



Citizen OS

Citizen OS Foundation

Annual Report 2022



Published January 2023

Contents

Index	Page
A Message from Anett	03
Our Mission	04
Our Vision	04
Theory of Change	05
2022 in numbers	06
Organisational developments	08
Product developments	09
Projects & Partnerships	11
Team	15
Upcoming plans	17
Corner of Appreciation	18

A Message from Anett



The year 2022 was the seventh year of Citizen OS. It's a year that saw unprecedented events take place around the world—with war in the heart of Europe, deepening energy crises and escalating climate change issues fostering the decline in democracy more than ever.

In light of these events, Citizen OS has taken an even stronger role in supporting and protecting democracy and its values—not only in Estonia and wider Europe, but also in India, where we have fruitful partnerships and volunteers, and Indonesia, where a branch of Citizen OS has now officially opened.

In 2022, we continued developing our participation platform in order to make respectful, argument-based discussions and collaborative decision-making easier for communities and organisations. We also launched our Democracy Defenders Accelerator, to empower and equip civil society leaders with knowledge, tools and a network of like-minded others. We hope that through the Citizen OS platform and this programme there will be more engaged, motivated leaders in the world—willing and ready to stand up for the values of democracy and open society.

We are not doing these things alone. We are lucky and grateful to have our supporters, partners and like-minded people who share the same values—and are working towards the same mission as we do. Our team is dedicated to building a future in which everyone everywhere can live in a democratic and open society.

Together with our team, our partners, our volunteers and supporters, we will keep pioneering the field of e-democracy and foster democratic decision-making at all levels of society.

Anett Linno, CEO

Our Mission

Our mission is to empower people to participate in respectful, meaningful discussions in order to collaboratively decide on issues that affect them.

We strive to empower as many people as possible from around the world to engage in such decisions, focusing our efforts on those that directly impact people's wellbeing, and that of the planet.

Our Vision

Our vision is a world in which no one person or group rules over others, but where people govern together.

In this world we dream of, every person has the right and opportunity to participate in decisions they wish to be part of. We believe that by making collaborative, deliberative, respectful and evidence-based decisions, we will better take into account the interests and wellbeing of all the inhabitants of Earth, as well as the planet itself.



Theory of Change

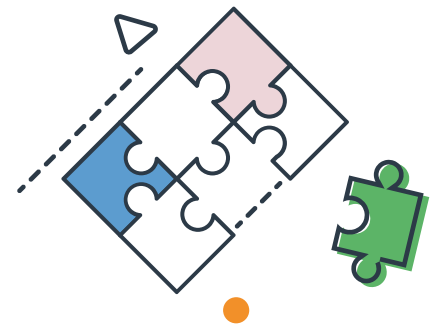
Citizen OS is a mission-driven organisation, so the impact we bring to people and communities is our key criteria of success. Through our actions, goals, outcomes and vision we're helping to build a more inclusive, deliberative and participatory democracy.

Our Theory of Change shows how we foster social change in people's lives—supporting and protecting democracy and open society values all around the world. We believe that technology will help to increase civic participation and bring people closer to decision-making processes at all levels of society.



IMPACT
A more inclusive, deliberative and participatory democracy

VISION
People govern together



OUTCOME 1:
Citizens & advocacy groups are designed into decision-making processes

OUTCOME 2:
Communities are skilled and empowered to use collective wisdom in decision-making

OUTCOME 3:
A new generation of community leaders are skilled to practise participatory leadership

OUTPUT 1:
Decision-makers are practising deliberative e-democracy

OUTPUT 2:
Citizens have opportunities to participate in discussions that lead to tangible change, and feel motivated and engaged in doing so

OUTPUT 1:
Community members are skilled in having respectful, engaging discussions and understand the importance of participating

OUTPUT 1:
Community leaders are equipped with participatory leadership skills

OUTPUT 2:
A strong network of community leaders are working together

ACTIVITY 1:
Developing our participation platform

ACTIVITY 2:
Implementing a knowledge hub and training programs

ACTIVITY 3:
Communicating our vision

ACTIVITY 4:
Providing support to empower the ambassadors of civil society

2022 in numbers

On our platform

Since the beginning*

3929

Discussions

14275

Votes

498

groups

10019

users

New in 2022**

712

Discussions

4173

Votes

80

groups

1251

users

**Since Citizen OS first began in 2015, up until 1 Jan 2023*

***Between 1 Jan 2022 and 31 Dec 2022*

In our organisation

People engaged in our projects and platform development in 2022:

77
volunteers

1249
project participants

Our API and open source code

Aside from the discussions and votes that take place directly on our platform, we also make our API and product code freely available on GitHub. That way, others can put them to use in developing their own bespoke civic tech initiatives—tailored to their own needs. Since 2019, we no longer collaborate directly with API partners, as we decided to focus all our resources on further improving our SaaS platform. But it makes us happy to know there are still people out there putting our code to great use in other ways!



Organisational developments



Officialisation of Citizen OS Indonesia

This September, we celebrated an important development for us as an organisation. Our team in Indonesia became officially registered as a foundation!

This means we now have two separate but interconnected entities in our organisational structure—the Citizen OS Foundation, which is our longstanding HQ based in Estonia, and Citizen OS Indonesia, a new branch with teams in both Jakarta and Bali.

But working in Indonesia is far from new to us. Since 2018, our amazing Indonesian team led by civic activist Agustina Iskandar Crombach has been working tirelessly to develop and deliver high-impact civic engagement and e-democracy projects. Recent successes include the Indonesia Opinion Festival, Youth E-Engagement Programme, and the Civic Innovation Gatherings.

Having legal recognition as a foundation in Indonesia is a huge milestone for us. It means we can optimise our work in facilitating discussion and participation for a more inclusive

decision-making process in Indonesian society. It also opens doors for us to work with more partners at the national and international level, and to apply for funding to take our work there to the next level.



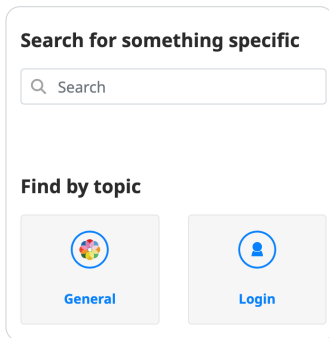
is now a **registered foundation** in Indonesia!



www.citizenos.com

Product developments

It's been a great year for improvements to the Citizen OS platform. Here are a few of the top new features and developments



Help Centre

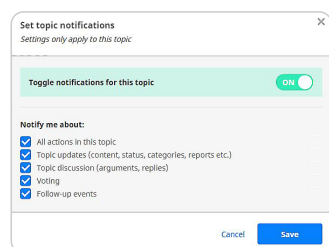
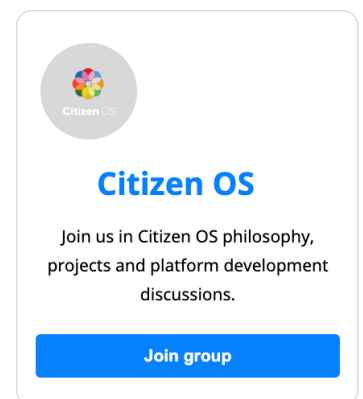
At the beginning of the year, we launched our new Help Centre for user support. Accessed via the 'Help' link or '?' button, Citizen OS platform users can now find guidance on how to use all features, and find responses to some of our most frequently asked questions.

It's also possible to submit feedback about the platform or submit a Help Request via the Help Centre.

Public Groups

Just like it's always been possible to create public topics on the Citizen OS platform, you can now also create public groups! By joining a public group, you get access to all the topics that have been added to the group.

This means that if an organisation or group wants to share several related topics publicly—either at once, or over a period of time—they can do so in a much tidier and easy-to-communicate way. This is a feature which our users have been enthusiastically requesting for a while, so we're very happy to have it now developed and live.



Notifications

Building upon the Citizen OS platform's already existing default notifications, we've now developed a comprehensive notifications system that allows users to opt into optional additional email notifications.

For example, if you're participating in a topic and want to know when someone has added an argument, voting has opened, or some follow-up information has been posted, you can do so via the Notifications Management feature.

To make sure no-one receives any more notification emails than they want, we've made it possible to select exactly which kinds of notifications you want to receive, and to manage them on a topic-by-topic basis.

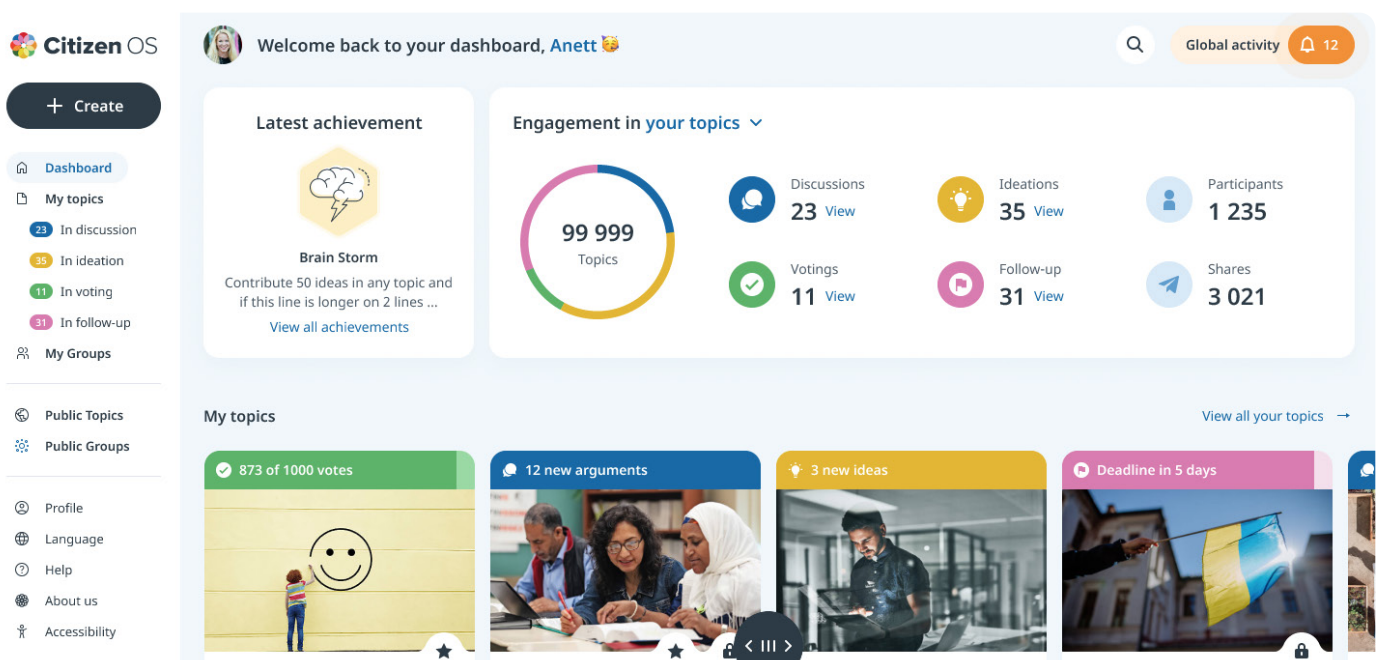
UX/UI Redesign

Thanks to the work of our longstanding UX/UI design partners DUX, we are very excited to have a new set of designs for the Citizen OS platform, to be implemented in 2023.

After much ideation, discussion and user testing, we're feeling positive that these designs will create a much smoother (not to mention more beautiful!) user experience, as well as offering some important new features.

The most notable changes to the design include a fresh new look, a complete re-working of the dashboards, a new ideation feature for gathering ideas, and options for different entry points from which to start your group decision-making (i.e. discussion, ideation or voting).

Huge thanks to all the volunteer testers who've helped us validate and fine-tune the designs!



External recognition

Our platform has been included in a number of civic tech databases this year: People Powered's **Digital Participation Platform Ratings**, the **Democracy Technologies Database**, and PartiCipate's **Platforms for Digital Participation**.

These initiatives showcase participation tools to help groups and organisations find the most effective tool to meet their needs.

Projects and partnerships

Indonesia Opinion Festival 2022

The second Indonesia Opinion Festival was held online on 26-27 March 2022. Launched by Citizen OS Indonesia in 2021, and run in partnership with **Indorelawan** and **Gerakan Mari Berbagi**, the event brings Indonesians together to celebrate freedom of expression and discuss current issues.

Issues up for discussion are decided by the community beforehand, via the Citizen OS platform. Anyone can propose topics, then the final topics are selected via a public vote. During the festival, participants hear from

expert speakers from diverse backgrounds, then collectively discuss how to solve the issues raised.

To ensure that participants' voices are heard by those in power, a list of concrete recommendations from the discussions are sent directly to the relevant government bodies. Government representatives also attend the event as speakers and participants.

The 2022 event attracted 1,191 participants. Discussions were made possible with the input of 47 speakers, 33 community partners, 25 media partners and 64 volunteers.



Youth E-Engagement Programme



Developed following recommendations from the Indonesia Opinion Festival 2021, the Youth E-Engagement Programme (YEEP) prioritises technological solutions as a way to increase positive impact and participation in civic engagement initiatives.

YEEP participants are young Indonesians leading their communities in tackling a range of social issues. Through the programme, they are equipped with expertise to use a wide selection of tools and platforms to work more effectively within their teams and with partners, map the stakeholder needs and evaluate engagement impacts. Following its successful launch in 2021, YEEP went on

to secure a strategic partnership with the Indonesian government in 2022—to scale up the programme across the country, and improve the government’s youth funding strategy.

YEEP is led by Citizen OS Indonesia in collaboration with Indorelawan and One-Click Democracy, with support from Gerakan Mari Berbagi and the Indonesian Ministry of Youth and Sport. The three YEEP programme winners (pictured below) who received project funding from the government were Seni Tani, Yos Indonesia Bersinergi and Ruang Kolaborasi Perempuan.

Civic Innovation Gathering

A further outcome of the Indonesia Opinion Festival was the development of Citizen OS Indonesia’s Civic Innovation Gathering (CIG). Following the development of the idea at the Indonesia Opinion Festival 2022, the first CIG took place online in August.

The event provided an opportunity for Indonesian civil society actors to come together and share innovative activity in their work—with a particular focus on platforms, applications and programmes targetted at community

groups. The initiative aims to enable connections and collaboration between civil networks, communities and organisations, as well as allowing the trial of community-led platforms and a direct feedback loop between communities and platform creators.

The first CIG specifically targeted the committees, speakers, and attendees who participated in the 2022 Indonesia Opinion Festival, and was attended by 22 people. However, the CIG will be opened up to the wider public in future.

Democracy Defenders Accelerator

We are delighted to have received funding from Active Citizens Fund to develop a 10-month civil society leadership programme for young activists from around the world.

In this immersive, hands-on programme, participants will learn how to design and deliver civic engagement projects and practise participatory leadership skills—through both the running of a fictional organisation and the development of real-life projects.

The learning process, which runs from 20 Jan to 17 Nov 2023, will be a hybrid one—involving a mix of fortnightly online workshops and mentoring sessions, as well as a 10-day in-person Bootcamp in Estonia.

The applicant selection process is already well under way. We've been very impressed by the quality of the applicants, and can't wait to start working with these inspiring young changemakers in the New Year.



Masters Module in Civic Engagement

This Autumn, we've had the pleasure of designing and delivering a module in Civic Engagement for Tallinn University's Open Society Technologies Masters programme.

For their final projects, the students worked to address a particular problem in society, analyse the stakeholders involved, and explore what kind of solutions could be devised in an open society.

Delivering the module was an illuminating and rewarding experience for us. We were happy to have the opportunity to share some of our knowledge and experience with this group of smart and committed students.



GEYC EuroChangeMakers

Led by the youth organisation GEYC, in collaboration with Citizen OS and partners from 18 countries, the **EuroChangeMakers** project took place from 15 Mar 2021 to 14 Sep 2022.

The project succeeded in engaging over 500 citizens in National Civic Hackathons across all participating countries, out of which an EuroChangeMakers network of 100

young active citizens was also created. At the hackathons, citizens came together to discuss, reflect, and propose concrete solutions for the future of Europe.

The hackathon teams used the Citizen OS platform to discuss some of Europe's most pressing issues and engage youth in the conversation.



SALTO Flagship Projects

Our 2021 Erasmus+ Youth Exchange program “**Digital Transformation for Civic Engagement**”, was selected to be among the 17 best projects showcased by SALTO Flagship Projects, published in SALTO’s **Participation Resource Pool** in October 2022.

The youth exchange, which ran from 17-25 Aug 2021, saw 22 young people from Estonia, Latvia, Turkey, Romania and Luxembourg attend a 9-day programme in Tallinn, Estonia. Through the programme, they gained practical experience of designing effective civic engagement projects and using technological tools to enhance participation.



Team

At Citizen OS, we are truly blessed with the most incredible team of smart, dedicated and team-spirited people! We work with a flat and collaborative structure—with each member having their own area of speciality, but collectively working towards our goals and sharing our knowledge, ideas, inspiration and support freely between ourselves.

Citizen OS Foundation



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Expanding Our Knowledge

To ensure we stay up-to-date with the latest knowledge in our fields of democracy, e-governance, civic tech and civic engagement, our team regularly attend external events and programmes.

Some highlights this year have included:

Anett and Oksana attended the Council of Europe’s **World Forum for Democracy in Strasbourg, France**. There they learned more about the challenges facing democracy globally, the potential solutions to address them, and the powerful civic movements that are stepping up to do so.



Agustina received an Australia Awards in Indonesia scholarship to attend the **Youth Participation in Social Justice Issues Short Course in Brisbane and Melbourne, Australia**. There she had the chance to learn from and meet with Australian Government agencies, INGO/CSOs, youth organisations, young activists, young politicians and other leading experts in the sector.

Anett and Kati attended the DD Foundation’s **Democracy Conference in Tartu, Estonia**. There they participated in discussing the problems and possible solutions for advancing democracy, and celebrated the launch of a new Center for Developing Democracy.



Anett and Sara attended the **e-Governance Academy Conference in Tallinn, Estonia**. Through the sessions, they had the chance to hear from strategists, decision-makers, policy implementers and donors, to collectively chart the future of governance.

The Citizen OS Indonesia team participated in **Diversity, Equality and Inclusion Advocacy Training in Organisations** held by the INDEKS Institute (Institute for Democracy and Social Welfare), Friedrich Naumann Foundation (FNF) Indonesia and Indonesian Ministry of Law and Human Rights, on 27 August 2022.

Upcoming Plans

We're excited to be kicking off 2023 with some big plans for moving our organisation even further towards achieving our mission:



UX/UI implementation

Across the year, we'll be gradually implementing the new UX and UI redesign of our Citizen OS platform. Chunk by chunk, our existing platform will morph into a more beautiful, more user-friendly, and all-round more effective version of itself. We'll be looking for feedback and willing testers along the way, to make sure we get it just right.

AI advisory board

For Citizen OS to succeed in helping as many people as possible participate in decision-making, we need to solve some of the technological problems we are currently facing. We see AI as a potential solution. For example, in helping to sort and organise a discussion with large numbers of arguments, or providing AI-generated arguments in the discussions.

To explore this potential, we're in the process of creating a Citizen OS AI Advisory Board. We're happy to have already found some great allies in Tallinn University and the University of Helsinki, as well as a very fruitful collaboration with AI developer Roland Pihlakas. We'll be continuing to recruit members over the coming months!

Engaging like-minded philanthropists

The Citizen OS Foundation is a donation-based organisation, and we are very grateful to have stable financial support from our philanthropist funder and other private donors. We're a small organisation but we do dream big, and to bring our dreams to life in 2023 we would love to engage more like-minded people in our mission!

Projects we're looking for support with include implementing AI within our current open source technology, creating an online Knowledge Hub to share knowledge about open society, democracy, and online civic engagement; and continuing to expand our educational programmes—such as our Democracy Defenders Accelerator.

Corner of Appreciation



Australia Awards Indonesia

for receiving our Head of Citizen OS Indonesia, Agustina Iskandar Crombach, on the Youth Participation in Social Justice Issues Short Course



Faransina Olivia Rumere

for being a core volunteer for Citizen OS Indonesia



Gerakan Mari Berbagi

for their partnership in the Indonesia Opinion Festival and Youth E-Engagement Programme



Group of the European Youth for Change (GEYC)

for helping recruit participants to our Democracy Defenders Accelerator



Jiri Podhorecky

for translating our platform into Czech language



Kevin Crepin & the rest of the DUX team

for their work on our platform UX/UI redesign



Indorelawan

for their partnership in the Indonesia Opinion Festival and Youth E-Engagement Programme



Rajashekhar V

for being a core volunteer on Citizen OS projects in India



Bhavna Rawat

for supporting Citizen OS work in India as a contributor



Richard Hartono

for being a core team volunteer for Citizen OS Indonesia



Roland Pihlakas

for support in developing AI solutions for our platform



Leony Christanti

for carrying out a design internship with our HQ office



Merja Bauters

for collaboration on Tallinn University's Open Society Technology Masters



Ministry of Youth & Sport Indonesia

for their partnership in the Indonesia Opinion Festival and Youth E-Engagement Programme



Miro Šimkovič

for translating our platform into Slovak language



Nyoman Try Widhyastuty M. S.

for being a core team volunteer for Citizen OS Indonesia



Sarah Maulina

for being a core team volunteer for Citizen OS Indonesia



Tiara Permata Dewi

for being a core team volunteer for Citizen OS Indonesia



Youth For Understanding (YFU)

for helping promote the Democracy Defenders Accelerator



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