Bioc Technical Advisory Board Minutes
6 August 2020

Attending: Charlotte Soneson, Martin Morgan, Michael Love, Vincent Carey, Shila Ghazanfar, Rafael Irizarry, Wolfgang Huber, Aaron Lun, Laurent Gatto, Stephanie Hicks, Aedin Culhane, Hector Corrada Bravo, Robert Gentleman
Regrets: Levi Waldron, Kasper Hansen

Schedule

:00 - :03 Minutes
- 2020-07-02 minutes approved

:03 - :10 Transitional concerns
- Transition of NHGRI funding from Roswell to DFCI (and 3 subcontracts at Roswell, FHCRC, and BWH)
- Transition of build system physical and logical components (Nikos George (DFCI), and Vince (BWH), Herve (FHCRC) and Lori (Roswell) are connecting on a new Linux builder)
  - rethink build process - connect with RStudio?
- Flat funding for five years (assuming proposal accepted), so for project to grow we must
  - add efficiencies
  - seek additional durable sources of funds
- Stable components:
  - Morgan group, limited scope/personnel when funding ends after 2/2021
  - FHCRC with Herve
  - BWH with Vince who is proposing to be on project at 40% FTE

:10 - :20 Quick status reminders of work to be unpacked in upcoming meetings
- Carpentries training -- mostly CAB concern, get Carpentries-trained folks activated, honorarium support, platform support -- topic to be addressed in CAB liaison in future
  - first meeting last month, open discussion, including people from the Carpentries
  - training material to be developed for online teaching for inclusivity - use for in-person teaching as well
  - monthly meetings going forward
- Code validation initiative -- needs working group with proposal back to TAB, see below
- Build-on-commit for real-time reporting to developers
  - Martin, working group?
    - Changed workflow for new package submission, gets added to bioconductor git repository immediately, each new commit triggers a build.
    - Potential to extend to all packages.
- Jenny's remarks on 3-platform CI/CD on GHA
- Workshop infrastructure: huge kudos to Sean Davis; will need to think about how to increase impact for trainers and students in future deployments (CAB/training) and how to help Sean with infrastructure (working group, see below)

:20 - :25 Report from CAB liaison
- Slides from Bioc2020
- Code of Conduct working group, private slack channel. Chair:Saskia Freytag
- Diversity Statement (ongoing)
- CZI EOSS (not submitted). Looking at other funding mechanisms (e.g., Genentech, NSF)
- TAB, CAB stickers, copies printed. Will be sent to TAB/CAB members
- Created images with TAB/CAB members, which we can add to Bioconductor website (if there is support)
- During Bioc2020, supported BoF with colorblindness discussion. Slack channel #accessible-vis
- June minutes

:25 - :30 Report from Conference Committee liaison
- 500 Participants + waiting list (+50). Global. Students & others.
- Survey not yet sent out; soon though… Initial reactions (very :) positive.
- Debriefing already occurred. Consequences for next meeting.
- Recordings available, will be uploaded to YouTube.
- Comments from the board
  - Seemed 'pretty good' (Martin Morgan: really good), people engaged. Timing
  - Five days seems pretty extreme (Martin Morgan: or not -- let's just have all invited talks 9am Monday morning). Consider parallel sessions.
- Mostly in the hands of the CAB going forward

:30 - :60 Discussion of TAB meeting format (see next page)
- Rotating presentations by working groups, scheduled in six month chunks -- can bring in people who are not in TAB to assist but TAB member will report back; assume 25-30 minutes allocated to presentation plus discussion. Possible working group areas
  - **Code validation initiative** project -- working group seems feasible
    - important for regulatory processes (relevant in industry)
    - indicating relative reliability of certain pieces of code
    - provide easy reference based on experience
    - in industry - manage control of change
    - relate to renewal specific aim on **reliability of core infrastructure**
    - link to 'recommended workflows' (CAB discussion) - docker images of packages that tend to be used together
    - test coverage
- Build system innovations - Robert
- Containers -- how images are managed, what is the process for supporting containerized bioconductor
  - seamless transition to the cloud - how can we help operationalize, help users understand how it works, what the cost will be
- Documentation rot
  - Packages seem to withstand this well enough -- affy hasn't been updated in years, but that's apparent from the package & domain itself… Workflows actually seem more problematic -- there isn't enough turnover to keep these current, so available workflows are necessarily out-of-date.
  - Something that could be done by the community - possibly another on-ramp to more package involvement.
  - documentation - a - thon. Assemble a group at regular intervals, perhaps attached to Bioconductor meetings (BiocAsia/BiocEurope)
- Project technicalities, establishment of corporate knowledge … improving password and domain name management, resource funds transfer -- assign a person's name to major functions (at least)
- Large data management and use - Stephanie, Laurent, Kasper, Aaron, ...
  - interest in forming a working group for developing an online book (generic, useful for different data types)
- *Hubs and their publicity and evolution -- process of adding resources -- ENCODE3 - Mike, Hector, Aaron
  - highlight usefulness for teaching, workshops etc
  - Currently the most useful AHub data (as Mike sees it) is primarily UCSC server based, what other resources / repos could be leveraged to expand the AHub?
  - Is it worth providing more sophisticated (but still light-weight) query capability (subset, filter, query by region)
- Prospects for tighter integration with Rstudio ('skin', 'buttons', binary packages, efficient reverse dependency checks, lifecycle management)
  - dependency control - Robert Castelo … project level (currently integrated into BiocPkgTools)
- technical infrastructure for cloud-delivered workshops and "services" as spearheaded by Sean for Bioc2020
- Other priorities of interest to TAB members?

- Assign leaders to six of these and think about scheduling work and presentations to TAB over the next six months.

Any other Business
- Suggestion to have TAB email address/public or private slack channel similar to CAB (public slack channel already exists)
Appendix

- Funding links: NHGRI U41, NCI U24, NHGRI AnVIL, (Bioconductor-specific progress), CZI seed network
- CAB page
- Events
  - BiocEurope: Padova, Italy - Davide Risso as local host. Current planning: virtual meeting 14-18 Dec (with only “a few” hours per day).

Deleted concepts that may need attention in future meetings

Short term concerns

- New pressures on project
  - October release with Roswell infrastructure; emulate activities at DFCI to confirm smoothness of handoff in 2021
- Upcoming events -> transition to CAB only
  - BiocAsia
  - BiocEurope
- Enhance clarity of CAB:TAB relationship, governance documents
- "Using the logo" is clarified, but "Using Bioconductor" in a conference announcement is not clearly governed … seek expertise in governance
- Thinking of the idea of "memberships" into Bioconductor (Foundation or Consortium administered) that includes prepaid cloud computing time … and could provide the funds for many enhancements such as professional documentation and streamlined website …