Biotechnology

Metadata template change checklist

From the field note “Your assay team renamed one column. Forty submissions loaded without it.”.

The short version

- ◇ Make every submission declare its template version, so the importer never guesses which rules apply.
- ◇ Validate at the point of entry, with messages a scientist can act on without asking a curator.
- ◇ Accept the current and previous versions only, with written migration rules between them.
- ◇ Treat a template change as a release: an owner, an impact check, tests on real submissions and a retirement date.

The checklist

- [ ] Name one assay family, its template owner, curator and downstream consumers.
- [ ] Check what your ELN, LIMS or metadata tool already validates and versions.
- [ ] Put a version marker in every template and return files without one.
- [ ] Record an owner, definition and allowed values for every field.
- [ ] Write migration rules from the previous version, including what cannot migrate.
- [ ] Replay historical submissions before any template change ships.
- [ ] Set and announce a retirement date for each old version.

Want a second pair of eyes on your answers?

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