



# Starting Small, Thinking Open:

## Building a Grassroots Open Science Community for ECRs

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### If you're an early career researcher feeling overwhelmed by Open Science

You are not alone. We were overwhelmed too. That is why we created **Agape**: a grassroots, beginner-friendly community, built by PhD students to help each other. Our aim was to make Open Science practical, playful, and part of everyday research.

### OUR VALUES & PROCESS

**Inclusive:** Made *by* ECRs, *for* ECRs, across disciplines including linguistics, psychology, computer science, physiotherapy, and more.  
**Practical:** Each MOOC chapter includes ECR-friendly exercises you can apply directly in your PhD.  
**Transparent** : Fully open-sourced via GitHub, embracing iterative community development.  
**Sustainable** : Built with no funding, driven by passion, still growing through peer contributions.

### WHAT WE HAVE DONE SO FAR

**Open-access MOOC** – Modules rooted in ECR work life: Open and FAIR Data, Open Access, Licensing, Digital Repositories, etc.

**Interactive workshops** – Introductory workshops to Open Science for students, librarians, academics, and really everyone who is interested.

**Detective game** – Science Sleuth detective game where in an entertaining way participants learn to reveal fraudulent publishing practices.

**Templates & tools** – Everything we create is available under the Creative Commons licenses, including the community website template, MOOC structure, quiz banks, infographics, etc.

**Community Hub** – With a public website, GitHub pages for new ideas, surveys, and friendly peer feedback. We are happy to join any discussion and share our thoughts and experiences if that is what you are looking for.

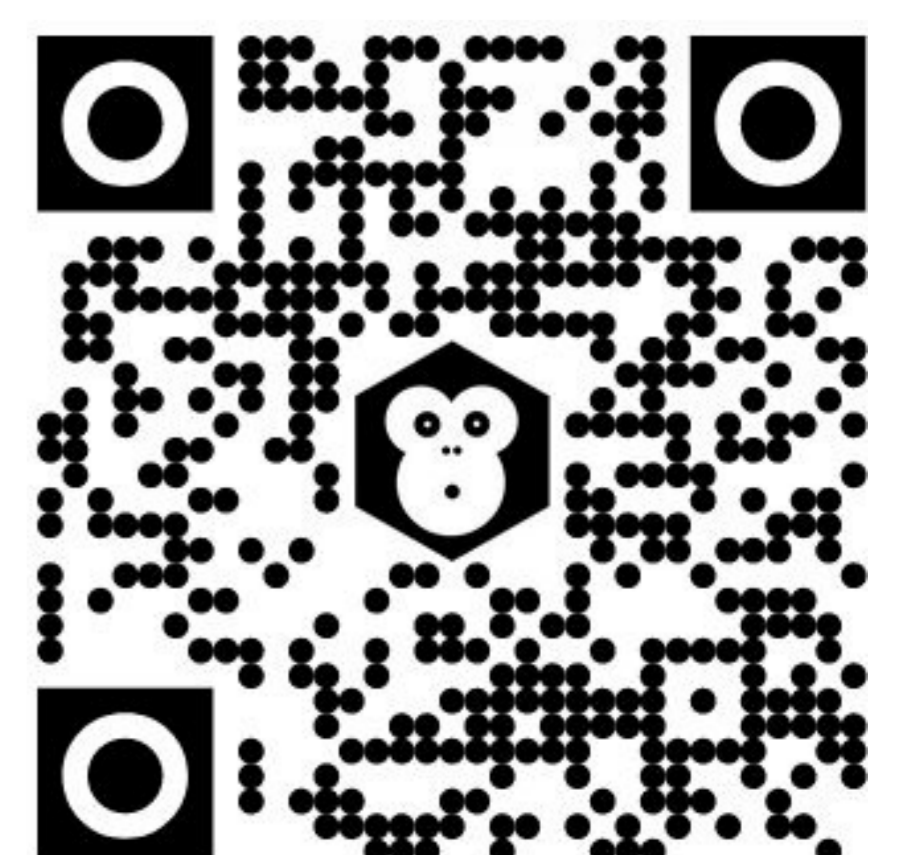
### WHY AGAPE EXISTS

We are a small band of PhD students and ECRs who met through the **Horizon 2020 “Opening Doors” Doctoral Education Network**. We found Open Science equal parts empowering and disorientating. As a result, we founded **Agape**, a welcoming, inclusive, beginner-friendly community. Agape means “wide open,” just like our approach to science.

### LEARNING

We engage ECRs when Open Science is optional before it becomes mandatory, so that Open Science practises are intentional and natural. We let practical, playful learning lead the way rather than policy-heavy guidance, ensuring accessibility and engagement. We build tools with communities. We leverage grassroots momentum to complement institutional governance.

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