

Citizen Science Inspiration- en Networking Day 2026

On Monday, **28 September 2026**, Scivil will host its next Citizen Science Network Day. The event will take place at Aeropolis near the **Schaerbeek** trainstation. This year, Scivil is organising the Network Day in collaboration with [Beweging.net](#), [VITO](#) and the [VUB Citizen Science Contactpunt](#). You can expect an inspiring keynote, a series of engaging talks, and in-depth workshops on various aspects of citizen science, as well as a pleasant networking lunch.

We offer a wide range of engaging citizen science sessions on themes such as **impactful communication, inclusion and diversity**, how to get **started with citizen science**, and **practical examples** from citizen science in the city, biodiversity and environment, the heritage sector, and the Global South. In addition, this edition places a strong focus on policy impact: how can citizen science contribute to real change in policy and society? Together with our partners, we explore how insights and data from citizen science can feed into policy processes, societal dialogue, and concrete actions.

Sessions will be held in **Dutch** and in **English**. The programme offers sessions both for **beginners** in citizen science and for **experienced practitioners** looking for more in-depth exploration.

Participation is **free**. Are you registered, but can't come? Let us know as soon as possible and avoid a **no-show fee** (50 EUR).

Below you will find more details about the programme with the different breakout sessions for which you can register per time block.

9:15 – 9:45	Registration & Coffee				
9:45 – 11:15	Plenary session: • Welcome by organisers • Keynote by dr. Dilek Fraisl (English)				
11:20 – 12:35	1A. How to get started with citizen science? (English)	1B. Politicising without escalation (Dutch)	1C. Ethical reflection in citizen science (Dutch)	1D. Citizen science in the Global South (English)	1E. What works in communication and engagement? (Dutch)
12:35 – 13:50	Networking lunch including Citizen Science Market and Ice Breakers to get to know each other				
13:55 – 15:10	2A. Science for and with vulnerable groups (English)	2B. Approaches for meaningful evaluation and scaling (English)	2C. Citizen science in the city (Dutch)	2D. From hard to warm data as a driver for change (Dutch)	2E. A communication strategy for your citizen science project (Dutch)
15:15 – 16:30	3A. Inclusive citizen science in practice (Dutch)	3B. Heritage as a driver for societal change (Dutch)	3C. Citizen science for environmental policy (English)		
16:30 – 17:30	Networking reception				

Sessions

9:45 - 11:15 Welcome and keynote.

Keynote: **dr. Dilek Fraisl** (IIASI & Global Citizen Science Partnership)

Citizen Science: From Local Action to Policy Across Governance Levels and Topics

Dr. [Dilek Fraisl](#) is a Senior Research Scholar at the [International Institute for Applied Systems Analysis \(IIASA\)](#). She is also Managing Director of the [Citizen Science Global Partnership \(CSGP\)](#), a global network that strengthens citizen science in relation to sustainable development.

Her research examines citizen science, artificial intelligence, earth observation, and data innovation as tools for enhancing official statistics and advancing evidence-based policymaking to improve the monitoring and achievement of sustainable development.

In addition to publishing in high-impact scientific journals, she has contributed to several key international reports, including the Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services (IPBES) Monitoring Assessment, and major publications from the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) and the United Nations Statistics Division (UNSD).

She is actively involved in the organizing committees and scientific advisory boards of major European and global conferences, including the UN World Data Forum. With many years of experience, Fraisl has collaborated extensively with international organizations such as the World Bank, the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), World Health Organization (WHO) and various government agencies, ministries, and national statistical offices (NSOs) in advisory, consultancy, and expert roles.

During the Network Day, she will present insights on how citizen science can serve as a bridge between local action and policymaking across governance levels, from local to global.

11:20 – 12:35: Parallel session 1

Between 11h20 and 12h35 you can attend one of the following sessions.

1A. Introduction to citizen science (English)

Presentation and Workshop

This session offers an introduction to citizen science. Many concrete examples and methods from different disciplines will be discussed. You will learn practical aspects for setting up your own initiative and discover how citizen science can be relevant for your organisation or field of interest.

- Jef Van Laer (Scivil)

1B. Politicising without escalation (Dutch)

Workshop

How do we create support and transcend differences between various stakeholders? Most challenges are multi-stakeholder problems; one actor alone cannot solve them. The tools and space to reach a multi-stakeholder solution—often the only sustainable one—are unfortunately often lacking. Using practical examples, we explore how you can politicise in a sustainable way.

- Jo Robberechts (Beweging.net)
- Tijs De Geyndt (Beweging.net)

1C. Ethics and data management in citizen science (Dutch)

Presentations and open discussion

How do we guarantee transparency and respect for participants in citizen science projects? We address themes such as consent (including for children), data ownership, and the sharing of results. Inspiring examples help translate these issues into practice.

- Leyla Soslambekova (VUB Research Information and Data Management)
- Erik Laes - WeAre (VITO)
- Seppe van Bladel (UGent) - Principes van public engagement
- Sam Van Damme (AP Hogeschool) – Cities2030

1D. Citizen science in the Global South (English)

Pitches & panel discussion

This session explores how citizen science in the Global South goes beyond mere data collection and generates tangible impact on policy, communities, and daily life. Through concrete case studies from Africa and Latin America, speakers share practical insights on how citizen-generated data can be turned into meaningful policy dialogue and community empowerment and reflect on what these experiences from the Global South can teach the wider citizen science community.

- Moderator: Caroline Michellier (AfricaMuseum & UC Louvain)
- Sara Dewachter & Nathalie Holvoet - Fuatilia / Women Water Watch (UAntwerpen)
- Afnan Agramont Akiyama - Citizen science for Environmental justice and wetland conservation: experiences from Bolivia and Kenya (VUB)
- Andrea Garcia (UCLouvain) - Citizen Science enabling transparency in the Brazilian beef supply chain (*Andrea Garcia, Dariele Santos, Thais Menezes, Tawana Miquelino, Erasmus zu Ermgassen, and participants of the do Pasto ao Prato initiative*)
- Mercy Ashepet (AfricaMuseum)
- Steff Deprez (Voices That Count)

1E. What works in communication and engagement? (Dutch)

Presentations and follow-up discussion

In this session, we explore how targeted communication can not only reach people but also truly engage them. Through inspiring practical examples, speakers share what works (and what does not) in communication and engagement strategies, how to translate reach into active participation, and which factors contribute to sustained engagement of different target groups.

- Moderation: Liesbeth Gijssels - Iedereen Wetenschapper (EOS wetenschap)
- Petrus te Braak – MOMENT (VUB)
- Isaak Vandermaesen – MaarAllee (Scivil)

13:55 - 15:10 Parallel session 2

Between 13h55 and 15h10 you can attend one of the following sessions.

2A. Science for and with vulnerable groups (English)

Presentations and open discussion

This session offers an inspiring insight into practical experiences from four European projects. The central question is how to involve vulnerable target groups in research in a sustainable and meaningful way. We look more closely at methodological choices: how do you reach people, how do you stimulate active participation, how do you maintain their engagement, and what happens after the project ends? Expect a combination of insights on co-creation, concrete practical examples, and useful tips and tricks.

- Sofie Put (Beweging.net)

2B. From output to impact: approaches for meaningful evaluation and scaling (English)

Presentations and open discussion

How can citizen science initiatives better understand, demonstrate, and strengthen their impact? This session explores practical ways to map and reflect on change and shows how meaningful evaluation can support both learning and the scaling of impact.

- Leticia Garcia Martinez & Noémi Maughan - ScienceUs (ULB)
- Steff Deprez (Voices that Count)
- Mohammad Gharesifard - Navigating impact assessment approaches in citizen science (Rijksuniversiteit Groningen)

2C. Citizen science in the city (Dutch)

Presentations

How can citizen science in the city go beyond mere data collection? Based on successes and lessons learned, we explore how citizen science can contribute to awareness, policy dialogue, and concrete change in the city.

- Kris Vanherle - Telraam Talks (Telraam)
- Straat-O-sfeer & Straatvinken
- Anuschka Dildick en Sofie Neyens - Stapscore (Beweging.net)
- Francis Devlamynck (Beweging.net) & Katrien Voet (CM) - Luchtpijp

2D. 13:55 – 16:30: From hard to warm data as a driver for change (Dutch)

Extended workshop - Please note that this workshop continues during parallel session 3!

How can we not only collect data, but also jointly explore the connections between data, people, and places? How do we move from hard to warm data? From individual to shared ownership? How can jointly interpreting data create movement within an action culture? In this session, we work with the conversation formats of the "wijkbaromotor" (neighbourhoods monitor) and co-creatively explore what work is needed to build these connections, based on a concrete case. The wijkbaromotor is not a tool, but an approach that combines data, conversation formats, and imagination in a specific place to strengthen the resilience of that neighbourhood.

- Sarah Martens, Nathalie Lambrechts, Erik Laes (VITO)

2E. 13:55 – 16:30: A communication strategy for your project (Dutch)

Extended workshop - Please note that this workshop continues during parallel session 3!

Do you want your project to truly make a difference in society? To motivate people to participate? To maintain engagement over the long term? To communicate results in a clear way? And to do all this in a way that fits you and your target audience? A communication strategy is essential. During this workshop, we will look for answers to the questions: who communicates, why, about what, with whom, and how? The workshop is interactive and practice-oriented: together we reflect on your challenges. The goal? You go home with a wealth of inspiration to get started with the communication of your research yourself.

- Julie De Smedt (Science communicator)

15:15 - 16:30: Parallel session 3

Between 15h15 and 16h30 you can attend one of the following sessions.

3A. Inclusive citizen science in practice (Dutch)

Presentations and open discussion

How do you make citizen science accessible and relevant for diverse groups? In this panel, speakers share concrete experiences and approaches, with attention to barriers and success factors. The session offers practical insights for more inclusive projects.

- Els Dumortier – Child Citizen Lab (VUB)
- Jowin Boone – Femma Quartier (Femma)
- Laurien Van Dyck - From patient to project partner: inclusive citizen science in biomedical research. (VIB)
- More speakers will follow soon

3B. Heritage as a driver for societal change (Dutch)

Workshop

What we consider important from the past and pass on to the future: that is the essence of cultural heritage. Socially relevant research does not only look back but also engages with current questions and future challenges. This works best when citizen scientists can actively contribute in different phases of the research. During this session, you will get to know several multidisciplinary citizen science projects in which heritage enriches research with a broader perspective. Afterwards, you will engage in dialogue with other participants and discover how to build bridges within your own project between historical information, current issues, and recommendations for the future.

- Saidja Steenhuyzen (FARO)
- Hendrik Vandeginste (Histories)
- Jacqueline van Leeuwen (FARO)

3C. Citizen science for environment & policy (English)

Presentations and discussion

This session focuses on how citizen science can contribute to influencing policy on climate, energy, and the environment. Through inspiring practical examples, speakers show how data and insights from citizen science can feed into policy processes and societal change. We explore what is needed to move from scientific evidence to real policy impact, and what lessons can be learned from this.

- Wim Van Bortel - Tiger mosquito surveillance (ITG & Sciensano)
- Lieven Symons - Watermonsters (Waterland vzw)
- Stijn Van Onsem ([INBO](#) - [In-situ-monitoringsnetwerken](#)) - Using citizen science to monitor protected and invasive alien species in Flanders
- Eline Verhoeven - [Samen Meten](#) en [CitiObs](#) (RIVM)