

CITIZEN SCIENCES FOUNDATION (*Fondation Sciences Citoyennes*)

An NGO dedicated to the redistribution of the capacity for expertise and research towards citizen-movements

We are experiencing a transformation in the nature of risks, inequalities? and hazards? created by the prevailing modes of production and consumption. Free-market globalisation exacerbates these threats and entails the subjection of research and technical development to the demands of the balance sheet. In recent years a growing number of crises (Chernobyl, asbestos, contaminated blood, BSE, GMOs...) has shown the need to take account of other interests and risks than those defined by the techno-scientific industries themselves. They question the existing system of expertise and science and have provoked a revival of social mobilizations and numerous initiatives for the involvement of laypersons in research, expertise or vigilance, a process that has led to a degree of opening-up of science and its institutions.

Faced with the commercialisation of knowledge and living matter, these mobilizations and initiatives are embarking upon a democratic development and a new social pact for responsible and collective citizen science. Far from amounting to "a rise in irrational beliefs", or a lack of information or a question of "culture scientifique", they affirm that science for all must be built with all and in dialogue with types of knowledge previously discounted.

An engine of emancipation for several centuries, science, now techno-science, is tremendously powerful today. In order to serve the well being of the whole of humanity on our planet, this power must be driven by other motives than merely the quest for knowledge, the desire for power or the logic of profit. So after the era of the "control of nature" must come that of the "control of science", of citizen science.

The Citizen Science Foundation aims at supporting and prolonging the current movement of democratic and civil appropriation of science in order to put it at the service of the common good.

Our objectives are, in particular:

- ▶ To increase the capacity for research and expertise of civil society, NGOs, consumerists, citizen-movements and trade unions. We support the establishment of a "scientific third sector" that is better able to meet the growing social and ecological demands, which are neglected by the major scientific orientations whether they be defined by the state or by private industry.

- ▶ To stimulate the freedom of expression and debate in the scientific world, to support whistle blowers and the development of public controversies and "hybrid forums" on key scientific issues. In total contrast with the fear of public intervention and with technocratic thinking, pluralism and controversy are the source not only of a better exploration of possible worlds and, therefore, of better decisions, but also of an active appropriation of scientific knowledge by the public.

- ▶ To promote the democratic elaboration of scientific and technical choices. We support the organisation of public debates on public policies regarding research, technology and expertise. We will also be vigilant in analysing the new methods of deliberation that have increased in number during recent years in order to support those that further a genuine technical democracy.