METASCIENCE ALLIANCE

Overview

Over the past months, the Metascience Alliance has gathered a wide range of input from various perspective. This includes survey results from early 2025 and structured discussions held during the London metascience workshop. Together, these contributions offer a first picture of what different stakeholders hope the Alliance could enable and where they see the most immediate opportunities for collective progress.

The purpose of this document is to reflect back what we have heard so far: the needs, ambitions, and practical ideas that have surfaced across disciplines, sectors, and regions. It is not a strategic plan, nor a fixed agenda. Rather, it is a working synthesis – a starting point for deeper conversations with the organisations and individuals who make up the Alliance.

The five themes below represent the strongest and most consistent signals across the input to date. They provide an early sense of direction: areas where shared needs converge, where coordinated action could add value, and where the Alliance may be well positioned to create enabling conditions for collaboration. In the coming months, these themes will serve as prompts for one-to-one and small-group conversations, helping shape a more refined understanding of what the Alliance should prioritise.

This document is therefore both a first articulation of what we have learned, and a basis for shaping the next steps together.

Coordination infrastructure

Making it easier for metascientists to find each other, collaborate, and learn from each other.

Across the input, there is a clear desire for the Alliance to reduce fragmentation in the metascience ecosystem. Many respondents highlighted the need for better integration across the metascience landscape. There is a strong appetite for the Alliance to serve as a light,

enabling backbone – creating shared spaces for communication, low-barrier opportunities for collaboration, and common frameworks that make it easier for organisations to work together. This includes open communication channels, repositories of initiatives, lightly facilitated networking and project-pitching sessions, and support for multi-organisation or multi-country research efforts, as well as simple shared resources that help people see what already exists and avoid working in isolation.

Across these responses runs a common message: metascience is energetic but fragmented, and the Alliance could play an important role in providing the connective tissue that allows larger, more coherent collaborations to emerge.

Shared Learning and Synthesis

Helping stakeholders keep up, make sense of what metascience is, and translate insights into something usable.

Across the input, we have heard a widespread need for the Alliance to lower the cognitive and organisational burden of staying informed in a fast-evolving landscape. Many organisations lack the capacity to monitor developments, track the literature, or interpret complex methodological debates. People are not merely asking for “training” or “summaries”; they’re asking for a layer of curation, translation, and synthesis that helps different types of organisations navigate the metascience landscape without each reinventing their own monitoring and learning capability. The Alliance could play a useful role in providing curated summaries, introductory materials, and decision-relevant syntheses for diverse audiences.

System-level Influence

Giving metascience a seat at the table – and helping metascientists speak with clarity, credibility, and coherence.

We gathered a sense that stakeholders believe that metascience is still poorly understood, weakly represented, and that its insights often fail to reach policymaking, funding decisions, and institutional strategy. As such, we noticed a strong desire for the Alliance to help articulate, represent, and advance metascience within the wider research ecosystem.

This includes providing clear, but potentially diverse, narratives about the purpose and approach of metascience, developing shared goals and guidelines, and offering structured channels for outsiders to engage with the diverse activities and organizations engaged in

metascience. Overall, this theme reflects a need for the Alliance to support the visibility, legitimacy, and influence of metascience at large without centralising authority.

Inclusion & Capacity Building

Broaden who gets to do metascience, strengthen the people who want to participate, and ensure the Alliance reflects the full diversity of research systems.

This theme picks up several distinct requests that together form a coherent picture: people want the Alliance to help make metascience more accessible, more globally representative, and more supportive of individuals and organisations with limited resources or structural disadvantages. This includes greater integration of Global South perspectives, visibility for underrepresented disciplinary and institutional communities, and targeted support for early-career researchers. The emphasis is not merely on representation, but on capacity – enabling people and communities to actually engage, contribute, and benefit.

Many noted that participation in metascience often requires skills, resources, and confidence that are unevenly distributed. The Alliance could play a valuable role in providing or facilitating mentoring, training, job resources, access to engage in collaborations, and general skills for navigating research systems with confidence. Language accessibility, disciplinary diversity, and equitable access to data and infrastructures appear as important enablers. Overall, this theme points to the importance of designing Alliance activities in ways that strengthen capacity across the ecosystem and building equitable participation.

Visible On-the-Ground Activity

Creating a visible movement: concrete things happening that bring people together, build energy, and make the Alliance feel alive.

Across the responses, there are many references to small-scale, practical activities that generate engagement, connection, and momentum. These requests are not for grand programmes or major initiatives – they are for activities that are easy to join, organise, and understand. These include hackathons, unconferences, webinars, virtual discussions, and short project-pitch sessions. Such events provide low-barrier opportunities for engagement, help build relationships, and offer a sense of activity even while long-term structures are being developed.

Regular monthly or quarterly touchpoints are seen as valuable for maintaining momentum, surfacing emerging interests, and giving stakeholders opportunities to interact in concrete ways. Respondents also emphasised the value of member-led initiatives and recurring sessions that keep individuals and organizations connected. Overall, this theme reflects a desire for the Alliance to feel lively and active, with regular touchpoints that strengthen cohesion and help surface emerging interests.

Next Steps

This synthesis is an early waypoint rather than a finished map. The themes presented here will continue to evolve as more organizations and stakeholders engage, as new perspectives surface, and as the Alliance begins a new phase of structured conversations and pilot activities.

Three ways to stay involved and help shape what comes next:

1. **Sign the Letter of Intent:** For organizations interested in helping shape the Alliance's direction and early activities, the Letter of Intent is the clearest way to signal commitment. Review the Letter of Intent, and if your organization is interested in signing, email metasciencealliance@cos.io. We'll follow up with next steps.
2. **Join the mailing list:** To receive updates and public-facing outputs as they're published, join the Metascience Alliance mailing list.
3. **Engage with upcoming activities and outputs:** Over the coming months, the Alliance will begin piloting practical experiments and activities designed to build momentum while longer-term structures take shape. Keep an eye out for announcements and shared outputs, and consider responding with feedback when opportunities arise.

As this process unfolds, further refinements of this synthesis will be shared. The aim is to build iteratively and openly, ensuring the Alliance's direction is shaped by those who choose to take part.

For Further Inquiries

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