

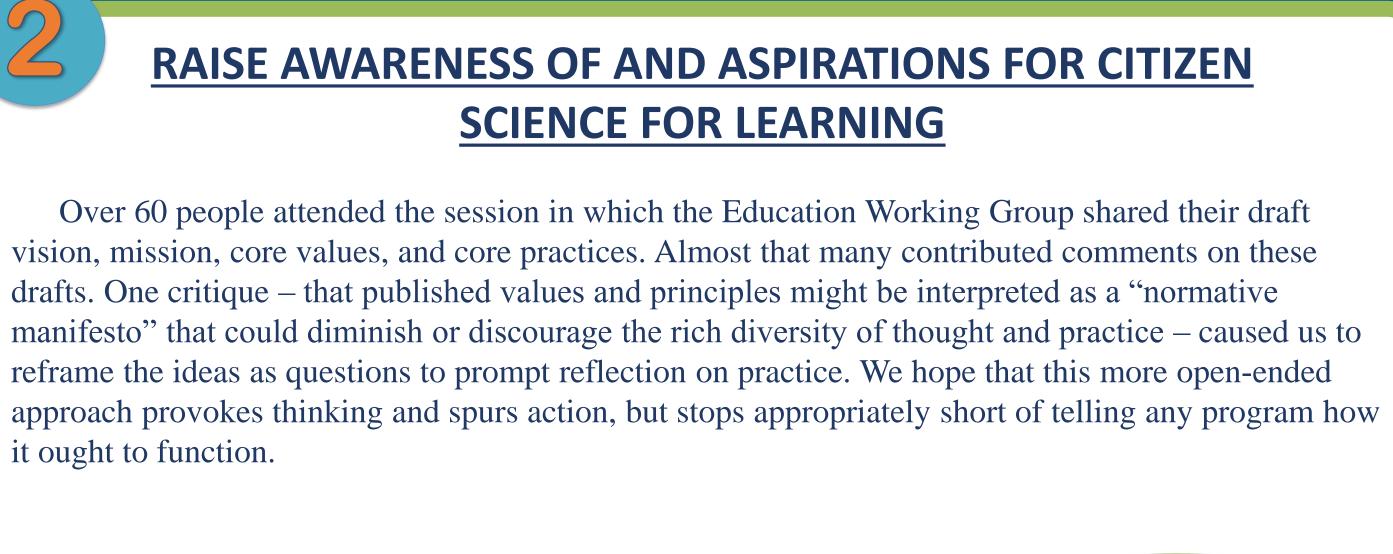


Values

Gulf of Maine **Research Institute**

Science. Education. Community.

Through participation in citizen science, people of all ages and backgrounds contribute to science while building passion for and understanding of scientific ways to investigate the natural world.

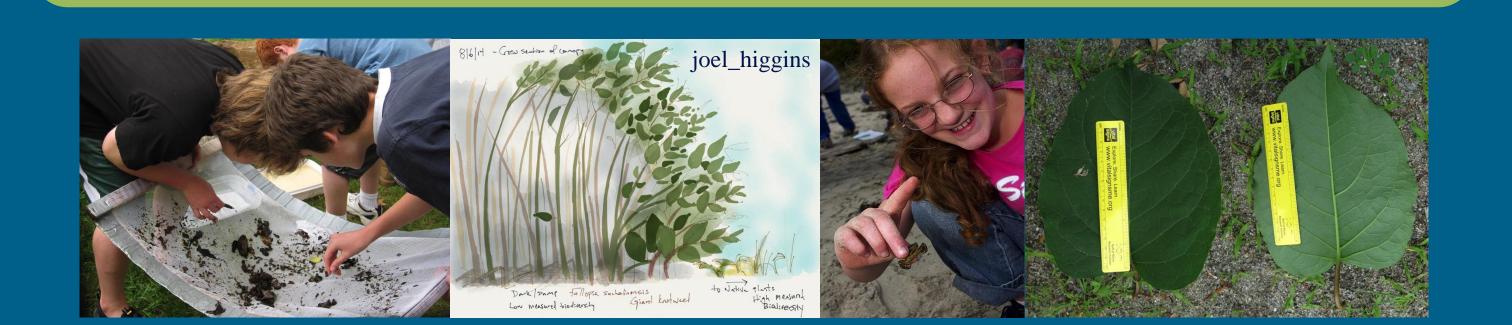


Integrating comments from workshop participants and additional experts from STEM education and citizen science, the Education Working Group revised the drafted values and practices into the following list of questions to prompt reflection on the use of citizen science for STEM learning.

- Do you articulate your programs' learning objectives and make them visible? \diamond
- Do you articulate your programs' science objectives and make them visible? \diamond
- Do you support participants' growing identities as "scientists" and science-capable \diamond learners who see science as part of their lives?

Practices

- Do you help your participants to see where their contributions fit in the scientific \diamond research enterprise?
- Do you welcome your participants into the scientific community? By what means? \diamond
- Do participants in your program experience the unpredictable, sometimes messy \diamond nature of research and discovery?
- Do you provide opportunities for learners with diverse skills and interests to \diamond contribute to the research being done? Do you accommodate learners or educators with different learning goals? Do you offer opportunities for differently talented participants to contribute to the research effort?
- Do participants in your program use skills and knowledge from other disciplines or \diamond endeavors as part of their activities?
- Do you offer participants role models? Are those role models diverse in interests, \diamond race, careers, age, ethnicity, background, experience in the project, etc.?
- Does your program facilitate social interaction among diverse novices, learners, and \diamond experts to support their learning? Does your program leverage divergent perspectives to strengthen the science and learning outcomes?
- Do you share control over who poses research questions, who performs analysis, and \diamond who benefits from research?



Integrating Citizen Science into the STEM Ecosystem Mark Berry¹, Meg Demroese¹, Sarah Kirn², Abe Miller-Rushing³ ¹Schoodic Institute, ²Gulf of Maine Research Institute, ³National Park Service

Questions

OVERVIEW

We held a workshop as part of the two-day Citizen Science 2015 Conference. The overarching goal for this workshop (and the ongoing work of the Education Working Group of the Citizen Science Association (CSA)) was to expand and improve the use of citizen science in formal and informal STEM education to pursue the breadth of learning outcomes being pursued in those settings. Within this goal, the working group recognized particular opportunities:

Raise awareness and aspiration in the citizen science field for what learning outcomes might be achieved through participation; 2. Uncover the cultural forces, factors, constraints, and assets of each stakeholder in citizen science for learning to bridge the diverse worlds of research science, STEM education, and public engagement and enable effective collaboration; 3. Begin to **identify the tools, resources, and research needed** to overcome barriers

and expand the effective integration of citizen science and STEM learning experiences. To create structure around these opportunities, the working group prepared draft language for a vision, mission, core values, and core practices for citizen science in learning (see box

at left). We also prepared an empty table with prompts to encourage attendees to think deeply about the audiences they hope to engage in their programs (see box at right).



Workshop participants and Education Working Group member Sandra Henderson; photo credit Mary Ford



NEXT STEPS

Multiple rounds of community input and synthesis have begun to inform a research, development, and action agenda, but fall short of identifying priorities. Clearly, we must:

- Uncover the cultural forces and factors at play for each group of participants (e.g., the very different cultures of "scientists," "educators," and "the public");
- Develop or enhance resources to overcome these barriers and broaden participation.

The Education Working Group sees an opportunity to use the questions to prompt reflection on practice as a tool for individual citizen science programs to develop and articulate program goals and corresponding indicators. We are planning to use the questions as the organizing structure around which to solicit exemplars from the field for presentation at the 2017 Citizen Science Association meeting. While we are interested in stories "from the field" that illustrate promising practices, we are most interested in soliciting from program leaders what they have learned from the design decisions they have made. In the near-term, we are drafting a manuscript for submittal to *Citizen Science*: Theory and Practice, the new journal of the Citizen Science Association.

- Assess which barriers to participation are most significant for which audiences;

BRIDGING DIVERSE PROFESSIONS AND COMMUNITIES

The Education Working Group has observed that the professionalism and research-based practices of the STEM learning field are often underestimated by scientists and citizen science practitioners. Building appreciation and understanding across these professions is the essential first step to expand and improve the use of citizen science in STEM learning. The following table was our vehicle for launching this discussion.

Audience/ partner/ practitioner group	Cultural forces and factors influencing participation	Assets and attributes they bring to effort	Barriers to their participation	Resources, tools, trainings, mechanisms to overcome barriers	Benefit of this group's participation to them and to research
Scientists					
Resource managers					
Citizen science practitioners					
K-12 educators					
Informal educators					
Youth					
Adults					

Joe Heimlich and Gary Timko of the Lifelong Learning Group and COSI conducted an evaluation of the overall conference and this workshop. A convenience sample was used to select 35 attendees of this workshop for interviews. The full evaluation report is available at http://www.informalscience.org/citizen-science-conference-full-evaluation-report

Evaluation results show that overall participants felt very positive about the conference and the field of citizen science. In interviews education workshop attendees expressed diverse priorities for CSA attention. Interestingly, individuals tended to identify their own priorities differently from what they see as important for the field of citizen science.

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not necessarily reflect the views of the National Science Foundation.





EVALUATION

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

- This work reflects the dedicated effort of the Education Working Group members:
- Sandra Henderson, Project Budburst and Citizen Science Academy
- The Making Education and Lifelong Learning Connections strand of the Citizen Science Association conference was supported by the National Science Foundation
- under Grant DRL-1501158. Any opinions, findings, and conclusions or recommendations **ANSEP** expressed in this effort are those of the authors or of the citizen science community and do

