iDigBio's Public Participation Platform Survey

Thank you for taking the time to consider and respond to the following questions. iDigBio will make your responses available to the natural history collections community, both as an online resource available to anyone, and as a reference specifically for participants in our upcoming Public Participation in Digitization of Biodiversity Collections course.

Please return your completed survey to Michael Denslow (<u>michael.denslow@gmail.com</u>). And thank you for your time!

## **Questions:**

1. Name and email of person responding to this survey:

#### Katie Pearson, help@symbiota.org

2. Name of public participation platform:

#### Symbiota

3. Website:

#### https://symbiota.org/

4. Company or group responsible for maintaining platform:

## Symbiota Support Hub at the University of Kansas Biodiversity Institute

5. Long-term funding structure for maintaining platform (e.g., grants, membership, private):

Symbiota portals are created and maintained by various organizations, but most of them are managed by the Symbiota Support Hub. The Symbiota Support Hub is supported by various grants and some fee-for-service agreements for, e.g., the hosting of images.

6. Brief summary highlighting the market niche for this platform:

Symbiota portals are primarily used for collection management and data mobilization; over 1000 biodiversity collections use a portal to actively edit and manage their data via a public web portal. Symbiota portals can additionally be used to engage volunteers in transcription and quality-checking activities via Symbiota's built-in "crowdsourcing" tools (<u>https://biokic.github.io/symbiota-docs/editor/crowdsource/</u>). These tools provide a data entry interface alongside images that any logged-in user can access and use for transcribing data. The data entry form includes tools for converting verbatim coordinates into decimal degrees, georeferencing (Open Street Maps and GEOLocate), and searching for and using duplicate specimens found in the portal to auto-fill fields. Dropdown menus are provided for scientific name, country, state/province, county, associated taxa, and basis of record fields to prevent transcription errors.

Alternatively, skilled volunteers can be given editing permissions for a collection, which allows them to do additional tasks such as batch georeferencing, annotating specimens, printing annotation and specimen labels, scoring traits from specimen images or label data, and adding linked resources (e.g., linkages to DNA sequences).

7. Types of biodiversity specimens most common on the platform:

Mostly natural history specimens such as herbarium specimens, pinned insects, fossils, etc.

8. Types of tasks supported by the platform (e.g., transcription, measurement, georeferencing):

Transcription, georeferencing, quality checking, trait coding, duplicate harvesting and matching, species identification, creation and maintenance of checklists and inventory projects, creation and maintenance of a glossary

9. Other disciplines that utilize the platform (e.g., camera traps):

# Biodiversity monitoring and inventory projects (e.g., National Ecological Observatory Network)

10. Example of the types of institutions/collections using your platform:

# Field Museum of Natural History, Botanical Research Institute of Texas

11. Any restrictions as to who can use the platform:

## None

12. Primary language(s) supported:

# English, Spanish, French

13. Primary volunteer base or core users of the platform:

# Volunteers associated with specific biodiversity specimen collections

14. Brief description of method(s) for quality control/quality assurance available on the platform:

Symbiota portals include tools for data cleaning, duplicate harvesting, identification of identification conflicts, but few quality control measures are enforced. Dropdown menus are provided for key fields (e.g., scientific name).

15. Types of media supported by the platform (e.g., image, video, 3D):

## Images

16. File formats supported by the platform. Indicate both input and output as appropriate:

# Input: CSV, Darwin Core Archive, IPT imports Output: CSV, Darwin Core Archive

17. Workflow customization available to the user:

## None at this time

18. Costs to collections to use the platform:

Adding data to a Symbiota portal and managing data there is free. Images may be hosted on Symbiota Support Hub servers for a moderate cost after surpassing the free tier (see <a href="https://biodiversity.ku.edu/products-services">https://biodiversity.ku.edu/products-services</a>).

19. Representative for potential users to contact:

## Symbiota Support Hub: help@symbiota.org

20. Best resources for additional information about the platform (e.g., presentations, brochures, recorded webinars, peer-reviewed papers):

Symbiota Docs website: https://biokic.github.io/symbiota-docs/ Symbiota Support Hub YouTube page: https://www.youtube.com/channel/UC7gIMVLRnTA6ES3VTsci7iQ

21. Data ownership or usage policies (e.g., publication, sharing of data, public access):

All data are publicly shared (with the option to redact locality data) and are presented under one of many creative commons licenses, as selected by the originating collection. Data are owned by the individual institutions.