Bioc Technical Advisory Board Minutes

7 July 2022

Attending: Charlotte Soneson, Wolfgang Huber, Vince Carey, Rafael Irizarry, Aedin Culhane, Levi Waldron, Jennifer Wokaty, Michael Love (until :20), Alexandru Mahmoud, Lori Shepherd, Stephanie Hicks, Kasper Hansen

Regrets: Laurent Gatto, Shila Ghazanfar, Robert Gentleman, Aaron Lun, Hector Corrada Bravo

:03 - :06 Previous minutes approved.

:06 - :07 M1 builds now available (kjohnson builder).
  ● M1 mac mini at macstudio.
  ● Only build/install binaries, no check for platform-specific errors.
  ● Thanks Jen Wokaty!

:07 - :10 TAB election results.
  ● 11 nominees, 5 vacant seats.
  ● Re-elected: Stephanie Hicks, Laurent Gatto, Charlotte Soneson.
  ● New members: Davide Risso, Sean Davis.
  ● Leaving the board: Hector Corrada Bravo, Aaron Lun.

:10 - :15 CAB minutes quick overview. CAB 6-9 Minutes. Highlights:
  ● Reviewed activities and presentation for BioC2022.
  ● Concerns over high cost of BioC2022 in-person attendance. Reasons include increased costs, decreased in-person attendance (due partly to venue restrictions), lower student registration fee. The goal is to break even.
  ● Community Manager position interviews on Tues 12th July.
  ● Please consider adding posts to the Bioconductor blog:
    ○ biocblog GitHub
    ○ biocblog
  ● Kozo translation-a-thon this Saturday.

:15 - :25 Ad hoc presentation by Lori
  ● Some hiccups when trying to get the Single Package Builder to run on the new mac and Windows with the new toolchain. Move towards a different approach for build reports for new packages - GitHub Actions?
    ○ SPB is "just what you want" as a user - immediate feedback.
    ○ How close can we make it (containers) to the build system? Can we execute the GitHub Actions on our system? Containerize the BBS? Linux yes, harder for mac/Windows.
    ○ Idea: Set up a template workflow that prospective developers would bring into their package - would get built on systems that are "close" to the build system (not identical).
Short term - fine if the SPB only works on Linux. May need to have package acceptance a bit further in advance to the release (to deal with the issues appearing when it's brought into the BBS and tested across all platforms).

  ● **Ad** is out for a software engineer (not funded by Bioconductor).
  ● How to reduce non-software engineering related workload for software engineers?
    ○ Do we have too many packages? Lots of time spent on review and 'keeping things going'. Would be useful to have a summary of how time is spent.
    ○ Within the next six months, the goal is for all package reviews to be community-based. Also reaching out to authors of packages where the builds are failing.
    ○ Debian keeps a list of 'orphaned' packages not being maintained - can be taken over by other community members, help figure out packages that can be deprecated.
    ○ Bioconductor covers many different fields - some packages have few downloads but are still impactful. Hard to determine whether a package is 'highly used'.
    ○ Many packages have little maintenance burden for the core team.
    ○ Prioritization - where do we need to do more engineering to be able to do more data science, software/algorithmic development?
    ○ Get a list of 'core' packages - priorities are enhancing/maintaining those, since they are the basis for many other packages.
    ○ There's a big community doing scientific development, but often not focused on software development.

:35 - :40 Meet the TAB session at BioC2022 - scheduled for Friday July 29, either 9-9:30 or 9:30-10 Pacific time (the other slot is the core team). Who will be there/what do we do?
  ● Talk about binary production (incl. M1) - containers.
  ● Branch renaming?
  ● Working groups - expose the concept, encourage people to sign up.
  ● Open wishlist request (deadline before the meeting), active sli.do during the meeting as well.

:40 - :60 Governance
  ● Vote/adopt changes to the governance document (working group representatives, expected attendance).
  ● Vote to allow up to 20 members this year to allow working group representation.
  ● Identify priority working groups for addition at the next TAB meeting.
  ● Vote postponed until next meeting - need to clarify the working group concept and criteria for obtaining voting rights, as well as the long-term vision.