ISB Executive Committee Meeting
MInutes for 09 May 2019
Previous minutes: 08-April Link to previous minutes. All minutes in ISB Google Drive.
ISB-EC Calendar
Agenda (by N. Vasilevsky)

Attendees: Nicole, Mary Ann, Frederic, Sylvain, Andrew, Jane, Cookie
Regrets: Rama, Pete, Sandra

For discussion
1. **Follow up from ISB 2019 meeting - Cambridge (Sandra and Pete)**
   ○ Shared the slides/added to website
   ○ AI: prepare some kind of report - include this in June newsletter, do not write separate report
   ○ Sandra/Pete: Lessons Learned - *Nicole - will there be a post-conference survey sent out?*
   ○ Sandra asked workshop organizers to write up blog posts about their workshops
     ■ **AI:** Nicole: Cross post this blog post: http://gigasciencejournal.com/blog/biocuration-2019-cambridge/
   ○ New Diversity subcommittee:
     ■ Nicole - webpage: https://www.biocuration.org/equality-diversity-and-inclusion-committee/
     ■ Google folder: https://drive.google.com/drive/u/1/folders/1WuaYVmFcpdQEI70HD0jlM_pc35QlKkgu
     ■ Nicole - Sent out invitation for community members to join
       ● **AI: Nicole will schedule a meeting** - *in progress*
     ■ Can we budget some funds for this committee?
       ● Casey Greene tweeted about ISCB's diversity committee, advocated having a budget for the committee
       ● What will the budget be for? This should be discussed amongst the committee - **AI: add this to the future agenda for EDI comm.**
         ○ Microgrants
         ○ Outreach
         ○ Conferences that are attended by underrepresented committees
       ● Set initial budget of $1000
     ■ Action items for subcommittee:
       ● Create ISB code of conduct for all biocuration conferences
       ● Retrospective analysis of speaker demographics
       ● Respond to RFI - **due May 16**: https://nexus.od.nih.gov/all/2019/05/01/nih-wants-your-input-on-increasing-diversity-among-biomedical-research-faculty/

2. **PayPal/Membership issues -** Sylvain and Sandra
    - **Ivan E.** is having trouble paying for his membership, likely due to PayPal issues
        - Unsure what the issue is, may be payments from the US?
        - Cookie has been notifying folks with membership issues that we're having issues and working on it
            - Don't encourage them to keep trying, we should notify them when it is fixed
            - AI: Cookie: keep a list of people who are having issues and we will notify them
    - Budget - Sylvain

3. **PayPal issue: Report from Sylvain**

Background information on the PayPal account:

These last years, we forgot to inform the bank of a chair and treasurer handover, which is an absolute requirement. For some reason, the bank realized this recently and restricted our account access until we have cleared the situation.

These last two months, I have spent the equivalent of 2-3 working days to collect and send documents, contact the bank etc. In theory, the problem should have been solved rapidly since we always provided documents rapidly. Unfortunately, the process is extremely slow: the bank restricted the access without any notification but it then takes weeks to evaluate the every document we provide.
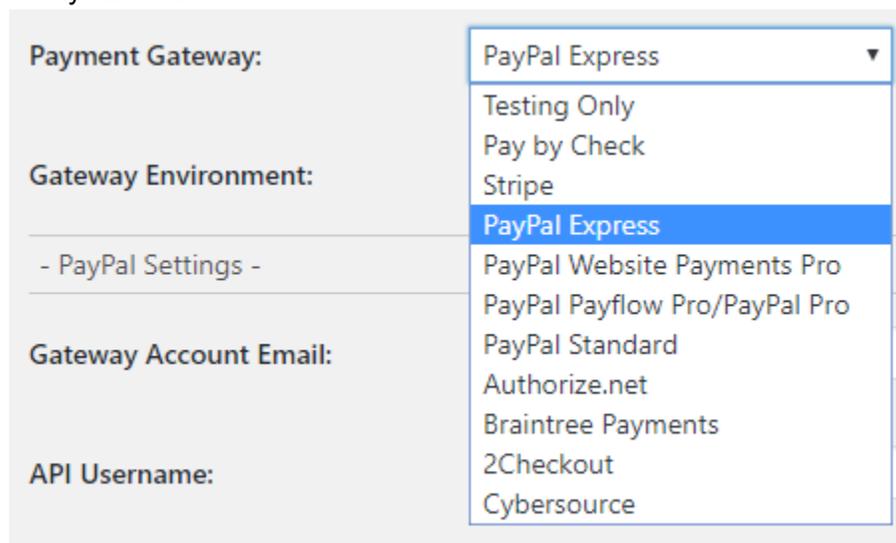
Current situation:

Two weeks ago, PayPal requested new documents (well, not really new documents since they did not reviewed documents properly and that part of documents were already sent before) and I sent all documents needed the 26th of April. Since then, documents are awaiting review. These last two weeks I had three long phone calls with PayPal assistance to speed up the process. Unfortunately, the people in charge of phone assistance cannot review documents. Following my last phone yesterday, they promised to review these documents by Thursday evening. I will call them again, if we have no access to the bank account tomorrow morning.

To summarize:

1) We depend on PayPal to relieve the restriction. It is really frustrating, but we have always made the maximum to solve the issue. We always provided document as soon as possible and the blocker is clearly PayPal. Yesterday, a PayPal phone assistant admitted that their compliance team is understaffed.

2) I cannot establish any budget for the moment, as long as we do not have access to the PayPal account. Fortunately, Sandra could advance money from the conference budget to pay travel fellowships. But she cannot use this money for expenses not related to the conference. For this reason, I have not voted to any proposition (lab exchange, BC2 conference fellowship), for the simple reason that I don't know when we will have access to the account.

3) I started writing documentation regarding the handover of chair and treasurer and ensure that all administrative points are done properly and that this embarrassing situation does not happen in the future.

As we provided all documents requested, I have good hopes that the situation should be cleared rapidly, but I am really frustrated by this situation.

- Note - the PayPal account is based in Switzerland - we could encounter this issue again in the future, especially if the EC members are not based in Switzerland
- Difficulty with transferring money to the US
- Should we consider moving the bank to the US in the future? Pros and cons to this
- Sylvain will write SOPs for transfer of treasurer/bank accounts
  - Hope that in the future that if we provide the proper documents in a timely manner that we won't run into this issue again
  - Need docs that prove the ISB address, Sylvain provided the tax form
  - **AI (Sylvain):** Add to Chair transition document: https://docs.google.com/document/d/19T7v1OO8J4S6T8EEFIB_uVi6TfYntWvrbc4eh29-8VU/edit
- Consider alternate payment methods? Options from PMPpro. Consider this if Sylvian can't get PayPal issues resolved.

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- Last payment was on 12 April
- Received many payments in early March

4. **Affiliated conferences - Frederic**
   - Will offer travel fellowships to BC2 in exchange for advertising - 2x500 Swiss francs fellowships. The successful applicants will be selected by the ISB EC. Applicants must be ISB members.
   - BC2 could not offer a discounted rate for ISB members since the registration process was already started.
   - The fellowships will be announced both by the ISB and the BC2 organizers
   - About advertising ISB, the BC2 organizers proposed:
     - to put the ISB logo + link on the general webpage of [BC]2 under

- ■ "Travel fellowships and support" (see https://www.basellife.org/2019/basel-life-structure/bc2/general.html)
            - ■ Tweets to thank ISB for the support and to announce the travel Fellowship
            - ■ announced in [BC]2 newsletter, the [BC]2 program and coffee slides and the conference mobile application
            - ■ In theory, it should also be in the general Basel Life programme, but this needs to be confirmed.
        - ○ *Nicole* - Should we add an "affiliated conferences tab" to the website? yes
        - ○ Frederic met with organizer - wrote text to display on BC2 website, need to ask Basel Life website to add text
        - ○ Timeline - applicants should apply by first week of June to BC2 organizers, will verify the applicants have submitted talk/poster proposals and the BC2 organizers will forward to ISB EC,
            - ■ We will have one week to review and decide on awardees
                - ● 2-3 reviewers (including Frederic)
        - ○ **AI:** Frederic will send text to add to ISB website - *done*
            - ■ Add text about membership issues - *done*
        - ○ Applicants must be ISB members
            - ■ If we are still having membership issues, we will still allow them to apply
  5. Membership issues- Cookie sends a list of members to Joanna at Database, there are several memberships expiring in May
        - ○ Will be an issue if people are trying to publish in Database
        - ○ There are some people (existing members and new members) who are trying to publish in Database
            - ■ For existing members, we can go in and note they are renewed
            - ■ We will give them a free pass if their membership hasn't renewed/been activated
  6. Jane will connect with Pistoia Alliance https://www.pistoiaalliance.org/, who are a non-profit co-ordinating pre-competitive projects for industry, mostly pharma.
        - ○ Chatted with them - they are keen to advertise at their events, they are happy to collaborate
            - ■ AI: Jane - ask them to advertise the 2020 conference
        - ○ **AI: Nicole:** Create new 'collaborations" tab under community - *done*
            - ■ Add something to our website that we collaborate with Pistoia Alliance
            - ■ BC2 exchange fellowship
  7. Jane proposal new membership fee structure for companies under a certain size:

Proposed membership rates from Jane:
Two rates - one for small companies under 250 people (similar to academic rate), or non profit, one for large companies.

SME (1-250 people) or non-profit
Large company (>250 people)

LEVEL PRICE

Principal Investigator - Academia   CHF 60.00
Biocurator, Developer, Bioinformatician - Academia   CHF 40.00

Biocurator, Developer, Bioinformatician - SME (1-250 people) or non-profit   CHF 40.00
Biocurator, Developer, Bioinformatician - Large company (>250 people) CHF 60.00
Senior Role - SME (1-250 people) or non-profit   CHF 80.00
Senior Role - Large company (>250 people)   CHF 100.00

Student CHF 20.00

Biocurator, Developer, Bioinformatician (Low and Lower-middle Income Country)   CHF 30.00
Principal Investigator (Low and Lower-middle Income Country)   CHF 40.00
Student (Low and Lower-middle Income Country)   CHF 15.00

Is this too complicated? Maybe, maybe not. :)
AI: Andrew: Add retirees to the student rate, and this new fee structure

8. **Database**
   - Coordinate with the to determine how to handle virtual issues
   - Papers are submitted to Database and for consideration for talks at the conference
     - Editorial staff has difficulty finding reviewers
   - Mike Cherry said we could handle virtual issues however we wanted, could move up the deadlines
   - Could we recruit the reviewers?
   - We should work with Mike prior to the 2020 conference
   - Need a liaison between conference and journal
   - How many papers were submitted - last year there were about 10-14 papers, this year there were 11 accepted (not sure how many submissions)
   - **AI:** Nicole: Tell Sue and Cindy - we should start advertising the Virtual Issue soon (like now!)
     - Conference organizing calendar: https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/1AFAne_mwT-lhRw-GjpaE9R5UsB7w61sqCgVLwv7ypFs/edit#gid=523897404
   - Papers got shorter speaking slots this year
     - On the one hand, they have a paper out, so they can just highlight their work
     - On the other hand, it was a lot of work to submit a paper, so they should get a longer talk
   - Criteria to accept paper into talk - should be novel and exciting

- ○ Should we come up with a policy?
- ○ We should discuss this further
- ○ **AI:** Nicole - send out summary of issues and we can think about it and discuss further at next call
- ○ Frederic talked to folks at the conference:
  - ■ Suggested that we need a paper about biocuration
    - ● 2018 paper: https://journals.plos.org/plosbiology/article?id=10.1371/journal.pbio.2002846
  - ■ Private company in Switzerland, when trying to sell their services, companies don't see the value of biocuration. Would be nice to have a paper that shows the impact - stats on impact of biocuration before and after
    - ● Paper that came out showing the impact of not having FAIR data (cost of 10 billion euros annually): https://publications.europa.eu/en/publication-detail/-/publication/d375368c-1a0a-11e9-8d04-01aa75ed71a1
    - ● We could write an opinion piece
    - ● EBI published a paper proving the value of EBI services

9. Frederic will take the lead - will schedule a call with himself, Nicole and Jane
   - ○ Nicole, Jane will help
   - ○ Need to find journal - pre-registered report (?), submit a plan
   - ○ Do we want a private company to perform the analysis
   - ○ Have a small subcommittee draft this, and then the EC can decide if they want to submit on behalf of the EC

10. **ISCB membership incentives (this was an email that went out from Nicole) - do we want to reuse any of these ideas?**
    - ○ They have a [membership incentive program], whereby current members are incentivized to recruit new members or encourage members to renew- and in doing so, they are offered prizes (the grand prize was all expenses paid to the conference: registration, flight and 4 nights hotel). She said this program has increased their membership by about 5% (with new and recurring members). We could discuss if this is something we are interested in potentially doing.
    - ○ They have a senior member designation program, she said they helps incentivize folks to renew, to maintain that status. The requirements are that they have been 10 years post-degree and a member for 5 consecutive years, then other members can endorse them to become "senior members". They have a special ribbon on their conference name tag and get any additional 10% conference registration (https://www.iscb.org/iscb-senior-member).
    - ○ They are starting a webinar series that includes research talks and trainings, and the content will be free to members. Perhaps this is something we may want to consider doing? Maybe invite members to present their work on webinars, and give members access to archived videos?

- ○ She said they have been collaborating with other groups (like Amer. Society for Human Genetics and Amer. Society for Plant Biology) to present at their conferences. They did a talk at ASHG on Big Data in the Cloud. I think someone brought up this idea in our outreach survey. Sounded like there could potentially be an opportunity for us to present a talk on behalf of the ISB at one of their meetings.

11. Updates/action items from subcommittees:
- ○ Training Committee (Nicole, Pete, Mary Ann)
- ○ Outreach and Communication (Nicole, Pete, Mary Ann, Sandra, Jane)
  - ■ [Draft Q3 newsletter](#)
    - ● Stats from Biocuration conf (Sandra, Pete)
    - ● Need workshop reports (Mary Ann/Nicole/Pete)
    - ● BC2 felllowship (Frederic)
    - ● Microgrant report (Andrew)
  - ■ Recruit another Outreach officer?
- ○ IT infrastructure (Andrew, Pete, Rama, Nicole)
  - ■ How to best maintain and update website?
  - ■ Add members list to website?
    - ● Website committee is supposed to investigate this - we would want to include their name and ORCID. We'd want to allow people to opt in when they renew their membership.
      - ○ Sandra will ask folks at EBI about this
  - ■ Mailing list and membership - there appears to be a disconnect where new members are not automatically told about the mailing list. We need to look into this and to make this an automatic or semi-automatic process.
- ○ Conference coordination committee (Sandra, Andrew, Jane)
  - ■ ISB 2020 meeting will be at Jax
    - ● Cindy Smith is contact person
  - ■ Australasia
    - ● Notification sent for call for 2021

REMINDERS:
- ○ Enter data with respect to conference / meeting attendance and populate the spreadsheet (do we add outreach/mentoring events here? Mary Ann)
- ○ Twitter- ping Pete about any communications that should go out via Twitter
- ○ Newsletter - send any newsletter content to Nicole and Mary Ann - Q2 newsletter to go out in June
- ○ Increasing awareness of the field of biocuration by promoting the field to career development offices at universities/degree programs.
  - ■ AI: Sandra will look and see if she can find a list of career offices - in progress
    https://www.agcas.org.uk/ in the UK
    There is an annual global summit conference (https://gcssummit.org/), contacting the organizers may be helpful (https://gcssummit.org/organising-team-2019/)

Report from Frederic: Will the global summit conference organizers allow us to promote ISB?

Draft email to send to career offices:
Hello!
We are contacting you from the International Society for Biocuration (ISB). We are aiming to promote the field of biocuration to the scientific community and hope that you would be able to share this information with any relevant parties at your institution.

Biocuration is defined as the extraction of knowledge from unstructured biological data into a structured, computable form. Biocurators come from many backgrounds including biologists, bioinformaticians, computer scientists, application developers, system administrators, etc. The ISB is a professional society that aims to promote our field and promote synergies and collaborations amongst biocurators.

We have a wealth of information on our website (https://www.biocuration.org/) about the field of biocuration, and would welcome any inquiries from students, scientists or people with other backgrounds who are looking to transition into this field.

In addition, the ISB community published a recent paper that describes more about the profession:
https://journals.plos.org/plosbiology/article?id=10.1371/journal.pbio.2002846

Please feel free to contact us should you have any questions.
Best,
ISB

12. Future agenda items, or FYI/no discussion needed
  - **N/A**