



SEEKCommons

Community Call

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FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 26th | 12:00 PM EST Via Zoom

Equality of Access Requires Equity in Design: Rethinking Open Science Infrastructures

FEATURING LOUISE BEZUIDENHOUT

The 2021 UNESCO Recommendation on Open Science underscored the global commitment to Open Science. The declaration defines Open Science through the values of inclusivity and equity and the principle of sustainability. This commitment to equity hinges on a key implicit assumption: that diverse stakeholders around the world will be able to add value to their lives by accessing and applying the resources made available through Open Science infrastructures and practices. Despite these strong commitments, engagement around what equitable access to open resources looks like in practice is low. Being able to meaningfully utilize available online resources is influenced by a range of other technical, infrastructural, cultural and geopolitical factors.

This call presents research on infrastructural equity. Using computational methods, access to open infrastructures has been tested from different locations around the world. The data illustrates a highly heterogeneous landscape of accessibility of open resources that links to the design decisions inherent in these infrastructures and the contexts in which they are trying to be used. How can we ensure that infrastructures are not geo-blocked to specific countries? How can we support use of infrastructures in low-bandwidth settings? How can we enable engagement with infrastructures through diverse ICT devices? How can we ensure that equal access to open resources is supported by equity in infrastructure design?

LOUISE BEZUIDENHOUT

is a social science researcher specializing in Open Science, data sharing and access, with a focus on justice, inclusion and equity. Her work concentrates on understanding diverse voices within the Open Science movement, particularly improving representation of low/middle-income country researchers through ethnographies, interviews and surveys across Africa, Europe and North America. Dr. Bezuidenhout holds PhDs in cardiothoracic surgery (University of Cape Town) and sociology (University of Exeter). She currently works as a senior researcher at the Centre for Science and Technology Studies (CWTS), University of Leiden, focusing on Open Science monitoring and practice.



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