the public. These can include, among others, school pupils, visitors of museums, adventurers or ecotourists, activists, and amateur experts in their free time.

Scientific fields: Citizen science takes place and can be rooted in many different scientific fields and areas of research, such as life sciences, physical sciences, medical research, engineering, social sciences, and humanities. Considerations of outputs and outcomes: Citizen science outcomes can range from knowledge outcomes, such as journal articles, or information used by participants to address issues of local concern, to practical policy outcomes, and tangible outputs can range from an open data repository to a personal checklist of nature observations.

Open science dimensions: The growing importance of open science [32] and the integration of citizen science as part of the European Open Science conceptualisation [33] for opening up scientific processes, stresses the need to address and consider open science practices in citizen science, such as the use of open data, open access publication, releasing research code as open source, and open lab/workflows.

Technology use and accessibility: The type of technology and its use (e.g., pen/paper, desktop computer, mobile phones, sensor boxes, scientific instrumentation (binoculars, telescopes, DNA sequencing kit)) as well as their accessibility in terms of cost of acquisition or usage, and the skill levels required to operate them, are

The temporal dimension: Citizen science happens only once (one-off), over a short-term (days, weeks, months) and/or long-term (every day, years, decades).

(iii) What is not citizen science?

While some exclusionary statements exist, there is no explicit definition of what is not citizen science.

(Bonney et al., 2009)

(Haklay et al., 2020)

(Wiggins and Crowston, 2011)

Conferences > 2011 44th Hawaii International Conference on System Sciences

From Conservation to Crowdsourcing: A Typology of Citizen Science

Publisher: IEEE

Cite This

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Andrea Wiggins ; Kevin Crowston All Authors

277
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Abstract

Document
Sections

- I. Introduction
- II. Related Work
- III. Methods

Abstract:

Citizen science is a form of research collaboration involving members of the public in scientific research projects to address real-world problems. Often organized as a virtual collaboration, these projects are a type of open movement, with collective goals addressed through open participation in research tasks. Existing typologies of citizen science projects focus primarily on the structure of participation, paying little attention to the organizational and macrostructural properties that are important to designing and managing effective projects and technologies.

More

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Citizen science types

CROWDSOURCING

→ participants provide resources (ex. collect data)

PARTICIPATORY RESEARCH

→ participants are actively involved in several phases of the research process



SSH contributory projects

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Mobile Lifeworlds in German-American Letters

Letters are an irreplaceable and rare primary source for understanding the experiences of immigrants. Recognizing this fact, researchers in Germany have spent decades gathering letters sent from the United States that were in private hands to shed light on the experiences of immigrants in the years after their arrival. New and innovative approaches to the history of migration, however, recognize that it can be just as valuable to understand how migration shaped the experiences of those who remained behind as it is to study the experiences of those who crossed the Atlantic.



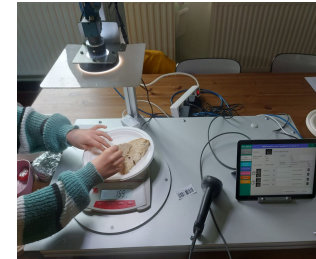
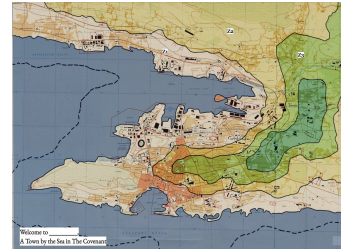
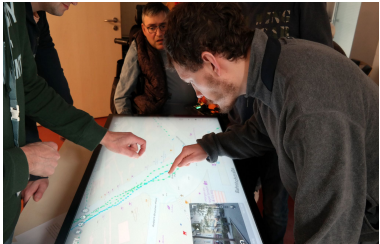
SSH participatory projects



<https://coeso.hypotheses.org/pilots>



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A diversity of participatory approaches and research questions

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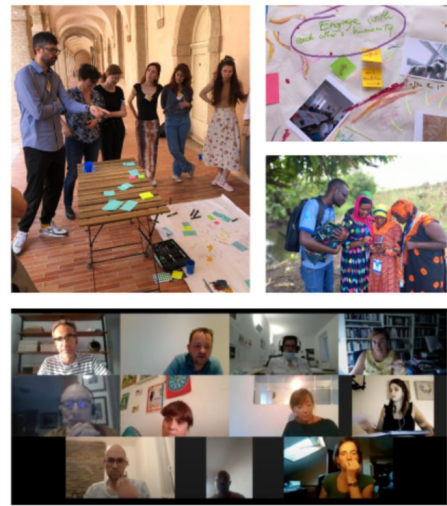
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CitizenHeritage takes the citizen science approach to the world of cultural heritage, where the digital realm creates new opportunities to reach out to broader audiences and facilitate community building. The project ...

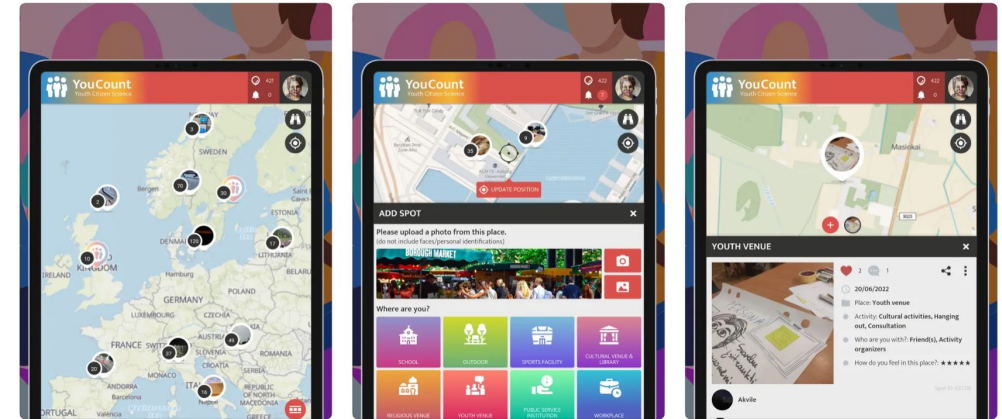
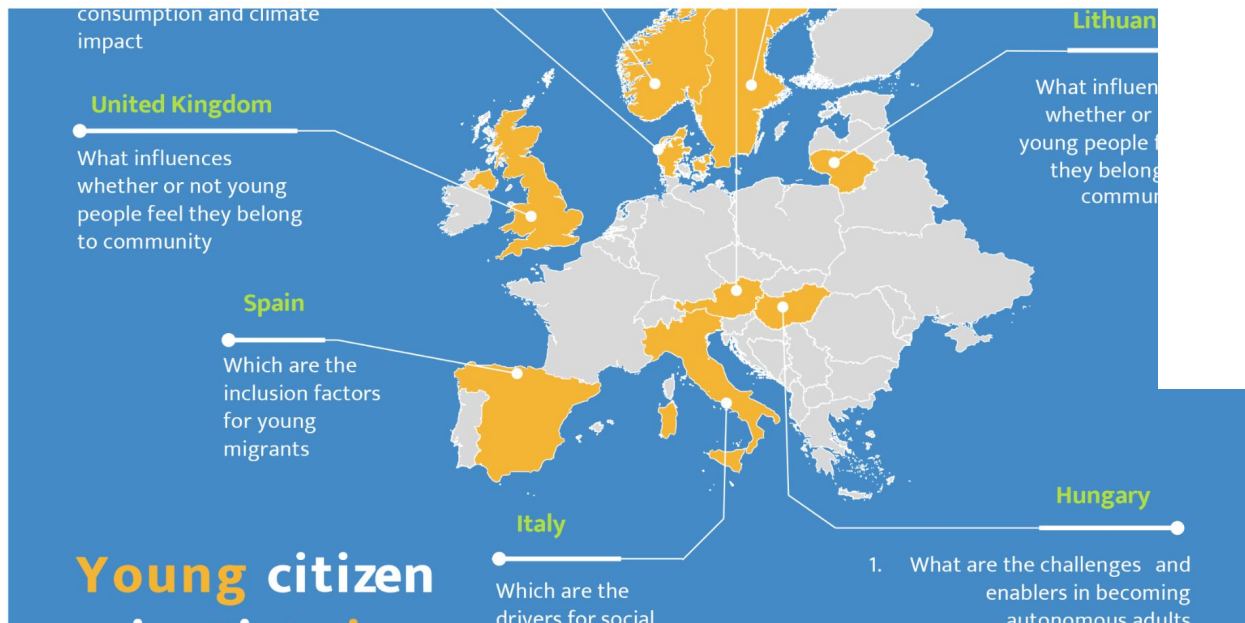
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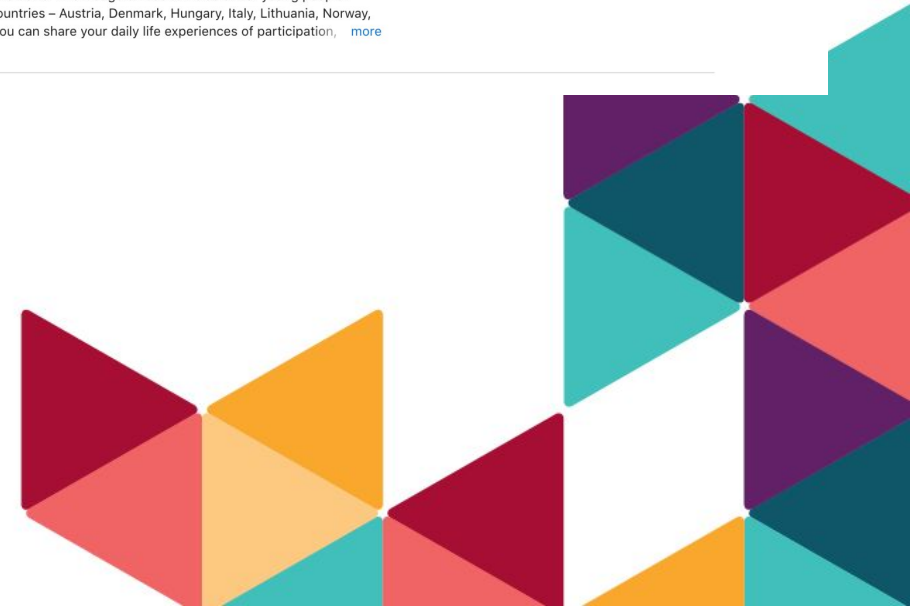


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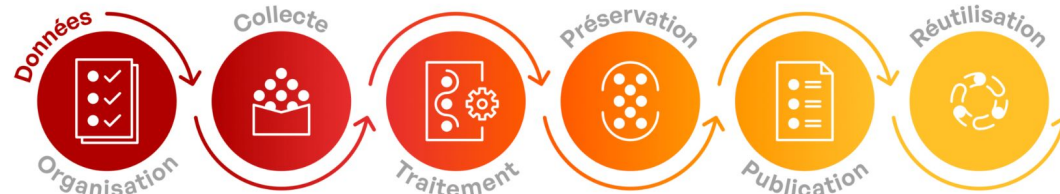
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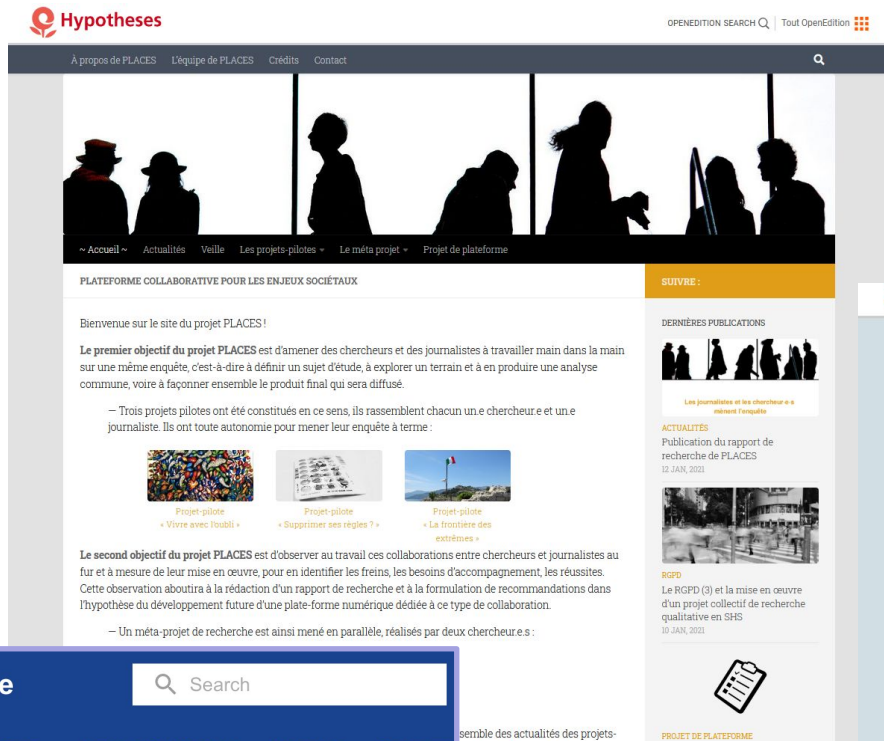
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A cette étape Huma-Num met à disposition des services pour organiser et faciliter le travail en équipe et la gestion de projets.



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Présentation : Apprendre de
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social de biens confisqués
en Italie, à travers le
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(english version) Pourquoi allons-nous travailler sur l'antimafia sociale ? En travaillant depuis des années sur le sujet, Fabrice Rizzoli garde l'impression que l'étude des mafias italiennes fait encore l'objet de nombreuses approximations de la part des experts: ceux de l'école de criminologie (Alain Bauer, Jean-

di Lorenzo Bagnoli (Investigative Reporting Project Italy – IrpiMedia)
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RESEARCH ARTICLE

Open digital infrastructures for bridging professional cultures: the case of extreme citizen science between journalism and research

[version 1; peer review: 1 approved with reservations, 1 not approved]

Jonathan Chibois, Alessia Smaniotto



<https://doi.org/10.12688/openreseurope.15262.1>

Mutual learning spaces



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COLLABORATIVE ENGAGEMENT ON SOCIETAL ISSUES

WP6 – Deliverable 6.1.

Public Engagement, Mutual Learning, and
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Report on the activities of WP6

19.09.2023



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(Leon Quijano & Benei, 2023)
<https://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.10046771>



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Diferencia sexual. ¿Una ontología práctica?

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- 1 desembre: Reflexiones sobre el "entre": praxis, pensamiento y crítica de la diferencia sexual Teresa Hoogeveen (UB) i Andreu Ugalde (UB)
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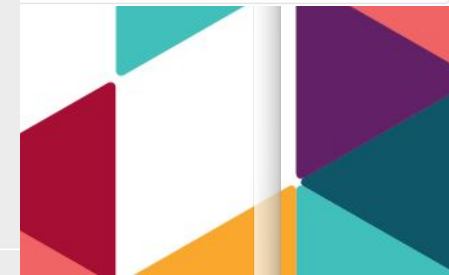
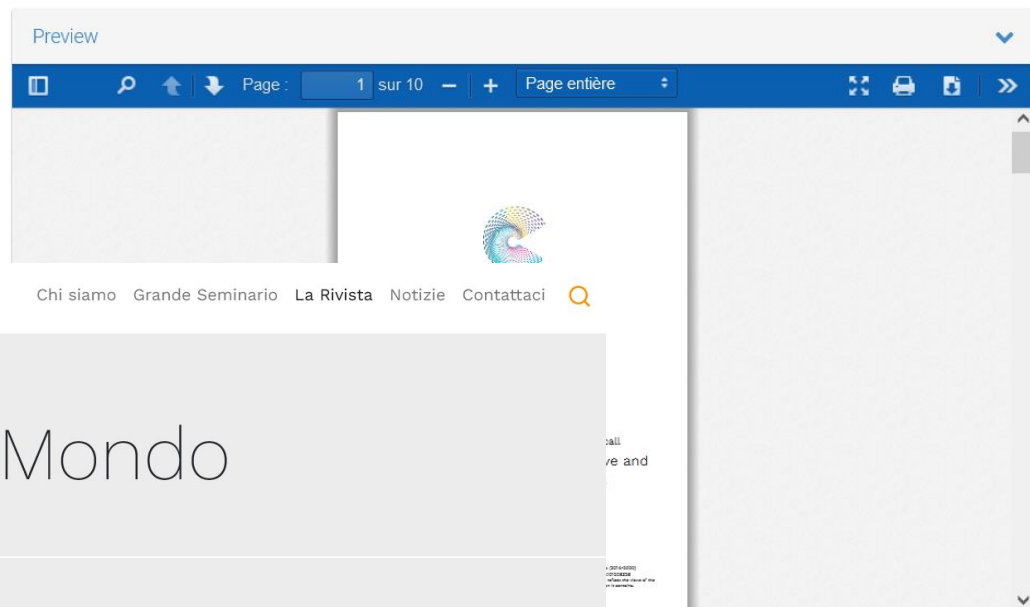
Report on accessibility to sensitive and privately-owned databases (COESO D.2.8)

Bagnoli; Rinaldi

Project member(s)

Gingold; Smaniotto

This report (Deliverable D.2.8) discusses the need for data accessibility in journalism practices. Specifically, it addresses the benefits of developing collaborative spaces and innovative tools that allow both journalists and public authorities to perform in-depth investigations of the links between criminal actors and legitimate assets - in particular legitimate companies - to uncover the risks of corruption, collusion, financial crime and organised crime.



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<https://saojose.huma-num.fr/intro>

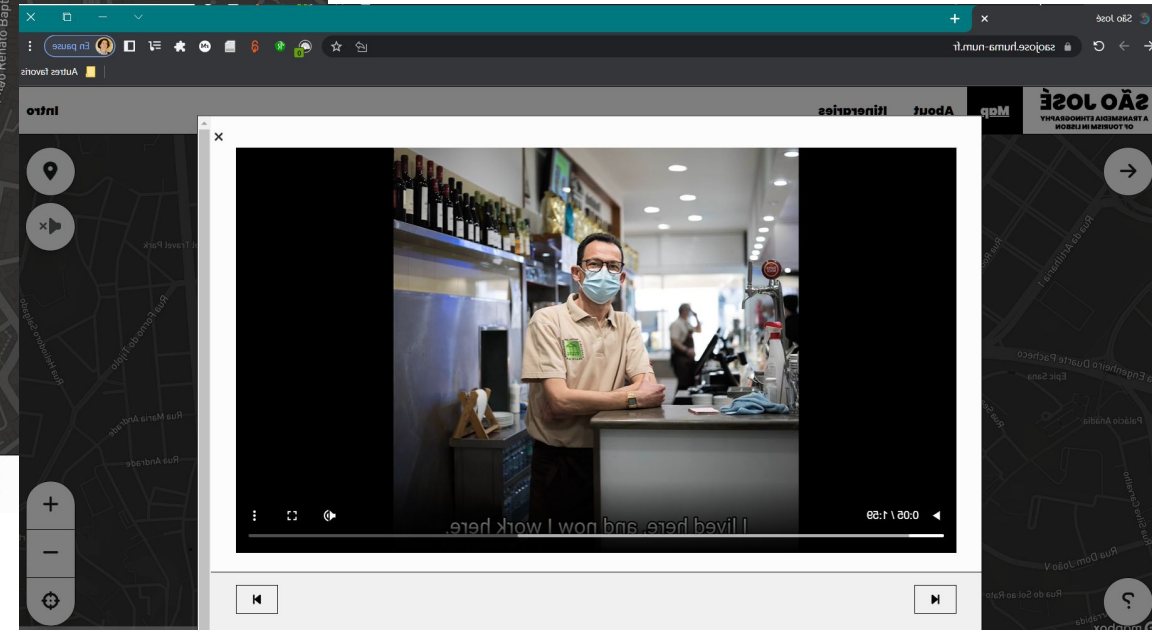


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A TRANSMEDIA ETHNOGRAPHY
OF TOURISM IN LISBON

Map About Itineraries Intro

Mapbox

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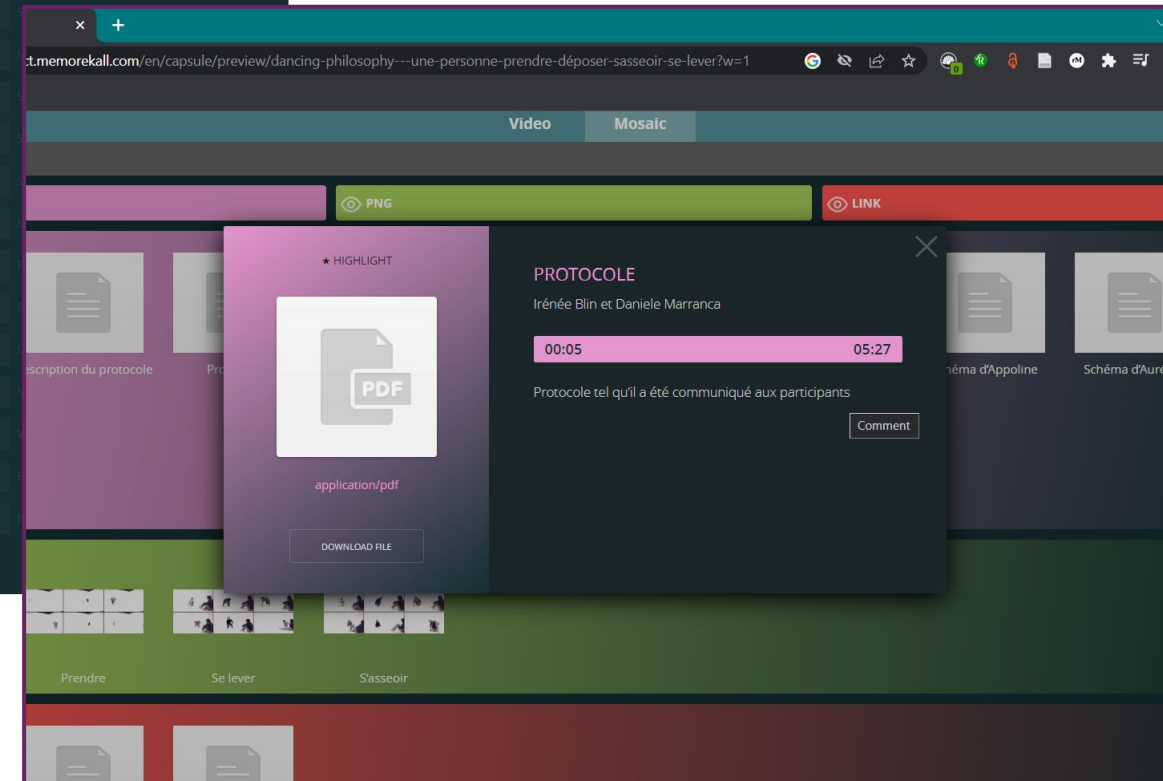
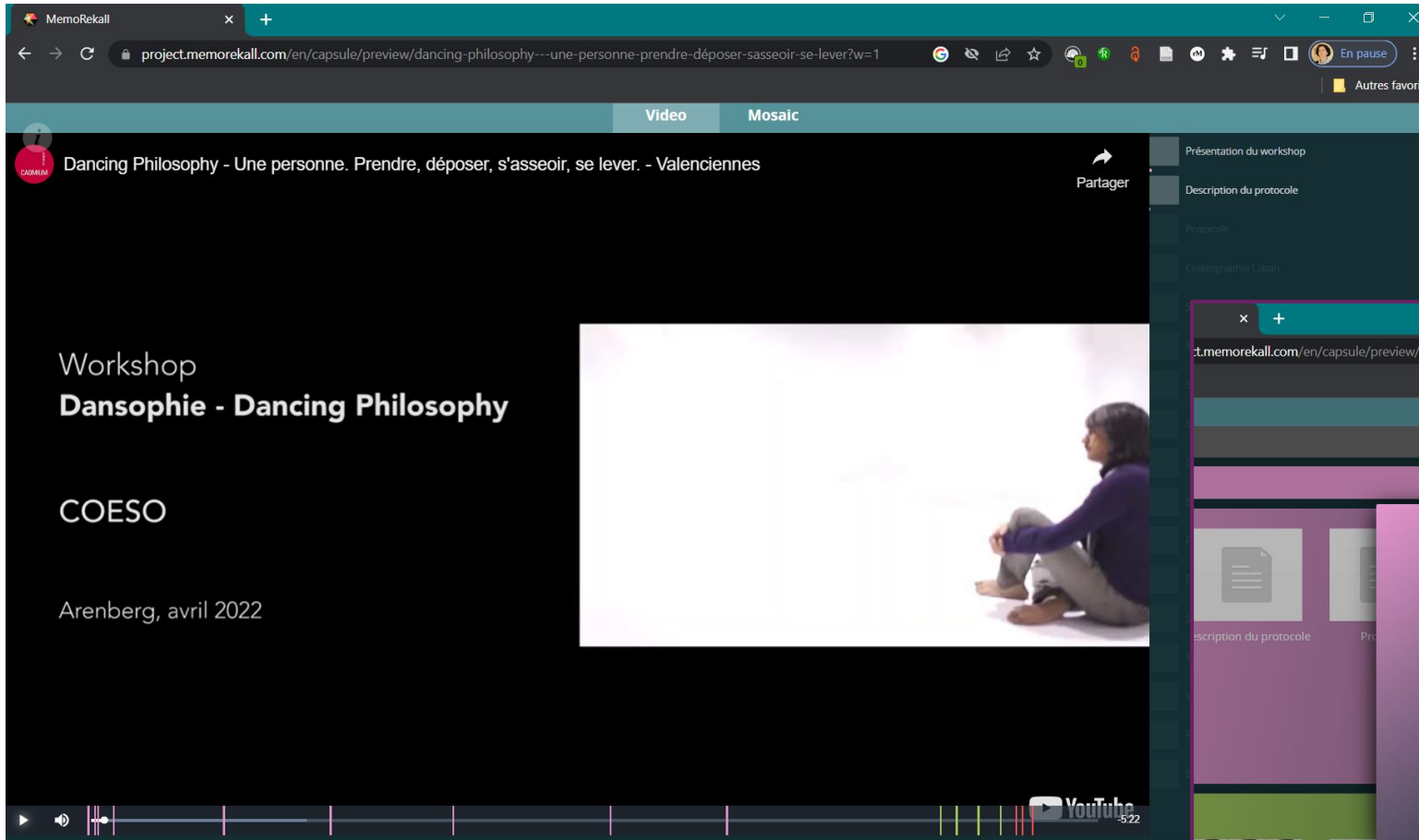


Intro

0:00 / 1:28

I lived here and now I work here

Memorekall for Dancing Philosophy



<https://project.memorekall.com/en/capsule/preview/dancing-philosophy---une-personne-prendre-d%C3%A9poser-sasseoir-se-lever?w=1>

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The
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Welcome to the second issue of the **Citizen Engagement Quarterly!**

Podcast

EXPLORING

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podcast



CAN RESEARCH AND SOCIETY BE (RE)CONNECTED?

Articles for «the general public»



Take-away

- Explore the diverse citizen science and participatory approaches and **SSH choose the one(s) that better fit with your project and or one of its specific phases**
- Look around and be inspired by and **connect with similar projects**
- Consider scenarios and manage the best way to **handle your data** (ex. sensitive information)
- Think **multilingualism** (for both natural and professional languages)
- Dare exploring and use **unconventional and/or innovative output formats** (text, pictures, audio, video, ...)



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The social sciences and humanities contributions to citizen
science: insights from the COESO project journey (COESO D.7.6)

(Smaniotto, 2023)



Monographica. Citizen Science with and within the Social Sciences
and the Humanities, in *Etica&Politica*, XXV/2, 2023

(Eds: Smaniotto, Passani, 2023)



Thank you!

Alessia Smaniotto, EHES-OpenEdition/OPERAS

alessia.smaniotto@openedition.org



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