

Offer, Demand, and Needs in Training and Education: A Study Focusing on Microbial Culture Collections within the MIRRI Consortium

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The bioeconomy is fueled by Biological Resource Centers, which play a vital role in harnessing and preserving the world's biodiversity, [1]. MIRRI (the Microbial Resource Research Infrastructure: www.mirri.org) is an EU-project involving a total of 33 partners, aiming to provide facilitated access to microbial resources, associated data and expertise, and promote knowledge transfer and foster innovation. One crucial step is to properly define our stakeholder community and identify their current and future needs, and match them to our offer.

In order to achieve these goals, MIRRI surveyed both its partners, and current and potential users of microbial resources and services. Here we present and analyze some of the results of this survey, focusing on training and education.

Despite current trends and benefits in increased use and production of contents in new formats (e.g. video, interactive), and use of new tools and technologies (e.g. e-learning, b-learning), training within MIRRI still has an overwhelming dominance of classic content types and delivery methodologies. Also, we identified a much wider untapped market for education and training within our customer base, and we estimate a spike in demand of training from culture collections, particularly from the profit sector.

Additional efforts are clearly necessary in adjusting our offer, adapting contents and content delivery and focusing on cost-efficiency and proper advertising to increase visibility, and better serve the needs of our customers.

References:

[1] OECD, *Biological Resource Centres. Underpinning the future of life sciences and biotechnology*. 1-66 (OECD, 2001).