

A YEAR OF SCIENCE SHOP



SCIENCE SHOP PRINCIPLES AND PRACTICES



The Science Shop program of the CEU Community Engagement Office engages citizens, civil society organizations and public entities in collaboration with the university, by transforming their questions or requests into **course projects, internships, thesis work** or other academic **research cooperation**.

Science Shop is a matchmaker, it stimulates partnership, offers coordination and support. The collaborations serve the community partners as well as CEU, and give opportunity for co-creation and mutual learning.

Universities naturally create partnerships in a great many ways. Science Shop focuses solely on the not-for-profit and public sectors, and advocates for **academic practices**, which **harmonize learning objectives with the needs of the civic partner**. Carefully designed cooperation is viable for higher education, with real-world, impactful and community-facing results.

A balancing act that offers reward for all involved. Science Shop projects – while providing support for the public – enable experiential, engaged and service learning as well as community-based practices. These have been proven to boost student motivation and satisfaction, classroom participation, development of a range of essential skills and competences that are hard to acquire in traditional teaching. Additionally, they deliver on the ever-growing student demand for real-life context during studies.

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SCIENCE SHOP IN ACTION

An imaginary example



HOW TO REDUCE LITTERING IN PARKS, ESPECIALLY AROUND PLAYGROUNDS?

An environmental studies **intern** samples parks and playgrounds, and makes a study on the level and type of contamination, and their possible effect on human health and the urban ecosystem.

A **university course** on urban studies with 3 groups of students are tasked

- 1 › to do benchmark research on urban programs from around the world that aim to mitigate littering, with a special focus on parks and playgrounds,
 - 2 › based on their findings, they suggest solutions that are feasible in Favoriten, assessing the success/failure factors. Student groups compete to offer the best solutions, including innovative ideas such as gamifying (e.g. turning disposing of trash into a sort of game where trashcans can be decorated with googly eyes or a small basketball hoop is placed over them) They hold a presentation of their project results where local citizens are invited.
- › Students of another **university course** run by the cultural heritage department design an art-based workshop with school kids to understand their perception of littering: does it bother them? do they think it's an inherent part of city life/environment? It also includes an exercise for the school kids to discuss this topic with their parents.

- › One of the university students of the cultural heritage class likes the project so much, as a spin-off, they make it into a **thesis work**. The research is about the cultural and socioeconomic factors that influence the perception of litter(ing).
- › The Field Research and data analysis **course students** synthesize the results of the above activities and invite citizens to join the course project research. The neighbourhood group together with the students, supervised by the professor, set up an interview guideline that aims to better understand the attitudes behind littering, and what people think on how it can be avoided. Pairs of students and citizens approach people in parks and playgrounds, conduct 15 interviews, analyze them, and prepare a report.



FINALLY, THE SCIENCE SHOP INVITES THE NEIGHBOURHOOD GROUP (INITIATORS) AND ALL OTHER STAKEHOLDERS (PARK MANAGEMENT, MUNICIPALITY, OTHERS CITIZENS FROM NEAR-BY AS WELL AS STUDENTS AND PROFESSORS) TO CELEBRATE THE RESEARCH PROCESS, SHOWCASE RESULTS AND DISCUSS FUTURE POSSIBILITIES – TO SEE WHICH RECOMMENDATIONS CAN BE IMPLEMENTED.

MEET THE TEAM



KSENYA SHTALENKOVA
Science Shop manager, EHU



NATALYA MIKHAILOVA
Science Shop coordinator, EHU



FLORA LASZLO
Science Shop director, CEU



ANDRAS MARTONI
Science Shop manager, CEU



The Open Society University Network (OSUN) is a global network of educational institutions that integrates learning and the advancement of knowledge, promotes civic engagement on behalf of open societies, and expands access to higher education for underserved communities.

The Science Shop program of the CEU Community Engagement Office is financed by OSUN for the academic years 2021/22 and 2022/23. CEU partnered with the Vilnius based European Humanities University (EHU) to run the two-year pilot program. Both institutions have roots in two countries that spans the project scope to Austria, Belarus, Hungary and Lithuania – involving members of their respective civil society sectors, even if in exile.

The Science Shop program at CEU in its first year received valuable contributions from

- › CEREN CETINKAYA / *PhD student*
- › JOSIPA CVITIC / SPENCER ELDER HERB / MUJTAPA WALI / *CEU students*
- › GABOR HERA / *external evaluator*
- › DAVID JAN KRYCH / *fundraiser*
- › ILDIKO PETROK / *graphic designer*
- › as well as numerous CEU academic and administrative staff members.

Thank you!

ACADEMIC ACTIVITIES

2022 Winter & Spring



COURSE PROJECTS

Course title › COMMUNITY PARTNER

Civic engagement › JELENLET JESUIT MISSION, ARLO

(Mis)Performing World Politics › SEEK FEMINIST RESEARCH NETWORK

Educational Development in Practice › AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL HUNGARY

Civic engagement › TEACH FOR AUSTRIA

Field Research and Qualitative Data Analysis › AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL AUSTRIA

Cultural Heritage Project and Event Management › TEACH FOR AUSTRIA AND
MITTELSCHULE ABSBERGGASSE

INTERNSHIPS

Course title › Environmental Practicum

Community partner › SEEK Feminist Research Network

Faculty / Academic support › Viktor Lagutov, Ruben Mnatsakanian / Anastasia Kvasha

Students › Olivia Precious Livingstone, Brooke Ellen Moore

Course Title › Internship project of the Human Rights LLM/MA programs

Community partner › Asylkoordination Österreich

Faculty / Non-academic support › Inga Winkler / Lilla Sugó

Students › Aqil Atayi and Ramez Hayek

THESIS WORK

CRIOSTÓIR STEPHEN KING › MA in Sociology and Social Anthropology

Title › Bursting the “Bubble” of Environmental Activism: The Role of Framings and Cultures in Creating more Diverse and Inclusive Austrian Environmentalism

Community Partner › GLOBAL 2000



COURSE PROJECTS



1. Civic engagement

Course title / Civic engagement

Faculty / Chrysovalantis Margaritidis, Flora Laszlo

Community Partner / Jelenlet, Jesuit Roma mission in Arlo village

Students / Subham Manandhar, Rahel Peterlini, Dananai Anguiano Rodriguez, Peter Ujvari

PROJECT DESCRIPTION ▶ The course educates students on civic and social responsibility and prepares them for lives of engaged citizenship, with the motivation and capacity to think critically, discuss and act. Students co-design engagement projects with partner NGOs in the winter semester and implement them during the spring. ▶ The community partner is Jelenlet [Presence], an educational initiative of the locally based Jesuit Roma mission in the village of Arlo, North-East Hungary. ▶ The project goal was to create a space that brings people and cultures together that would not have met otherwise, to shed light on the positive values of Roma culture, and to show the importance of music and dance in intercultural communication and positive identity-building.

RESULTS ▶ During April/May 2022, the team of students organized and video-documented a two-day musical festival in the village. ▶ *“The level of responsibility that was given to us, the amount of creativity that was demanded of us, and the intensity of this direct experience made our second year’s spring term the most important one of all the ones that we have had so far. Seeing the smiles of the 400 people who eventually turned out at the festival; hearing that after the festival, dozens of local children approached Jelenlet that they would like to learn music within their subproject, Szimfonia; and seeing locals dancing to live Roma music with people from outside the continent – all of these made us feel that this was indeed meaningful, something that is worth working for. Importantly, this project helped us put our studies into context and explain why it’s worth studying what we study.”*

“This project helped us put our studies into context and explain why it’s worth studying what we study”

RAHEL PETERLINI

2. (Mis)Performing World Politics

Course title / (Mis)Performing World Politics

Faculty / Erzsebet Strausz, teaching assistant Idil Yatkin

Community Partner / SEEK Feminist Research Network, Umbreen Salim, Sumbal Bashir

Students / Dilara Bergler, Barbora Blaskova, Ceren Cetinkaya, Nico Gusac, Marita Lagidze, Audacia Machado, Nimaja Premachandra, Oliver Rudmann, Tizian Rupp, Ashraf Saad, Mateja Zherajikj

PROJECT DESCRIPTION ▶ The course looks at contemporary issues of world politics, exploring how common concepts such as statehood, sovereignty, identity, gender, citizenship and labor under global capitalism are performed and acted out in everyday practices and situations. ▶ SEEK is a network organization that endeavors to reimagine research and narratives on migration by bringing migrants’ knowledges and perspectives into policy discourses. ▶ SEEK brought its project “Portraits of Power” to the course that envisions a creative retreat for young migrant/refugee women through workshops and mentorship with the aim of providing a safe space for reflection on cultural taboos in their communities. The organization sought support in designing the retreat for effective participant engagement, in the selection of topics for discussion and the collection of ideas on how to organize the writing circles.

RESULTS ▶ Three groups of students, supervised by Dr Strausz who had experience with writing retreats, came up with ideas on creating a safe and inclusive environment for participants. Project plans included a variety of community building activities and

rituals that could help establish trust (such as sitting in a circle, active listening, eye gazing, spending time outdoors, cooking together) as well as a range of interactive exercises to facilitate creative expression and discussion in a way that it suits a diversity of cultural, linguistic, personal needs and backgrounds (such as writing exercises, drawing a river of life, keeping a visual notebook, digital collective archiving practices). SEEK found these ideas and suggestions inspiring, and were grateful for the reflective and co-creative atmosphere, something which is in line with their values and practices. ▶ The course also resulted in students finding the skills of session planning a great experience, and “that it is acceptable to present an open-ended session plan that has so much room for modification as events and feedback require”. The anonymous reflection at course-end noted “the feeling that we are doing something that is actually worthwhile.”

“The significance of this task trespasses the 20% element of our grade. The awareness of reflecting will stay with us for our academic career in general. It is so important to raise awareness.”

ANONYMOUS STUDENT FEEDBACK

3. Educational Development in Practice

Course title / Educational Development in Practice

Faculty / Kata Orosz

Community Partner / Amnesty International Hungary – Human Rights Education Team, Adam Beothy, Annamaria Landy

Students / Julia Toth, Lika Tsintsadze, Israt Jahan Oeeshi

PROJECT DESCRIPTION ▶ The blended course allows students to learn about the

practice of educational development experientially, through engagement in applied research, programming and advocacy roles. The student team, in collaboration with the partner, works to deliver a so-called “knowledge product”. ▶ The community partner Amnesty International Hungary – Human Rights Education Team works in the field of advocacy. As part of its many initiatives, they run an education program to help parents and educators raise open-minded young generations who are aware of and respect human rights. ▶ The course project research feeds into the organization’s effort to establish rigorous but feasible impact assessment practices to enable staff to evaluate and develop workshops and methodological guidebooks further.

RESULTS ▶ Based on an exhaustive literature review, the student team zoomed in on two methods, Kirkpatrick’s training assessment model and the Cycle of Continuous Improvement, noting that “*there is no one formula for assessment in human rights based training in general, the majority of evaluation studies followed and preferred the combined model*”. They went in detail explaining them, and in the final chapter made three recommendations: 1) to merge the teacher training and human rights education workshops, 2) to frequent trainings for efficiency and 3) to develop assessment questionnaires (based on the models) with the capacity of teachers and context in mind.

4. Civic engagement

Course title / Civic engagement

Faculty / Chrysovalantis Margaritidis, Flora Laszlo

Community Partner / Teach for Austria, Elisabeth Witzani

Students / Anna Fasching, Melanie Helm

PROJECT DESCRIPTION ▶ The course educates students on civic and social responsibility and prepares them for lives of engaged citizenship, with the motivation and capacity to think critically, discuss and act. Students co-design engagement projects with partner NGOs in the winter semester and implement them during the spring. ▶ The community partner is TEACH FOR AUSTRIA (TFA) that works towards education equality. Its vision is that all children have equal opportunities, regardless of the socio-economic



background of parents. Their core activity is a fellowship program: graduates from all academic backgrounds are trained to work for two years in disadvantaged schools and kindergarten. ▶ The course project rationale was TfA's strive to connect more with Favoriten, the 10th district of Wien to work towards lowering the young people's NEET rate (not in employment, education or training) in 10 years. Students were asked to assist in finding out what parents of school-aged children's ideas are about good education and education equality, what main challenges do they see with regards to further education for young people, and what kind of support would they seek for that? The long-term goal is to establish Favoriten as a "showcase district" where the collective impact of everyone who works towards educational equality becomes visible.

RESULTS ▶ Students organized three workshops in two schools to showcase different lines of careers for children, and through that, to have them think and gradually grow appetite for further education. Children's feedback was positive, they enjoyed the workshops. The evaluation suggested that such events can, one step at a time, strengthen their desire and belief that further education is worthwhile and within reach for them.

5. Field Research and Qualitative Data Analysis

Course title / Field Research and Qualitative Data Analysis

Faculty / Inna Melnykovska, teaching assistant Franziska Wagner

Community Partner / Amnesty International Austria, Daniel Schier, Theresa Reiter and Sarah Koch

Students (core team) / Maria Atanasova, Gulnaz Ilshatovna Sabirova, Koichi Osamura, Elisabeth Maria Bauer, Victoria Palchikova, Ellen Carrie Byrne; 23 students in total.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION ▶ The course teaches students how to systematically collect/generate data in the field, manage and analyze them. Students get familiar with principles and practices of doing fieldwork, and are introduced to particularities of doing fieldwork in the difficult contexts of illiberal regimes, conflicts and global pandemics. In the interview lab, the core practical exercise of the course, students do semi-structured interviews,

manage and analyze the collected interview data as well as give visual presentations of the results. ▶ The community partner is Amnesty International Austria, one of the main social service providers in the field of mobile health care, social work and labor market inclusion in Wien. ▶ The organization was interested to know how to engage young people in human rights activities: what kind of activism attracts young people, what role do they wish to play within human rights activism, and what are the intersections between "youth" and "human rights" in regards to communication, engagement, and topics?

RESULTS ▶ Student teams conducted 22 interviews with an interview guide consisting of 21 questions in total. As the report summary discusses, "among the main results, we may highlight that to attract young people, civic engagement projects should be impactful, short-term, and in relatively small groups [...] we also demonstrated that low personal motivation could be outbalanced by external determinants (such as socialization). The COVID19 pandemic enhances online socialization and communication, while its restrictive influence on civic engagement seems to be short-term."

"Community partners – in our case Amnesty and the local schools – are best regarded as co-designers, not as targets of the research. Their ideas and insights on how to organize the field work were essential."

PROF. INNA MELNYKOVSKA

6. Cultural Heritage Project and Event Management

Course title / Cultural Heritage Project and Event Management

Faculty / Zsuzsanna Szalka

Community Partner / Teach for Austria and Mittelschule Absberggasse

Students / Kristina Ford, Mariana Di-Bella, Samah Mohamed, Mahmoud Barakat,
Nellya Dzhamanbaeva, Dendup Tshewang, Isabel Thomas,
Gopalas Michailovskis, Alisha Sijapati

PROJECT DESCRIPTION ▶ The course introduces the basic elements of managing cultural heritage projects, using the concept of “learning by doing”: students develop a heritage interpretation project within the Cultural Heritage Studies Program, supported by CEU Culture Hub ▶ The community partner is Teach for Austria (TfA) that works towards education equality. Its vision is that all children have equal opportunities, regardless of the socio-economic background of parents. ▶ With the help of TfA, course students worked with a school in Favoriten district to engage children in dialogue about their cultural heritage through art. The goal was to learn together in a way that is empowering and different from elitist or monocultural ideas about what heritage is – and express this through the arts.

RESULTS ▶ Students organized two workshops: on the first ones children shared their ideas about objects and intangible mediums linked to heritage: photos, stories, songs, clothing, food, jewelry, religious iconography, and decorative items. With musician Aygyul, they learned to notice symbols of cultural heritage in songs and music videos. ▶ On the second workshop, the CEU students and school children shared objects and photos from their heritage with each other, and assembled collages. Some worked individually, others worked in groups. In the afternoon, CEU students returned to talk more about issues of stereotyping, nationalism, and mass media. ▶ Finally, the collages as artworks were on exhibition in the street-facing Glassroom of the CEU campus on the ground floor, visible to passers-by, giving the class a chance to share their cultural identity with the community of Favoriten.



INTERNSHIPS



AQIL ATAYI › ASYLKOORDINATION ÖSTERREICH

Task / research resettlement programs established for vulnerable Afghans, following the withdrawal of American troops and how prospective asylum seekers/refugees can apply. › **Experience** / I got to appreciate the importance of communication, and how it can lead to a smooth and convenient completion of the task. I communicated with my supervisor a few times (once in person), wherein she commented on whether I had approached the work in the desired manner and added her own input. I had been given a very active role, so my voice, input and methodology were considered essential.



RAMEZ ALHAYEK › ASYLKOORDINATION ÖSTERREICH

Task / research resettlement programs assigned to individuals mainly coming from Arabic-speaking countries, with a prime focus on Syria, Lebanon and Iraq (finding details about the criteria, how and where to apply, and the partners involved for each resettlement program).

Experience / it provided me with valuable research, analytical and practical skills related to the refugee/resettlement field. It also exposed me to the difficult nature of this type of work, especially as I got to witness the extremely low number of resettlement programs dedicated to millions of refugees who are in urgent and desperate

need globally. This has revealed to me the importance of pushing and incentivizing our governments to boost their resettlement programs, offer more places for the most marginalized, and help provide a better future for those who are at greatest risk.



BROOKE ELLEN MOORE › SEEK FEMINIST RESEARCH NETWORK

Task / involved helping design, shape and begin SEEK's social media campaign on climate migration. Other tasks involved writing policy briefs and grant applications to help support this campaign. › **Experience** / in addition to skills such as grant proposal writing, this internship has helped me increase my knowledge on climate migration and environmental justice. Most importantly to me, I've been able to experience what working for an organization like SEEK entails, collaborating with individuals from the field and understanding the role NGOs have on shaping policy.



OLIVIA PRECIOUS LIVINGSTONE › SEEK FEMINIST RESEARCH NETWORK

Task / were threefold, 1) writing of the research paper, titled "From Tides to Tides: Challenges associated with migration as a form of climate change adaptation in coastal communities in Liberia.", 2) sharing of a video of "my climate story", 3) conducting interviews with two Liberians (one climate change expert and one climate change victim) on the impacts of climate change in Liberia and how its risks can be mitigated. › **Experience** / My work experience at SEEK was very impactful on my professional journey. I learned new concepts on climate change and migration by working actively with one of SEEK's research

projects focusing on climate change, adaptation and indigenous communities. My time at SEEK also honed my research, networking and communication skills as I collected data for the "My Climate Stories" series and wrote a research paper on climate change and migration.

THESIS WORK

Bursting the “Bubble” of Environmental Activism: The Role of Framings and Cultures in Creating more Diverse and Inclusive Austrian Environmentalism



CRIOSTÓIR STEPHEN KING
MA student of the Department of
Sociology and Social Anthropology

RESEARCH IDEA ▶ Mainstream media debates about the environment often frame the issues in terms of class conflict, i.e. that environmental policies are costly and are therefore only a concern for those who already have their material needs met. Environmental organizations have also been accused of a lack of diversity within their activism and for failing to adequately consider working-class perspectives. I wanted to study how diversity issues play out in the activism of environmental organizations, and whether barriers to greater popular support and participation can be removed.

RESEARCH FINDINGS ▶ Through ethnographic fieldwork and semi-structured interviews, I found that specific framings of the nature-humanity relationship and more practical factors such as the tactics a group uses can contribute to creating cultures of exclusion or inclusion within environmental movements. Members of these movements need to critically reflect on how their activism speaks to those from different backgrounds to gain broader public support.

VALUE OF COOPERATION ▶ The cooperation with GLOBAL 2000 was extremely valuable as it enabled me to carry out an in-depth ethnographic study. I spent a lot of time in the organization and joined their activist groups, which exposed me to various parts of their work at a deeper level. ▶ This immersion was necessary for ethnographic research and allowed me to understand culture and perspectives. I trust that the research findings will benefit the organization as they reflect on their strategies.

EMBRACING SOCIAL IMPACT

Research to seek best-fit evaluation and impact assessment methods



CEREN CETINKAYA
PhD student of the CEU Doctoral School
of Political Science Public Policy and
International Relations

The first time I heard about science shops was in Fall 2021 on a consultation with my Ph.D. supervisor. As I learnt about the concept, I realized what an important gap they close, and got me interested. My journey with the program on CEU was special as I dived into impact assessment as a freelancer whilst attending a course project as a student, going through the science shop experience myself.

As we researched suitable evaluation and impact assessment framework, I realized how much methods are influenced by organizational motivation, strategy and capacity. We took exploratory and experimental approaches, talked to different science shops and education professionals about their own practices. We also dared to question the necessity of impact assessment and explore the limits, beyond which it consumes more organizational capacity than helpful.

Highlights for me were methods such as storytelling and journaling that humanizes the evaluation process instead of the more technocrat solutions, and focus on impact and development while giving space for self-reflection.

Getting familiar with the different techniques and seeing how many ways they can help the program increase its positive impact through evaluation was an enriching experience. I hope that in a short time we see more science shops all around the world, and they will keep influencing the community in the best way possible with their unique approaches.

PARTNERS IN NETWORK



Based in Vilnius, Lithuania the European Humanities University (EHU) also runs course projects as part of the OSUN Science Shop program.

EHU has been in exile in Vilnius since 2005, after forced displacement by the Belarusian regime that found its mission so threatening, it could not tolerate its presence. The educational standards of leading European and North-American universities were implemented at EHU to educate a new generation that is capable of leading Belarus away from the heritage of totalitarianism toward an open society.

The politically repressive situation in Belarus has been worsening ever since, leading up to mass protests after the rigged presidential election in 2020. The wave of repression against NGOs and educational initiatives have been overwhelming, with more than a hundred organizations outlawed and thousands of people arrested. Many organizations relocated, families fled. After February 2022, another wave of refugees fled from the violence, this time in Ukraine. Vilnius has become a refuge city for Ukrainians, Belarusians and Russians alike, fleeing difficult conditions. The university now operates in a multi-lingual environment. Although Lithuanian is barely spoken by faculty and students, we organize education in Belarusian, English, Russian and soon perhaps Ukrainian. The university is evacuating Ukrainian colleagues and students, while most EHU students and faculty residing in Belarus are under threat of arrest.

In this situation, the Science Shop program seemed a long shot but we found ways to build meaningful cooperation with Belarusian NGOs working in exile, as well as Lithuanian NGOs interested in our mission. In the 2021/2022 academic year we work on six projects connecting students and faculty with community partners, addressing a range of issues in the field of civic engagement.

CARD GAME ON GENDER INEQUALITY

EHU students of the BA program in Visual Design assisted a Lithuanian NGO “Lygių galimybių plėtros centras” (Center for Equality Advancement) in preparing gender-neutral materials for a card game to be distributed in Lithuanian kindergartens.

RESEARCH ON PSYCHOLOGICAL SUPPORT FOR BELARUSIAN EXILES

EHU students of the BA program in Media and Communication implement research on psychological problems of relocation as a consequence of Belarusian peaceful protests in 2020 under the guidance of the Belarusian-Lithuanian NGO “PsyVilnius” within the “Methodology of media studies” course led by lecturer Andrei Vazyanau.

SYSTEM OF VISUAL COMMUNICATION FOR THE “PSYVILNIUS” INITIATIVE

In addition to the research on psychological support for Belarusian exiles in cooperation with the Belarusian-Lithuanian NGO “PsyVilnius”, students of the BA program in Visual Design created a system of visual communication for the “PsyVilnius” initiative.

RESEARCH ON DIGITAL SOLUTIONS FOR ONLINE CITIZENSHIP

Together with the Belarusian NGO “Meta-Belarus”, students of the BA program in International Law and EU Law taking the “Law and Technology” course led by lecturer Inessa Stolper research technological ways of creating online government, specifically — a digital voting system for Belarusians.

DESIGN MATERIALS AGAINST STIGMATIZATION

Students of the BA program in Visual Design produced SMM and corporate identity materials for a Lithuanian NGO “Rigra paramos fondas” (Rigra support fund) that provides help for marginalized social groups, specifically people with drug addictions and people living with HIV/AIDS.

RESEARCH ON MINORITIES REPRESENTATIONS IN LITHUANIAN MEDIA

The Lithuanian NGO “Lietuvos žmogaus teisių centras” (Lithuanian center for human rights) requested research support on the topic of anti-discrimination laws, specifically aimed at Roma and Jewish minorities living in Lithuania. Students of the BA program in Media and Communication took part in the collaboration.

WHERE CAN YOU MEET US



The Living Knowledge Network is the international hub of science shops, as well as individuals, organizations in support of community-based teaching and research.

Practitioners, academic faculty and administrative staff, students and civil society organizations attend the Network's bi-annual conference in Groningen, the Netherlands between 29th June and 1st July 2022. As the organisers explain, "the 9th Living Knowledge Conference aims to bring together all those involved in doing or supporting research with and for communities. What can we learn from each other's approaches? How can we collaborate? Which links have been forged and which could we still make?"

OSUN Science Shop team's abstract, submitted in fall 2021, was accepted by the Conference Committee, titled "The changing role of science shops in a politically charged environment". Here is an excerpt of it.

"There's a surge of political actors that gain popularity and power by denouncing the achievements of the post-WW2 era such as universal human rights, rule of law and the net of democratic institutions. In doing so, they intend to politicise spaces of civic and professional life, which were though previously influenced and controlled to various extent but not openly charged with and divided by ideology and political power. Consequently, we see actors of the cultural, educational and civil society sectors constantly prone to be contextualised and labelled as "good" or "bad", and threatened existentially through soft pressure, financial and legislative means. Being in the internode of the education and CSO sectors, those Science Shops, which work in hostile political environments need to consider and reflect on this change. Developing new strategies to stay true to the core mission may call for unusual practices such as not sharing information on a project as it may put the community partner, the academic staff or the student at risk."



CONCEPTS WE USE



EXPERIENTIAL LEARNING › The process of learning by doing. Students engage in hands-on experiences and reflect on them. Their ability to connect theories and knowledge learned in the classroom to real-world situations is greatly strengthened.

ENGAGED LEARNING › A type of learning in which learning objectives are accomplished by working on projects with a community partner (Civil society organizations, active community members, etc.); classroom skills and knowledge are put into practice while supporting and serving one's community.

COMMUNITY-BASED TEACHING/LEARNING › Learning and education incorporate the community and immediate environment into the teaching approach. It is done using many methods including working directly with the community via outreach and integrating the community into academic learning.

CIVIC ENGAGEMENT › Active participation by members of the university both students and staff in community improvement projects. Includes communities working together or individuals working alone with communities to promote and safeguard public values and make a positive change in the community.

CITIZEN SCIENCE › Scientific research conducted, in whole or in part, by amateur (or nonprofessional) scientists. Outcomes are often advancements in scientific research by improving the scientific community's capacity, as well as increasing the public's understanding of science.

PARTICIPATORY ACTION RESEARCH › Research in which members of the communities affected by the research participate and play an active role. Utilizing collaborative reflection in order to broaden the understanding of all participants.

TABLE OF CONTENT



Science Shop Principles and Practices	3
Science Shop in Action	4
Meet the Team	6
Academic Activities	7
Course Projects	9
Civic engagement	9
(Mis)Performing World Politics	10
Educational Development in Practice	12
Civic engagement	14
Field Research and Qualitative Data Analysis	15
Cultural Heritage Project and Event Management	26
Internships	18
Thesis work	20
Embracing Social Impact	21
Partners In Network	22
Where Can You Meet Us	24
Concepts We Use	25

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COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT OFFICE / OSUN SCIENCE SHOP PROGRAM

- › communityengagement.ceu.edu/science-shop
- › scienceshop@ceu.edu
- › Quellenstrasse 51 Room A606 / 1100 Vienna / Austria