# OUTREACH DISCUSSION GROUP

Facilitator: Anna Monfils

Location: Live Oak

<https://docs.google.com/document/d/1DhrUMHzl37MuuI66XpeKjXF_azcXWEWOIrDDIB5PoPY/edit>

[**http://tinyurl.com/summit2-outreach**](http://tinyurl.com/summit2-outreach)

**Finding other pots of money at NSF for education and outreach:**

It is unrealistic to expect that DEB will fund all components related to education and outreach.

**Education and Outreach General Workshop**

When would an education and outreach workshop be appropriate?

Is this topic too broad? Should we look at these topics in other ways?

PIs often struggle with education and outreach. Breaking up these topics may be beneficial; we can achieve more specificity in terms of exact programmatic deliverables.

A workshop may not be a solution for everything. Perhaps a lobby endeavor or collaboration with a university may be more beneficial (e.g., to develop requirements, or curricula).

Development of educational modules that can be widely used.

It is important to think of both the scale of audiences (e.g., K-12, higher education, public, etc.).

Q: What defines outreach? Is PR or press coverage a component? A: Yes, it is part of public education. A2: The range of what institutions can do is vast, but there are limits (e.g., funding, staffing, and time limits) of what they can do. There are also possible limitations based on the institution’s mission.

Training may be required to help us understand how these collections data may be used for training or educational programming. Comment: There is an RCN (AIM UP) that has focused on this issue (e.g., Alaska plant distribution data and exploration of climatic zones).

Planting Science (from the Botanical Society of America) may be an excellent vehicle for using collections-based data.

How do you connect with local groups to engage in formal school education? Additionally, being able to accommodate local educational requirements within an educational module is a difficult challenge for individual institutions.

Who can be involved in education and outreach programs?

..................................

Topics for Discussion:

**1. Who are the audiences for education and outreach activities?**

University or Institutional Administration

Collections Community

Research Community

Adults - Knowledgeable amateurs (or citizen scientists) and others

Children (including mixed audience such as organized groups with adults and children, such as scouts, etc.; individuals]; Important to distinguish among educational levels

Government/Policy Makers (including professionals, science and non-science)

Private Sector, Industry/Corporations (including professionals, science and non-science)

Individuals (e.g. Professionals)

Other non-science disciplines that may add value to what we do (e.g., engineering, art, etc.)

**2. Formal Education**

Undergraduate - Education about the value of what we do, individual exploration.

Science vs. non-science majors.

Graduate - Pre-service training for future professionals.

K-12

Funding distribution among these audiences:

At NSF,

1. IGERT (DGE) is very much focused on graduate level education

2. For masses (e.g., at the undergraduate level), DUE (TUES program); REU

3. Junior colleges, ITEST

4. DRK-12

iDigBio may be an umbrella under which we can more broadly acquire money from various directorates that can broadly help accomplish formal education goals shared by many TCNs.

Partnering with professional evaluators or education professionals will be key for evaluating the program and assessing the efficacy of education. NSF will pay for this evaluation.

Compiling a list of potential funding would be helpful.

 We can be strategic in our vision, to develop new resources, acquire funding, etc. We should develop a unified strategy about how we can communicate what we are doing, and how we fit into that.

 We would benefit from a centralized forum that can facilitate discussions and success stories.

We really need an assessment of what people are doing? A working group would identify objectives for education, assessing the needs/wants of our audiences/communities, make recommendations on behalf of the group, identify sources of funding, and aid the development of formal modules that can be used by the broader community.

It may be better to start with a workshop and then break out into working groups that will continue work to formulate recommendations and oversee module development.

**3. Informal Education**

Adults - Knowledgeable amateurs (or citizen scientists) and others

Children (including mixed audience such as organized groups with adults and children, such as scouts, etc.; individuals]

Public Participation

There is now broader interest in public participation. How does this fit in the broader picture?

Each type of collection has its own target audience. There may be synergies among collections as well as among informal/formal education and outreach.

In terms of digitization, there isn’t much being done to inform others (particularly among K-12 audiences) about the importance of this effort.

Focus on the importance of technology in this effort.

**~~4. Outreach~~/Communications**

How is this topic defined?

A. Target Audiences

i. Media

ii. Policy makers

iii. Special Interest Groups

iv. Corporations/Industry

vi. Administrators

B. Vehicles

 i. Media

 ii. Lobbying

 iii. Collaboration

iv. PR/Marketing (has a more formal connection to outreach than to
informal and formal education)

**It may be worthwhile to bring in people who can provide training on effective communication to various target audiences.**

Identify individuals who can provide the training (marketing experts, university officials, science communications specialists).

It would be worthwhile to propose a workshop, funded by iDigBio, to arrange a focused workshop on communications strategies (including interpretive sign design), marketing, etc.

Advice on navigating internal institutional structure to conduct communications activities, development/fundraising, social media activities.

Using social media effectively.

Who should we invite?

Bruce Lowenstein (Cornell)

Carl Zimmer (science writer)

**5. Outreach to smaller collections**

 It is important to engage these smaller collections in our digitization and globalization of data efforts, since they play an important role in recruiting/encouranging the next generation of systematists.

 Smaller collections are not often thought of as important in the mission of teaching and research. Encouraging small collections to see their collections as valuable; it would be worthwhile to quantify/demonstrate how these collections were particularly important to a research question, etc. Helping equip collections (of all sizes/types) with the knowledge, skills, and resources to communicate their value to various audiences would be enormously helpful.

 Incorporate a component for collection discovery (if possible). Would it be possible to include an interactive map or list that shows which collections are involved or not involved with digitization? This could help with outreach efforts and many other initiatives. Is it possible to generate this list?

Educational Modules

Best Practices for Outreach

Other Funding Opportunities

Strategic Communications Plan

With what types of events might iDigBio Follow Up?