# Exploring and Enhancing Digital Cultural Heritage with the Zooniverse Platform

Dr. Samantha Blickhan Zooniverse Co-Director & DH Lead Adler Planetarium, Chicago 31 October 2025 PHAIDRAcon 2025: Connecting Scholar and Citizen: The Emerging Social and Cultural Role of the Repository







What is crowdsourcing?



At its best, [crowdsourcing] is a form of digitally-enabled participation that creates meaningful opportunities for the public to experience collections while undertaking a range of tasks that make those collections more easily discoverable and usable by others.

Ridge, Blickhan, Ferriter et al. (2021) The Collective Wisdom Handbook:
 Perspectives on Crowdsourcing in Cultural Heritage

Book: <a href="https://britishlibrary.pubpub.org">https://britishlibrary.pubpub.org</a>

Project: <a href="https://collectivewisdomproject.org.uk/">https://collectivewisdomproject.org.uk/</a>



## Why crowdsource?

Discoverability	Engagement
Data processing/transformation	Opportunities for exploration
Increased access to collections	Encourage institutional transparency around the digitization process
Results in new, or expanded, reusable datasets	Work with communities toward a shared goal



What is Zooniverse? How does it work?



THE ZOONIVERSE WORKS

929,411,567

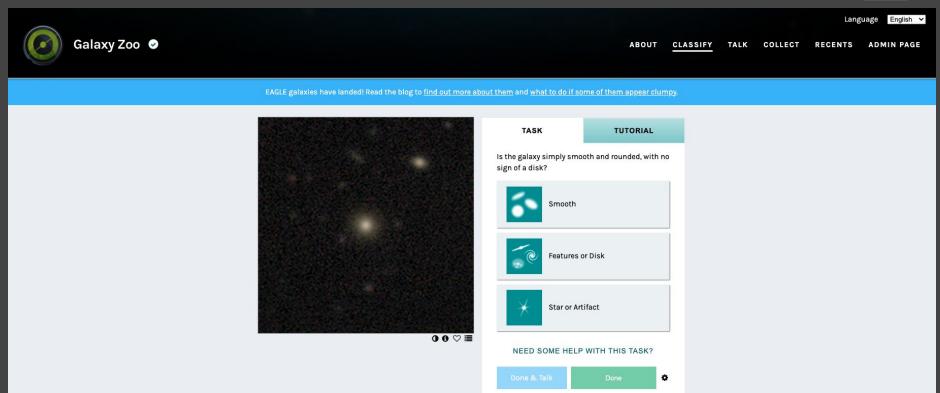
**CLASSIFICATIONS SO FAR** 

2,926,575

**REGISTERED VOLUNTEERS** 

https://www.zooniverse.org







FROM THE ORGANIZATION: ETCH A CELL - COLOURING IN CELLS FOR SCIENCE! ABOUT CLASSIFY TALK COLLECT RECENTS

We've just added a brand new workflow to Etch A Cell - ImmunoExplorers! Check out 'Workflow 2 - Nuclei Hunters'! Thanks for being here 😃

TASK TUTORIAL Please draw a box around all the immune cells NEED SOME HELP WITH THIS TASK? Done & Talk & Done

#### ZOØNIVERSE'

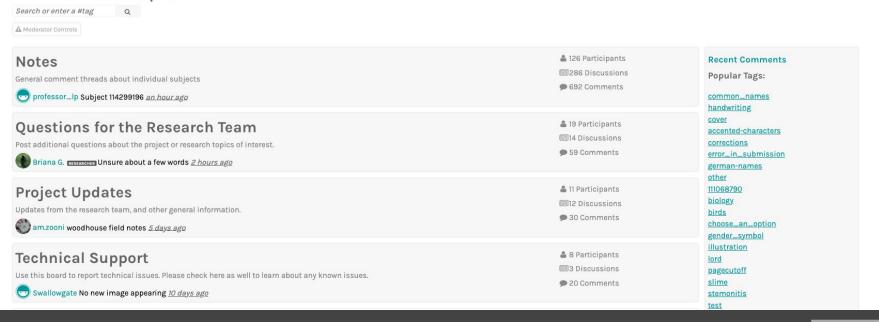


ABOUT CLASSIFY TALK COLLECT RECENTS

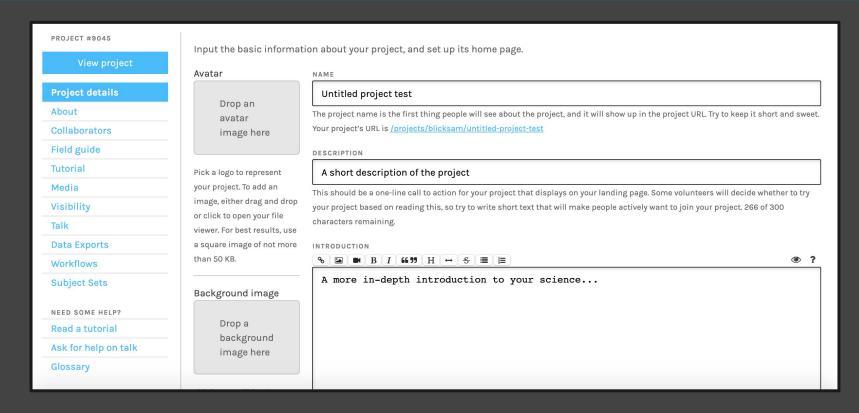
Thank you so much to everyone helping with this project! See the RESULTS page for periodic updates. TASK TUTORIAL Work in the text box below to edit the machinegenerated text based off what you see in the image on Note that some pages may be very difficult to read and will take some time (up to 30 minutes). Don't worry if you can't fix every error! Feel free to submit whatever When you're done transcribing, select an option from the menu below. Then hit DONE! Your corrections will be sent to project staff and you will be shown a new page to work on. 0 some Post Baks here the gross in very rank and our Cattle will have a good chance we took dinne by the light of a a Candle is right of Vennon steak Rece hand Bread & Ceffee I wrotein letter to amount Harrott in the Tuesday 2d Cloudy & Your Their at day light 44° If was cold all night I wrote a letter to Telle Probuts as soon as I got up as the Captain Ave emp loyes an Indian the our letters to the Fort cleaned about eleven piclock Ther 73°at 20Pm I come nlants

Thank you so much to everyone helping with this project! See the RESULTS page for periodic updates.

#### Field Journal Fix-Up Talk







https://www.zooniverse.org/lab https://www.zooniverse.org/publications



### Data export types (see Data Exports tab of PB)

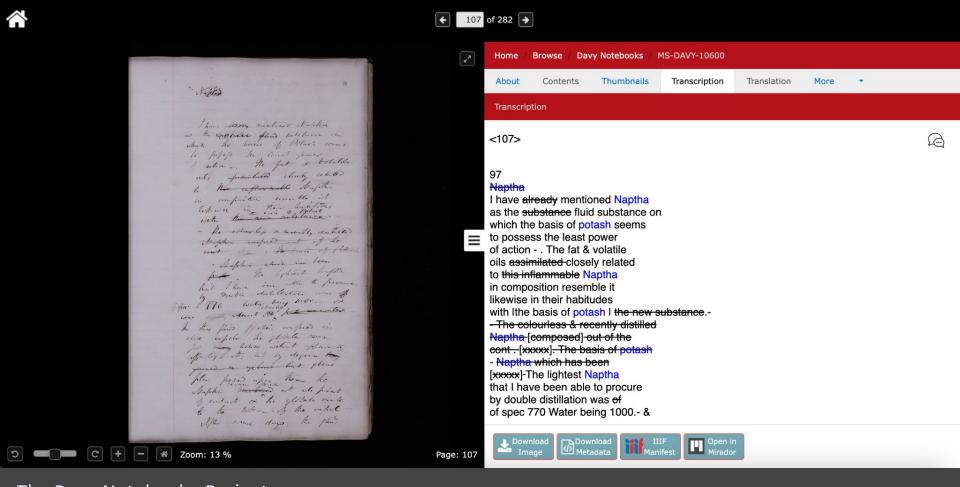
- Classification export: all task data from all workflows for your entire project
  - JSON in .csv (annotations column)
- Workflow classification export: all task data from a specific workflow
  - JSON in .csv (annotations column)
- Workflow export: structural information about how your workflow looks (w/ version info)
  - JSON in .csv

- Subject export: list of all subjects you have uploaded w/ any metadata included
  - JSON in .csv
- Talk export: all comment and hashtag data from Talk
  - JSON
- Details at:

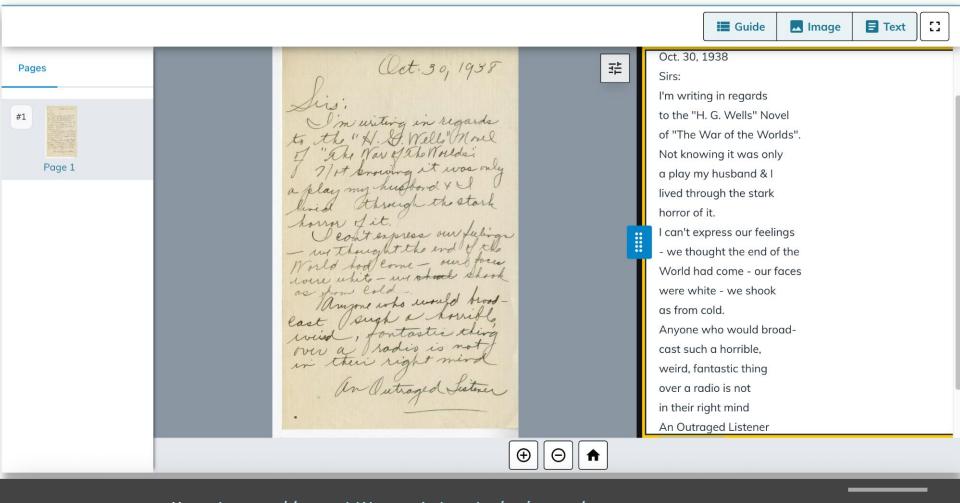
https://help.zooniverse.org/next-steps/data-exports/



What do people do with their Zooniverse data?



The Davy Notebooks Project: <a href="https://digitalcollections.lancaster.ac.uk/collections/davy/1">https://digitalcollections.lancaster.ac.uk/collections/davy/1</a>



Reading: The Shakespeare's World Crowdsourced Transcription Project Datasets

#### **⊥** Download











#### **Data Paper**

The Shakespeare's World Crowdsourced Transcription Project Datasets

Victoria Van Hyning <sup>™</sup> ZhiCheng Wang <sup>™</sup>



#### **Abstract**

The Shakespeare's World Datasets derive from a crowdsourced transcription project hosted on the Zooniverse platform between 2015 and 2019 (Van Hyning et al, 2015–2019). Volunteers transcribed 14,330 digitized early modern manuscripts from the Folger Shakespeare Library. 3,926 registered volunteers contributed, and over 94,570 anonymous sessions representing an unknown number of individuals, were recorded. This paper presents a cleaned dataset of individual volunteer transcriptions (IVT), containing all 203,389 valid classifications, along with three supplementary social datasets for a discussion forum and blog. These datasets provide insights into the transcription process, and volunteer and project owner interactions during the project's lifespan. The datasets have significant reuse potential in digital humanities, historical linguistics, and

Contents

Annotations & Comments

Related Articles

#### Abstract

- (1) Overview ~
- (2) Method ~
- (3) Dataset Description ~
- (4) Reuse Potential

Notes

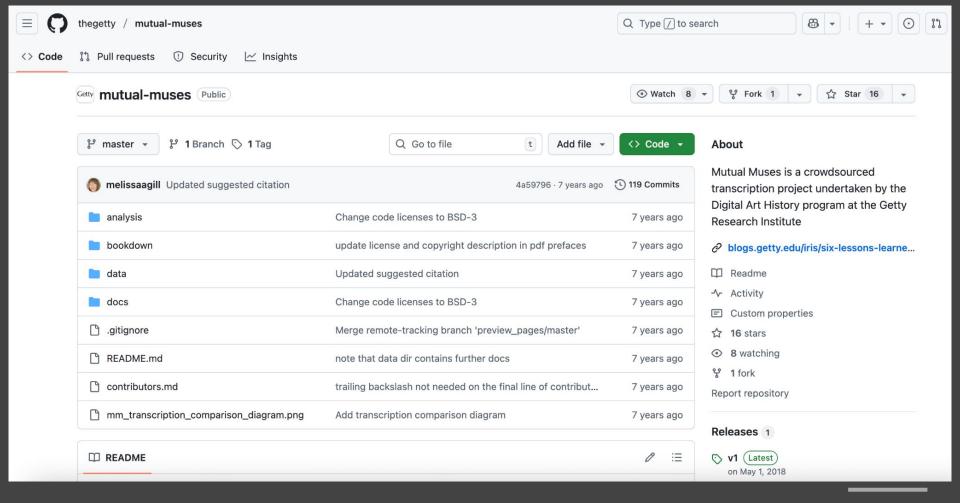
**Funding Information** 

**Competing Interests** 

**Author Contributions** 

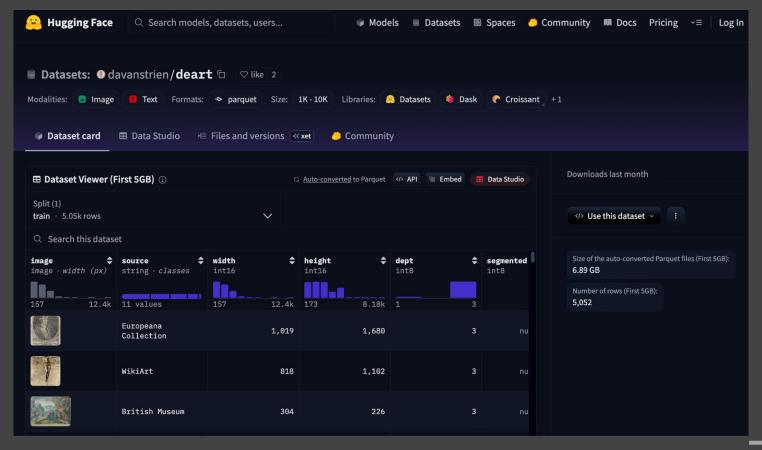
References

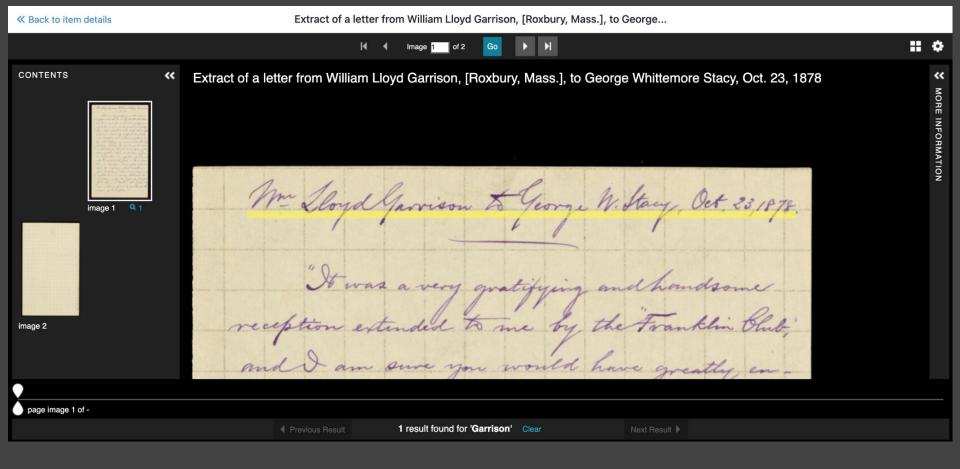
Sean + Sam 1:1 -



#### DEArt: Dataset of European Art







Anti-Slavery Manuscripts at the Boston Public Library: BPL Digital Commonwealth,

Anti-Slavery (Collection of Distinction), Letters/Correspondence

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#### DATA

SPACE

PHYSICS

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#### Results & Datasets (13)

HUMANITIES

MOLA Citizen Science on the ADS, Hawker-Yates, 2024

NATURE

Data for Publication Citizen Science for IceCube: Name that Neutrino, C. Love, 2024

MEDICINE

War of the Worlds Fan Mail, University of Michigan Library, 2024

SOCIAL SCIENCE

Lancaster Digital Collections: The Davy Notebooks Project, Ruston+, 2024

LANGUAGE

Image descriptions for 7471 of the DEArt images, obtained via the Zooniverse crowdsourcing

platform, Reshetnikov+, 2023

META

Snow Spotter Canopy-Snow Interception Dataset #1, Lumbrazo+, 2022

Engaging Crowds Project Data, Engaging Crowds Team, 2022

AI4MARS: A Dataset for Terrain-Aware Autonomous Driving on Mars, Swan+, 2021

Addressing Health Pensions Data Mapper, Smith+, 2021

Rainfall Rescue Data Set, Hawkins, 2021

Living with Machines alpha and beta Zooniverse 'accident' task data, 2020

Scribes of the Cairo Geniza Data, Scribes of the Cairo Geniza Team, 2020

Mutual Muses Results, Mutual Muses Team, 2018

# Any questions? contact@zooniverse.org

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