

Statement of Intent for the International Society for Biocuration Executive Committee

I am applying for membership on International Society for Biocuration (ISB) Executive Committee. I have been a member of the ISB since 2011 and have worked as a professional biocurator and ontology developer since 2010 as part of the Ontology Development Group at the Oregon Health & Science University Library.

When I began my position as a biocurator, it was immediately apparent that the field of biocuration was a perfect fit for my professional interests. I find biocuration to be intellectually stimulating and satisfying, and I feel like I'm making a positive contribution to science by increasing access to knowledge. I love being able to apply my domain knowledge to efforts to organize and classify information and content, as well as work in collaboration with other talented scientists and programmers in such a dynamic field.

I see a great need for increasing researcher's skills in biocuration, to increase productivity, efficiency and transparency in science. Within the library community, there are a lot of efforts to develop services to enable researchers to improve their data science skills, in data curation, open data and data sharing. The biocuration community is well poised to promote these types of efforts, however, one issue I see facing this community is how to train researchers and have them integrate biocuration as part of their research process.

As part of the ISB Executive Committee, I am especially interested in increasing outreach efforts and promoting and integrating biocuration within the biomedical research community. Specifically, I have been witnessing the outward efforts of Monica Munoz-Torres in the secretary position, which has been wonderful for the community and I would love to work with her to extend her efforts. I am also interested in implementing some of the attribution and credit semantic work performed by our group to better expose biocuration as a primary scientific contribution. Some ideas of potential contributions are:

1. Make the ISB website a definitive source of information about biocuration. While the website contains valuable information, it would be nice to include additional information about the products of our biocuration efforts. For example, an aggregated list of resources, databases and places where researchers could find data standards (like BioSharing or NCBI BioPortal) could enable researchers to learn more about the field and for biocurators to learn about each other's work.
2. Promote expertise of curators and help external parties find expertise via the ISB website.
3. Provide biocuration and data science education information on the website. This could include training opportunities and online training. Through the NIH BD2K Initiative, a lot of online training materials are becoming available and these could also be displayed on the ISB website, as well as other materials from other organizations such as NISO.
4. Increasing awareness of the field of biocuration by promoting the field to career development offices at universities/degree programs.

5. Promote regional interactions amongst biocurators. With colleagues at OHSU, we have unofficially formed a Pacific Northwest Data Librarians group, where we meet locally approximately once a year. The ISB could promote creation of regional groups and promote more interactions with local curators to give more opportunities for networking and collaborations.
6. Promote the ISB microgrants to the research community by increased advertising through listservs and promotion at conferences. My group has applied for and received several ISB microgrants to host local meetings and as sponsorship for the previous two Force11 conferences. This seems like an underutilized source of funding and perhaps increased marketing would increase the number of applications.
7. Help create subcommittees amongst committee members and members of the ISB to address specific needs and tasks (such as those addressed above, or the recent metrics discussion on the listserv).
8. Help plan the upcoming ISB conference as I have extensive experience in conference planning, for example I served on previous conference program committees and was the program chair the Force2016 conference in Portland, OR.

Biosketch:

I have a Bachelor of Arts degree in Biology from Reed College. I received my PhD in Cell Biology from Oregon Health & Science University, where I studied protein-signaling pathways in a mouse cancer immunotherapy model. I joined the OHSU Library in 2010 to assist with biocuration and ontology development for the eagle-i Network (www.eagle-i.net). While working on this project, I realized my passion for biocuration, ontology development and promoting best practices for scientific research data management. After the completion of the eagle-i grant, I have worked on numerous other projects in the role of a biocurator, ontology developer, project manager and educator. I led a study that demonstrated that many research resources that are reported in the literature lack uniquely identifying information. As a follow up to this study, I helped lead the Resource Identification Initiative to promote use of unique research resource identifiers in the biomedical literature. I have done curation for the Biocreative V project, as well as performed curation for the Cancer Reproducibility Project. I currently perform biocuration for the CRAFT corpus and for phenotypes for animal and human diseases for the Monarch Initiative. Additionally, I assist with ontology development of the Mouse and Human Phenotype Ontologies, the Monarch Disease Ontology and the Cell Ontology. In addition to biocuration, I contribute to the development of Open Educational Resources on Data Science and teach skills courses as part of the BD2K Initiative.

Conflict of Interest:

I declare no conflict of interests with serving on the International for Biocuration Society Executive Board.