

Consortium Steering Committee Meeting
Monday, December 14, 2020
4:00 pm to 5:00 pm
Zoom

Committee Attendees: Adam Berger, Stephen Burley, Karla Ewalt, Shridar Ganesan, Yibin Kang, Anita Kinney, Michael Levine, Edmund Lattime, Benjamin Raphael, Linda Tanzer, Eileen White

Administration Attendee: Gina Londino-Greenberg

1. Advancing genomics collaborations across the consortium (White)

- Previous collaborations have been successful, especially with a recent P01.
 - o Following that model, the expertise in Computational Genomics should be leveraged to build synergy for research and grants.

- Past Cancer Genomics retreats have been successful.
 - o Pilot funding opportunities were linked to the retreats.

- A T32 grant application in Genomics was proposed as a way of bringing the collaboration to the next level.
 - o There was agreement that with the right central theme, this application could be very competitive.
 - o Training opportunities need to be in place, similar to what there was available for the one focused on cancer metabolism.
 - o If preparations are done in this upcoming semester, then a T32 application could be submitted in September 2021.
 - o Potential themes for this T32 included Immunology and Computational Biology.

- The Computational Biologists should be brought together to interact regularly.
 - o Pilot awards have been a great mechanism to get the Computational Biologists to meet regularly. The De/Raphael collaboration is an example.
 - o The areas of Spatial Genomics and Single Cell Genomics could be considered for pilot awards/collaborative work.
 - o A monthly or quarterly meeting of the Computational Biologists could be useful.
 - o The “methods developers” need to be linked to the “data generators” at Rutgers Cancer Institute.
 - o Princeton University researchers would like to collaborate locally, and so the genomics data that will entice these collaborations needs to be identified.

- Single Cell Sequencing requires methods development and data sets.
 - o Rutgers Cancer Institute has access to large data sets.
 - o The ITCR program has supported grants for several Computational Biologists, including De and Raphael.

- The Lewis-Sigler Institute has several new faculty who are doing work in the area of Single Cell Genomics: Britt Adamson, Michelle Chan, and Yuri Pritykin.
 - Adamson is already involved in Rutgers Cancer Institute's DNA Repair Working Group and received a NIA.
 - Chan just arrived. Pritykin will arrive early next year. Levine can connect them with Rutgers Cancer Institute to have them become Research Program members and collaborators.

- Rutgers Cancer Institute recently joined the New York Genome Center (NYGC).
 - There is now the question of how to best use their resources. The ways to build collaborations are still being explored.
 - Lewis-Sigler Institute is a member of NYGC, though it is uncertain for how much longer that will be. Interaction with NYGC has steadily decreased and if the faculty do not collaborate, the membership might be allowed to lapse.

- The Systems Biology meetings at Rutgers Cancer Institute should be opened up to the Princeton University members to get the trainees to communicate with each other.
 - Having to offer scientific meetings virtually has helped to promote meeting participation.
 - Ganesan and Raphael, with Hossein Khiabani and Subhajyoti De, can lead the efforts to build up participation in this meeting series.

- The question was raised of how to connect with the researchers doing sequencing.
 - The suggestion was made to offer focused pilot awards to generate specific needed data sets.
 - The generated data sets could then be made available to the new working group being started.
 - It is also necessary to inform Princeton University researchers about data sets currently available from Rutgers Cancer Institute.
 - Inventory must be taken of all of the sets of sequencing data available.
 - This project could begin with a focus on a few especially interesting data sets.
 - It was noted that Rutgers Cancer Institute would need to think carefully about how to word future use of data during the consenting process.

- The new enhanced Systems Biology meeting series should begin with presentations by those already utilizing data sets.
 - Data sets could be from human patients or mouse models

- Efforts should be made to generate data to be shared with this working group.
- The IQB should also be engaged in this new working group.
- Levine can provide other contacts at Princeton University who are engaged in Physical Chemistry, such as Phase Separation.
 - Jean Baum was named as a potential Rutgers University contact for Phase Separation research.
 - Levine will coordinate a small virtual meeting, and will ask White and Burley for invitees from Rutgers University.

2. Report on 2020 Annual Cancer Research Joint Symposium (Lattime)

- Participants to this event gave very positive feedback on the evaluation surveys, with the feedback being uniformly outstanding.
- The event was successful, with approximately 230 participants (35 from Princeton University, and the rest from Rutgers University).
- The hope is that the next symposium will be in person.
 - Similar in-person events have had poster sessions that generated much discussion.
 - It is anticipated that feedback will be even more positive for an in-person meeting.
- The next symposium is being tentatively planned for Fall 2021.
- It was noted that a consistent name should be identified for this event, and it should be called a symposium, so as to distinguish from the Annual Retreat on Cancer Research in New Jersey

3. Discussion of Consortium-related Strategic Plan components (Tanzer/Londino-Greenberg)

- Londino-Greenberg presented on the development and finalization process for Rutgers Cancer Institute's new 2021-2025 Strategic Plan.
- An overview of the new Strategic Plan's Mission, Vision, and components was provided, with emphasis on those relevant to the Consortium.