

<https://osi-ngo.org/agir-vous-memes/centre-de-ressources/communautes-de-pratiques/article/quels-jalons-pour-cadrer-un-projet-de-recherche-participative>



# What milestones help structure a Participatory Research project?

- Act Yourself - Resources Center - Communities of Practice -



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[!glossary]

**In the realm of Science and research projects connected with society, there are many levels of citizen involvement, regardless of age. This can gradually increase from scientific outreach to science mediation, followed by citizen science, crowdsourcing, and even up to the involvement level of participatory science. Beyond this, citizens can be fully involved in all stages of research, reaching the level of [Participatory Research](#). (For more on this topic, see the article [Distinguishing truly Participatory Research from Research that involves non-scientists without genuine participation](#)).**

**[Also check out the training on the design and facilitation of a Participatory Science project](#)**  
[<https://training-for-development.com/-Sciences-Participatives-Step-1-?lang=en>]

In the specific case of a [Participatory Research](#) project, non-scientists' involvement levels cannot be partial.

**On this page, we find several milestones to help define and outline a [Participatory Research](#) project.**

- Favor a newly defined research project designed natively in a participatory format, rather than trying to make an existing project participatory. Of course, a new project can be defined within the scope of ongoing research.
- Establish a solid State of the Art. If necessary, consider separating a very broad multidisciplinary project into several thematic projects, each led specifically, to simplify project understanding and improve acceptance by the relevant disciplinary community. In any case, for a project to be viable, it must be within the scope of the scientific disciplines mastered by the involved research partners, even if this requires scaling down the scope or bringing in an additional research partner.
- Limit the research project to existing possibilities. Expanding to other possibilities is part of a developmental phase prior to the research project itself.
- Always prioritize using common terms when they exist, rather than technical terms. Avoid jargon whenever possible.
- Demonstrate a genuine co-construction approach to the Research. When presenting the partnership stakeholders, present the research and civil society organizations at the same level and in a similar format.
- Specify the exact details of the non-scientific participants who are engaged as participant-researchers. Always delve deeply into different layers of society, not limiting involvement to group representatives but actively recruiting individual citizens. Clearly differentiate the composition of the General Public from the participating public.
- Involved citizens do not necessarily have to be the final beneficiaries of the research.
  - Impact Participatory Research: For instance, when a citizen-researcher should avoid being an involved observer to maintain an independent research role and reduce potential biases, or when observing individuals (anthropology, psychology) or when the research concerns a site (national park, marine area, mountains) visited by citizens from elsewhere (other parts of the country, foreign volunteers), these are examples where the citizen-researcher may not be directly impacted by the research or the immediate beneficiary of results (Extra Community Based Research) but is engaged in an impact-focused project (Good Deed - Impact Participatory Research Project).

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- Community-Based Participatory Research: On the other hand, if the citizen-researcher conducts research on issues that affect them or benefits them or their community, this Participatory Research is considered community-focused (Community-Based Research - Community-Based Learning).
- Do not confuse the participatory dimension with outreach. For example, the dissemination and promotion of data from the research is not directed at the participating public since they are already co-authors of this data. In this example, participants in a participatory setting are therefore co-authors of dissemination and promotion, which is aimed at an even broader audience.
- Distribute tasks equitably between the Research Organization and the Civil Society Organization so that the project is balanced, complementary, and mutually beneficial (i.e., without additional effort required from each side to contribute to defining and conducting research and engaging citizens).
- List the various steps in the Research process (deliverables, work packages) and specify the role of involved non-scientists and how they are involved at each step. A good approach is to separate the designation of the deliverable, the role of non-scientists, and the role of scientists.
- Include University stakeholders (doctoral students) to introduce research findings to the broader scientific community beyond the project itself / also connect non-scientists with the University in addition to connecting them with Research.
- Funding cannot exclusively fund the research organization; otherwise, the project is clearly not Participatory. Achieving 50% funding for civil society organizations is a prerequisite for a truly Participatory Research project, with the requirement to verify that non-scientists are genuinely involved at every stage of the research and in what manner (see above).
- Data production and dissemination must meet both pure research standards and outreach frameworks, covering both Research and Participation fields.
- The budget should be coherent and detailed. Organizing it around participatory activities and including research-related elements is often the most effective approach.

## A Training on the Design and Facilitation of Participatory Science Projects



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In collaboration between Objectif Sciences International and Step and Go, this training is specifically dedicated to the techniques for creating and designing a Participatory Science project for Sustainable Development, as well as the techniques for leading and facilitating a Participatory Science project using a Project-Based Learning approach:

<https://training-for-development.com/-Sciences-Participatives-Step-1-?lang=en>

[<https://training-for-development.com/-Sciences-Participatives-Step-1-?lang=fr>]

Choose the 3-day residential version or the 4-day non-residential option, in the Alps, Paris, Nice, New York... or request a date specifically dedicated for your team.