

## Summary of iDigBio 2012 Summit

### Overview

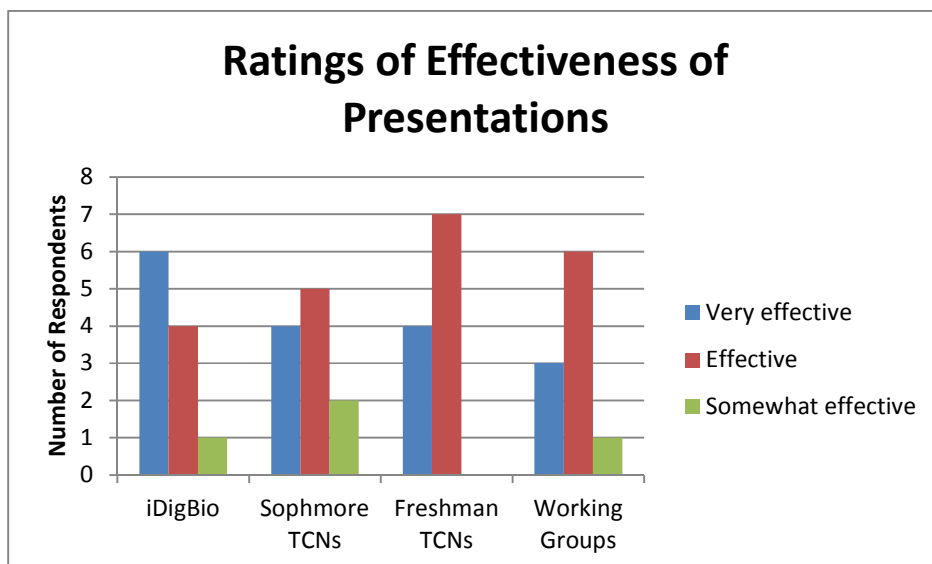
The primary purpose of the survey was to solicit input on the format and organization of the meeting that could be used to inform planning for subsequent summits. Surveys were distributed electronically to 53 Summit participants, 11 responded including 4 representatives from first year or freshman TCNs, 2 from second year or sophomore TCNs, 4 members of iDigBio, and 1 “other.”

Overall, the respondents reported the summit to be of value, especially the opportunity to meet others face-to-face. In terms of format, the “Birds of a Feather” and “Breakout Groups” varied in terms of effectiveness. It should be noted that there was a low response rate to the survey—which may be interpreted to mean that in general the meeting was fine because if it was not individuals would likely have taken the opportunity to raise concerns.

That said, respondents did offer some ideas for how to improve future Summits including: focus on concrete and specific progress and problems; provide strong leadership/facilitation to ensure productive discussions; and take steps to ensure there is follow-up to the discussions, including dissemination of information.

### Presentations

Respondents were asked to rate the effectiveness of presentations from “very effective” to “very ineffective.” Presentations by all groups were rated as at least “somewhat effective.”



Respondents were asked whether they preferred Q & A sessions following each group of presentations or after each presentation; 6 of 8 respondents preferred holding questions until all speakers in a group had presented rather than after each presentation.

### Alternate formats

Respondents were asked their opinion of having posters or lightning sessions in lieu of short presentations. Views were split among the 10 respondents.

In favor of both poster and lightning talks:

- Both posters and lightening presentations are worth considering, especially for those TCNs who are "Upper classmen" so to speak.
- Poster sessions or lightning presentation in lieu of longer presentations about TCNs is an excellent idea.
- Changing the pace of the summit is a good way of getting people's attention back. Though very short presentations cannot be done of every topic.
- Prefer lightning sessions in order to force everyone to know at least a little bit about everyone else, but then have either poster or birds of a feather to group people with common interests for in depth presentation/discussion.

Pro-poster:

- I liked the presentations or focus the presentations on 1) ways of extending individual TCNs 2) specific activities or thoughts on how to collaborate more with other TCNs 3) major issues that need to be addressed or specific breakthroughs. Posters would be good to show basic statistics and major accomplishments in bullet format.
- Perhaps a poster session in lieu of any summary presentations. Those posters should also be a written as a 2 page summary, that is passed along to participants prior to the meeting. Everyone, upon arrival at the meeting, will already be caught up regarding the general progress and workflow of tcns and idigbio.
- Posters might be good - for iDigBio or TCNs; I think they should be tried at Summit III.

Anti-poster:

- I'm not a big fan of posters
- Posters are pretty much a waste of time, paper and ink. With all the media options available including PDFs and Wiki files, etc., a poster is not needed.

Pro-lightning

- The talk format seemed to keep the conference a bit more informal. The short presentations might be useful for each institution highlighting their progress.
- I like the lightning presentations ideas.

Anti-lightning

- I don't like 'lightening sessions.' I have been exposed to some, and don't believe that they are effective.

### Ways to improve presentations

Suggestions for ways to improve the presentations include:

- Always look for ways to make them more about the actual work, actually going on, and less about the blue sky, hand waving vision.
- Presentations should only be practical, with serious discussion after. For example, How will we share data with idigbio (the details), demo and discussion of the image ingestion tool, questions from the new tcns (what do you need to know). After the first day working together as a group, breakout sessions could happen if a need is presented (such as software demos).
- Provide some focus on what is of interest to the group as a whole (ADBC program).

### **Birds of a Feather Discussions**

Of the respondents, 73% (8) participated in one of the informal “Birds of a Feather” discussions. Five individuals reported the discussions to be “effective” or “somewhat effective” while the others rated them as less effective. Reasons for the low ratings include “Not enough time for complex issues and unclear about the purpose of those discussions” and “ bit too much discussion occurred off topic and it would have been better if things were steered more thoroughly.”

### **Informal Dinner**

Summit participants were asked whether “dinner on their own” gave them opportunities for productive discussions or in other ways facilitated their work. Seven of 10 respondents indicated that it did.

### **Breakout Group Sessions**

Nine of 10 respondents rated the breakout group sessions as either “effective” or “somewhat effective.” There were few comments on the summary reports produced by each breakout group. Suggestions for ways to improve breakout groups in the future include identifying specific questions or problems to be solved and ensuring some kind of follow-up, including dissemination of the summaries. All comments:

- More specific questions or problems to solve. Breaking down the big issues into smaller ones to avoid going on for too long on a specific issue.
- I think they worked quite well because they were given plenty of time (perhaps a little too much in some cases) and highly targeted. Important topics were discussed. This is not always the case at workshops where breakout groups can get too far away from the central theme of the workshop.
- The basic problem I have with breakout groups at any meeting is that there is typically not any follow up after the meeting.
- Strive to make them around actual shared development/computerization objectives, the broader the topic the more diffuse, general and uneven the discussion.

- Include software demos. Don't force breakout groups, start with full meeting discussions and create breakout groups if need arises. Participants should be listed on the summary documents.
- Breakout sessions are too open-ended, making discussion revolve around the same topics (outcomes of the breakout groups are not very different from past meetings). There is also a need to disseminate better the breakout group summaries (which are clearer than the verbal summary presented during the summit).
- More leadership in steering topics a certain way and away from irrelevant things.

### **Overall Value**

Nine individuals responded to a question that asked about the overall value of the meeting:

- Very valuable. The meeting gave me a good understanding of what other people are doing and what the big picture looks like.
- I found it very informative. Especially learning what other groups are involved.
- Valuable. It allowed a tremendous exchange of ideas. Discussions were focused on problems and solutions; I think that was effective.
- I liked it and found it very useful.
- Yes, liked the ability to catch up on newly funded projects. Also ability to meet with collaborators.
- Yes. Mostly for networking and solving some practical issues face to face.
- The ability to interact in smaller groups and to learn from others is very valuable. Larger group discussions tend to lead to few people overpowering others (not sure if a professional leader would produce better results), and the outcomes are usually a broad statements that are minimally useful for concrete short-term plans. For example, formation of a working group is often suggested, but even people that "offered the idea" have no interest in participating or contributing to the working group.
- Yes, I did, it was good to get to meet folks and see what people were up to. The breakout sessions were a bit disappointing though.
- In general, the meeting was very valuable. Learning about the experiences of sophomore TCNs was very useful. Networking with other TCN participants and iDigBio personnel was extremely helpful. The Breakout sessions provided relevant information on topics; this information can be directly incorporated into our project plan/methodology.

### **Most and Least Useful Information Learned**

Eight respondents revealed what they found most and/or least useful about the meeting:

- Learning what progress has been accomplished and what yet needs to be done. Would like to know what difficulties other museums are encountering.
- Information about the new TCNS. Information about how the 2nd-year TCNs are progressing (or not...).
- It was all good information, I still think there should be more emphasis on how TCNs and iDigBio can work together even more.

Shari Ellis, January 2012

- Most useful: New TCN goals
- The presentations were the least useful, discussions on data sharing the most useful.
- Most useful: integration plans between Specify and Symbiota. Least useful: discussion on GUIDs
- Most useful was what people were up to. Least useful, perhaps the breakout sessions?
- Networking with other TCNs and iDigBio.

### **Additional Suggestions for Future Summits**

- Like the idea of "marketing your museum" workshop.
- Perhaps meet somewhere other than Gainesville.
- Look for ways to make presenters present actual metrics of productivity, standardize some requests for those before the speakers arrive. It would be useful to get at how many actual collaborations on small or large items the projects have been involved in, in other words, are they making a true effort to increase efficiency and productivity by reaching out to others?
- There is so much to cover at these meetings I think more aggressive leadership regarding discussions should be considered. Everyone did a great job guiding the discussion and topics, but could have been more so.
- Create focused short-term goals with expected outcomes. How do we make people to follow up on all the great ideas that are suggested in these general discussions?