

Christopher I Hunter, PhD.

Lead Biocurator, GigaDB, GigaScience Journal, BGI-Hong Kong
ORCID: 0000-0002-1335-0881

Statement of Intent for Election to the ISB Executive Committee, 2016.

I. Biographical Sketch:

Like many people in biocuration I sort of fell into the role. For me it was a natural fit, even during my PhD and early research career I found myself cataloguing and classifying things in order to make better sense of them. So when the opportunity arose to join the European Nucleotide Archive at EBI as a curator it was an easy decision to take it. During my time with ENA and later, still in the EBI with the Metagenomics resource team, I was involved not only in helping many scientists structure their data appropriately, but also in the design and user testing of submission tools and wizards to allow greater autonomy to the users. My commitment to the promotion of well structured and annotated resources has since continued in my role at GigaDB, where I curate a much wider variety of biological data. All the annotation is stored in a purpose built database where relationships between objects can be represented explicitly. As far as possible attribute names are selected from community agreed standards and where possible terms are selected from ontologies. Both standards and ontologies are keys to good curation and given the broad scope of data that I work with I have had to become aware of a wide variety of communities that are working to create and improve these tools for curators and researchers. I have been directly involved in the creation of the GSC MixS set of standards, and actively contribute to their ongoing development, as well working with the ISA team to help increase the utility and uptake of those tools. To read more about me please visit my LinkedIn page (<https://hk.linkedin.com/in/chr1shunter>)

II Motivation to join EC and Intended Contributions:

I am already committed to all of the goals of the society as they align very closely with those of my current position. I am active in the promotion of all biocuration activities and firmly believe that the key to pushing research forward is the curation of all data at point of creation, which requires the education and training of all young researchers in the basics of curation. To accomplish this we need to promote funding for activities and resources to allow us to most effectively share curation tools and the expertise of those already committed to the field.

I am also a member of the formed China Biocuration Society, this means I am ideally placed to help push the ISBs activities further in Asia where the field is still very new. Having regularly worked with researchers at BGI and CNGB, as well as others from all over Asia (e.g. Japan, Singapore, Malaysia, Philippines etc.) I am aware of the challenges facing curation in this area and I'm prepared to spearhead the push for better curation here.

III. Statement on Conflict of Interests:

Dear Members of the ISB 2015 Nomination Committee,

I am writing this letter to state that, to the best of my knowledge, I have no affiliation or relationship that prevents me from performing duties as a member of the Executive Committee of the International Society for Biocuration, should I be elected. However, as the governance guideline state, I must make you aware that I am employed by the journal GigaScience, as the lead biocurator to the database (GigaDB) where we host all the data used in the journal articles. I have no direct control over the editorial processes for manuscript selection.

I am a member of the following relevant communities, none of which would provide a conflict of interest: International Society for Biocuration (ISB), China Biocuration Society, International Society for Computational Biology (ISCB), Genomics Standards Consortium (GSC).

I understand that I must contact both the ISB and the Nomination Committee if a conflict exists or arises during my service.

Sincerely,

Christopher I Hunter, PhD.

GigaScience Database, BGI-Hong Kong, 16 Dai Fu Street, Tai Po Industrial Estate, Tai Po, Hong Kong

LinkedIN: <https://hk.linkedin.com/in/chr1shunter>