

Conference Abstract

Training Taxonomists for the Digital World: Are we prepared?

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Abstract

Digital knowledge and skills are rapidly becoming integral part of the work of the modern taxonomist. Their importance is further increased with the recent recognition of DiSSCo (*Distributed System of Scientific Collections*, <https://dissco.eu>). This new pan-European research infrastructure envisions placing European natural science collections at the centre of data-intensive scientific excellence and innovation for taxonomic and environmental research, food security, health and the bioeconomy. The mission of this ambitious project is to mobilise, unify and deliver bio- and geo-diversity information at the scale, form and precision required by scientific communities as well as to transform a fragmented landscape into a coherent and responsive research infrastructure.

An important step in improving the capacity of the research community underpinning DiSSCo is the COST Action MOBILISE (*Mobilising Data, Policies and Experts in Scientific Collections*, <https://www.mobilise-action.eu>). One of major capacity-building objectives is to facilitate implementation of common standards and newly-developed techniques by training and education. Its achievement is envisaged by standardised training modules such as training courses, workshops, webinars, online tutorials and short-term visits to other research units.

The first impression from surveying interests of candidates to be included into training events, demonstrates an uneven distribution of digital knowledge and skills across

countries, institutions and generations. We advocate that a massive coordinated training programme may result in more efficient establishment of common standards and, consequently, better implementation of the forthcoming joint efforts in the development of the new pan-European research infrastructure.

Keywords

Digital knowledge, digital skills, DiSSCo, MOBILISE, taxonomy, research, education, training, natural history collections, capacity building, young researchers

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