

Putting evidence at the centre of everyday life for citizens: A call to action

This call to action supported by the Evidence Synthesis Infrastructure Collaborative (ESIC) emphasizes the critical role of **citizen engagement** in the evidence synthesis ecosystem and the processes by which evidence from around the world is gathered, evaluated and communicated.

The call to action was initiated by ESIC citizen members (Euphrasia Ebai-Atuh Ndi, Michelle Hamilton-Page, Richard Morley, Maureen Smith). It was co-written by two of its citizen members (Richard Morley and Maureen Smith) with input and support from ESIC members, the ESIC secretariat, and the wider evidence-synthesis community for consideration in the ESIC roadmap and for discussion by all evidence ecosystem ‘interest holders’ at the ESIC consensus meeting in Cape Town in June 2025.

Vision

This document envisions an evidence ecosystem that values, supports and embeds citizens as both users and co-producers of evidence. Realizing this vision requires bold action and structural change to create inclusive, responsive, and accountable evidence systems globally.

Why it matters

People around the world make countless decisions each day that impact personal and societal well-being. Yet they often struggle to access trustworthy, relevant evidence due to barriers such as language, technological access, and systemic inequities. Evidence syntheses, particularly living evidence syntheses, are vital tools that help counter misinformation and inform decisions—but must be shaped by and accessible to citizens to be truly effective.

Challenges for citizens

Citizens face multiple obstacles in accessing and using evidence: (1) difficulty identifying relevant and trustworthy sources; (2) limited digital access and language barriers; (3) low evidence literacy; and (4) social and economic barriers leading to marginalization of voices.

Citizen engagement in the future evidence synthesis ecosystem is vital to its success

This engagement should be culturally sensitive, inclusive of diverse and vulnerable populations, and integrated into governance, decision-making, and evidence support. Fostering partnerships and advancing citizen engagement will make evidence syntheses more relevant, credible, which will result in impactful evidence to support informed citizen participation and decision-making.

Call to action

ESIC outlines **four strategic calls** targeting various actors across the evidence ecosystem:

1. produce evidence that meets citizens’ needs.
2. foster an evidence synthesis ecosystem where citizens can be co-producers of evidence.
3. enable citizens as evidence users.
4. support the role of citizens as advocates for evidence and trustworthy information.