HIGHLIGHTS

InCoB2016 (Singapore), APBioNet ExCo Election Results and appointment of ExCo Members (2016 - 2018)

page 3-5

Establishment of Indonesian Association of Biodiversity and Bioinformatics

page 8

APBioNet Life Long Service Award: Shoba Ranganathan & Mark De Silva

page 11-12
APBIONET ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING, 2016
1. Secretary report
2. APBioNet ExCo Election Results (2016-2018)

INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON BIOINFORMATICS 2016 (InCoB2016)
3. Conference chairman report
4. InCoB2016 Travel Fellowship Awards
5. InCoB2016 Supplementary Publications with BioMed Central
6. Celebrating BIC’s 20th Anniversary Remembering The Journey

APBIONET ENDORSED ACTIVITIES
8. 2016 GOBLET Annual General Meeting
9. Establishment of Indonesian Association of Biodiversity and Bioinformatics (IABB)
10. Bioinformatics for Precision Medicine: the 7th National Conference on Bioinformatics and Systems Biology of China
11. Introductory Bioinformatics Workshop (IBW), South Africa

APBIONET LIFE LONG SERVICE AWARD
12. Shoba Ranganathan
13. Mark De Silva

Published by:
Asia-Pacific Bioinformatics Network Limited
10 Kent Ridge Drive (Eusoff Hall)
Email: sec@apbionet.org
website: www.apbionet.org
(C) Copyright reserved
ISSN 2424872X

We bid farewell to our outgoing President, Shoba Ranganathan who is retiring from APBioNet after 18 years of dedicated service and outstanding contributions to APBioNet in raising bioinformatics awareness, training, education, infrastructure, resources, and research in the Asia-Pacific region. Ranganathan will continue to support activities of APBioNet in her new role as a Board Member of the non-profit entity APBioNet Ptd. Ltd. which manages accounts and legal matters of APBioNet.

We welcome our new President, Christian Schönbach and Vice Presidents Paul Horton (Conferences), Ge Gao (Education) and Sissades Tongsima (Corporate). Other newly elected office bearers are Tsung Fei Khang (Treasurer) and Hu Hongli (Secretary). We wish them all the best in their efforts to steer APBioNet and serve its bioinformatics community.

APBioNet’s annual conference, the International Conference on Bioinformatics (InCoB) has been held annually since 2001 in different locations of the Asia-Pacific region. The most recent, 15th InCoB was held for the second time in Singapore, at Biopolis. The 16th InCoB will be held in Shenzen, China from September 20-22, 2017. Research papers accepted for oral presentations at the conference will be published in peer-reviewed journals, such as BMC Bioinformatics, BMC Genomics, BMC Systems Biology, BMC Medical Genomics, PeerJ and IEEE/ACM Transactions on Computational Biology and Bioinformatics (TCBB).

The APBioNet team looks forward to meeting you at InCoB 2017 in Shenzen.

Mohammad Asif Khan
Editor-in-Chief
It’s been a busy (and successful) year for APBioNet! Our past activities and future plans were heard by members during the APBioNet Annual General Meeting 2016 which took place in the midst of our yearly flagship conference, the 15th International Conference on Bioinformatics (InCoB), in the futuristic venue of Biopolis, Singapore. Shoba Ranganathan, president of APBioNet, started the AGM with a thank you to our hard-working Vice-Presidents for their efforts throughout the year and for being present in Singapore for the event.

She reminded us of the success of the last GIW/InCoB joint conference in Tokyo Japan in 2015 (see our last newsletter), which was no less successful than this year’s InCoB 2016, thanks to the accomplishments of Christian Schönbach (Vice President (Conference)), working together with the conference chair, Chandra Verma. This year the conference was hosted by Bioinformatics Institute (BII) and supported by Agency for Science, Technology and Research (A*STAR) A*STAR, Association for Medical and Bio Informatics Singapore (AMBIS) and International Society for Computational Biology (ISCB). Ranganathan reported that we had 155 participants and a total of 101 paper submissions. APBioNet also used its profits from the conference to award 9 travel grants to passionate, young bioinformaticians.

Vice-president (Corporate), Mohammad Asif Khan then spoke on behalf of the Secretariat which is led by Nurul Salwanie Che Wahid, our APBioNet Executive Officer, who has done phenomenal secretariat work this year. He told us that among other outstanding efforts, several APBioNet-joint workshops were organized, promotional materials were designed, and APBioNet now has an established presence on various social platforms. As a result, the secretariat generated enough revenue to support their efforts for the upcoming year.

Bruno Gaeta (Vice-President (Education)) then outlined APBioNet’s education activities which included participating in GOBLET’s AGM and organizing training and best-practices workshops in November. Ge Gao furthermore informed the audience of a new Bioinformatics MOOC course that is now available on Coursera. The course is the second bioinformatics MOOC course in the world and is the only fully bilingual MOOC course from China.

Our president then outlined exciting future plans for APBioNet, which includes a joint Asian ‘Super-Bioinformatics Conference’ and collaboration with the Singapore National Supercomputing Centre and ASEAN ASTRENA in efforts to promote bioinformatics applications over the TEIN network in ASEAN nations. This is important because many of the ASEAN countries have insufficient accessibility to the internet, related resources and training. This collaboration will serve as a platform for countries to share their experiences in bioinformatics to bring up the region as a whole.

The audience then heard the results of the Executive Committee Election for the year 2016 to 2018. It was with a heavy heart that we saw Shoba Ranganathan step down from the Presidency. Christian Schönbach was elected as the new President to lead the organisation forward and continue the legacy of APBioNet founders. He is an established scientist with prominent qualifications and vast experience in the field of big data. We also welcome our newly elected ExCo members, and place our trust that they will steer APBioNet in progressive directions.
The AGM continued with the financial report, and it is well worth noting that we are in the black, thanks to the excellent work of our former Treasurer Farhan Sjaugi and the Secretariat. Christian Schönbach then announced the news that next year’s InCoB will be held in China, hosted by Tsinghua University, in collaboration with the University of Technology Sydney (UTS).

The AGM ended with the presentation of the Travel Fellowship Awards and Meritorious Service Awards to well-deserving recipients. Ranganathan reminded the members that they play an important role in the organization, and to voice any proposals or suggestions for the improvement of APBioNet in the future. May I also remind you, dear reader, to send in any helpful thoughts or insights that you may have to the organization.

We hope to see you again at the next AGM in InCoB 2017, China!

**APBIOMET EXCO ELECTION RESULTS (2016-2018)**
by: Tan Tin Wee (NUS) Singapore

We are happy to announce the results of the APBioNet ExCo election for the period of 2016-2018, which were made public on the first day of InCoB, 21st September 2016, during the APBioNet Annual General Meeting. The ExCo election was a biannual event where ExCo members that will be responsible in the running of the organisation are selected through online and physical voting. The process starts with candidate nomination notification to all APBioNet members via its mailing list. A total of 18 candidate nominations were received both from existing ExCo members and new nominations. The online voting system that started on the 24th of August concluded on the 7th of September. This was followed by physical voting during the registration day of the conference.

After tabulating both e-votes and physical votes, 12 candidates were elected as ExCo Members. Office bearers were then appointed during the first meeting of the ExCo members, organised on the same day. The list of elected ExCo members and the appointed office bearers is as follows. We wish the new Office Bearers a succesful term.

**ExCo Members**
Mohammad Asif Khan, Perdana University, (Malaysia)  
Bruno Gaeta, University of New South Wales, (Australia)  
Nik Elena Nik Mohamed, Perdana University, (Malaysia)  
Muhammad Farhan Sjaugi, Perdana University, (Malaysia)  
Kenta Nakai, University of Tokyo, (Japan)  
Durai Sundar, Indian Institute of Technology, (India)
InCoB 2016 was held in Singapore during the week of Sept 21-23, 2016. This was the second time the conference returned to Singapore, and was hosted again by the Bioinformatics Institute and this time the theme was generally on the role of bioinformatics in translational/clinical and precision medicine. The conference drew 155 attendees from 20 countries covering the globe, a small increase of 2 for the number of countries represented since the last meeting held in Japan; while the increase was small, nevertheless it points towards a greater recognition of the meeting; the largest contingent was from Singapore (16%).

The conference was feted by 5 keynote speakers including, Tom Blundell, Shoba Ranganathan, Barak Cohen, Mihaela Zavolan and Vanessa Hayes who covered areas from characterization of clinically important and relevant features such as genomic variations in cancer, cis-regulation and small RNA targets in gene regulatory networks, the emergence of resistance and the characterization of the human proteome, underscoring the theme of this meeting, which was on translational and clinical aspects.

Tan Tin Wee ended the proceedings with an introduction to a supercomputing effort he heads in Singapore which aims to herald the large scale efforts and computing that will be needed to process the huge volumes of data that are emerging and will emerge in the quest for precision medicine. The conference was divided into four intensive tracks that covered a total of 78 talks covering a wide range of subjects; areas included Ontology and text mining, Bioimaging, Disease Informatics, Sequencing & Sequence analysis, NGS Informatics, Structural Bioinformatics and Systems Biology.

The conference proceedings resulted in the publication of several papers in BMC Genomics (15 papers), BMC Medical Genomics (6 papers), BMC Systems Biology (6 papers), BMC Bioinformatics (17 papers) the Journal of Bioinformatics and Computational Biology (3 papers) and two in PeerJ. Day 1 also witnessed 3 excellent workshops on the Garuda platform which explored connectivity in biology and medicine (by Vipul Gupta and Nikos Tsorman), an introduction to transcriptomics and cancer (by Jonathan Goke, Anders Skanderup and Yu Guo) and Decoding causative mutations: finding SNPPs in a sea of sequenced data (by Lloyd Low and Kenneth Ban), which were all well received. In summary, another very successful and well received InCoB was completed, thus testimony to the excellent efforts of the InCoB team.
On behalf of the conference committee, we thank APBioNet and conference sponsors including Centre for Bioimaging Sciences NUS), Duke-NUS, Biomedical Research Council of A*STAR, the ETC (A*STAR), GIS (A*STAR), p53 laboratory (A*STAR), IMB (A*STAR) and BII (A*STAR) for indispensable organizational and financial support; and the many volunteers and staff of whom without their tireless efforts would not have made this possible; in particular Shoba Ranganathan, Hu YongLi, Christian Schönbach, Tin Wee Tan, Limsoon Wong, Mohammad Asif Khan and Nurul Salwanie.

Many thanks are due to the people who gave up their time and volunteered to give the workshops and we are particularly indebted to the Garuda team and GIS.

During the closing ceremony of InCoB2016, eight recipients were awarded with the InCoB2016 Travel Fellowship. Each recipient was selected from their applications submitted to the InCoB2016 Programme Committee. A total of USD3,500 allocated from ISCB and APBioNet Travel Fellowship Fund was awarded.

An ISCB representative, Bruno Gaeta was also present during the ceremony. The Travel Fellowship Awardees included: Snehal Dilip Karpe (India), Ting-Wen Chen (Taiwan), Vaishali Parag Waman (India), Praveen Kumar (India), Ruban Durairaj. D (India), Onkar Singh (India), Neha Bhawardj (India), Abhishek Subramanian (India) and Chaowang Lan (Australia).
BECOME AN APBioNet MEMBER TODAY!

APBioNet MEMBER BENEFITS:
visit www.apbionet.org to know more

TRAVEL FELLOWSHIPS
Eligibility to apply for APBioNet and ISCB Travel Fellowships

DISCOUNTS
- Discounts to attend APBioNet conferences, workshops and other events
- Discounts on APBioNet merchandise and publications

MAILING LIST
Notification and regular updates on APBioNet activities, as well as attractive offers and opportunities for participation in select activities of interest

COMMUNITY OUTREACH
Eligibility to represent APBioNet at key meetings, AGM and events as official delegates

APBioNet
Advancing Bioinformatics and Allied Disciplines in the Asia-Pacific Region
The paper submission for InCoB 2016 opened in January. Authors had a choice of six journals: BMC Genomics, BMC Bioinformatics, BMC Systems Biology, BMC Medical Genomics, PeerJ, or Journal of Bioinformatics and Computational Biology (JBCB). Of 101 submitted manuscripts, 49 (48.5%) were accepted in revised form after peer review by at least two members of the Program Committee or external reviewers chosen by journal editors (in case of PeerJ and JBCB). Forty-four accepted manuscripts are published in the InCoB2016 supplements of BMC Medical Genomics (6), BMC Systems Biology (6), BMC Genomics (15), BMC Bioinformatics (17) issues, two in PeerJ and three in JBCB. The authors of four manuscripts with top reviewers' scores were selected for Best Paper awards.

The following were the winners for the Best Paper Awards:

**BMC GENOMICS**

Hou M, Tian F, Jiang S, Kong L, Yang D, Gao G.

**BMC MEDICAL GENOMICS**

Goh WWB.
Fuzzy-FishNET: A highly reproducible protein complex-based approach for feature selection in comparative proteomics.

**BMC MEDICAL BIOINFORMATICS**

Ezzat A, Wu M, Li XL, Kwoh CK.
Drug-target interaction prediction via class imbalance-aware ensemble learning.

**BMC SYSTEMS BIOLOGY**

Lee M, Lee HJ.
InCoB 2017
The 16th International Conference on Bioinformatics
September 20 to 22, 2017
The Graduate School at Shenzhen, Tsinghua University, China
http://datamining-web.it.uts.edu.au/bioinformatics

Conference chairs
Jinyan Li, University of Technology Sydney, Australia
Lan Ma, Graduate School at Shenzhen, Tsinghua University, China

Program committee chairs
Christian Schönbach, Kumamoto University, Japan
Siu-Ming Yiu, University of Hong Kong, China
Tatsuya Akutsu, Kyoto University, Japan
Paul Horton, Artificial Intelligence Research Center, AIST, Japan

Important dates
Full paper submission: April 20, 2017
Student and Early Career Travel Fellowship applications: May 20, 2017
Initial acceptance notification of full paper submission: June 20, 2017
Demonstration, Highlight and Poster Abstract submission: June 20, 2017
Acceptance of final full paper and abstracts of posters, demos and highlights: June 20, 2017
Early-bird registration: June 30, 2017

Journals for accepted papers

Keynote speakers
Saman Halgamuge, The Australian National University, Australia
Jianzhu Chen, Massachusetts Institute of Technology, USA
Alfonso Valencia, Spanish National Cancer Research Centre (CNIO), Spain
Mindy Shi, University of North Carolina at Charlotte, USA
Xiujie Wang, Chinese Academy of Sciences, China
Yong Hou, BGI-research, BGI-Shenzhen, China
The 15th International Conference on Bioinformatics (InCoB) held in Biopolis, Singapore witnessed the 20th anniversary celebration of the region’s first Bioinformatics Center (BIC), established at the National University of Singapore (NUS) in 1995 by Tin Wee Tan. A year later in September 1996, BIC was officially launched with Tin Wee Tan appointed as the Founding Director. The idea behind the Centre was triggered by the rise of biological databases on the Internet, for access by the public. In the first three years of its establishment, BIC received funding of $6Mil from the Economic Development Board (EDB) of Singapore and an additional fund of $3Mil from Glaxo Wellcome. Working closely with Subbiah Subramanian, BIC grant was formulated to finance the research, education and service activities of the Centre for nearly a decade. Singapore’s first website was a biological database set up by Tin Wee, and this further strengthened the Centre’s role as the region’s first bioinformatics center.

Since then, BIC hired more principal investigators (PIs) into the team, and drastically expanded its activities. Scientists like Limsoon Wong, Christian Schönbach, Meena Kishore, Prasanna Kolatkar, Vladimir Brusic and Betty Cheng were among the pioneer PIs. The late John Wooley and Chris Sander were linked to the Center as Scientific Advisory Board Members. Without Subbiah and the backing of John, there would not have been BIC. The Centre also witnessed few PhD students such as Meena Sakharkar and P. Kanguane, who successfully completed their doctorate at the time. The technical team comprising of Mark De Silva and Kuang Siong Lim were instrumental in supporting the Centre. The various many workshops organized by the Centre led to the discussion of setting up an Asia-Pacific bioinformatics community. Later in 1998, during the Pacific Symposium of Biocomputing, Asia-Pacific Bioinformatics Network (APBioNet) was established, with Tin Wee Tan as the Founding Convenor and Subbiah Subramanian became its Founding President, and Shoba Ranganathan served as Vice President. Since then, APBioNet has come a long way in its mission of promoting bioinformatics in the region.
One of the many achievements of APBioNet is the S-Star (S*) programme, a MOOC like education platform before its time and was a collaborative effort involving six institutions from five continents, namely the Karolinska Institutet in Sweden, the National University of Singapore, Stanford University in the United States, Uppsala University in Sweden, the University of Sydney Australia, and the University of the Western Cape in South Africa.

In 2002, two years after Shoba Ranganathan joined BIC, she took over as the second President of APBioNet and brought it to greater heights. The Centre now hosted more post graduate students such as Edula Goutham, Kunde R Govindarajan, Anita Suresh, Lawrence Wee, Tong Joo Chuan, Paul Tan Thiam Joo, Kong Lesheng, Justin Choo Kar Heng, Vivek Gopalan, and many more. Recognizing the great need for a bioinformatics conference, Ranganathan and Tan, with the funding support of BIC, shepherded the birth of the first International Conference of Bioinformatics (InCoB) in 2002, held in Bangkok.

InCoB was then adopted as the flagship conference of APBioNet and is now in its 16th consecutive year running, held in Shenzhen, China this year. BIC was also influential in the establishment of private limited companies in Singapore, namely Bioinformatrix Pte Ltd and KooPrime Pte Ltd. BIC has played the main role in underpinning and supporting APBioNet and InCoB, and all its international activities, such as S* Alliance at a time where no other national bioinformatics centre shouldered the effort to promote bioinformatics in the region. This largely led to APBioNet’s systematic approach in its coverage of research, Internet networking, conference, training, hands-on workshops, online courses, and software tools, among others.

At the closing of InCoB 2016, Tin Wee Tan announced his retirement as Founding Convenor and Secretariat of APBioNet. He shepherded the formation of APBioNet from before its inauguration in Jan 1998, gotten its endorsement at Asia-Pacific Advanced Network (APAN) and Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC), linked it with ASEAN Committee on Science and Technology (COST), plus $100K funding from NUS at its early stages, underpinned it with BIC resources, served faithfully under two Presidents, ran all the APBioNet Elections as Election officer and Secretariat, worked to incorporate APBioNet Ltd and served as nominee director from its incorporation at the request of the ExCo, and many more contributions. Last InCoB also saw Shoba Ranganathan stepping down as the President of APBioNet. Both had worked hard to effect a succession plan and have handed the reins to the newly elected ExCo leaders to sustainably bring APBioNet forward.

On behalf of APBioNet members, we extend our heartiest congratulations to BIC for completing 20 glorious years of success, and our gratitude to the founding members and the pioneering team. The bioinformatics community has gained and grew a lot due to its vision and dedication.

We wish BIC all the success for many more years to come!
The 2016 Annual General Meeting of the Global Organisation for Bioinformatics Learning Education and Training (GOBLET) took place from the 7th to the 9th of November in Brisbane, Australia. The AGM followed the annual conference of the Australian Bioinformatics and Computational Biology Society (ABACBS), and was preceded by two days of workshops in best practices in bioinformatics training.

The meeting took place on the grounds of the Queensland University of Technology next to the Brisbane Botanic Gardens and city centre, and was attended by representatives from Europe and the Americas, as well as several Australians. Several other representatives participated via video link. APBioNet was represented by Bruno Gaeta (2014-2016 Vice-President Education).

The election results for new GOBLET officers were also announced and the new committee started organising themselves.

The new team as well as the updated vision and mission statements for GOBLET will be announced shortly on the GOBLET website (www.mygoblet.org). As a Gold member, APBioNet has the potential to shape the future of GOBLET and to leverage its collective expertise in bioinformatics training to further APBioNet’s mission.

Thanks to the efforts of the local organiser Annette McGrath from CSIRO/Data61, the meeting ran seamlessly, with plenty of time for reflection on the progress of GOBLET since its inception, and fruitful discussions about the objectives of the society over the coming year.

This is dependent on APBioNet’s members getting involved in GOBLET, which provides a great environment for bioinformatics trainers and educators to network, share expertise and support each other’s efforts.
On 10th of May 2016, APBioNet witnessed the establishment of the Indonesian Society for Bioinformatics and Biodiversity (ISBB). This was in conjunction with the 3rd Workshop on Bioinformatics and Computational Biology (BioCompBio), held at Universitas Padjadjaran, Bandung, Indonesia from the 9th to the 12 May, 2016. The event was attended by local representatives from the Universitas Padjadjaran (UNPAD), Swiss German University (SGU), University of Indonesia (UI), Indonesia Institute for Statistics (IIS), PT. Smart Tbk (industry representative), and workshop participants, who hailed from different parts of the country.

Kholis Abdurachim Audah has been elected as the founding President of the society, to help lead and establish long-term strategies and plans for a strong footing. Mohammad Asif Khan, the Vice President (Corporate) of APBioNet and the Director of Perdana University Centre for Bioinformatics (PU-CBi), who has been invited as a speaker for the workshop since its inception in 2014, was instrumental in realising the establishment of the society, by working closely with the organizers of the workshop, who are active in promoting bioinformatics in the country, namely Kholis Abdurachim Audah of SGU, Bimo Tejo (an APBioNet ExCo Observer), then of Surya University, now with UCSI, Malaysia, Setia Pramana of IIS, and Dwi Agustian of UNPAD.

Their collective efforts paved the way for this landmark milestone, the establishment of a national society for bioinformatics. The mission of the society is two-fold, to promote bioinformatics in the country and advance scientific understanding of the local biodiversity through various platforms and activities, such as research collaborations and networking through workshops and conferences, among others. The society is particularly interested in bidding for the next International Conference on Bioinformatics (InCoB), APBioNet’s flagship conference.

APBioNet wishes Kholis Audah all the best in spearheading ISBB’s mission and looks forward to working closely with him to support the society.
From the 7th to the 9th of October, 2016, the 7th National Conference on Bioinformatics & System Biology (NCBSB), along with the International Workshop on Advanced Bioinformatics & Precision Medicine, was held in Chengdu, China. 1000+ professionals and graduate students from all over the country and also several US universities joined the biannual event.

In past decades, the conference aimed to provide a nation-wide, interdisciplinary forum to bring scientists from life sciences, computer science, mathematics, statistics and related fields together, to communicate latest developments in bioinformatics and omics.

Building on its past successes, the 7th NCBSB assembled strong scientific program with 16 invited plenary talks, 30 invited session talks, 43 contributed talks, as well as 94 poster presentations, covering broad subjects from the structure and function of protein and other biological macromolecules, identification and functional analysis of non-coding RNAs, to the development and application of sequencing technology in the era of big data.

A total of 16 leading Chinese scientists were invited to give 30-minute plenary talks, including both local researchers Bolin Hao (Fudan University, Academician of the Chinese Academy of Science), Runsheng Chen (the Institute of Biophysics, Academician of the Chinese Academy of Science), Chao Tang (Peking University), Jingdong Han (Shanghai Institute of Biological Sciences), Xie Wei (Tsinghua University), and international scholars: Bin Ren (University of California, San Diego), Ying Xu (University of Georgia), Hao Li (University California, San Francisco), Wei Li (Baylor College of Medicine), Jiashun Zheng (University California, San Francisco), Sheng Zhong (University of California, San Diego), Michael Q. Zhang (University of Texas, Dallas and Tsinghua University), Xiaole Shirley Liu (Harvard University and Tongji University), Zhiping Weng (University of Massachusetts Medical School), Kun Huang (Ohio State University) and Ting Wang (Washington University in St. Louis).

Meanwhile, a total of 73 talks were given in the invited and contributed sessions on seven major topics: (1) Structure and function of protein and other biological macromolecules, (2) Systems biology of complex biological process and complex diseases, (3) Identification and functional analysis of non-coding RNAs, (4) Transcriptional regulation and epigenomic modification, (5) New concepts, ideas and trends in bioinformatics, (6) Modeling and functional analysis of biological networks and systems and (7) Sequencing applications in the big data era.
Nearly 100 posters were displayed. The freedom of discussion and the flexibility of time made it a good opportunity for interaction and exchange of ideas from different researchers.

The conference was organized by Chinese Society for Cell Biology (CSCB) and National Natural Science Foundation of China (NSFC), hosted by the University of Electronic Science and Technology of China (UESTC). Runsheng Chen of Institute of Biophysics, Chinese Academy of Sciences (CAS) was the organizing chair of the conference, and Zhirong Sun of Tsinghua University was the general secretary. Feng-Biao Guo and Jian Huang of UESTC led the local organization team.

Introductory Bioinformatics Workshop, South Africa
by: Nurul Salwanie Che Wahid (Perdana University), Malaysia

The 5th of September marked a milestone for Perdana University and APBioNet Secretariat in their efforts to reach out to the international community. APBioNet VP Corporate, Mohammad Asif Khan was invited to organise a 6-day workshop on Introductory Bioinformatics Workshop in North West University, South Africa. The workshop received participation and positive feedback from 22 students of various academic backgrounds.

The workshop covered various essential topics such as biological databases and bioinformatics tools, sequence comparison including biological pattern/profile search, molecular phylogeny and 3D structure visualisation and homology modelling, with hands-on practicals on the theories and concepts covered. This workshop has recently been completed in Universitas Yarsi, Indonesia in March 2017 and will soon be organised in Universiti Sains Malaysia (Malaysia), July 2017.

Mohammad Asif Khan with participants after completion of the workshop

1 MOE Key Laboratory of Bioinformatics, State Key Laboratory of Biomembrane and Membrane Biotechnology, School of Life Sciences, Tsinghua University;

2 State Key Laboratory of Protein and Plant Gene Research, College of Life Sciences, Center for Bioinformatics, Peking University, Beijing, China.
2016 marks the first year that Asia-Pacific Bioinformatics Network (APBioNet) honors one of its members with the Life Long Service Award. This award recognizes an APBioNet Executive member who has made unique and lasting contributions to APBioNet through exemplary leadership, education, service, or a combination of these elements. This year, APBioNet (www.apbionet.org) honors its outgoing President for her devoted contribution and dedication during the establishment and running of Asia-Pacific Bioinformatics Network.

Her affiliation with APBioNet has been a long affair, started 19 years ago when the founders for the organisation, Subramanian Subbiah, Tan Tin Wee and fellow APBioNet executive committee members led by her assisted in organizing InCoB2002 (the International Conference on Bioinformatics, 2002) at Bangkok, Thailand. They then adopted this meeting as their annual conference. Subsequent conferences was followed in Penang, Malaysia (2003); Auckland, New Zealand (2004) and Busan, South Korea (2005).

One of her close colleagues, Tan Tin Wee, noted that “Her sterling leadership, powerhouse of ideas and energy, and incredible drive has seen the realisation of APBioNet’s mission to be the driving force for advancing Bioinformatics in the Asia Pacific. Without Shoba, there would be no InCoB conference. She persuaded the Thais to pioneer the first conference and thereafter kept it going till today. Her stamina and perseverance is still phenomenal. I look forward to new things and initiatives which she will champion in the future”.

Since then, the organisation had witnessed several key benchmark, namely, the publication of InCoB’s supplementary issues with BioMed Central, the first jointly organised conferences such as between ISCB-APBioNet in InCoB2011, Malaysia and GIW-InCoB 2015 in Japan. She also brought InCoB to Australia for the first time in 2014, and the conference had successfully brought over 200 participants and over 100 submissions.

Her passion and determination will continue to inspire and motivate APBioNet members. Her vision and hope for future bioinformaticians was clear when she said during InCoB2016 in Singapore “We should not be scared, we should remember our very first scientific lesson, which I still do, as a Bachelor’s student on precision and accuracy. Consensus does not mean we are accurate. Please do not restrain yourself to simple ideas. Pursue your dreams, because your intuition works”.

Tan Tin Wee
The other awardee of the Life Long Service Award is Mark De Silva. Mark has been the Senior Technical Consultant for APBioNet for the last 19 years, ever since its inception in 1998. Together under the direction of the Executive members, Mark has been the go-to guy when it comes to providing IT, networking, programming and security support on a part-time basis and for all conferences and meetings, such as the International Conference on BioInformatics (InCoB) and The Biological General Repository for Interaction Datasets (BioGRID).

Silva’s contribution to APBioNet was noted fondly by its founders, Tan Tin Wee. “Without Mark, there would be no APBioNet website or any other related online services. The most current services have his imprint, or they were derived directly from his early efforts. His IT legacy for APBioNet, InCoB, Bioslax, bioinformatics training courses and more, are legendary. I most certainly cannot have come so far without an IT giant and guru like Mark holding me up technically for the past twenty years”

We thank him for his outstanding commitment to the organisation.

MARK YOUR CALENDAR

InCoB 2017
The 16th International Conference on Bioinformatics
September 20 to 22, 2017
EDITORIAL BOARD

EDITORIAL ADVISOR

Christian Schönbach (PhD, UT, DE)
Chandra Verma (PhD, York, UK)
Tan Tin Wee (PhD, Edin, UK)
Shoba Ranganathan (PhD, IIT, IN)
Ge Gao (PhD, PKU, CN)
Bruno Gaeta (PhD, UNSW, AU)

EDITORIAL STAFF

Mohammad Asif Khan (PhD, NUS, SG)
Editor-in-Chief
Nurul Salwanie Che Wahid (BSc, UKM, MY)
Managing Editor
Nik Elena Nik Mohamed (MForSc, UWA, AU)
Assistant Editor

ApBioNet Newsletter
Advancing Bioinformatics and Allied Disciplines in the Asia-Pacific Region
At Repositive, we make finding and accessing human genomic data easier. This saves researchers time and money and allows more resources to be spent on creating better research.

Browse over 1,087,000 datasets
From 35 global sources

Filter & Discuss & Access

View all public collections
- Microbiome
- Methylation
- Expression
- Chinese Control
& many more

Find out more
www.repositive.io
Data Science is an interdisciplinary field that uses a combination of approaches to extract knowledge or insights from data. It is an exciting field with tremendous opportunities to improve the quality of life for people across the world. Towards this, Perdana University School of Data Sciences (PU-SDS) has launched a Data Sciences eXchange Initiative (DSXi) with the objective of raising awareness of the field among the public, especially the younger generation to prepare them for the opportunities ahead.

FEATURES
Discover Data Science eXchange Initiatives (DSXi) activities year-round, in Malaysia and beyond

PUBLIC LECTURE SERIES
ROADSHOWS
DATA SCIENCE CARNIVAL

Data Science is an interdisciplinary field that uses a combination of approaches to extract knowledge or insights from data. It is an exciting field with tremendous opportunities to improve the quality of life for people across the world. Towards this, Perdana University School of Data Sciences (PU-SDS) has launched a Data Sciences eXchange Initiative (DSXi) with the objective of raising awareness of the field among the public, especially the younger generation to prepare them for the opportunities ahead.

ORGANIZED BY

Perdana University, Block B and D (Level 1), MAEPS Building, MARDI Building, Jalan MAEPS Perdana, 43400, Serdang, Selangor, Malaysia
Tel: +603-8941 8646 (ext:145)
Fax: +603-8941 7661

dsxi.perdanauniversity.edu.my
pu.sds@perdanauniversity.edu.my
facebook.com/PUSDSci