Conference Abstract

DoeDat, the Crowdsourcing Platform of Meise Botanic Garden

Quentin Groom[‡], Sofie De Smedt[‡], Nuno Veríssimo Pereira[‡], Ann Bogaerts[‡], Henry Engledow[‡]

‡ Botanic Garden Meise, Meise, Belgium

Abstract

Herbarium specimens hold a wealth of data about plants; where they come from, where they were collected and by whom. Once digitized, these data can be searched, mapped and compared. However, the information on specimens is often handwritten and even the best software systems cannot read it. This is where we get real value from citizen involvement. Digitizing these data is only possible with the aid of human intelligence.

DoeDat is a multilingual open-source platform for transcription, based upon the DigiVol program of the Australian Museum and Atlas of Living Australia. DoeDat is a product of our digitization project Digital Access to Cultural Heritage Collections (DOE!), funded by the Flemish Government. DoeDat is about creating data and also, 'Doe Dat' means 'do that' in Dutch.

DoeDat will help us digitize our collections, and will also give the public the chance to take an active part in the process. We aim to build a community of enthusiastic online volunteers who will help us liberate botanical data from specimen labels and documents. We launched the platform on Science Day and within two months, more than one hundred volunteers had transcribed more than 4,000 specimens.

Join in at www.DoeDat.be

Keywords

crowdsourcing, herbarium specimens, transcription, volunteer programs, citizen science

Presenting author

Quentin Groom

Presented at

SPNHC