

Bioc Technical Advisory Board Minutes

5 March 2026

Present: Nicholas Cooley, Kasper Hansen, Andres Wokaty, Lori Kern, Robert Castelo, Jacques Serizay, Gabriele Sales, Michael Lawrence, Laurent Gatto, Helena Crowell, Ludwig Geistlinger, Hugo Gruson, Maria Doyle, Marcel Ramos, Vince Carey, Hervé Pagès, Rafael Irizarry, Henrik Bengtsson, Wolfgang Huber

Absent: Levi Waldron

:00 - :04 February [minutes](#) approved.

:04 - :05 Urgent concerns related to **funding** gap.

NB: NIH has released a carryforward that will keep us going up to the renewal review and beyond, but at reduced effort.

:05 - :30 Robert Castelo on “Use of [SVT_SparseArray](#) matrices in GSVA” [[slides](#)].

:30 - :50 [Transition to r-universe](#) & modernization of package ingestion/[review infrastructure](#).

:50 - :55 Open discussion: **Bioconductor Annotation**

renovation/questions, and paths forward:

- run the pipeline again (not now)
- leave the 3.22 mapping packages in place for 3.23 (likely)
- renovate GO.db, org.[.eg.db]; see [AnnotationLab](#).
 - significant backward compatibility complications
 - do `getClass("AnnDbBimap")` and look in [code.bioconductor.org](#) for uses of complex methods
 - test against `limma::goana`, `globaltest`, etc.
- MCP services like Sean Davis's for [OLS](#)
- Ultimately, we want to identify the key mapping requirements and provide efficient support.
 - But how much curation and repackaging is really necessary for today's bioinformaticians?
 - Legacy software "needs" these specific approaches and interfaces, but should we be held back from adopting new technologies for the sake of continuity of availability? Of *implicit* API commitments?
 - Costs of maintenance of the ecosystem are coming into focus.

:55 - :58 Suggestion for next TAB meeting [see [here](#)]:
Discussion about custom Bioconductor **AI agents**.

:58 - :60 Review on recent **Developer's Forum** (see [here](#)):
Identifying topics/speakers is challenging;
N. Cooley will be contacting potential speakers.

Appendix: Food for thought.



Hervé Pagès 10:07 PM

1,879,397 downloads (distinct IPs) in 2025 vs 1,139,800 in 2024. That's a 65% increase! Does this reflect the growth of our user base or is there something else? BTW the number reported here <https://bioc2026.bioconductor.org/sponsors/> is for 2024, not 2021. (edited)

BioC_downloads_2017_2025.png ▼

