

An archaeologist at the Smithsonian collaborating with a biologist at another research institution

Title	An archaeologist at the Smithsonian collaborating with a biologist at another research institution
Primary Actor	A researcher
Scope	All researchers
Level	got no clue what this means
Story	<p>An archeologist in Panama has built a large collection of digital data that represents everything they have excavated at a particular site, which is managed as a large collection of Fedora objects that are related as on large graph. For each trash pile the archaeologist identifies, one tabular data object is created for all of the fish bones that are found, one for animal bones, shell fragments, pottery fragments, etc. Each row in the data represents one find, identifies the species or type, etc. The data file as a whole has descriptive metadata, but takes most of its meaning from its position in the graph. For example, the tabular data object is the child of an object that describes the trash pile, identifies its date, speculates about what the trash pile related to, etc. That object is in turn the child of an object that describes the larger context in which the trash pile was found, which in turn has child objects that describe other features like dwellings, tombs, etc.</p> <p>The archeologist notices that some of the bones are from an animal that is from a region from an island off the coast from this inland site, in a trash pile he determines to be 6,000 years old. He contacts a friend who is studying that kind of animal species in Panama. The friend is studying that species' distribution in current day Panama, but this is interesting evidence that gives some baseline information about the history of the species in the larger region. The biologist links the tabular data object as evidence under the graph of research data that he is building.</p> <p>The full meaning, veracity and authenticity of the evidence that the biologist is using is tied to the durability of the original research project's graph, and in turn becomes data that can be used in some other context.</p>