

Report of EMAGE Advisory Board

MRC Human Genetics Unit, Edinburgh, UK
15th December, 2009

Advisory Board members present:

Dr. David Wilkinson – National Institute for Medical Research, UK (Chair)
Dr. Alvis Brazma – European Bioinformatics Institute, UK
Dr. Janan Eppig - Mouse Genome Informatics, USA
Dr. Graham Kemp – Chalmers University of Technology, Sweden
Dr. Martin Ringwald – GXD Database, Mouse Genome Informatics, USA
Prof. Claudio Stern – University College London, UK

Apologies

Dr. Suzanna Lewis – Berkeley, USA
Dr. Sarah Wedden – MRCT, UK

The Advisory Board was impressed by the progress that has been made in the past year, which includes a significant increase in number of gene expression patterns in the database, improvements to the layout and user-friendliness of the website, and further capabilities that have been developed for data input and analysis. We are pleased that the project has made changes and met the targets that were recommended following the 2008 Advisory Board meeting.

Recommendations

1. We agree with the overall plans for 2010 that are presented in detail in the EMAGE report for 2009.
2. The completion of data input from Eurexpress, which is planned to occur early in 2010, is a major priority.
3. The EMAGE database should continue to focus on its major strengths by carrying out the planned further 3D mapping of data from Eurexpress.
4. Efforts to automate data entry should continue, taking into account that these must not compromise the quality of the data.
5. The EMAP database is less well developed than EMAGE. The purpose of each, and the relationships between them, are not entirely transparent to external users. It is important to increase the integration of these closely related databases.
6. In the longer term, EMAGE will need to incorporate other types of data, such as gene regulatory networks, in order to maximise its capabilities and value. It is important to anticipate these needs and ensure that the database is designed to be capable of incorporating such data.
7. It is important to expand the links to other databases, make EMAGE more obviously relevant to human health and other topics of interest to the wider community. This includes links to gene knockout databases.
8. The efforts to increase awareness of EMAGE by the wider scientific community should continue to be an important priority. These include further workshops, and when appropriate to give presentations at conferences of the scientific use of the database.
9. The EMAGE project will need to grow beyond what is currently funded by MRC core support. It is important that external funding is obtained to facilitate such growth.