



Swiss Institute of
Bioinformatics

PRESS RELEASE

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Two SIB knowledge bases deemed essential for the life sciences

At the end of a stringent selection process led by [ELIXIR](#) at European level, two core data resources of SIB Swiss Institute of Bioinformatics have been singled out as of crucial importance for life sciences: UniProt and STRING. Identifying Core Data Resources should pave the way towards their financial sustainability.

[Uniprot](#) is a comprehensive protein resource, produced in collaboration with [PIR](#) (USA) and [EMBL-EBI](#) (UK), and for which [SIB's Swiss-Prot Group](#) is providing the majority of the expert-curated content. This world reference resource for protein sequence and functional information receives over 900,000 requests per month.

Ioannis Xenarios, SIB group leader and co-principal investigator of UniProt: “UniProt provides a gold standard reference of protein sequences and functional annotation which is used by thousands of biomedical researchers worldwide on a daily basis. We are delighted that UniProt has been recognized as an ELIXIR Core Resource and look forward to shaping the development of UniProt in collaboration with our partners in the UniProt Consortium at PIR and EMBL-EBI.”

Proteins rarely act in isolation in an organism, and the [STRING](#) knowledgebase provides in-depth information on protein-protein interactions. It is developed by [SIB's Bioinformatics / Systems Biology Group](#), in collaboration with [EMBL](#) (Germany) and [University of Copenhagen](#) (Denmark).

Christian von Mering, SIB group leader and co-principal investigator of STRING: “We see the main value of the STRING database in its capacity to integrate and score interaction information, both for predicted as well as for experimentally determined protein-protein interactions. It is very encouraging that the essential contribution of such data integration to the life sciences is valued and recognized.”

The selection process that led to the decision relied on a set of key indicators (described in a recent [paper](#)) and was coordinated by ELIXIR, the organization dedicated to building a sustainable infrastructure for biological information across Europe. The indicators measure aspects such as scientific and technical quality, usage, impact on the scientific community and resource's role in accelerating science.

Christine Durinx, Associate Director of SIB: “Identifying Core Data Resources is a first step towards ensuring their long-term sustainability. These essential resources need to be supported through a coordinated international effort because of their value to the global life science community. Since its foundation almost 20 years ago, SIB's core mission has been to provide the life scientists with best-in-class bioinformatics databases and tools, and sustain them in the long-term.”

The purpose of the identification of ‘Core Data Resources’ by ELIXIR is to inform the decisions of policy makers and funders. Indeed, with two-thirds of the several hundreds of public databases in Europe having no or only very short-duration assured funding, fundamental knowledge is at risk of being lost.



Learn more in our latest news on the [‘First international proposal to sustain core data resources: a revolution in motion’](#) and our [March announcement “SIB is part of a global coalition to sustain core data resources”](#)

About SIB Swiss Institute of Bioinformatics

The SIB Swiss Institute of Bioinformatics is an academic not-for-profit organization. Its mission is to lead and coordinate the field of bioinformatics in Switzerland. Its data science experts join forces to advance biological and medical research and enhance health.

SIB (i) provides the national and international life science community with a state-of-the-art bioinformatics infrastructure, including services, resources, expertise;

and (ii) federates world-class researchers and delivers training in bioinformatics. It includes some 65 world-class research and service groups including some 800 scientists in the fields of genomics, proteomics, phylogeny, systems biology, structural biology, and personalized health.

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