



Mednarodna fakulteta  
za družbene in poslovne študije  
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for Social and Business Studies  
Celje · Slovenija

# Citizen Science in Slovenia

Exploring how non-professional volunteers are transforming scientific research across Slovenia and Europe, creating a bridge between community engagement and scientific discovery.

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# Defining Citizen Science in Europe and Slovenia

Citizen science involves non-professional volunteers in scientific processes—from observation and data collection to analysis and even shaping research agendas. In Europe, it has been embedded into policy frameworks such as the European Open Science Agenda and Horizon Europe.

## Democratise Science

Strengthen public trust and make research more accessible to communities

## Accelerate Knowledge

Speed up data production and promote open access to research

## Connect with Society

Link scientific research directly with societal needs and challenges

## Promote Sustainability

Support SDG-related goals and environmental stewardship



**i** In Slovenia, citizen science serves a **dual role**: providing practical data where institutions lack capacity, whilst strengthening cultural traditions of community volunteering and nature stewardship.

# Cross-Cutting Themes & Strategies

Citizen science in Slovenia addresses a wide range of societal and scientific challenges, leveraging diverse methodologies and engaging various target groups.



## Environmental Monitoring & Biodiversity

Citizens actively track flora, fauna, and ecological changes, contributing to climate change research, species protection, and sustainable environmental practices.



## Cultural Heritage & History

Engagement in projects preserving historical records, restoring architectural sites, and documenting artistic and linguistic heritage, often through archival work and fieldwork.



## Digital & Linguistic Innovation

Leveraging digital platforms for data collection, developing large language models, and promoting computational approaches in humanities and computer science.



## Community Engagement & Social Impact

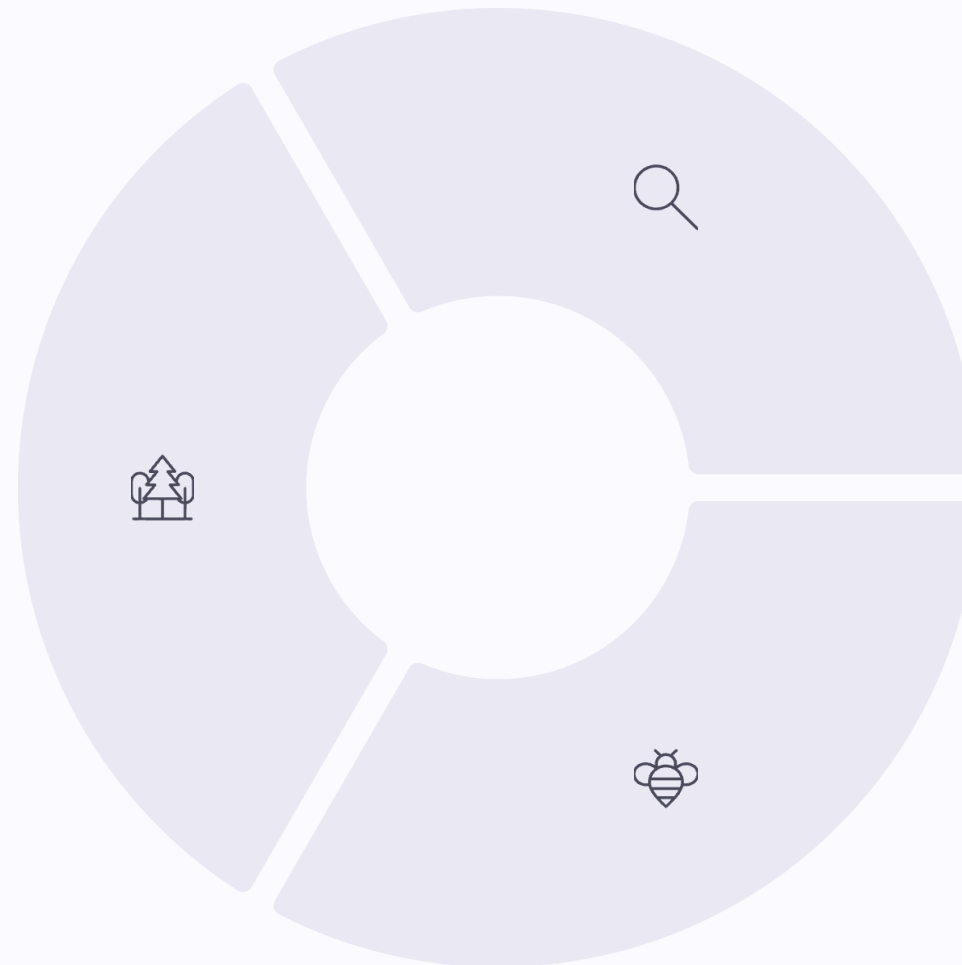
Initiatives focused on social equity, public health, and educational outreach, ensuring broad participation and addressing community-specific needs.

Participants of all ages, from primary school children to pensioners, contribute valuable data and insights, primarily through fieldwork, at-home tasks, and archive research.

# Slovenia's Citizen Science Landscape

## Forest Monitoring

LIFE ARTEMIS project engages citizens in identifying invasive species, providing early-warning capacity to forestry services whilst blending professional expertise with local ecological knowledge.



## BioBlitz Slovenia

Annual biodiversity mapping events where experts, citizens, families, and schools collaborate, combining education with real data collection for national biodiversity databases.

## Urban Pollinators

Buzzing in the City project in Kranj uses public libraries as science hubs, with activities including building insect hotels and observing pollinators in urban spaces.

# Digital Innovation and Crisis Response

## COVID-19 Sledilnik



A volunteer-built digital dashboard providing real-time COVID-19 data showcased citizen-driven open data infrastructure during a crisis. This prime example demonstrates how digital platforms can amplify collective intelligence when communities need it most.

## National Mobilisation



**"Let's Clean Slovenia in One Day!"** mobilised 270,000 people in 2010—approximately 13% of the population. Whilst not framed as "science," the initiative included mapping illegal dumpsites and producing valuable spatial and environmental data, illustrating civic mobilisation at national scale.

# Slovenia in the European Context

## Shared European Features

- Environmental focus dominates research
- Strong ties to EU funding instruments
- Growing use of digital platforms
- Biodiversity and pollution monitoring

## Unique Slovenian Aspects

- Extraordinary civic mobilisation traditions
- Cultural heritage integration (beekeeping)
- Public libraries as science hubs
- National-scale volunteer coordination

"Slovenia demonstrates that even small countries can mobilise citizens at national scale, offering inspiration across Europe."





# Channels of Promotion

To ensure widespread engagement and impact, citizen science initiatives in Slovenia utilise diverse channels to reach potential participants and disseminate findings effectively. These institutional channels and networks are crucial for promoting citizen science across the country.

## Mreža Občanske Znanosti (Citizen Science Network Slovenia)

- A national network connecting various organizations, institutions, and individuals involved in citizen science.
- Facilitates collaboration, knowledge sharing, and best practices among its members.
- Serves as a central hub for promoting citizen science activities and engaging the public.

## ARIS (Slovenian Research Agency)

- The primary national agency responsible for research funding and policy in Slovenia.
- Actively calls for and funds citizen science projects, integrating them into the national research landscape.
- Supports initiatives that promote public engagement in scientific research.

## Institutions like Tehnopark Celje

- Science centers and interactive parks play a vital role in public outreach.
- Hosts events such as the "Festival trajnosti 2025" (Sustainability Festival 2025).
- Organizes exhibitions like "Odkrivaj, sodeluj, raziskuj: občanska znanost v Sloveniji" (Discover, Cooperate, Research: Citizen Science in Slovenia) to engage visitors.



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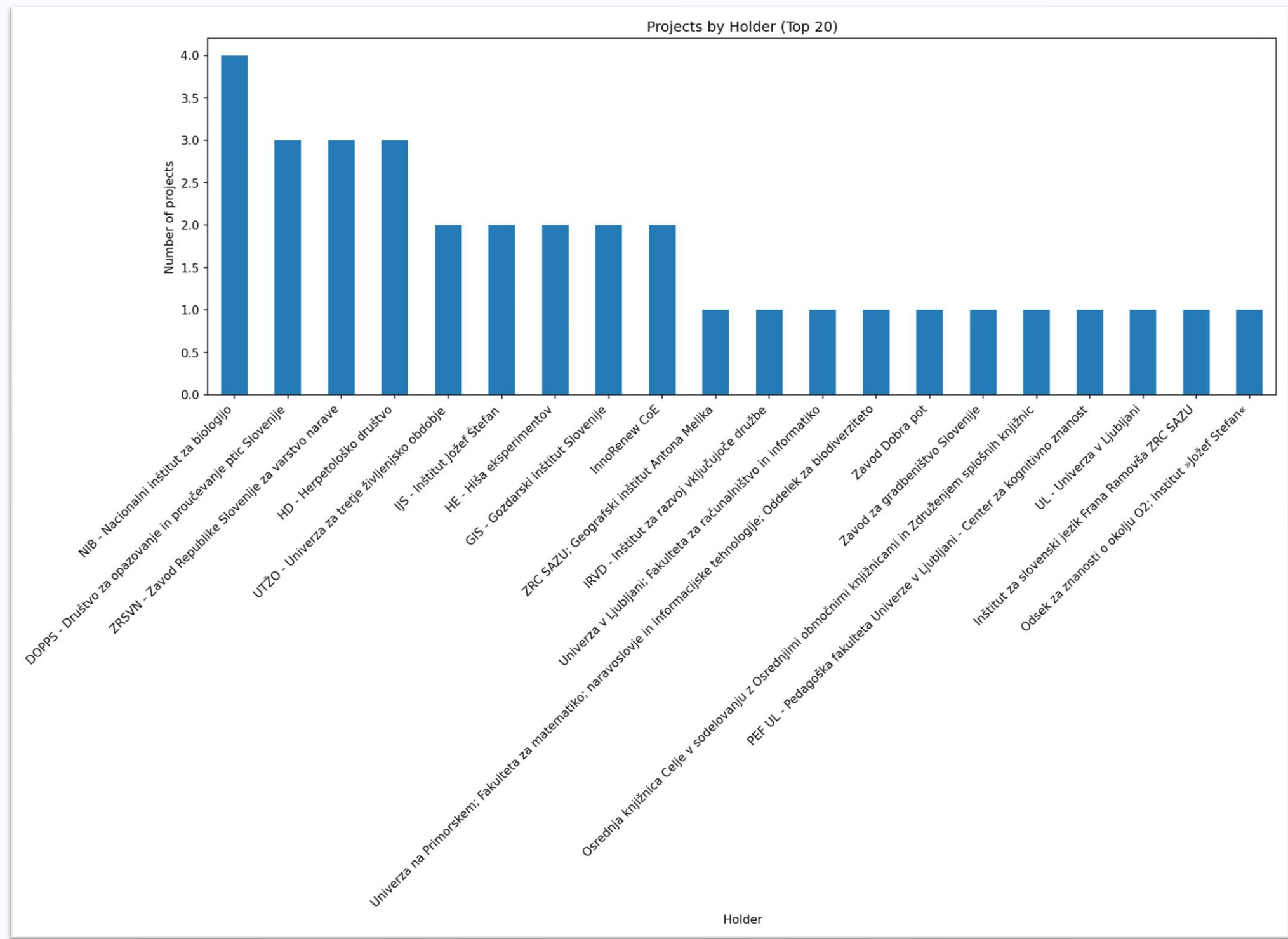
Mreža občanske znanosti v Sloveniji

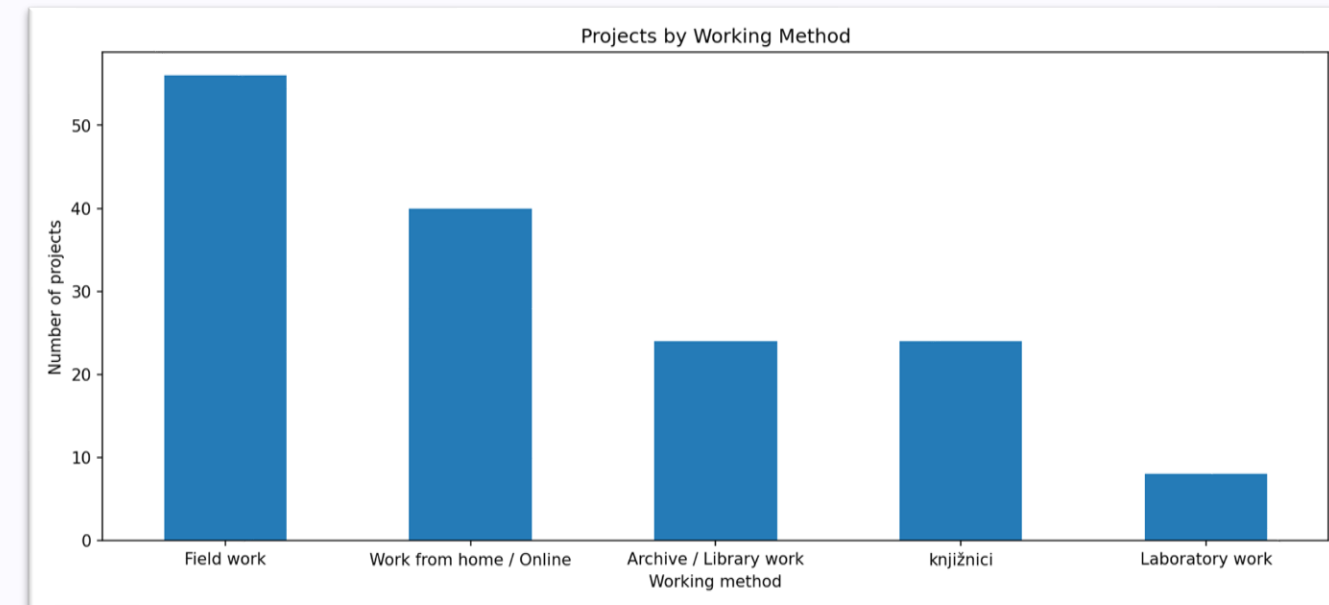
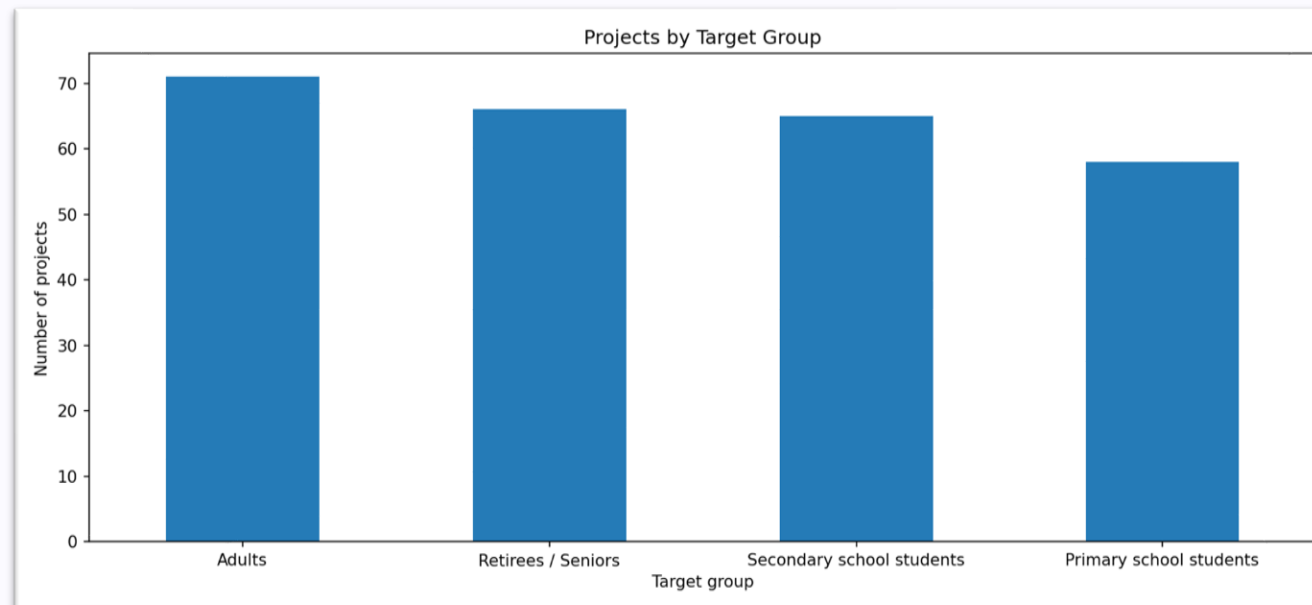
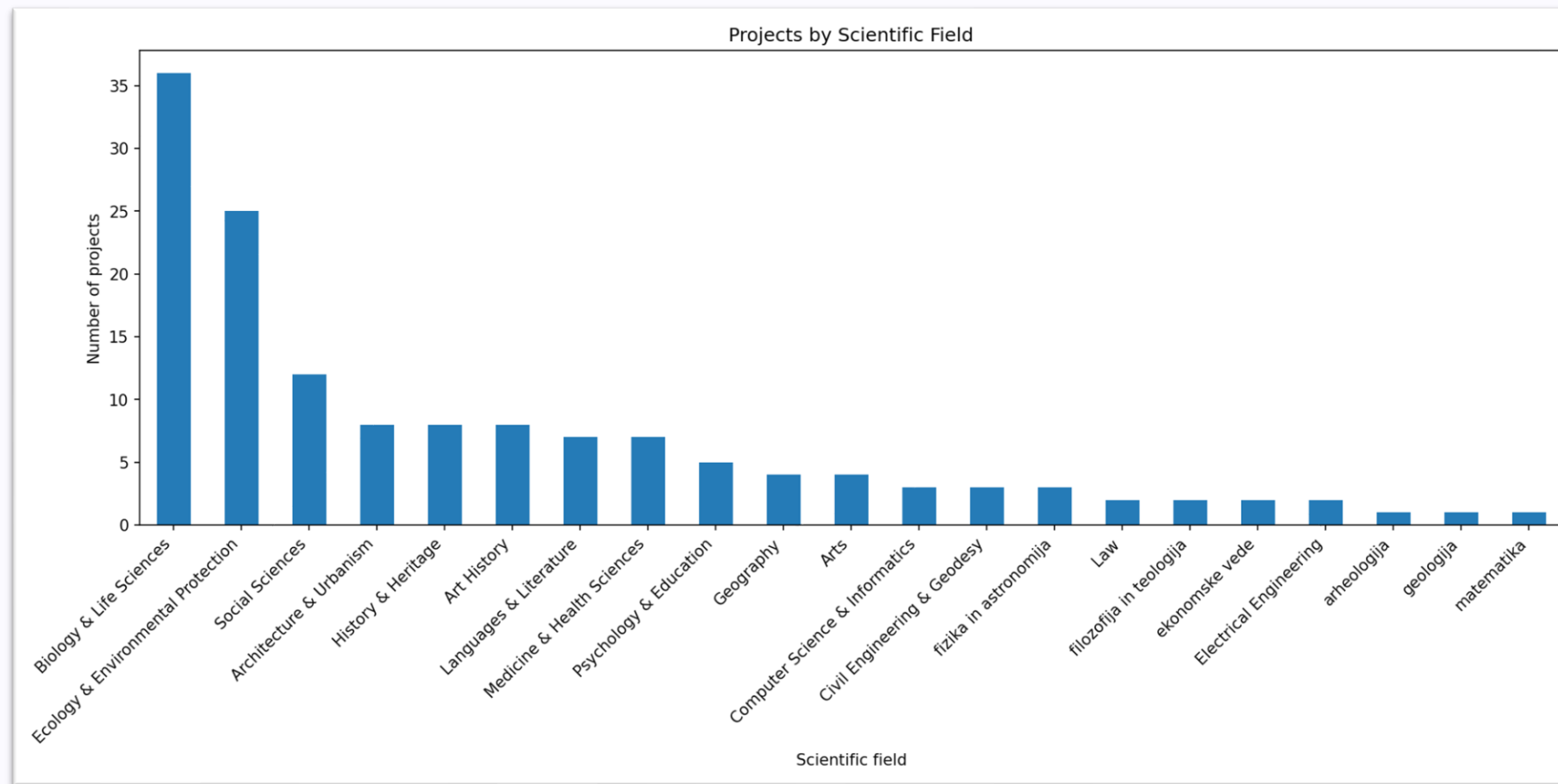


# NEWS

Our goal is to provide you with the latest updates in citizen science and open science practices, covering developments both locally and internationally. We strive to offer diverse news content, encompassing various facets of citizen science. Additionally, we keep you informed about a broad spectrum of events relevant to citizen scientists, including project presentations, exhibitions, and other...

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# Categorising Citizen Science Infrastructure

Citizen science initiatives in Slovenia are supported by a diverse range of infrastructure, both physical and digital. These services are crucial for enabling public participation and ensuring the quality and impact of projects.



## Library & Information Resources

Provides access to printed and digital resources, licensed databases, digital reading rooms, and interlibrary loan services.



## Expert Consultation Services

Offers guidance on data collection, research design, project planning, and data management from experienced professionals.



## Physical Workspaces

Includes workstations with computers for researchers, rooms for meetings or group work, and larger halls for events or presentations.



## Technical & Specialized Services

Offers advanced capabilities such as 3D printing and scanning, alongside standard printing and scanning facilities.



## Bibliographic & Repository Services

Supports the bibliographic processing of research outputs and provides repository services like DiRRoS for data archiving.



## Promotion & Dissemination

Assists in promoting citizen science projects through institutional media, social media, and dedicated websites to raise awareness and share results.



## Membership & Cost Structures

Typically features free or minimal costs for citizen researchers, sometimes offering free membership for a limited number of participants per project, or small fees for specific services.



## Key Infrastructure Providers & Services

Citizen science in Slovenia is supported by a robust network of institutions, primarily public and university libraries, which offer a diverse range of services to facilitate research and engagement. Here are some providers:

### Central Technical Library, University of Ljubljana

- Free membership for citizen researchers
- Access to licensed literature
- Consulting for project planning and data management
- Bibliographic processing of results
- Repository services (DiRROS)
- Meeting spaces & workshops



### Kranj City Library

- Access to printed & electronic resources
- Consultation for project participation
- Expert assistance in resource location
- Computer-equipped workstations
- Meeting rooms & event halls
- Printing and scanning services



### Institute of Information Science (IZUM)

- Consulting for project planning
- Information/data source search assistance
- Access to printed & e-resources (incl. interlibrary loan)
- Workspaces with computers & meeting rooms
- Scanning & printing services
- Bibliographic processing of research outputs



### Goriška Library, Nova Gorica

- Free membership for one researcher per project
- Access to online resources
- Assistance in data/information search
- Workspaces with computers
- 3D printing & scanning services
- Promotion of citizen science projects

### Ljubljana City Library

- Expert help finding research data
- Access to print & electronic sources (on-site & remote)
- Free annual membership for one researcher
- 3D printing & scanning services
- Meeting/education rooms & training classrooms
- Promotion and dissemination support

### University Library, Nova Gorica

- Access to printed & e-information sources
- Expert help in finding sources/data/materials
- Meeting/group work rooms with Wi-Fi
- Bibliographic processing of research results
- Promotion of citizen science via website
- Free membership for researchers

These institutions collectively form a critical backbone, providing essential tools, knowledge, and spaces that empower citizen scientists across various fields.

# Lessons for Embedding Citizen Science

01

## Leverage Existing Cultural Practices

Citizen science thrives when linked to established traditions such as beekeeping, volunteering, and nature protection, creating natural pathways for community engagement.

02

## Anchor in Trusted Institutions

Public libraries and NGOs make citizen science tangible, trustworthy, and sustainable by providing familiar community spaces for scientific activities.

03

## Blend Digital and Physical Worlds

Hybrid participation models combining fieldwork with online platforms maintain momentum and accessibility, reaching diverse audiences effectively.

04

## Integrate Policy Frameworks

EU frameworks encourage alignment, but national identity and culture make citizen science meaningful locally, creating sustainable engagement.

05

## Scale Through Community

Slovenia proves that small countries can achieve remarkable mobilisation, demonstrating the power of community-driven scientific initiatives across Europe.

✔ **Key Insight:** Citizen science isn't just about producing data—it's about embedding science as a cultural practice in everyday life, strengthening the connection between communities and scientific discovery.

