

Statement of Intent for the International Society for Biocuration Executive Committee

Candidate name: Nicole Vasilevsky

Candidate position: Research Assistant Professor, Lead Biocurator

Candidate affiliation: Oregon Health & Science University, Library

Motivation: I am applying for a position on the International Society for Biocuration (ISB) Executive Committee, with the goal of promoting the field, to help biocurators advance and support research in meaningful ways, and to improve the connectedness of the biocuration community to repositories, journals, policy makers, funders, and other communities. As a member of the ISB Executive Committee, I hope to bring my experience and passion for biocuration to the service of the membership, assist in improving the quality and value of resources available to ISB members such as generating more opportunities for connection and collaboration across our community, and working to increase the collection of biocuration training materials in number and quality. I am especially interested in increasing outreach efforts and promoting and integrating biocuration within the biomedical research community.

Experience: I have 7 years of experience as a professional biocurator and ontology developer and have been a member of the ISB since 2011. I have performed biocuration for numerous projects including the [eagle-i Network](#), the [Monarch Initiative](#), the [Resource Identification Initiative](#), the [Cancer Reproducibility Project](#), the [CRAFT Corpus](#), and [Biocreative V](#). I contribute to ontology development of the [Mammalian Phenotype Ontology](#), [Human Phenotype Ontology](#), the [Monarch Merged Disease Ontology](#), the [Cell Ontology](#) and the [Environmental Exposure Ontology](#). In addition, I participate in a variety of curation-related educational efforts, such as development of BD2K Open Educational Resources on biocuration; and teaching data science courses, where we introduce biocuration methods and promote the efforts of the ISB. In the past year, I co-led an effort to learn more about our biocuration community through a membership-wide survey, and am analyzing these results for dissemination at the next ISB conference. I have also volunteered my time to the new educational initiative for ISB. This included creating an [online portal](#) that collects biocuration training materials contributed by ISB members, in collaboration with members from the GOBLET and ELIXIR TeSS projects. I have extensive experience in conference planning and community organization: for example, I was the Program Chair for the [Force2016](#) conference in Portland, OR, and am currently the Co-Chair for the [Galaxy Community Conference/Bioinformatics Open Source Conference](#) in 2018.

What I will bring to the ISB Executive Committee: Our scientific community has identified a great need for increasing researcher's skills in biocuration, which will eventually translate into an increase in productivity, efficiency, and transparency in science. Some potential contributions are:

1. Make the ISB website a definitive source of information about biocuration and biocurators. This would include information such as an aggregated list of reading materials and supported resources and databases. These could be auto-populated from sources such as BioSharing, OBO Foundry, PubMed, etc. and linked to biocurator profile records. This would enable researchers to learn more about the field, to identify biocuration resources and expertise, 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, especially for biocuration projects, grant and paper reviews.
3. Continue to develop the biocuration and data science education portal on the website, and in collaboration with other ongoing education efforts such as GOBLET and ELIXIR TeSS .
4. Promote the field of biocuration to career development and degree program offices at universities and other scientific institutions. This can be partially achieved by sharing the results of our biocuration career survey with these offices.
5. Promote interactions amongst biocurators by encouraging regional meet-ups.
6. Promote the ISB microgrants to the research community by increased advertising through listservs and promotion at conferences.
7. Help create subcommittees amongst committee members and members of the ISB to address specific needs and tasks (such as those addressed above).
8. Help plan the ISB conferences and develop new innovative ideas to keep the conference fresh and effective at supporting our community and its connections to the scientific world at large.
9. Promote diversity and inclusion in the field of biocuration by enhancing ISB policies, considering target audiences in the context of the educational opportunities and connections, and in ISB microgrants, as well as outreach to new communities.

Biosketch:

I have a Bachelor of Arts degree in Biology from Reed College in Portland, Oregon. I received my PhD in Cell Biology from Oregon Health & Science University, in Portland, Oregon, where I studied protein-signaling pathways in a mouse cancer immunotherapy model. I joined the OHSU Library in 2010 as a Scientific Data Curator and Research Associate to assist with biocuration and ontology development for the eagle-i Network. In 2012, I joined the Monarch Initiative as a lead biocurator. I was promoted to Senior Research Associate/Lead Biocurator in 2015, and subsequently promoted to Research Assistant Professor in 2016. I routinely publish and give talks and poster presentations on our biocuration and ontology efforts, and perform peer review for relevant journals. I have served on several conference planning committees, including the International Conference on Biomedical Ontologies, Force11, and the Galaxy Community Conference. In addition to my position at OHSU, I am an adjunct Assistant Professor at the National University of Natural Medicine in Portland, Oregon, where I teach immunology and lead journal clubs.

Statement of Conflicts and Other Commitments:

I work for Melissa Haendel, who currently serves on the ISB Executive Committee. I am currently the Co-Chair for the Galaxy Community Conference/Bioinformatics Open Science Conference in 2018.