

CHALLENGE 1: WHERE SOCIAL MEDIA MEETS CITIZEN SCIENCE

How can we use all our extraordinary innovation in culture and technology to offer more ways for people to participate more meaningfully with stuff that truly matters e.g. the health of the biosphere that supports all life (including humans).

Background and Context

Everyday we take millions of photos, write messages, like stuff, classify it through hashtags and upload it to social platforms for others to share and view.

Last month 20,000 people watched a puddle in Newcastle through the Periscope app > <http://www.theguardian.com/technology/2016/jan/06/the-internet-cant-stop-watching-this-livestream-of-people-trying-to-cross-a-puddle>

It's all very nice, but in a world increasingly full of issues and impacts that the human way of life is having on the natural world, imagine if we could harness a slice of that creativity, action, energy and engagement to look out for the natural world...

Some of this behaviour about the awe of nature already exists e.g. on Instagram alone #cloudporn has nearly 12 million posts, #spring 35 million #ladybirds 20K

Thousands of us are already capturing data which could be valuable to scientists, we just aren't aware of, or being asked to do it. One way of Citizen Science is asking people to go out and do tasks, another angle is that people are already doing it without being asked.

Many people are taking photos of species/habitats etc. and posting to social platforms, sometimes via groups using Facebook, Instagram and Flickr.

For this challenge we want to develop some prototypes with potential to get folks noticing, watching, listening, recording and sharing purposeful images/tweets/videos/data with potential scientific value that offer purposeful participation to a user that use twitter, Instagram, Facebook, hashtags. Periscope etc. to get folks to notice nature.

Questions to Consider

- What could we rapidly develop around our initial science hooks e.g. seasonal changes, invasive species, ecosystem services, flooding, climate change, etc.?
- What could we already find by harvesting existing data on social platforms e.g. Can we find data that could be useful for our science challenges e.g. through hashtags, photos, geo locations etc. Through searching for photo data/hashtags around some of our big issues e.g. floods, invasive species, seasonal changes, ecosystem services, etc.?



- Are there obvious groups on Facebook, Twitter or Instagram that we could start with?
- Is there value in harvesting and classifying more popular image classifications that are naturally occurring in people's existing behaviours e.g. #urbanbirds, #cloudspotting, #spring what else (see stimulus)?
- What is the most basic useful data sets that we can collect, (Minimum Viable Data) e.g. name, location etc, what are the complexities that we need to design around e.g. language?

OUTPUTS

Create a NIU minimum viable data (MVD) approach to using social media for nature intelligence gathering, packaged up, communicated and seeded out in a way that anyone can understand.

- A NIU framework for noticing/spotting/classification using social media.
- A simple, human way of helping people classify observations, sightings, noticing etc. using hashtags, photos and geotags which could provide useful data if we can engage larger groups of people into the tasks (e.g. name, place, time).
- Using this approach design and prototype a range of 'nature intelligence gathering' tasks using social media channels/tactics.
- Design a task/observation/noticing etc. with a core audience in mind, package it up and communicate it an engaging way, and if possible start to seed it out online.
- Create a story/narrative hook for each task and why it matters or could be interesting to people.

Example tasks could include:

- Marine issue(s)/challenge(s)
- Tasks around impacts of climate change e.g species impacts from flooding etc
- Tasks around invasive species spotting

Stimulus and Inspiration

What can we learn from existing projects that harness social media applications and everyday scenarios/contexts to engage people in participation?

- 2 minute beach clean > <http://beachclean.net/>
- Take 3 for the Sea > <http://www.take3.org.au/>
- Litterati > <http://www.litterati.org/>
- Project Splatter > <http://projectsplatter.co.uk/>
- <http://www.theguardian.com/news/datablog/ng-interactive/2014/may/07/sunrise-twitter-animated-map>



What can we learn from prototypes exploring the use of social media and citizen science? e.g.

- <http://www.purpleoctopus.org/groupsourcing/>

What can we learn from hashtags as a way to classify or log issues or a topic?

- <https://twitter.com/uksnowmap>
- <https://twitter.com/search?q=%23extremecivilisation>

Check out the related stimulus on the website: <http://www.natureintelligenceunit.com/challenge-areas-swarm/2016/2/8/challenge-1-social-media-meets-citizen-science>

