

# DCitizens Fostering Digital Civics Research and Innovation in Lisbon

## **DELIVERABLE 2.2: Workshop Proposal**

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## D2.2: Workshop Proposal

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1.0	10/07/2024	Hugo Nicolau & Dina Dionísio	Proofread

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## Executive Summary

The DCitizens consortium committed to submitting and organising two scientific workshops at premier Human-Computer Interaction (HCI) venues throughout the project. This deliverable corresponds to the first workshop submission.

Overall, by month 21, the consortium has submitted five workshop proposals to premier HCI venues. All submissions were peer-reviewed and accepted for publication. The partners jointly organised five workshops throughout 2024 at different venues: CHI Conference on Human Factors and Computing Systems (CHI), Participatory Design Conference (PDC), Nordic Human-Computer Interaction Conference (NordiCHI), Designing Interactive Systems (DIS), and Interaction Design and Children (IDC).

The organisation of workshops at scientific events contributes towards disseminating the project, building a community of interest and practice with experts, advancing the field of Digital Civics, and establishing the DCitizens' partners as leading players.

We strategically built on other DCitizens initiatives when organising these workshops. For instance, the experts in the Lecture Series were invited as workshop collaborators, and some workshop participants were then invited to the Lecture Series. On the other hand, our digital infrastructure (e.g., Discord server and website) was used to disseminate and build an online community to discuss and share experiences around Digital Civics, which consists of researchers from different fields of knowledge, experts in Digital Civics, and students from summer schools.

This deliverable is organised in five sections that provide a brief overview of the scientific workshops organised in 2024, their primary goals, and outcomes.

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# 1 Special Interest Group at the 2024 Conference on Human Factors in Computing Systems

DCitizens Roles Unveiled: SIG Navigating Identities in Digital Civics and the Spectrum of Societal Impact		
Venue: CHI	CORE Ranking: A*	Dates: 11-16 May 2024
Mode: Hybrid	Location: Hawai'i, USA	Web: <a href="https://chi2024.acm.org/">https://chi2024.acm.org/</a>
Proceedings: <a href="https://dl.acm.org/doi/10.1145/3613905.3643981">https://dl.acm.org/doi/10.1145/3613905.3643981</a>		
Open Access: <a href="https://arxiv.org/abs/2407.05003">https://arxiv.org/abs/2407.05003</a>		
Partners involved: UNN, IST-ID, IIT, USi		
<p><b>Abstract:</b> The DCitizens SIG aims to navigate ethical dimensions in forthcoming Digital Civics projects, ensuring enduring benefits and community resilience. Additionally, it seeks to shape the future landscape of digital civics for ethical and sustainable interventions. As we dive into these interactive processes, a challenge arises of discerning authentic intentions and validating perspectives. This exploration extends to evaluating the sustainability of future interactions and scrutinising biases impacting engaged communities. The commitment is to ensure future outcomes align with genuine community needs and address the ethical imperative of a considerate departure strategy. This dialogue encourages future researchers and practitioners to integrate ethical considerations and community-centric principles, fostering a more sustainable and responsible approach to technology-driven interventions in future urban regeneration and beyond.</p>		

## 1.1 SIG Goals

The DCitizens SIG was designed to foster an inclusive discussion on crucial aspects of digital civics. We explored diverse perspectives on (1) the motivations behind our engagement in digital civics and the alignment of our roles with community perceptions, (2) the ethical considerations involved in entering and exiting digital civics projects to ensure lasting benefits and community strength, and (3) the key considerations shaping the future of digital civics for ethical and sustainable interventions. The session aimed to be an inclusive forum addressing diverse concerns within the digital civics landscape. The session was designed to cater to attendees with varying backgrounds and focus, ensuring that the discourse was accessible and relevant to all. The organisers were from diverse institutions, industries, and disciplines and, therefore, were well-equipped to accommodate and facilitate discussions across the theme of digital civics, fostering an environment where insights from different backgrounds converged and enriched the conversation. The session resulted in a brainstorming of ideas, highlighting our dedication to creating a space that truly reflects the interdisciplinary nature of digital civics. The main goal of this SIG was to kickstart a community discussion surrounding digital civics and the roles we play, leading to an open and integrated group ready for collaboration.

## 1.2 Outcomes and Next Steps

Prior initiatives concentrated on developing and deploying digital tools, platforms, and processes within a Digital Civics research agenda. This SIG shifted the focus towards probing questions, exploring motivations, ethical considerations, and the future trajectory of digital civics. DCitizens SIG will build upon the Discord group and seminar series already in motion and serve as an extension, not only expanding the community but also with aspirations to set up a SIGCHI chapter. Additionally, we plan to organise follow-on workshops at conferences, including Participatory Design Conference (PDC) 2024 and CHI 2025. This initiative seeks to enhance collaboration and foster knowledge exchange within the digital civics' community. Our goal is to kickstart a continuous dialogue, expressing varied perspectives, extracting insights, and laying

the groundwork for collaboratively creating a guiding framework that future participatory designers can draw upon when navigating the complexities of this domain.

## 2 Workshop at the 2024 Participatory Design Conference

Envisioning Collaborative Futures: Advancing the Frontiers of Embedded Research		
Venue: PDC	CORE Ranking: B	Dates: 11-16 August 2024
Mode: Hybrid	Location: SibU, Malaysia	Web: <a href="https://pdc2024.org/">https://pdc2024.org/</a>
Proceedings: To be available in August 2024		
Open Access: <a href="https://arxiv.org/abs/2407.05016">https://arxiv.org/abs/2407.05016</a>		
Partners involved: UNN, IST-ID, USi		
<p>Abstract: Participatory design initiatives, especially within the realm of digital civics, are often integrated and codeveloped with the very citizens and communities they intend to assist. Digital civics research aims to create positive social change using a variety of digital technologies. These research projects commonly adopt various embedded processes, such as commissioning models. Despite the adoption of this process within a range of domains, there isn't currently a framework for best practices and accountability procedures to ensure we engage with citizens ethically and ensure the sustainability of our projects. This workshop aims to provide a space to start collaboratively constructing a dynamic framework of best practices, laying the groundwork for the future of sustainable embedded research processes. The overarching goal is to foster discussions and share insights that contribute to developing effective practices, ensuring the longevity and impact of participatory digital civics projects.</p>		

### 2.1 Workshop Goals

The workshop's main goal was to bring together researchers, industry members, practitioners, and interested citizens to envision the future of embedded research. The overarching aim was to strengthen the community of researchers and build a network for future collaboration. The workshop focused on establishing the groundwork for a robust framework to uphold collaborative efforts within the community in embedded research, emphasising ethical and sustainable principles. We intended to further develop this framework beyond the workshop, engaging the community in its ongoing construction. The workshop explored the current practices used throughout the projects' lifecycle, including how to consider exit strategies from project initiation and how to think about community benefits and strengths from the beginning. These explorations were grounded in real-world project examples, such as the use of commissioning models, which are increasingly popular as a tool for community-based projects. To guide this exploration, we addressed the following questions:

- How can a suitable framework/toolkit be created to support researchers, industry members and citizens alike across participatory design domains?
- What are the most pressing challenges faced within embedded research, and how can we mitigate them?

### 2.2 Outcomes and Next Steps

This workshop built upon the network forming within the Discord group and seminar series already in motion in the DCitizens project and served as an extension, not only expanding the community but also with aspirations to set up a SIGCHI chapter. Additionally, we plan to write an Interactions (i.e., ACM SIGCHI's magazine) article based on this discussion and organise follow-up workshops at conferences, including CHI 2025 and PDC 2025. This initiative seeks to enhance collaboration and foster knowledge exchange within the digital civics community and eventually set up a framework for the future of embedded research. Our goal is to kickstart a

continuous dialogue, expressing varied perspectives, extracting insights, and laying the groundwork for collaboratively creating a guiding framework that future participatory designers can draw upon when navigating the complexities of this domain.

### 3 Workshop at the 2024 Nordic Human-computer Interaction Conference

“And this is where we fu***d up!” Lessons learned from Participatory Design in Digital Civic Initiatives		
Venue: NordiCHI	Qualis Ranking: B1	Dates: 13-16 October 2024
Mode: Hybrid	Location: Uppsala, Sweden	Web: <a href="http://www.nordichi2024.se/">www.nordichi2024.se/</a>
Proceedings: To be available in October 2024		
Open Access: <a href="https://arxiv.org/abs/2407.05032">https://arxiv.org/abs/2407.05032</a>		
Partners involved: USi, IST-ID, UNN		
<p>Abstract: Participatory design (PD) in digital civics aims to foster mutual learning and co-creation between public services and citizens. However, rarely do we collectively explore the challenges and failures we experience within PD and digital civics, to enable us to grow as a community. This workshop will explore real-world experiences that had to adapt to unforeseen circumstances. Through case presentations and thematic group discussions, participants will reflect on the challenges faced, the causes that led to these challenges, and collaboratively problem-solve effective solutions. Furthermore, we aim to discuss well-being impact on researchers and communities when faced with these obstacles, the strategies participants use to overcome them and how this can be fed back into the digital civics’ community. By that, the workshop seeks to foster dialogue, reflection, and collective learning, empowering participants with insights to navigate complexities effectively and promote resilient design practices in digital civics.</p>		

#### 3.1 Workshop Goals

This workshop emerges from recognising the inherent and still under-discussed occurrence of unexpected outcomes and failure within collaborative design processes in digital civics. While previous workshops have also explored relevant issues, such as the role and practices of PD facilitators and the temporal aspects of the design process, there is still a notable gap in the literature regarding the exploration of failure within PD and digital civics. Acknowledging that such initiatives often encounter unforeseen obstacles and diverge from initial plans, this workshop was motivated by the imperative to address these difficulties effectively. By examining real-world cases and exploring the potential impact of unexpected outcomes in digital civics initiatives, we sought to help illuminate the intricacies of collaborative design dynamics.

Through our central question: Can failure in PD for digital civics be a catalyst for positive change, and if so, how can we best leverage it? The workshop aimed to bridge distances and diversities by stimulating dialogue and collective reflection on the role of failure in driving innovation in PD and learning within digital civics. Ultimately, we hoped to empower participants with insights and strategies for tackling these complexities, fostering a culture of resilient and impactful design practices.

#### 3.2 Outcomes and Next Steps

Based on the considerations outlined, the workshop had three major intended outcomes. We wanted to bring together different stakeholders with distinct views to learn from mistakes in PD in digital civics and how such lessons could help the field, its practices and research move

forward while building long-term, sustainable, transdisciplinary relationships. This initiative aimed to enhance collaboration and facilitate the exchange of diverse perspectives within the digital civics community. Such efforts can help equip future PD with the tools to navigate the unexpected developments inherent in the field. This workshop wished to inspire collective reflection on current design and research practices within digital civics. Participants were encouraged to engage critically with research methods and expectations, drawing insights from successes and mistakes. With a focus on failures, we aimed to identify strategies for more effective design processes. By reflecting on each other’s experiences, we sought to enhance our ability to navigate uncertainty and improve our practice. We intend to communicate the outcomes of our discussions in a collaborative paper on PD work with digital civics in an HCI-focused journal.

## 4 Workshop at the 2024 Conference on Designing Interactive Systems

Fostering Feminist Community-Led Ethics: Building Tools and Connections		
Venue: DIS	CORE Ranking: A	Dates: 1-5 July 2024
Mode: Hybrid	Location: Copenhagen, Denmark	Web: <a href="https://dis.acm.org/2024/">dis.acm.org/2024/</a>
Proceedings: <a href="https://dl.acm.org/doi/10.1145/3656156.3658385">https://dl.acm.org/doi/10.1145/3656156.3658385</a>		
Open Access: <a href="https://dl.acm.org/doi/10.1145/3656156.3658385">https://dl.acm.org/doi/10.1145/3656156.3658385</a>		
Partners involved: IST-ID, UNN, USi		
<p><b>Abstract:</b> This workshop proposal advocates for a dynamic, community-led approach to ethics in Human-Computer Interaction (HCI) by integrating principles from feminist HCI and digital civics. Traditional ethics in HCI often overlook interpersonal considerations, resulting in static frameworks ill-equipped to address dynamic social contexts and power dynamics. Drawing from feminist perspectives, the workshop aims to lay the groundwork for developing a meta-toolkit for community-led feminist ethics, fostering collaborative research practices grounded in feminist ethical principles. Through pre-workshop activities, interactive sessions, and post-workshop discussions, participants will engage in dialogue to advance community-led ethical research practices. Additionally, the workshop seeks to strengthen the interdisciplinary community of researchers and practitioners interested in ethics, digital civics, and feminist HCI. By fostering a reflexive approach to ethics, the workshop contributes to the discourse on design’s role in shaping future interactions between individuals, communities, and technology.</p>		

### 4.1 Workshop Goals

The workshop explores the intersection of community-led ethics, feminist HCI, and digital civics, focusing on fostering collaborative research practices grounded in ethical principles. As such, the main goal was to develop a meta-toolkit for community-led ethics. We intended to collaboratively brainstorm the preferred features for a meta-toolkit for community-led feminist ethics in HCI projects. We will later develop this toolkit to provide practical guidelines and heuristics for ethical considerations in community projects situated within their local contingencies.

Other secondary goals included:

- Exploring opportunities for the use of the meta-toolkit: Identifying opportunities for use by discussing common challenges in community-led research as an exploration of how such a toolkit might mitigate these issues and enhance embedded research practices in HCI projects.

- Identify and share relevant theories and concepts for feminist community-led ethics research: Compiling relevant theories and concepts for future toolkits and enhancing participants' understanding of community-led ethical research practices while highlighting the importance of community-led ethics from a feminist perspective.
- Strengthen the community of researchers and practitioners across the fields of ethics, community-led design, digital civics, and feminist HCI: Bring together a community of researchers, practitioners, and community stakeholders to exchange insights, share experiences, and collaborate on ethical research practices to facilitate cross-disciplinary knowledge exchange and opportunities for future collaborations.

## 4.2 Outcomes and Next Steps

Based upon the feedback received throughout the workshop about the key components to be integrated into the meta-toolkit, the toolkit will be iterated and published onto the Miro board for participants to view, share, and iterate. The aim is to make this meta-toolkit open access and return to DIS 2025 to host a re-evaluation workshop a year on to see how participants have used it within their research contexts.

All participants were encouraged to join the DCitizens Discord server to share their thoughts on the workshop and continue the discussions. These discussions will be compiled with the permission of all those involved and analysed to determine whether major themes emerge as potential guidelines or heuristics for designing future community-led ethics toolkits.

## 5 Workshop at the 2024 Interaction Design and Children Conference

Participatory Design with Young Children: Failures, Challenges, and Successes		
Venue: IDC	CORE Ranking: B	Dates: 17-20 June 2024
Mode: Hybrid	Location: Delft, Netherlands	Web: <a href="https://dis.acm.org/2024/">dis.acm.org/2024/</a>
Proceedings: <a href="https://dl.acm.org/doi/10.1145/3628516.3661158">https://dl.acm.org/doi/10.1145/3628516.3661158</a>		
Open Access: <a href="https://dl.acm.org/doi/10.1145/3628516.3661158">https://dl.acm.org/doi/10.1145/3628516.3661158</a>		
Partners involved: IST-ID, UNN		
<p><b>Abstract:</b> This paper introduces a hands-on workshop centred on participatory design (PD) approaches tailored for engaging young children, with a special focus on failures, challenges, and successes in prior experiences within the child-computer interaction (CCI) domain. Although previous efforts have highlighted the advantages of engaging young children in PD, research has overlooked their involvement as co-designers, leading to a lack of exploration and understanding of their unique perspectives and challenges in the design process. Through an interactive session and collaborative activities, this workshop will facilitate discussions surrounding challenges, successes, and lessons learned through PD with young children. By evaluating and exchanging experiences, we aim to enhance our understanding of PD and refine its methodologies for this particular population. By synthesizing the shortcomings, difficulties, and successes of past experiences, the workshop will bring together researchers and practitioners to initiate efforts toward closing this research gap. Together we will establish the groundwork for enhanced approaches and a deeper understanding of how to involve young children in PD, which will enhance future efforts in the field of CCI.</p>		

### 5.1 Workshop Goals

The workshop had three main goals:

- Exchange of Experiences: Facilitating meaningful exchange regarding prior experiences in PD with children. Participants openly shared successes, setbacks, methods, and strategies to improve PD processes further and sustain children’s motivation.
- Brainstorming for Improvement: Brainstorming to extend PD methodologies, leveraging the experiences of those working with young children, focusing on making the process more enjoyable and engaging for children. We intended to compile a comprehensive list of lessons learned, specific considerations, and successful methods to improve future PD sessions.
- Reflection on the workshop’s outcomes: Reflective conclusion where participants shared their most surprising revelation from the workshop and identified the most valuable takeaway. This aimed to capture the workshop’s key highlights and collective learning.

## 5.2 Outcomes and Next Steps

We will summarise the workshop results and write a white paper or a special issue in a journal to stimulate discussion in the community. We will invite participants to be part of a collaborative working group to develop further ideas and suggestions gathered during the workshop. We also plan to establish an online community of practice to share experiences and actively promote PD with children in the realms of CCI. Finally, during the workshop, participants and organisers discussed the possibility of organising a summer school in Lisbon in 2025 on Participatory Design with Children.

## 6 Conclusion

The DCitizens consortium organised five scientific workshops in 2024, strengthening its research network and establishing itself as a leading player in the field of Digital Civics.

Overall, we explored various topics related to Digital Civics, ranging from the sustainability of community-led projects and employed participatory practices to ethically mindful approaches to Digital Civics and coping strategies to deal with the negative consequences of conducting embedded research.

The first workshop/special interest group at CHI was geared towards discussions about sustainable and responsible approaches to technology-driven interventions in future urban regeneration. The workshop at PDC focused on participatory practices used throughout the projects’ lifecycle and how to consider community benefits and strengths from the beginning. We were particularly interested in discussing experiences using commissioning (or other) models to empower communities in shaping agendas. The NordiCHI workshop explored the failures and challenges of conducting Digital Civics research, particularly in deprived settings. The workshop focused on the impact on researchers’ and communities’ wellbeing and the strategies participants use to overcome them. At DIS, we continued our work on building an ethics framework and toolkit to conduct community-led projects (see D4.1). Finally, the IDC workshop explored the opportunities and challenges of conducting participatory research with children. This workshop was especially relevant as the 2024 DCitizens commissioned project involves this user group.