

- No53
- **Degree of public participation in Science Shops**

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- **Abstract**

- At the end of the sixties and the beginning of the seventies, facilities conducting research on behalf of underprivileged communities emerged in Europe and the United States. Usually, these facilities have been called science shops referring to the term employed in the Netherlands. Today, this model of interaction between educational and scientific institutions and citizens has spread across several countries. As a consequence, science shops offer a large variety of institutional formats in different local contexts. My research sheds light on the degrees of public engagement in science shops, or in other words, the way that citizens and members of the scientific community are related in these facilities. In order to achieve this, I have adapted an existing framework for discriminating among different models of science communication to the particular characteristics of science shops. A questionnaire with this framework was sent to about one hundred of these facilities. The results indicate that in most of the cases science shops do not only conduct research on behalf of citizens, but also involve them in several participatory processes related to science. This shows that the standard account of science shops as a consultative process free of charge on behalf of social groups describes only a part of their operations and that generally these facilities implement the best recommended practices in science communication in terms of engagement.