

Erin Robinson

DIGITAL INFRASTRUCTURE DESIGNER + FACILITATOR

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Research Narrative

My career focuses on making environmental data more useful to diverse communities. I use ethnographic and design methods to interrogate research practices and infrastructure, learn and iterate. Early work at Washington University's Center for Air Pollution Impact and Trend Analysis (CAPITA) repurposed air quality datasets for research on long-range smoke and dust transport, introducing me to the Earth Science Information Partners (ESIP), where I later served as Community Director and Executive Director. Across this work, one refrain held: "it's not a technical problem, it's a social problem." In 2021, I returned to graduate school in Information Science under Leysia Palen, to study the social side. My research domain shifted from air quality to biological field stations. Currently, my research investigates information work practices in place-based environmental science—how researchers, field stations, and local and Indigenous communities produce, share, and steward data—and translates those findings into infrastructure design. This work draws on FAIR, CARE, and TRUST principles to connect research outputs to place, and informs ongoing projects including Ethnocode, and the iPlaces platform.

Education

Ph.D., Information Science

UNIVERSITY OF COLORADO, BOULDER

[Boulder, CO](#)

Aug. 2021 - December 2025

- Thesis: From Standing Apart to Standing Together: The Social (Re)Organization of Biological Field Stations Through Computer-Supported Cooperative Work

M.Sc., Information Science

UNIVERSITY OF COLORADO, BOULDER

[Boulder, CO](#)

Aug. 2021 - May 2024

M.Sc., Energy, Environmental and Chemical Engineering

WASHINGTON UNIVERSITY IN ST. LOUIS

[St. Louis, MO](#)

Jun. 2006 - Nov. 2010

- Thesis: Integration Of Multi-Sensory Earth Observations For Characterization Of Air Quality Events

B.Sc., Chemical Engineering

WASHINGTON UNIVERSITY IN ST. LOUIS

[St. Louis, MO](#)

Aug. 2002 - May. 2006

Professional Experience

CEO & Co-Founder

METADATA GAME CHANGERS, LLC

[Boulder, CO](#)

Nov 2020 - Present

Executive Director

EARTH SCIENCE INFORMATION PARTNERS (ESIP)

[Boulder, CO & National](#)

Nov 2014 - Sep 2020

Information and Virtual Community Director

EARTH SCIENCE INFORMATION PARTNERS (ESIP)

[Boulder, CO & National](#)

Nov 2010 - Nov 2014

Publications

For all publications see my [Google Scholar Profile](#)

Papers

- Lowndes, J. S., Holder, A. M., Markowitz, E. H., Clatterbuck, C., Bradford, A. L., Doering, K., Stevens, M. H., Butland, S., Burke, D., Kross, S., Hollister, J. W., Stawitz, C., Siple, M. C., Rios, A., Welch, J. N., Li, B., Nojavan, F., Davis, A., Steiner, E., ... Robinson, E. (2024). Shifting institutional culture to develop climate solutions with Open Science. *Ecology and Evolution*, 14(6), e11341. <https://doi.org/10.1002/ece3.11341>
- Robinson, E., Buys, M., Chodacki, J., Garza, K., Monfort, S., Nancarrow, C., Praetzelis, M., Riley, B., Wimalaratne, S., & Davies, N. (2022). FAIR Island: Real-World Examples of Place-based Open Science. Zenodo. <https://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.7384146> (Accepted to Gigascience)
- Stall, S., Yarmey, L., Cutcher-Gershenfeld, J., Hanson, B., Lehnert, K., Nosek, B., ... E. Robinson & Wyborn, L. (2019). Make scientific data FAIR. *Nature*, 27-29, <https://doi.org/10.1038/d41586-019-01720-7>.
- Wilson, Anne, Downs, R. R., Lenhardt, W. C., Meyer, C., Michener, W., Ramapriyan, H., & Robinson, E. (2014). Realizing the Value of a National Asset: Scientific Data. *Eos, Transactions American Geophysical Union*, 95(50), 477–478.
- Robinson, E., Meyer, C. B., & Lenhardt, W. C. (2012). Moving the science data quality dialogue forward. *Eos, Transactions American Geophysical Union*, 93(19), 189–189.

Conference Presentations (Light peer review, invited noted with *)

- Davies, N., & Robinson, E. (2024). Resisting Contextual Collapse: How an Internet of Places (iPlaces) can help Field Stations and Marine Labs Operationalize FAIR and CARE Principles for Environmental Sustainability and Social Justice. AGU24.
- Robinson, E., Anderson, J., Buttigieg, P. L., Choe, S., Davies, N., Kansa, E. C., ... & Lehnert, K. (2024). Sampling Nature: Looking to the Future for AI-ready Samples. AGU24.
- Robinson, E., & Palen, L. (2023). Invisible Coordination Work: Field Stations as Scientific Caregivers. Companion Publication of the 2023 Conference on Computer Supported Cooperative Work and Social Computing, 160–163. <https://doi.org/10.1145/3584931.3606982>
- * Robinson, E., Anderson, J., Buys, M., Chodacki, J., Choe, S., Davies, N., Kansa, S., Lehnert, K., Meyer, C., Praetzelis, M., Thomer, A., Vieglaiss, D., Walls, R., & Wimalaratne, S. (2023, December 14) (Invited Union Session). Exploring the Hidden Afterlives of Material Samples: How the Internet of Samples (iSamples) and Transdisciplinary Collaboration Across the Material Sample Community Enables Open Science with Samples. In AGU Fall Meeting Abstracts. <https://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.10381317>
- * Lowndes, J., Robinson, E. (2021). (Invited Union Session) Open Project Design: Lessons from the NASA Openscapes Framework. In AGU Fall Meeting Abstracts
- * Robinson, E. (2020). (Invited Award Lecture) AGU Leptoukh Lecture: Putting Data to Work: Moving science forward together beyond where we thought possible. In AGU Fall Meeting Abstracts.
- * Robinson, E. (2019a). (Invited Union) Invited panelist. In AGU Fall Meeting Abstracts.
- * Robinson, E., Benedict, K., Daniels, M. (2019b). (Invited Union Session) Making Data Matter: Increasing the Use and Value of Earth science Data & Information. In AGU Fall Meeting Abstracts.

Awards & Honors

Leptoukh Lecture Award

EARTH AND SPACE SCIENCE INFORMATICS SECTION, AMERICAN GEOPHYSICAL UNION (AGU)

2020

- “For achievement in computational sciences, data sciences, and informatics leading to, or enabling, advances in domain science.”

Outstanding Contributions in Geoinformatics

GEOINFORMATICS DIVISION, GEOLOGICAL SOCIETY OF AMERICA (GSA)

2020

- “Honors an individual who has contributed in an outstanding manner to geology through the application of the principles of Geoinformatics”

NASA Exceptional Public Service Medal

NASA

2020

- “For exceptional, sustained, and creative community building among NASA and its collaborators, significantly enhancing NASA investments in data, technology, and applications.”

Volunteer/Service

Professional Society Memberships and Leadership Roles

- Local Contexts Biocultural Sciences Working Group Chair (2025-present)
- Organization of Biological Field Stations (2023-Present)
- OpenAQ Board, Treasurer and Member (2022-present)
- ACM SIGCHI (2021-present)
- AGU Data Management Advisory Board Chair (2017-2020)
- Research Data Alliance (2018-present)
- American Geophysical Union (2006-present)
- Earth Science Information Partners (2006-present)