International Society for Biocuration

In this issue:

- DATABASE is now the official journal of ISB
- Welcome the new Executive Committee
- Dr. Alex Bateman is the new chairperson of ISB
- ISB Regional Micro-Grants: Apply Today!
- News and Views from the ISB Community
- Upcoming Conferences
- Job Opportunities

DATABASE, official journal of ISB

DATABASE, The Journal of Biological Databases and Curation, is now the official journal of the International Society for Biocuration.

The International Society for Biocuration was created to promote biocuration, the product of multidisciplinary teams of database curators, software developers and bioinformaticians. Biocurators, whose work facilitates research and education across the life sciences, create and maintain a wide variety of online tools and databases essential to the biological community in their daily work. Such important efforts now have a rightful home at DATABASE.

DATABASE, The Journal of Biological Databases and Curation, supports the growing need of the research community to discuss a range of issues related to the creation, development and maintenance of biological databases, and to strengthen communication between database developers, curators and users. As this resonates strongly with the mission of the ISB, we are delighted to announce that DATABASE has now become the Society's official journal. DATABASE has published more than 250 papers, 50 of which have appeared in the Biocuration Virtual Issue, a special collection of articles describing work presented at the annual International Biocuration Conference.

The ISB Executive Committee.

Dr. Jennifer Harrow

Dr. Melissa Haendel

Dr. Alex Bateman

ISB Executive Committee Changes

ISB has a new chairperson and two new members of the executive committee.

ISB has elected a new Chairperson.

Congratulations are in order for **Dr. Alex Bateman**! Alex was elected as Chair of the International Society for Biocuration in an election held by the Executive Committee.

After many years of service, we are very thankful to **Dr. Pascale Gaudet** for her contributions and hard work for the improvement of the International Society for Biocuration since its inception. Pascale remains a member of the ISB EC.

The New ISB Executive Committee.

Please join us in giving a warm **Welcome!** to **Melissa Haendel** and **Jennifer Harrow** to the Executive Committee. We bid farewell and sincerely thank Renate Kania and Chisato Yamasaki, who served on the committee since 2011.

To read more about the work of Dr. Melissa Haendel, please visit http://goo.gl/R7ztlX. Learn more about Dr. Jennifer Harrow's career at http://goo.gl/735tGm

The Executive Committee is also composed, Monica-Munoz-Torres (Secretary), Marc Robinson-Rechavi (Treasurer), Teresa Attwood, Alex Bateman, J. Michael Cherry, Pascale Gaudet, and Claire O'Donovan.

Micro-Grants for Regional ISB Meetings!

ISB Micro-Grants are meant to sponsor local/regional short meetings of ISB members to synergize their work efforts, to generate a space to share your work, and to further help to advance the goals of the society.

Micro-Grants are awarded in the amount of (US) $250 per group, and applications may be submitted at any time (i.e. no

deadlines). If awarded, the group will write a 300-word report informing the ISB membership about the outcomes of the meeting. This report must be sent to intsocbio@gmail.com no later than 30 days after the end of the meeting. The report will be also posted on the ISB Newsletter.

To apply, members fill out and sign a form and submit a description of the purpose of the meeting, its target

audience and possible affiliations, and how the meeting will benefit the members of the ISB community. To request and submit the filled out form, please contact us at intsocbio@gmail.com with the subject line 'ISB Micro-Grants Application'.

Apply Today!

News & Views from around the ISB Community

Register now for Biocuration 2014!

The Organising Committee for the 7th International Biocuration Conference is very glad to announce that the website and registration are now open. Please visit http://biocuration2014.events.oicr.on.ca/
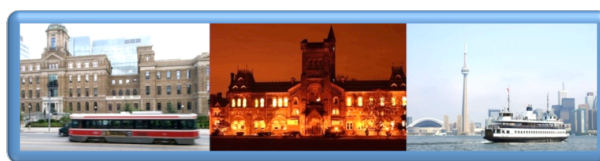
The conference will be held at Hart House, in Toronto from 6-9th April 2014 and the Biocuration 2014 organising committee is very much looking forward to seeing you there!

Our four confirmed keynote speakers will be **Dr. Tim Hubbard** (Wellcome Trust Sanger Institute), **Dr. Suzanna Lewis** (Lawrence Berkeley National Laboratory), **Dr. Patricia Babbitt** (California Institute for Quantitative Biosciences (QB3)), and **Dr. Lincoln Stein** (Ontario Institute for Cancer Research).

Early bird registration rates apply until 7th March 2014. The organisers have secured discount rates at three hotels in Toronto, and you can find more information about booking on the conference website.
The deadline for the abstract submission to present at the conference is 10th February 2014.

See you in Toronto next April!

CAFA 2: The Second Critical Assessment of protein Function Annotations

We are pleased to announce the Second Critical Assessment of protein Function Annotation (CAFA) challenge. CAFA 1 was highly successful experiment, involving 23 groups from around the world. In CAFA 2 we will evaluate the performance of protein function prediction tools and methods, and also expand the challenge to include prediction of human phenotypes associated with genes and gene products. As the last time, CAFA will be a part of the Automated Function Prediction Special Interest Group (AFP-SIG) meeting that will be held alongside the ISMB conference. AFP-SIG will be held as a two-day meeting in July 2014 in Boston, MA (USA).

The targets and all information about the CAFA challenge are now available at http://biofunctionprediction.org. The submission deadline for predictions is January 15, 2014. The initial evaluation will be done during the AFP-SIG meeting in Boston.

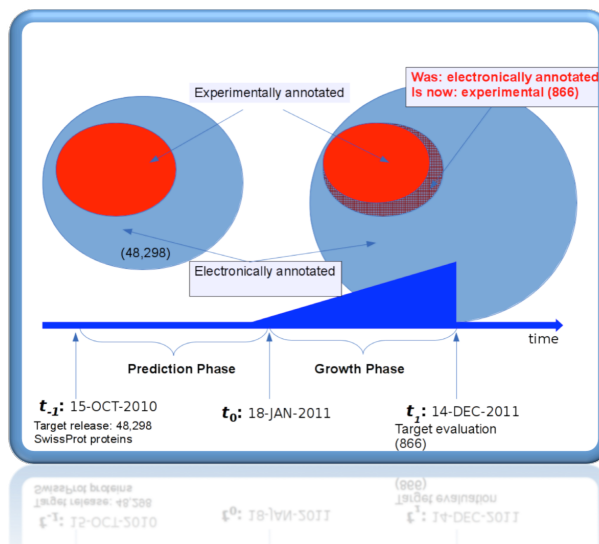### Anyone in the world is welcome to participate!

How to participate in CAFA 2:
1. Download target proteins, available August 27, 2013
2. Submit predictions on or before January 15, 2014
3. Join us at the AFP-SIG, July 11-12, 2014 in Boston for the Eighth Automated protein Function Prediction meeting, to hear the CAFA 2 results, to present your work, and to learn about the latest research in computational protein function prediction

More information is available at http://biofunctionprediction.org and via email at cafa.2014@gmail.com

Submitted by Iddo Friedberg, CAFA/AFP co-chair

Online Crowd-Verification of Biological Networks – Be a Part of the Crowd!

The Network Verification Challenge (NVC) – part of the sbv IMPROVER program - is a crowd- approach for the verification and expansion of pre-defined biological networks (*Bioinform Biol Insights*, 2013).

What is it?

sbv IMPROVER is a challenge-based program with a specific focus on the verification of industrial research processes related to systems biology (read more on www.sbvimprover.com).

Biological networks, with their structured syntax, are a powerful way of representing biological information; however, they can become unwieldy to manage as their size and complexity increase.

In NVC, web-based graphical interfaces are used to visualize biological relationships. Crowdsourcing principles enable participants to annotate these relationships based on literature evidences. Gamification aspects are incorporated, to encourage biological domain experts to gather robust peer-reviewed information from which relationships can be identified and verified.

Why participating?

Best performers in the crowd-verification phase will be invited to a 3-day "jamboree" to resolve controversies with subject matter experts, finalizing and publishing the network models.

The resulting network models will represent the current status of biological knowledge within the defined boundaries. For some

Network Verification Challenge
open until 28 January 2014

period following conclusion of the challenge, the published models will remain available for continuous use and expansion by the scientific community.
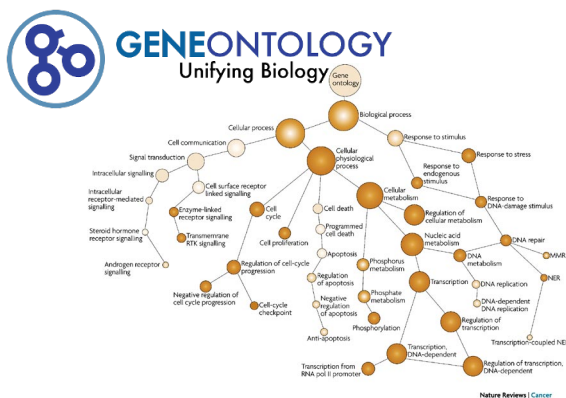
How to participate?

Learn more on the NVC website www.sbvimprover.com/nvc and become part of the scientific community improving the understanding of biological processes.

The project team includes scientists from Philip Morris International's (PMI) Research and Development department and IBM's Thomas J. Watson Research Center. The project is funded by PMI.

Submitted by
Immanuel Luhn, Marianne Charaf, and Dr. Julia Hoeng

Ten Quick Tips for Using The Gene Ontology

The Gene Ontology (GO) provides core biological knowledge representation for modern biologists, whether computationally or experimentally based. GO resources include biomedical ontologies that cover molecular domains of all life forms as well as extensive compilations of gene product annotations to these ontologies that provide largely species-neutral, comprehensive statements about what gene products do. Although extensively used in data analysis workflows, and widely incorporated into numerous data analysis platforms and applications, the general user of GO resources often misses fundamental distinctions about GO structures, GO annotations, and what can and can not be extrapolated from GO resources. The article referenced here offers ten quick tips for using the Gene Ontology. To read more, visit http://goo.gl/8EQKpu

Submitted by Judith Blake.

Upcoming Conferences

6th International Workshop on Semantic Web Applications and Tools for the Life Sciences (SWAT4LS 2013)
http://www.swat4ls.org/workshops/edinburgh2013/
When: Dec. 9-12, 2013
Where: Edinburgh, UK
What: SWAT4LS is a workshop that provides a venue to present and discuss benefits and limits of the adoption of Web based information systems and Semantic technologies in biomedical informatics and computational biology.
Notes: Proceedings of SWAT4LS 2013 will be published in CEUR Workshop proceedings (http://ceur-ws.org/)

International Workshop on Knowledge Support for Deep Phenotyping, co-located with IEEE International Conference on Bioinformatics and Biomedicine
http://skeletome.org/deepphenotyping2013/
When: Dec 18 - 21, 2013
Where: Shanghai, China
What: In this workshop we propose to trigger a comprehensive and coherent approach to studying (and ultimately facilitating) the process of knowledge acquisition and support for Deep Phenotyping by bringing together researchers and practitioners that include but are not limited to the fields of computational biology, genomics, clinical genetics, pharmacogenomics, healthcare, text/data mining and knowledge discovery, and knowledge representation and ontology engineering.
Notes: Extended versions of all accepted full papers will be included in a Special Issue of the Journal of Biomedical Semantics.

Job Opportunities

Bioinformatics Software Engineer at dictyBase, Chicago, IL, USA. Posted November 13, 2013. Details available at http://dictybase.org/dictybase_jobs.html

Content Operations Manager, Qiagen, Redwood City, US. Posted November 13, 2013. More information available at http://goo.gl/6FLafh

Ontology Engineer, Qiagen, Redwood City, US. Posted November 13, 2013. Find more about this position at http://goo.gl/n3Z8py

Bioinformaticians, including in training and outreach, University of Edinburgh, UK. Posted October 31, 2013. Details available at http://goo.gl/XpDZpS

Biocurator Position at Institut Curie in Computational Systems Biology of Cancer Department, Construction of Atlas of Cancer Signaling Networks (ACSN), Paris, France. Posted October 31, 2013. More information available at http://goo.gl/u6GP6I

Knowledge Engineer, Novartis, Cambridge, MA. Posted October 31, 2013. Find more about this position at http://goo.gl/n7zgj0

Scientific Data Curator, Novartis, Cambridge, MA. Posted October 31, 2013. Details available at http://goo.gl/63JwEi

Bioinformatician, PlantLink, Swedish University of Agricultural Sciences. Posted October 31, 2013. More information available at http://goo.gl/SyjuIM

Project Director, VIVO. Posted September 22, 2013. More information available at http://goo.gl/OA9EPP

Postdoctoral scholar position at Plant Pathway database, Oregon State University, OR, USA. Posted September 22, 2013. Find more about this position at http://goo.gl/Fv0dBM

Bioinformatics Analyst, Mouse Genome Database (MGD), Bar Harbor, MA, USA. Posted September 8, 2013. Details available at http://goo.gl/uxdpjH

Scientific Curator, Mouse Genome Database (MGD), Bar Harbor, MA, USA. Posted September 8, 2013. Find more about this position at http://goo.gl/3iRlLq

Community Manager, National Center for Biomedical Ontology (NCBO), Stanford University, CA, USA. Posted August 13, 2013. Details available at http://biocurator.org/jobs/NCBO_Community_Manager.pdf

Job Opportunities (Ctd)

Data wrangler, Oregon Health & Science University, Eugene, OR, USA. Posted August 4, 2013. More information available at http://biocurator.org/jobs/Data_wrangler_OHSU.pdf

Senior Software engineer, Genestack, Cambridge, UK. Posted May 24, 2013. More information can be found at http://www.genestack.com/careers

Software Engineer, Zebrafish Model Organism Database, Eugene, OR, USA. Posted March 15, 2013. Find more about this position at http://jobs.uoregon.edu/unclassified.php?id=4196

Executive Committee Meetings
The ISB Executive Committee meets monthly. Minutes from the meetings are posted on the ISB website
http://www.biocurator.org/executive_committee_minutes.html

ISB Newsletter Archive
Previous issues of this Newsletter can be found on the ISB website at
http://biocurator.org/newsletter.shtml
M. Munoz-Torres edits the ISB Newsletter.

Share your ideas with members of ISB!
Prepare a news article written to biocurators as the audience. In 260 words or less spread the word about new tools in your site, or tools for distribution to the wider community. Broadcast announcements and advances from your team to all the members of ISB by sending an email to intsocbio@gmail.com. Submission deadline for the November Newsletter is Friday, December 6th at midnight (UTC).

Kind regards,
The ISB Executive Committee.

ISB Spotlight provides a snapshot of some of the work and activities of members of the International Society for Biocuration (ISB). The Spotlight features brief descriptions of a range of databases and bio-curation tools, re-published, with permission, from the 'News & Views' section of ISB's monthly newsletter. The newsletter, with the complete 'News & Views from the ISB Community', is freely available from http://biocurator.org/newsletter.shtml.