



Citizen Science

Partnerships for Environmental Public Health (PEPH)

March 17, 2014

Tracking pollutants and investigating their health impacts requires expensive equipment and years of specialized training...or does it? In this podcast, we're taking a look at some real-world science being done by everyday people with low-cost research tools. The podcast highlights the benefits of citizen science and some key considerations to ensure it is done properly.

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A smartphone spectrometer, one of many low-cost tools that allow citizens to collect data about exposures in order to help advance environmental health research. (Photo courtesy of Public Lab)

Expert

Sara Wylie, Ph.D., is an assistant professor of health sciences and sociology and anthropology at Northeastern University and co-founder of the do-it-yourself science community, Public Lab. Dr. Wylie seeks to develop new modes of studying and intervening in large-scale social issues, such as endocrine-disrupting chemicals, through a fusion of social scientific, scientific, and art and design practices. She is experienced in applying community-based participatory research methods to environmental health problems. She earned her Ph.D. at MIT with a dissertation titled, *Corporate Bodies and Chemical Bonds: an STS Analysis of the American Natural Gas Industry*.



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For More Information

Public Lab

(<http://publiclab.org/>)

Learn more about the online community Sara Wylie helped found and deploy some experimental tools of your own at this do-it-yourself science website.

Validating civic perspective. grassroots resources for environmental science

(<http://www.niehs.nih.gov/news/newsletter/2014/1/spotlight-civic/>)

Read more about Sara Wylie and citizen science in this NIEHS Environmental Factor article.

Wetterhahn awardee discusses community project on arsenic in vegetables

(<http://www.niehs.nih.gov/news/newsletter/2013/3/science-wetterhahn/>)

Read more about Monica Ramirez-Andreotta and her community-based participatory research on arsenic in Arizona in this NIEHS Environmental Factor article.

Extreme Citizen Science: ExCiteS

(<http://www.ucl.ac.uk/excites>)

Learn about or get involved with this citizen science initiative developed by scholars from a variety of disciplines at University College London.

SciStarter

(<http://scistarter.com/>)

Find low-cost science projects for adults and children at this citizen science website.

References

Wylie SA, Jalbert K, Dosemagen S, Ratto M. 2014. Institutions for civic technoscience: how critical making is transforming environmental research. The Information Society 30(2):116-126. [[Abstract](#)]

(<http://www.tandfonline.com/doi/abs/10.1080/01972243.2014.875783#.Uyim4YWZh3M>)

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