iSamples RCN Education & Training Working Group: Training the Next Generation of Scientists in Sample Stewardship

The Education and Training Working Group within the EarthCube iSamples Research Coordination Network (RCN) seeks to engage early career scientists in an effort to transform sample management and sharing practices. Through workshops and other outreach opportunities, the group has disseminated information about existing tools for sample identification and management, such as the International Geo Sample Number (IGSN) and gathered feedback from early career scientists about their sample management and sharing challenges. Furthermore, members of the working group are designing and developing online training modules for educators and research supervisors to train student scientists in physical sample collection, documentation, and management. These tutorials are meant to serve as templates that can be fully customized to support sample-based workflows in many different research groups. By promoting sample stewardship in this way, the iSamples RCN is teaching the next generation of scientists to conduct research in a manner that promotes data integration and discovery and prevents the production of “dark” samples. These sample management training modules could serve as examples for the development of educational resources for other EarthCube projects.