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OpenAQ: Fighting Air Inequality Through Open Data and Community

Christa Hasenkopf
Chief Executive Officer & Co-Founder of OpenAQ

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OpenAQ: Fighting Air Inequality through Open Data and Community

Air pollution, responsible for more deaths each year than HIV/AIDS and malaria, combined, is a global public health crisis. Yet many scientific questions, including those directly relevant for policy, remain unanswered when it comes to the impact of air pollution on health in highly polluted environments. Often, specific solutions to improving air quality are local and sustained through public engagement, policy, and monitoring. Both the overarching science of air quality and public health, as well as local solutions, rely on access to reliable, timely air quality data.

Over the past two years, the OpenAQ community has opened up existing disparate air quality data in 64 countries through an open source platform (**openaq.org**) so that communities around the world can use it to advance science, public engagement, and policy. This presentation shares stories of communities from Delhi to Ulaanbaatar to Sarajevo and from scientists to journalists, using open air quality data from the platform to advance their fight against air inequality. The subsequent open-source tools (**github.com/openaq**) the OpenAQ community has developed and the entire data-sharing platform may be of interest to other open data communities.

Speaker

Christa Hasenkopf, Chief Executive Officer & Co-Founder of OpenAQ

Christa Hasenkopf is an atmospheric scientist, passionate about fighting air inequality – the unequal access to clean air to breathe across the world – and using open data and convening community to do it.

She is the Chief Executive Officer and co-founder of OpenAQ, a non-profit housing a real-time global open air quality data platform and community, created and used by scientists, software developers, journalists, and lovers of open environmental data.

She is also an Echoing Green Fellow and an adjunct professor at Johns Hopkins in the Environmental Science & Policy Program, part of the Advanced Academic Program. Previously, Hasenkopf was the first Chief Air Pollution Advisor to the Medical Director at the U.S. Department of State. Prior to this work, she was a fellow in the Global Development Lab at USAID. Before moving to Washington, D.C., Hasenkopf conducted postdoctoral research on air pollution in Ulaanbaatar, Mongolia. With colleagues, she launched the first air quality instrument in Mongolia that shared air quality data via social media.

Hasenkopf received a PhD in Atmospheric & Oceanic Sciences from the University of Colorado and a BS in Astronomy & Astrophysics from Penn State University. She is a former USAID/PEER Partner, National Science Foundation International Research Fellow, Fulbright Fellow, and corps member in Teach for America.

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