



APBioNet Monthly Newsletter

August 2009

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1. Asia Pacific Bioinformatics Network supports the ABC Initiative

In April 2009, the Korean Bioinformatics Center (KOBIC) hosted a symposium whereby the Asian Bioinformatics Center Initiative (ABC) was inaugurated through the signing of the Seoul Resolution (<http://www.abcenter.org/abc/main/main.jsp>). The aim of this initiative is to build an extensive network of Asian Bioinformatics Centres at the national and institutional levels throughout Asia to fulfill the aims of collecting, curating and preserving bioinformation, that will eventually lead to the formation of an Asian Bioinformatics Institute, analogous to the European Bioinformatics Institute in Hinxton Hall, Cambridge, UK.



As part of this ABC Initiative, an ABC Task Force has been formed, and task force members have been appointed by the APBioNet, together with the Asia Pacific International Molecular Biology Network, with whom APBioNet has a standing Memorandum of Understanding to work together since 2002, and

with the e-IMBL, the International Molecular Biology Laboratory. Signatories of the Seoul Resolution have nominated their representatives to the ABC Task Force. A Technical Committee has also been formed.

So far, two General meetings have been completed, with the next scheduled for InCoB 2009 conference in Singapore on 10 Sep 2009. Four Task Force meetings online have

resulted in several projects being endorsed and approved, including one completed. The ABC currently is engaged in a major collaborative project with the InCoB conference in an Asian Bioinformatics Repository whereby authors with papers published with InCoB will be requested to deposit database, datasets, software and other metadata associated with the paper with their national ABC repository node. Data in each node will be widely replicated throughout the network of ABC nodes.

Interested parties willing to subscribe to the Seoul Resolution are requested to contact Rohit Reja (rejarohit2004@gmail.com) to sign the resolution and to participate in all aspects of the ABC initiative, including joining the Task Force, the Technical Committees or setting up an ABC Node.

At the 2nd ABC General Meeting in Kuala Lumpur during the 28th Asia Pacific Advanced Network (APAN) meeting (23 July 2009), more signatories in South-east Asia have been recruited. The ten-year old BioMirror project will be reformulated as part of the ABC initiative with APAN and other organisations such as TEIN and Transpac to set up the next generation BioMirror2 project.

Registration for the 3rd General Meeting of the ABC, to be held on 10 Sep 2009 at InCoB 2009 is open at <http://incob.apbionet.org/incob09/register.html>

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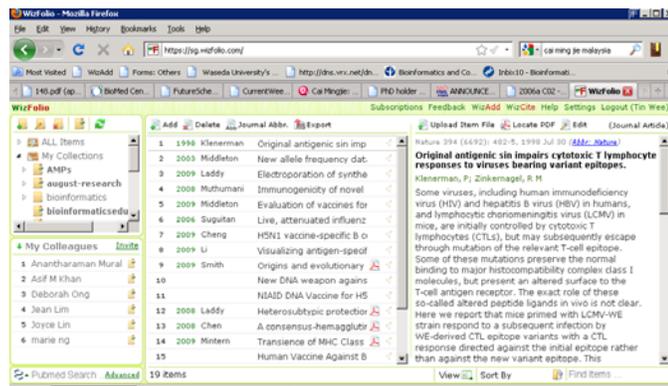
Secretariat

Asia Pacific Bioinformatics Network

1. Asian Bioinformation Center Website <http://www.abcenter.org/>
2. A-IMBN - Asia Pacific International Molecular Biology Network <http://www.a-imbn.org/>
3. e-IMBL - the electronic International Molecular Biology Laboratory <http://www.e-imbl.org>
4. Asia Pacific Advanced Network <http://www.apan.net/>
5. Bio-Mirror Project <http://www.bio-mirror.net/>
6. Gilbert et al. (2004) Bio-Mirror project for public bio-data distribution *Bioinformatics* 20(17):3238-3240; doi:10.1093/bioinformatics/bth219 <http://bioinformatics.oxfordjournals.org/cgi/content/abstract/20/17/3238?etoc>
7. TEIN TransEurasia Information Network <http://www.tein2.net/>
8. Transpac Project <http://www.transpac.org/>

2. APBioNet ties up membership benefit with WizFolio

WizFolio, the popular Web 2.0 online bibliographic management system and collaborative platform, will provide all APBioNet members free usage of their services on their website (<http://www.wizfolio.com>) for a full year. APBioNet Secretariat will be registering APBioNet members to WizFolio in bulk. WizFolio features include automatic PubMed retrieval of references, 5 Gigabytes of file storage space for documents, dynamic insertion of bibliographic



references to Word documents, automatic reformatting of references to 100 different bibliographic formats, and collaborative sharing of their references with fellow researchers.

For the future extension of this WizFolio-APBioNet collaboration, APBioNet secretariat will negotiate favourable deals with WizFolio as part of the membership benefits that members of APBioNet enjoy.

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About WizFolio - <http://www.wizfolio.com/>

WizFolio is a web based reference manager for researchers and scientists to efficiently manage their research and academic papers. An intelligent locate PDF engine easily retrieves PDFs from more than 500 top open access journals and can be linked to your library resources. WizFolio is developed by a privately held Singapore company founded by Professor Casey Chan, an adjunct professor at the Department of Orthopedic Surgery and the Division of Bioengineering at the National University of Singapore. In addition to developing medical devices, Prof Chan is heavily involved in research in the area of tissue engineering and nanotechnology. He regularly publishes in peer review journals.

Watch WizFolio on YouTube - Simply the best Web 2.0 information management tool.

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=OSQiK1gkxI>



3. Improving Scientific Reproducibility and Accessibility with MIABi: Minimum Information About a Bioinformatics Investigation

In a recent endorsement by the APBioNet ExCo, the InCoB Conference publication editors have initiated a discussion with our publishers, BioMedCentral and Bioinformatics, to implement a pilot experiment project with this year's Special InCoB journal issues BMC Bioinformatics, BMC Genomics and Bioinformatics. This experiment is based on a minimum criteria for disclosure, access, non-repudiability and reproducibility of scientific findings and claims reported in InCoB papers.



Each year for the past four years, InCoB has successfully published some 20 to 40 papers. However, InCoB editors and the publishers note the increasing loss of data arising from missing pointers

to websites or datasets. InCoB reviewers also bemoan the increasing lack of full disclosure amounting to an inability to reproduce bioinformatics investigations or difficulty in assessing the validity of a bioinformatics protocol. Moreover, the ownership of scientific claims is often confused, particularly in Asia for Asian names [1]. A process of disambiguation of author names is badly needed.



The editors of the latest InCoB publications have been tasked by APBioNet ExCo create the process of achieving version 1.0 of the Minimum Information about a Bioinformatics Investigation (MIABi) so that papers which are MIABi-1.0-compliant can be assuredly in

conformance to its evolving specifications, at least in the initial instance, with unique author identifiers derived from existing identifiers, or otherwise registered, and with deposition of databases, datasets, software, and other associated metadata about the publication, its protocols and its scientific claims.

In addition, authors of the papers accepted for InCoB will be selected for pre-publication and post-publication mark-up of their publication with appropriate identifiers and additional metadata, and deposited digital material.

In conjunction with this MIABi, APBioNet has endorsed the formation of the Asian Bioinformation Repository project as part of the Asian Bioinformation Centre (ABC) Initiative. This project sets out to create an extensive network of persistent bioinformation repositories synchronised with each other, such that any deposition of a digital object with one site propagates that document to all other sites. The network of repositories will support the MIABi in a way that provisions for a persistent and redundant system for sustaining the accessibility and maintaining the perpetuity of scientific data and information as they are published. It is hoped that this MIABi experiment will go a long way towards gaining membership and affiliation with the MIBBI project. The editors will follow through this process by studying how much of the computational literature is currently non-reproducible and how this can be improved by requiring authors to adhere to such guidelines.



"We are delighted to be working with the editors of our InCoB conference supplements on this," said Matthew Cockerill, Managing Director of BioMed Central, "and we absolutely support the underlying objectives of enhancing reproducibility."

Picture from www.kruufm.com/files/4/mcockerill.jpg (cc)

President of APBioNet, Shoba Ranganathan agrees, "In editing the past consecutive three years of conference supplements for BMC, we have faced this challenge each year, and it is only now, with the tie-up with the ABC initiative and the strong support of the BMC Management and others, that we are able start the process this year."



"BioMed Central is indeed working towards the long term reproducibility in computational research," added Cockerill, "Our WebCite system and other projects in the

pipeline are clear indications of our strong commitment in this direction."

All authors of InCoB conference papers in the future including the forthcoming InCoB'09 are invited to participate in this new initiative, and their enthusiastic support and cooperation would be most appreciated.

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Reference.

[1] Qiu, J. 2008. Scientific publishing: Identity crisis. Nature 451: 766-767.

<http://dx.doi.org/10.1038/451766a>

[2] The MIBBI Project: Minimum Information for Biological and Biomedical Investigations (<http://www.mibbi.org/>)

[3] Cockerill, M. (2007) Webcite links provide access to archived copy of linked web pages. As downloaded on 28 July 2009.

http://blogs.openaccesscentral.com/blogs/bmcblog/entry/webcite_links_provide_access_to

4. Education on the InCoB agenda: 2nd WEBCB (7 Sep 09)

The Workshop on Education in Bioinformatics and Computational Biology (WEBCB) will be held for the second time as part of the 8th International Conference on Bioinformatics (InCoB 2009). This meeting aims to bring together bioinformatics educators in the Asia-Pacific region and will include a discussion on the minimal bioinformatics skills required by life sciences graduates, and how these skills should be defined.

Bioinformatics is now an integral component of biology and yet many graduates in the molecular life sciences have not been exposed to the state-of-the-art methods available in the area. One of the goals of WEBCB 2009 will therefore be to identify how minimum standards of bioinformatics education for life science graduates should be defined and disseminated, and to provide this information as a resource for life science educators in the Asia-Pacific region.

Scheduled on the morning of 7th September 2009, this workshop will include a discussion in the form of an open forum at WEBCB. Bioinformatics educators are encouraged to attend this important meeting as any consensus achieved may be formulated into a document for adoption by APBioNet and its members and published for a wider audience.

Interested educators of bioinformatics are encouraged to contact the APBioNet Secretariat for more information on how to participate in the consensus process, and join the APBioNet education taskforce.

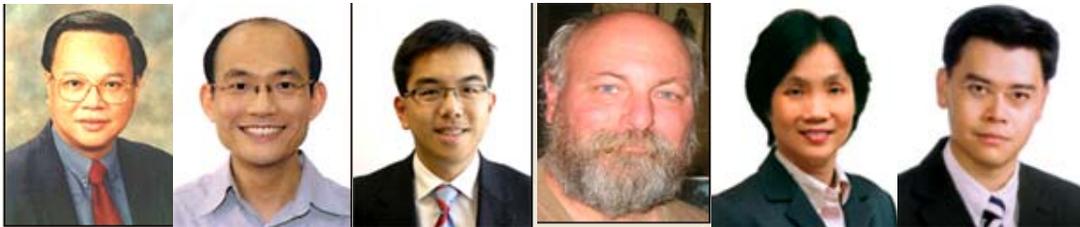
For more information about the schedule, please see
<http://incob.apbionet.org/incob09/program.html>

5. Clinical Bioinformatics on InCoB Agenda (8 Sep 09)

With ever-increasing volume of information in clinical medicine, doctors, health professionals and researchers need more effective information dissemination methods. Clinical Bioinformatics brings together experts in diverse fields to synergize and collaborate to develop solutions and tools specifically for the purpose of translating biomedical information into outcomes of clinical and biological relevance.

Take the case of pharmacogenomics, Clinical Bioinformatics methodologies help unravel new biomedical knowledge for individualized healthcare. After sequencing and analyzing the complete human genome, clinical bioinformatics enables highly efficient online databases search and extraction of relevant information with the ultimate goal of improving healthcare and prevent diseases for the era of personalized medicine.

To create awareness among doctors, clinicians, IT experts and research scientists, of this new field of Clinical Bioinformatics and its latest applications in healthcare and life sciences, a pioneering Symposium on Clinical Bioinformatics on Applied Sciences (CBAS) will be held on 8 September 2009 as part of International Conference on Bioinformatics (InCoB).



Distinguished panel of keynote speakers of 1st CBAS – Professor KC Lun (Past President International Medical Informatics Association), James Mah, Tien Y. Wong (Director of the Singapore Eye Research Institute, National University of Singapore), Wayne Mitchell, Caroline Lee, Su Yi.

This inaugural symposium invites well-known researchers and clinical scientists to share their knowledge on how to unlock some of the complex issues and advances in Clinical Bioinformatics. Topics include:

- Pharmacogenomics
- Personalized medicine
- Biomedical image Informatics
- Health Informatics
- Translational Informatics

For more information, please visit <http://incob.apbionet.org/incob09/program.html> and <http://incob.apbionet.org/incob09/cbas.html>

6. InCoB 2009 Dateline

Due to overwhelming requests, InCoB 2009 early bird deadline has been extended. Please sign up early to enjoy the benefits.

As can be seen from above, there are many exciting new initiatives to be shared at the Conference. So please sign up now at <http://incob.apbionet.org/incob09/register.html>

7. Disclaimer

These messages have been forwarded to a mailing list maintained by APBioNet. The contents of the original message have not been modified from that supplied by the third party and do not reflect the opinion of the editor or of members of APBioNet except where explicitly stated.

If you would like to post material to this newsletter please forward it to bgaeta@unsw.edu.au by the 24th of the month for consideration.

Additional information on APBioNet is available at <http://www.apbionet.org>