TIME4CS

SUPPORTING SUSTAINABLE INSTITUTIONAL CHANGES TO PROMOTE CITIZEN SCIENCE IN SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

Nurturing collaboration through an effective internal communication: the UniSR experience

April 27th, 2023

Vita-Salute San Raffaele University, Milan

The TIME4CS project has received funding from the European Union's Horizon 2020 research and innovation programme under grant agreement No 101006201

TIME4CS Vita-Salute San Raffaele University

Established in 1996, Vita-Salute San Raffaele University (UniSR) is one of the top-ranking universities in Italy for research and teaching. UniSR comprises the faculties of Medicine, Psychology and Philosophy and shares its campus with the San Raffaele Research Hospital (OSR). Thanks to 100 high-tech laboratories and more than 880 ongoing clinical studies, San Raffaele is a leader in many areas of biomedical research: including neuroscience, oncology, immunology and infectious diseases, and is a world authority in cell and gene therapies.

Both UniSR and OSR have a strong commitment to open science, research integrity and public engagement: due to the ever-increasing social, economic and environmental implication of research, engaging citizens in the scientific process is therefore of great importance.

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TIME4CS The path to Citizen Science

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Citizen Science is an excellent framework to co-create knowledge and share both results and tools with the society at large.

However, it is acknowledged that citizen science projects must overcome key challenges to succeed, especially in the complex field of healthcare and biomedicine. A fundamental action to overcome these challenges and fully unlock the potential of citizen science is to provide the appropriate institutional context.

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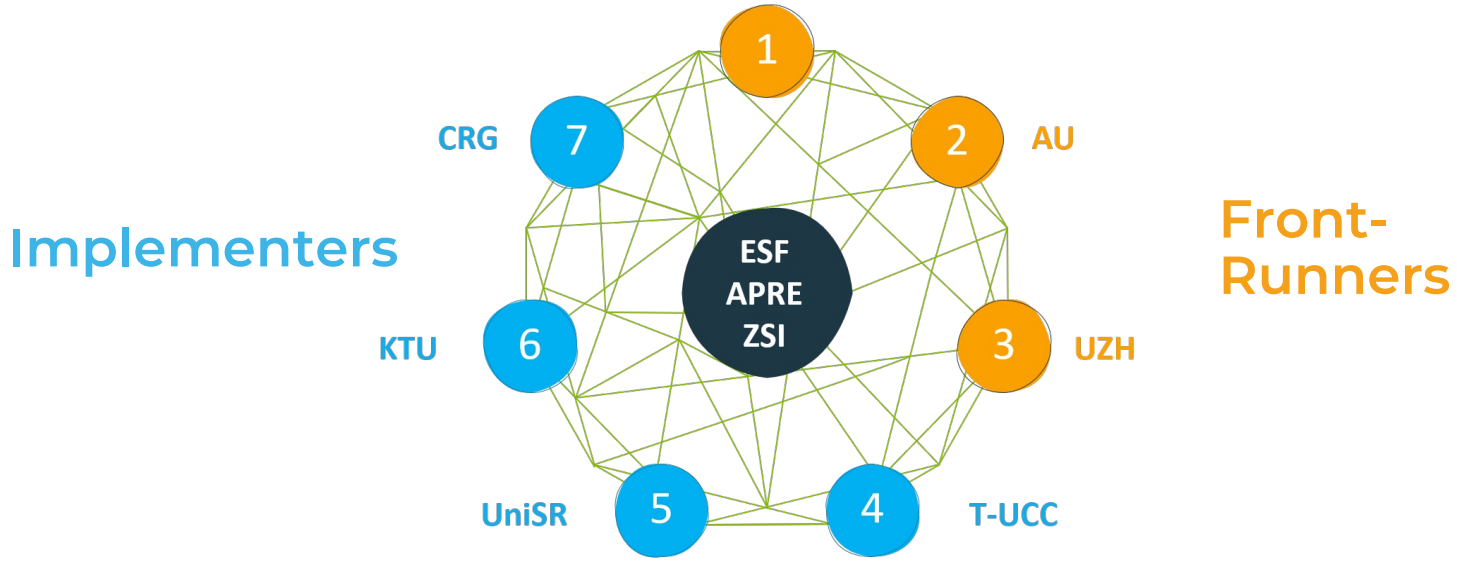
TIME4CS The Implementers' journey

To provide the appropriate institutional context, institutional changes are needed.
In 2021 UniSR joins Time4CS as Implementer institution, in order to collect best practices from the other project partners and to share its experiences related to Citizen Science.



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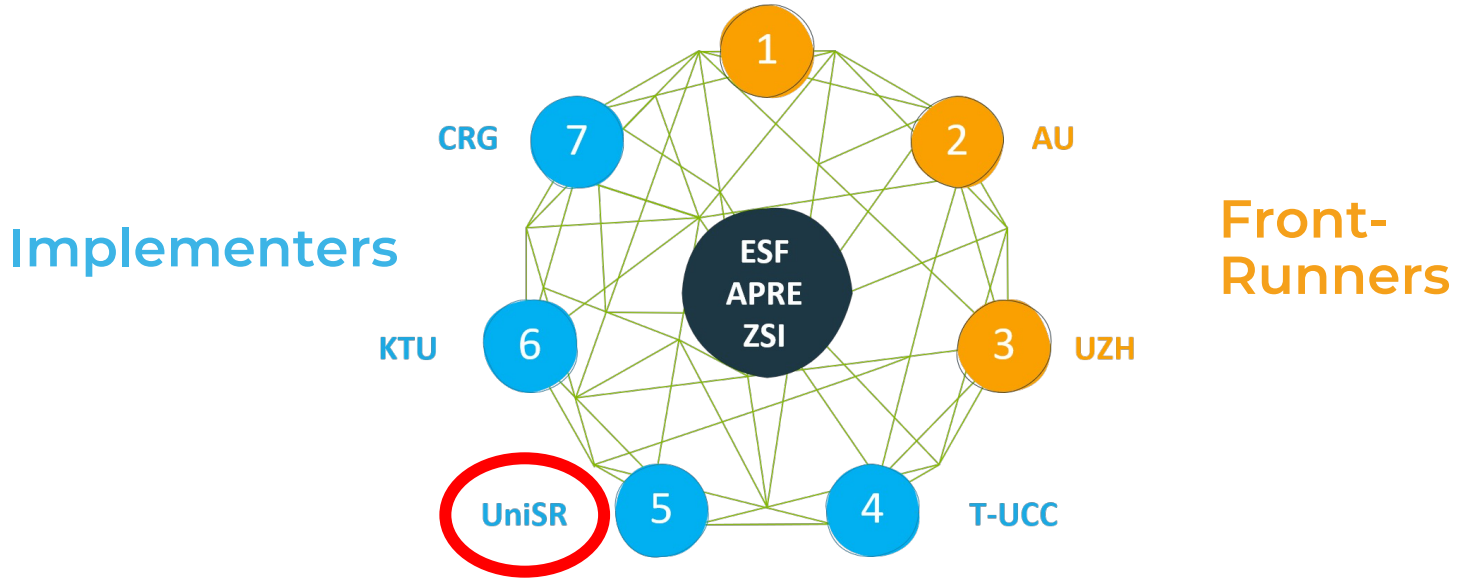

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TIME4CS Institutional change in UniSR

At the same time, an organisational innovation in UniSR has started in 2021, with the creation of a completely new Area dedicated to Research Development to implement strategic initiatives to support the development of UniSR research excellence and contribute to the internationalization and competitiveness of the University.

The Research Development Area includes:

- Research Integrity Office
- EU Research Strategy and Policy Office
- PhD Programme Office
- Research Policy Office
- Open Science Team, for the provision of support to the research community regarding the 8 pillars of open science

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TIME4CS Concept

Front-Runners

Implementers

Roadmaps

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TIME4CS Concept

Front-Runners

Implementers

- Research
- Education and Awareness
- Support resources and infrastructures
- Policy and assessment

Roadmaps

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TIME4CS UniSR Grounding Actions

Intervention Areas	Grounding Actions
Research	To belong to a Citizen Science network
	To implement changes in organisational structures or functions
Education and Awareness	To set up training programmes for researchers and citizen scientists
	Set up informal opportunities for interactions with researchers
Support resources and Infrastructure	To identify an institutional contact point for CS
Policy and Assessment	To adopt evaluation criteria for researchers' evaluation that take into account CS

Two more GAs to be implemented after the end of the project

Research	Develop Citizen Science methodology for research activities and projects
Education and Awareness	Organise debates or public events to promote CS

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TIME4CS Roadmaps implementation

Implementing GAs has brought to light potential barriers to institutional changes, allowing the team to rethink about the planned activities and to identify more concrete and effective actions to make the project activities truly successful. This has started a self-powered process of change in UniSR.

Needs to be addressed:

1. Enlarging the core team, involving different actors, with different expertise, within the project core team.
2. Defining a successful workflow to fully support researchers willing to implement CS in their research projects.
3. More effective communication activities due to the need to both better understanding researchers' point of view and insufficient understanding regarding CS by research community.

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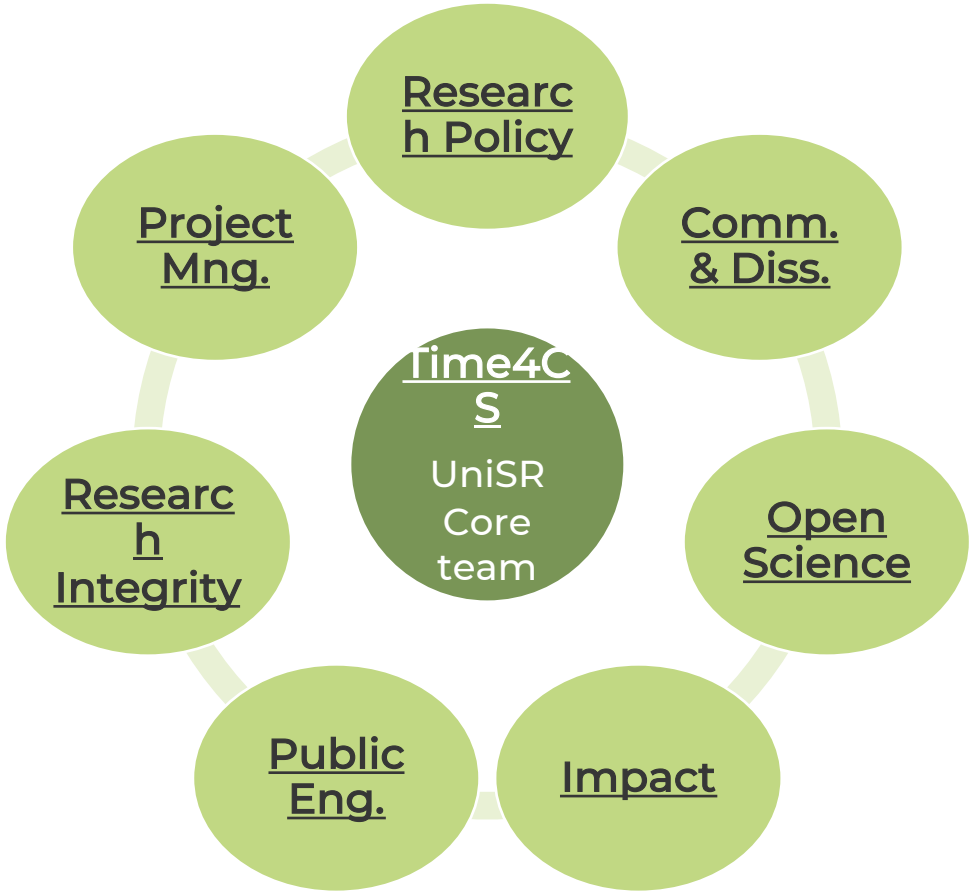
TIME4CS Need 1: enlarging the core team

The first step towards an institutional change in functions and structures implies the creation of an informal group of actors with different expertise.

This informal group, which represents the core team of the Time4CS project, has been evolving during the project implementation since its creation.



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TIME4CS Need 2: defining a successful workflow to support researchers

The second step towards an institutional change in functions and structures implies the definition of a **dedicated workflow for supporting researchers** and other actors who are interested or active in Citizen Science.

In order to achieve this goal, the core team has started a raising awareness process engaging the **stakeholders involved in the research supporting activities**. This approach will facilitate the creation of awareness regarding Citizen Science facilitating the interaction with the core team.

This led the core team to plan some specific activities targeted at **research support staff** (e.g. Research Office, Clinical Trial Center, project managers, etc.) to engage them in the process of institutional change.

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TIME4CS Need 3: more effective communication activities

Science and Society Seminars

A dedicated newsletter *Bits of Citizen Science*

Citizen Science Bits
TIME4CS
UniSR
Università Vita-Salute San Raffaele

03 Second "Science & Society" seminar

In the framework of the European Horizon 2020 project Time4CS, UniSR is organizing a seminars series called "Science and Society" aimed at promoting Citizen Science at San Raffaele.

Join us for the second seminar on 9th November, h 16.30, online, with the title *"Which role can sex and gender play in biomedical research?"*. The seminar will be held in English.

Our speaker will be Dr Sabine Oertelt-Prigione, MD, PhD, MSc, Professor (Strategic Chair) of Gender in Primary and Transmural Care at the Radboud University Medical Center, Nijmegen (Netherlands) and Professor of Sex- and Gender-sensitive Medicine at the Bielefeld University (Germany).
Her research focus lies on methods to investigate gender in medical research and on the systematic implementation of sex- and gender-sensitive research and practice.

Dr. Oertelt-Prigione will address how in recent years the attention to sex and gender has steadily increased due to a growing focus on the topic and pressure from funding bodies and scientific journals. In this meeting she will first discuss why sex and gender should be considered in biomedical research and what could possibly go wrong in not doing so. She will show us some examples from different disciplines and different types of research: if cell sex influences the experimental outcome, if the cell media can impact cell growth in a sex-dependent manner, if the sex of the researcher impacts the research being conducted, or if gender really impacts health outcomes.

Ensuring gender equality in both the research process and research content is one of the pillars of the Responsible Research and Innovation (RRI) approach, aimed at guaranteeing that the innovation proposed by a research project meets the needs of our society and also that the research procedures are conducted in a responsible manner.

Please find attached the flyer of the event.

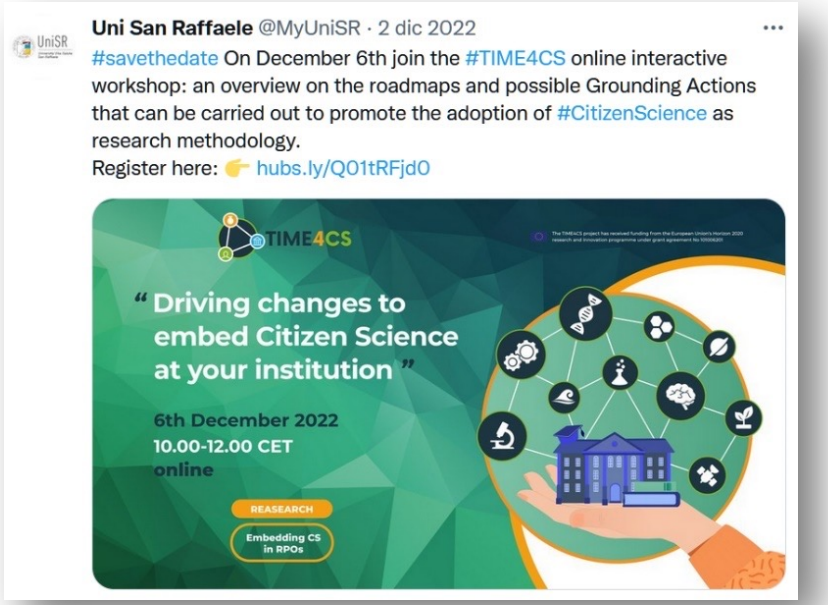
We hope to see you online:
Microsoft Teams
Click here to join the meeting

Meeting ID: 382 849 453 806
Passcode: qqXdwk
Download Teams | Join on the web

The Time4CS team
Contact us at citizenscience@unisr.it

To find out more about the project, please visit https://www.time4cs.eu/

Social media



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TIME4CS Lessons learned from UniSR experience

To get Citizen Science adopted in your organization, you need an **institutional change**.

To achieve an institutional change you should:

- understand the **context** and the state of the art;
- identify all the relevant **stakeholders** at your institution;
- pay attention to stakeholders' **concerns**;
- design **tailored activities** to engage the stakeholders;
- **co-create activities** with stakeholders;
- and... not give up!! ☺

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#TIME4CS

Thank you for your attention !

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