

ISB EC Election 2016

Peter Uetz

Motivations to join the EC

As the founder of two biological databases (the Microbial Protein Interaction Database, MPIDB and the Reptile Database) I am aware of the critical importance of well-maintained and well-curated databases. However, I am also aware that many users are not quite clear on the costs and efforts biocuration takes. As a community of curators we need to communicate and advertise our role more actively, not just to get more funding and support, but also to recruit more volunteer curators and community input. As a tribute to the volunteer community, I am also an active Wikipedian with more than 3000 edits.

Intended contributions to the group

- Expand biocuration to other databases. The NAR database issues have published papers on >1500 databases but the ISB has only a few hundred members. There is lots of room for growth and improvement.

- Expand the scope of ISB and biocuration. There is still a focus on model organisms and molecular databases within ISB. However, there are many other areas of biomedical research that are not covered. I have started the Reptile Database as a hobby and become a member of the Catalogue of Life project, an umbrella organization for about 150 taxonomic databases, very few (if any) are represented within ISB. And there are still many other areas that could and should become involved in the ISB.

- Funding, networking, outreach: I am working on an NSF Research Coordination Network grant that is aiming to bring together biocurators across numerous databases to share curation tools and strategies. Biocuration too often happens in isolation with lots of wheels being re-invented. That's my third room for improvement and contribution.

Brief biographical sketch

2011 — Associate Professor, Center for the Study of Biological Complexity, Virginia Commonwealth University

2007 — Founder, the Microbial Protein Interaction Database, MPIDB, now merged into IntAct

2006-2010 — Associate Professor, TIGR / JCVI, Rockville, MD

2001-2006 — Assistant Professor, Karlsruhe Institute of Technology, Germany

1997-2001 — Postdoctoral work at the University of Washington, Seattle

1997 — Ph.D., EMBL and University of Heidelberg, Germany; Subject: Biochemistry and Molecular Vertebrate Embryology

1996 — Founder, Reptile Database (originally “EMBL Reptile Database”)

1992 — Diploma, Max-Planck-Institute for Medical Research, Heidelberg, Germany; Subject: Molecular Neurobiology

(see <http://www.people.vcu.edu/~phuetz/> for more details, publications etc.)

Conflict of Interests' statement

Activities: No activities that appear to be in conflict with ISB

Memberships of other associations:

American Society of Microbiology (ASM)

Society for the Study of Amphibians and Reptiles (SSAR)

German Herpetological Society (DGHT)

Editorial positions on journals:

Microbial Cell

Dataset Papers in Biology

Amphibian and Reptile Conservation

Journal of North American Herpetology