
Survey response

Candidate statements and CV/resume

Please enter your name and email address below. [First Name]

Lila

Please enter your name and email address below. [Last Name (Surname)]

Higgins

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What do you feel are the major concerns facing the citizen science community?

Although, I have opinions on what I feel the major concerns are for the citizen science community, I want to state that I would prefer to ask the community first. I know that these sorts of questions are raised at many of the local, national, and international conferences and in online forums for the field. However, who attends those conferences and who participates in those online forums? By and large the citizen science participants themselves do not, so are we hearing their concerns? Also, what about the people our efforts to engage are missing entirely—their concerns are certainly not being heard. Are we creating our own echo chamber? It would be very interesting to hear different citizen science stake holders' answers to this question. Scientists, educators, and participants (and even non-participants) involved in citizen science would likely have different concerns, and mapping those concerns and seeing where they overlap and don't would be a very interesting project. That being said, I do see two major concerns through the lens my work here in Los Angeles. The term citizen science is the first concern I have. The community I work in and with, is bringing this up more and more. An historian at my museum, a local community organizer, and a non-profit director—all Latino—have strong concerns about the term in relation to the communities they work most closely with. These conversations have been bubbling for a while now, but since January 20th they have taken a different tenor and have gained a sense of urgency. This is work that cannot wait, and I hope to report further on as things develop. The other concern I see is barriers to entry. As I just mentioned, the term is a barrier to entry for some. Even for those who don't take issue with the word citizen, the term doesn't effectively communicate what we do, and needs explanation. Other barriers also exist, and they need to be better understood, studied, and shared. In 2015 when Wyoming passed Senate Bill 12, is one example of an extreme barrier. Literally, the bill outlaws data collection by the public on open land. Other barriers may seem more benign, but are none-the-less hurdles that deter people from participating. Working to uncover these barriers is an effort that by its nature has to be done on-the-ground with the people. Each project, each geographic area, and each community will have different barriers. Working with practitioners to help identify and overcome these barriers to participation is work I hope to contribute to.

What skills and what types of experience would you bring to the CSA board?

In 2006 I became a Monarch Watch citizen scientist and practitioner, while working as the volunteer coordinator at Mass Audubon's Drumlin Farm. Since that first brush with this form of scientific public engagement, I have been a fan. Over time, as my work in the education field broadened, I became deeply involved in the movement and have witnessed its power to advance humanity. I am a fierce advocate for the field. I have skills in nine areas that would help give new energy and perspectives to the CSA board—1) developing and administering projects, 2) planning and running programs, 3) being a spokesperson for the field, 4) knowledge of social media to push the field forward, 5) a commitment to diversity and inclusion in the practice, 6) a commitment to research and evaluation, 7) experience with fundraising, 8) involvement and service to the CSA, and finally 9) raising the profile of CS nationally/internationally through collaborative work. Here are a few more details that will hopefully convey my experience and passion: Over the course of my career, I have developed/helped develop eight different citizen science projects. I have planned and led hundreds of citizen science public programs both on the East and West Coast. I have given over 50 public presentations about the field of citizen science and the projects and programs I have been involved with. I have fully embraced other forms of communication of the field, starting and overseeing three social media accounts for the NHMLA, running a blog that focuses on L.A. citizen scientists, and incorporating CS stories into museum exhibits. I am committed to diversity and inclusion in the field, and have taken concrete steps in my current role at NHMLA. I hire/mentor diverse staff and volunteers, and we together have begun to work with communities in their own neighborhoods. Although co-creation of projects is not something NHMLA can focus on currently, we have adopted a model of co-creation of educational programs. I am also committed to research and evaluation in the field, ensuring that informal/formal evaluation and a reflective practice is part of every program I run. Most recently, I have begun working on scientific publications looking at the research and learning outcomes of our programs, with my first publication coming out last year. I have experience going after and receiving funding for CS from private foundations, local government entities, and nationwide grant programs. I have also been involved in the CSA, co-chairing the 2015 conference and working as an advisor for the upcoming 2017 conference. However, my biggest accomplishment to date is the ideation and organization of the City Nature Challenge. In collaboration with Alison Young from the California Academy of Sciences, the event launched in 2016 as a way to increase awareness of, and participation in citizen science for the April 16 National Citizen Science Day. This year the program has grown to include 14 other US cities.

LILA HIGGINS

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EDUCATION

California State University San Bernardino- Master of Arts, Environmental Education, 2006

University of California Riverside- Bachelor of Science, Entomology, 2001

PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

Manager, Citizen Science

June 2013-present

Natural History Museum of Los Angeles County, Los Angeles, California

- Manage museum's Citizen Science Program including supervision of 3 full time staff and 4 students/interns, oversight of \$200K budget.
- Manage inter-departmental citizen science working group, write publications and popular press items writing and apply for grants (grants to date for program total in \$245K, and a pending \$1.4M).
- Serve on museum's 2015/16 strategic planning committee
- Serve as a member of the Research & Collections leadership council
- Science communicator for urban nature and Los Angeles focused stories and content.
- Managing editor of NHMLA's urban nature blog, overseeing a group of 8 writers.

Manager, Citizen Science and Live Animals

December 2008-June 2013

Natural History Museum of Los Angeles County, Los Angeles, California

- Manage museum's Citizen Science and Live Animal Programs including 4 direct and 6 indirect reports, oversight of \$500K budget.
- Oversee live animal exhibits including live butterfly and spider pavilions, Insect Zoo, and live vertebrate displays.
- Exhibit content development for Nature Gardens and Nature Lab exhibits.
- Interpretive planning and program development for Nature Gardens
- Manage museum's Citizen Science Program including writing and reporting on grants
- Write NHMLA's urban nature blog

Assistant Director

July 2008-November 2008

Mary Vagle Museum and Nature Center, Fontana, California

- Work with director to create center's strategic and interpretive plans
- Plan and implement staff trainings on interpretation and environmental education
- Plan and lead programming for summer Artist in Nature Camp

Volunteer Coordinator

September 2006-July 2008

Drumlin Farm Wildlife Sanctuary, Lincoln, Massachusetts

- Manage sanctuary's 700+ person volunteer program, including group, teen and docent programs
- Work with sanctuary's live animal staff to provide proper care of the living collection (including Virginia opossums, raccoons, skunks, and woodchucks)
- Manage sanctuary's ecological management program for the 232 acre site including 4 miles of trails
- Coordinate sanctuary's suite of special events with annual attendance of over 7000 and gross income of \$65,000

Associate Education Curator

December 2004-July 2006

Riverside Metropolitan Museum, Riverside, California

- Design, implement and evaluate museum education programs for school groups, scouts and general visitors
- Recruit, train and supervise museum education staff
- Manage museum's docent and volunteer programs
- Maintain, manage and interpret museum's living collection including live vertebrates and invertebrates

- Work on committees for design, evaluation, and production of exhibit areas and interpretive signage

SELECTED PUBLIC SPEAKING & WORKSHOPS

Invited panelist: <i>Citizen Scientist: Searching for Heroes and Hope in an Age of Extinction</i> UCLA Luskin Center (Los Angeles, USA)	November 2016
Pre-conference workshop: <i>Citizen Science Best Practices for Science Centers and Museums</i> Association of Science and Technology Centers (Tampa, USA)	September, 2016
Pre-conference workshop: <i>From Buying in to Integrating Citizen Science at Your Organization: Sharing Concrete Tools and Stories</i> Association of Science and Technology Centers (Montreal, CA)	September, 2015
Accepted Symposium: <i>DIY Aerial Photography: Civic Science and Small Data for Public Participation and Action</i> Citizen Science Association Conference (San Jose, USA)	February, 2015
Accepted Talk: <i>Extreme Citizen Science in an Angelic Concrete Jungle</i> Citizen Cyberscience Summit (London, UK)	February, 2014
Invited Panelist and meeting planner: <i>Citizen Science & Libraries</i> Science & Engineering Academic Librarians Fall meeting (Los Angeles, USA)	December, 2013

SELECTED PUBLICATIONS

Ballard, H., Robinson, L.D., Young, A.N., Pauly, G.B., Higgins, L.M., Johnson, R.F. and Tweddle, J. C. Contributions to conservation outcomes of natural history museum-led citizen science: Examining evidence and next steps. *Biological Conservation*. 2016

Higgins, L. Looking for Nature in LA: The view from the Natural History Museum of Los Angeles County. *Boom: A Journal of California*, Vol 4 No. 3, Fall 2014; (122-128).

SELECTED GRANTS

Nature programming and citizen science @NHMLA \$95K/\$75K/\$75K S.D. Bechtel Jr. Foundation	October, 2014/13/12
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SELECTED PROFESSIONAL SERVICE

Citizen Science Association	May 2014-present
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CSA 2015 conference co-chair • CSA 2017 conference advisor 	

SELECTED MEETINGS

NSF Funded Workshop	April, 2011
Selected participant for NSF grant funded workshop, <i>Enhancing Biodiversity Conservation and Environmental Stewardship through Public Participation in Scientific Research</i> at American Museum of Natural History.	