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### **Building a Citizen science network in Slovenia**

We introduce the concept of citizen science and its significant role in furthering sustainable development. Citizen science involves the participation of the general public in scientific research endeavors, enabling them to actively contribute to scientific advancements. This emphasizes the crucial nature of maintaining an open dialogue between scientists and the broader public, fostering scientific literacy and excellence. The paper sheds light on the essential characteristics and competencies necessary for citizen researchers to effectively contribute to research endeavors. A strong emphasis is placed on upholding core principles of scientific research, including honesty, objectivity, and integrity. We also delve into the complexities of defining „citizen science”, suggesting that it spans both individual and collective dimensions of research participation. Guidance on the strategic planning and execution of citizen science projects is provided, detailing steps such as defining the research question, collecting data, and its responsible management. The significance of adhering to FAIR data principles is stressed, alongside the crucial aspects of data analysis, dissemination, and long-term preservation. Moreover, we spotlight exemplary citizen science projects in Slovenia and introduce the Citizen Science Network of Slovenia – a pivotal organization offering infrastructure, support, and resources for such initiatives.

**Keywords:** citizen science, open science, research projects, FAIR research data, community, communication plan

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