

Citizen Science Projects



From astronomy to zoology, wildlife surveys, converting old weather reports into digital data, to measuring air quality, to exploring diaries from the First World War – if you have a passion or a curious mind there should be a project to suit you.

The majority of projects in the UK evolve around wildlife and ecology. The Natural History Museum sponsors a range of activities, particularly concerning data gathering connected to climate change. By recording observations of wildlife, collecting samples, or transcribing handwritten records, you can unlock the potential of their collections and gather vital data for scientists, allowing them to better understand the natural world.

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Anyone can take part, and you don't need special skills or training.

The UK Centre for Ecology and Hydrology also has a selection of projects that enable you to contribute to 'real' science, while also engaging many people with science. There are different types of citizen science projects, from contributory to collaborative and co-created projects. They provide free apps that use GPS and camera technology embedded in smart phones.

Scistarter UK is a community hub for environmental citizen science funded by the Natural Environment Research Council (NERC). Their project has created a UK-wide platform with partner institutions and community partners in London, Manchester, Newcastle, Bristol, the Thames Valley and Birmingham, amongst other locations. Some of their projects like the UK Noise map in collaboration with the Open University, are very suitable for elementary and high school pupils, as well as graduate students and adults.

How about the Marine LitterWatch on our local beaches? Litter, plastics in particular, is accumulating in our seas and coasts. Volunteers collect data on marine debris in the ocean and on shorelines in the EU. The European Environment Agency has developed Marine LitterWatch mobile app to strengthen Europe's knowledge base and thus provide support to European policy making.



Ever heard of using mobile phones to measure the Earth's changing magnetic field? The digital magnetometers built into our modern mobile smartphones can be used as scientific instruments. The National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration are looking for magnetic data to create near-real-time models of Earth's time changing magnetic field to improve accuracy of the magnetic navigation systems.



Operation Earth is a UK organisation devoted to capturing and contributing information about the natural world. The millions of ecological records submitted by citizen scientists help researchers paint a picture of the UK's changing wildlife.

There has never been a better time to connect with organisations that are looking for volunteers.

Our children are increasingly computer literate, and this is perhaps a way in which we can steer them away from the distractions of social media and controversial internet content and get them engaged in something really worthwhile.

If this is of interest to you, your children and their school, check out the links below to get a flavour of what is currently available.

[Community science | Natural History Museum](#)

[Citizen science apps and projects | UK Centre for Ecology & Hydrology](#)

[UK - SciStarter](#), [Noise map - SciStarter](#), [Marine LitterWatch - SciStarter](#), [CrowdMag - SciStarter](#)
[Citizen Science - Operation Earth](#)