

Bioc Technical Advisory Board Minutes

3 September 2020

Attending: Martin Morgan, Vince Carey, Michael Love, Shila Ghazanfar, Hector Corrada Bravo, Charlotte Sonesson, Stephanie Hicks, Aedin Culhane, Laurent Gatto, Levi Waldron, Wolfgang Huber, Robert Gentleman, Aaron Lun

Regrets: Kasper Hansen, Rafael Irizarry

:00-:03 Minutes

- [2020-08-06](#) minutes approved

:03-:10 Greatest Hits of August 2020

- OSCA book [building on BBS](#), OSCA book published [in AnVIL](#) but details of change management need attention
- Devel Forum: new [repo searching facilities](#) from Mike Smith
- [Issue on SummarizedExperiment](#): package footprint too large for certain cluster computing processes
- Volunteers for [monthly topic presentations](#)
- John Readey of HDF Group passed an [NSF RFA](#) that he is interested in teaming up for; a call with rOpenSci happened yesterday
- Leonardo Collado Torres [biothis](#) package

:10-:20 Scientific Advisory Board comments

- Suggestion: Automate build system to free up developer time.
 - Transition of build system may be opportunity for rethinking and innovation
- Package reviews should be done by the community; see rOpenSci [contributing guide](#).
 - To be discussed by the CAB
 - What are the rate-limiting steps, are many package developers waiting too long for feedback from reviewers, or the other way around?
 - Lluís Revilla Sancho recently assembled [data on review process](#)
 - Wolfgang's group has some capacity to assist with reviewing.
 - Outline path to becoming reviewers, incentives. Mentoring system, opportunity for the community. Role of "assignment" in GitHub issues. Training program for reviewers.
 - Good to have a relatively small pool of people making the 'final call' for acceptance. "Editor" position.
- Bioc should take a leading role in facilitating practitioners' transition to cloud computing
- Build system currently builds ~2000 CRAN packages to support installation of 1800 bioc packages -- is this sustainable? Can dependencies be reduced?
 - Significant efforts going on in terms of dependency analyses (e.g. in BiocPkgTools [vignette](#)).

:20-:30 CAB Liaison comments

- CAB last published minutes [7/23](#) and [7/9](#). In the last CAB (August 13th), Vicky Hellon from F1000Research passed on her [slides](#) about the Bioconductor gateway. Potential actions/opportunities:
 - Could refresh gateway advisory board + need a banner image
 - Reach out to further global communities - most papers from N. America/Europe
 - Promote the gateway 'earlier' – encourage development of a manuscript at time of package submission to Bioconductor
 - Expand gateway - posters and slides, scope to write an article in other languages
 - Themed calls for papers/hackathons etc.
- Events: Bioc2020 (July 2020 CAB presentation, CAB/TAB stickers, discussed need to coordinate on virtual platforms for other events), CDSB 2020 (Aug 4-7 2020) Foundation supplied \$1200.
- Proposal submitted for \$20K funding for virtual component of BioC2021 to [Code for Science and Society's Conference and Event Fund](#).
- Upcoming Events: Bioc Asia Oct 15-18, Bioc Europe Dec 14-18, BioPackathon (recurring monthly). Bioconductor Calendar of Events (Add/Subscribe at [link](#))
- Ongoing action items; presenters for H3ABioNet, Funding, CoC, Inclusion & Diversity

:30-:40 Governance considerations

- Relationships between TAB, SAB, CAB, Bioc Foundation, and development core are not well-defined
- Might be advantageous to give boards more influence of what funds from the Foundation can be used for
- The process for amending governing documents is not clear
- Responsibilities and goals of each entity should be clarified on a regular basis
- Increase transparency of relationship between grant-funded activities and principles and objectives of the various boards. Require engagement with the boards before submitting funding proposals/organizing conferences related to Bioconductor (and the boards can provide useful input in return - access to infrastructure, leadership, advice, ...)?
- Revise the [mission statement](#) to include more aspects of the actual mission including training and outreach, open access publishing, inclusivity.
- Vince to reach out to form a subcommittee that will review governance documents, increase Foundation visibility and activity, address budgetary activities, expectations from board members. Representatives from both TAB, CAB, SAB, core team.
- Need to engage a lawyer to detect potential problems?

:40-:50 Technical consideration on transition to cloud computing (Vince; [slides](#))

- How to build motivation for people to use cloud computing? Not easy to figure out management of costs.
- Can this be covered/built into Bioconductor workshops?

- Cloud computing for teaching - could provide ready-made environments for all learners, but will not allow them to use the environment afterwards. How can we provide access after the course/event?

:50-:60 Open discussion and suggestions for next meeting. Sean Davis has been invited to do the technical report section ([proposed schedule](#)) of the October meeting.

- Would like to see the TAB think about Bioconductor giving formal guidance on how to formally support books submitted to be built on the BBS and deployed on bioconductor.org; Also need to think about review criteria to be accepted in BBS?
 - Several people are currently writing books on various topics (large-scale data analysis, DNA methylation, spatial transcriptomics).
 - From a technical/build system perspective, shaping the book as a package has some clear advantages.
 - Build system is currently able to allocate enough time to build the books.
 - Splitting up into individual components that can be built independently (cf. BioC2020 workshops) more efficient/scalable than building the whole book in one go. But can be challenging/tedious to create the links/cross-references between the chapters.

For a future meeting: Should we organize some writing groups? GenomicFiles, *Hub, BiocParallel, workshop authoring/deploying/maintenance could all use writeups.