draft-PWD-C-SG-Management-03.doc
PSI-SG

R. Julian, Indigo BioSystems
H. Hermjakob, European Bioinformatics Institute
January 2006

HUPO Proteomics Standards Initiative Management

Status of This Memo

This memo provides information on the HUPO Proteomics Standards Initiative management structure and related processes. It does not define any standards or technical recommendations. Distribution is unlimited.

Abstract

This document describes the management structure of the HUPO Proteomics Standards Initiative (PSI), including the roles of individual positions and committees and the processes for formation and approval of PSI working groups and research groups.

Contents

1. PSI Groups

The PSI management process was inspired by the system developed by the Global Grid Forum (GGF, www.globalgrid.org) [1,2,3].   The goal is to implement a reproducible, dependable and transparent process to produce high quality standards. To achieve this, the PSI is composed of working groups overseen by a Steering Group.

2. PSI Organization and Management

The PSI is managed by a general chair, a steering group, and working group chairs. The PSI Steering Group (PSI-SG) comprises a combination of working group chairs and general members. The Steering Group ensures continuity between working groups and enables communication between external stakeholders of the PSI standards as well as long-term strategic input to the working group chairs. The PSI chair also works with a PSI editor, who guides the document process [4] and a PSI Secretary,who oversees the logistics of the PSI operation. All of these groups and individual roles are described below. The processes for filling these roles via appointments, elections, and/or other means are described in [5].

2.1   PSI Chair

The PSI is chaired by two co-chairs. They are responsible for ensuring that the PSI as a whole and working groups in particular produce coherent, coordinated, architecturally consistent, and timely output as a contribution to the overall evolution of Proteomics technologies. In addition, the PSI chairs may arrange for topical or regional workshops attended by the PSI and perhaps other experts in the field.

The PSI chairs oversee the content of the PSI activities, working with the PSI-SG to manage the creation of new working groups, or areas and in some cases encouraging the formation of a group rather than waiting for proposals. The PSI chairs work with the PSI-SG to ensure that working groups receive adequate assistance from other PSI members. The PSI chairs serve as chairs of the PSI-SG, and as such are responsible for guiding the group to consensus and making operational decisions based on this consensus, while taking into account input from other sources, including group chairs, the PSI Secretary, individual PSI participants and HUPO.

The PSI chairs work with HUPO in areas regarding long-term strategy for PSI.

The PSI chairs also work with the PSI Secretary to oversee the planning and management of PSI meetings and to ensure that the PSI Web site is kept up to date. The PSI chairs work with the PSI editor to ensure smooth operation of the document process, and in particular to oversee the review function of the process, which is the responsibility of the PSI-SG.

Each PSI chair selects one or two vice chairs from the PSI-SG, who will assist the PSI chair as needed. The role of the PSI Vice Chairs is to (1) provide backup for the PSI chair (for example, to chair PSI-SG discussions in the absence of the PSI chair) and (2) ensure that multiple individuals are familiar with and trained in the role of PSI chair.

2.2   PSI Steering Group

The PSI-SG is composed of Working Group Chairs and other senior members of the PSI community. The PSI-SG, chaired by the PSI chair, oversees and coordinates the activities of working groups and research groups. The PSI-SG meets face-to-face at all PSI at-large meetings and holds regular teleconference meetings.

The PSI-SG is responsible for the PSI document series from the standpoint of architectural and technical quality and coherency, working with the PSI Editor to this end. The PSI-SG role in the document series process is described in [4]

2.3   PSI Participants

Participants in the PSI advise the PSI chair and/or PSI-SG on the chartering of new working groups and research groups and on other matters relating to the smooth operation of the PSI. PSI participants are not required to attend the regular PSI meetings.   It is difficult to contribute, however, without some participation in these meetings. Thus, individuals are highly encouraged to participate not only in electronic dialogs of PSI groups but also in the face-to-face meetings.

Participants also are encouraged to contribute to the working groups by evaluating and discussing document drafts and by serving as authors, suggesting topics for documents and/or volunteering to co-author.

2.4   Group Chairs

The working group chair is responsible for ensuring that the group makes progress toward the objectives outlined in the group charter and that the group process is fair, open, and marked by consensus. An overview of the responsibilities and role of a working group chair can be found in [5].

Participants in PSI groups are volunteers and as such do not report to the group chairs. As a result, the group chair must foster a group culture that is productive (in the sense that visible and deliberate progress is made) yet is informal and consensus driven.

The group chair is responsible for ensuring that agendas are planned for PSI meeting sessions or other meetings (including electronic or teleconference) of the group, and is responsible for running those sessions. The chair ensures that minutes are taken at all group meetings and posted to the group mailing list. The chair also ensures that the group Web page on the PSI Web site is kept up to date so that new participants can use the Web site to rapidly come up to speed in order to contribute to the work of the group.

In addition, the group chair monitors and guides the mailing list discussions to encourage open exchange while discouraging long discussions on issues that are not of relevance to the work of the group. The chair also periodically summarizes the points of consensus and progress made in both meeting and mailing list discussions and sends regular updates to the list regarding overall PSI developments, meeting planning process, agendas, or new documents or Web sites of potential interest to the group.

The chair coordinates with the area director(s) regularly regarding the progress of the group in attaining its objectives. The chair also works with the area director(s) to plan documentation, including selection and recruitment of authors and document topics and outlines.

2.5   PSI Editor

The PSI editor works closely with the PSI-SG and the PSI Secretariat to oversee the logistics of the PSI document process. This involves tracking the status of documents and actions taken by the PSI-SG in moving documents through the document review and approval processes [4], and ensuring that documents conform to the requirements set forth in [4].

2.6   PSI Secretary

The PSI Secretary oversees volunteers who perform support functions related to meeting planning and logistics, sponsorship programs, and other activities necessary to the work of PSI. The PSI Secretary is also responsible for providing communications related to meetings, disseminating information and collecting community feedback.

3.   Formation and Management of Working Groups

Working groups (WGs) are the activity centers in the PSI. A WG is typically created to address a particular implementation or operational area related to infrastructure necessary for Proteomics. WGs are expected to have a core of stable, committed membership in order to promote collaboration and teamwork. Participation in a PSI-WG is by individual contributors, rather than by representatives of organizations.

3.1   Approval of New Groups

A WG may be established at the initiative of an individual or group of individuals. Anyone interested in creating a PSI WG should first discuss the idea with a member of the PSI-SG. A proposed charter must then be submitted to the PSI chair along with a list of proposed founding members.

The PSI chair, in consultation with the PSI Steering Group (PSI-SG), will review the charter for approval. In some cases a group will be encouraged to meet as a birds-of-a-feather group until critical mass or focus can be achieved. In other cases the PSI-SG may provide specific feedback suggesting a target topic or set of objectives for a group in order to promote focus.

Unless the PSI-SG determines that the group is well outside of the parameters of approval (see §4.2) the draft charter will be appropriately announced to allow for interested parties to comment.

Once the group has been approved by the PSI-SG, the group chair will work with the PSI Secretariat to integrate information about the group into the PSI Web site. In order to ensure that potentially interested individuals may participate in the formative stages of the group, the new group will be announced within 30 days via email and on the PSI Web site.

3.2   Criteria for Formation

In determining whether a proposed WG is appropriate, the PSI-SG will consider several issues.

- Is the scope of the proposed group sufficiently focused? For example, a topic such as "mass spectrometry data interchange" is a reasonably focused topic for a working group.

- Are the topics that the group plans to address clear and relevant for the proteomics research, development, implementation, and/or application user community?

- Will the formation of the group foster work that would not be done otherwise? For instance, membership drawn from more than a single institution, more than a single country, and so on is to be encouraged.

- Do the group's activities overlap inappropriately with those of another PSI group or to a group active in another organization such as ASTM or W3C? Depending on the nature and extent of the overlap, the proposed group may still be formed, or the PSI-SG may recommend that the work be done within the existing PSI (or external) group.

- Are there sufficient interest and expertise in the group's topic, with at least several people willing to expend the effort that is likely to produce significant results over time? To help in this determination, a proposal to create a group should include a list of potential charter members.

- Does a base of interested consumers (e.g., proteomics application developers, instrument vendors, end-users) appear to exist for the planned work? Consumer interest can be measured by participation of end-users and implementers within the PSI process, as well as by less direct means.

- Does the PSI have a reasonable role to play in the determination of the technology? If other organizations are working in similar areas, the proposed group must outline how the members will coordinate with these other efforts.

3.3   Charter

A charter is a contract between a WG and the PSI-SG to work on the designated topics. Charters may be renegotiated periodically to reflect changes to the current status, organization, or goals of the group.

The formation of a WG requires a charter that is initially negotiated between the prospective group chair(s), relevant area directors, and the PSI chair in cooperation with the PSI-SG. When the prospective chair(s), relevant area director(s), and the PSI chair are satisfied with the charter form and content, and is approved by the PSI-SG, it becomes the basis for forming a WG.

A PSI WG charter consists of two components:

a. Administrative: Group name, names, and contact information for the group chair(s), name and contact information for the group secretary, mailing list address.
b. Description and Objectives: Description of group, goals for the group, and schedule of milestones (particularly important for working groups).

3.3.1   Administrative

Group Name: A group name should be reasonably descriptive or identifiable. Additionally, the group must define an acronym (maximum of 8 printable ASCII characters) to reference the group in the PSI directories, mailing lists, and general documents. The name and acronym must not conflict with any other PSI name and acronym.

Chair(s):   The group must have one or two chair(s) to perform the administrative functions of the group. The email address(es) of the chair(s) must be included in the charter.

Secretary: The group must have a secretary (one of the chairs may serve the role), who will ensure that minutes are made available for meetings and who will manage the group's mailing list and website.

Mailing List: Each group will have an Internet mailing list open to all interested parties and operating within the bounds of the PSI mailing list acceptable use policies. This list is used for an open discussion of the issues and announcements of results as they become available. Included should be the address to which an interested party sends a subscription request for the interest list, the procedures to follow when subscribing, and the location of the interest mailing list archive. The mailing list traffic must be archived for future reference and to allow newcomers to review in preparation for joining the work.

3.3.2   Description and Objectives

Focus/Purpose: The focus and intent of the group must be set forth briefly. By reading this section alone, individuals should be able to decide whether this group is relevant to their own work. The first paragraph must give a brief summary of the topic area, basis, goal(s) and approach(es) planned for the group. This paragraph will frequently be used as an overview of the group's effort. To facilitate evaluation of the intended work and to provide ongoing guidance to the group, the charter must describe the problem being solved and should discuss objectives and expected impact.

Goals/Milestones: The group charter must establish a timetable for specific work items. While this timetable may be renegotiated over time, the list of milestones and dates facilitates the PSI-SG's tracking of group progress and status, and it is indispensable to potential participants as a means of identifying the critical moments for input. Milestones must consist of deliverables that can be qualified as showing specific achievement; for example, "Draft document on Topic X finished" is fine, but "discuss via email" is not. It

is helpful to specify milestones for every 3-6 months, so that progress can be gauged easily. This milestone list is expected to be updated periodically

Website: Each group will maintain a page on the PSI Web site. This page should contain relevant information about the group, including at minimum all the charter items.

References

[1] Catlett, C., "Global Grid Forum Documents and Recommendations: Process and Requirements," December 2001.
[2] Catlett, C., Foster, I., and Johnston, W., "Global Grid Forum Governance," April 2002.
[3] Catlett, C., Foster, I., and Johnston, W., "Global Grid Forum Structure," October 2001
[4] Julian, R., Hermjakob, H., "Proteomics Standards Initiative Document Process", December 2005.
[5] Julian, R., Hermjakob, H., "Proteomics Standards Initiative Structure", December 2005.

Author Information

Randall Julian
Indigo BioSystems, Inc.
rkjulian@indigobio.com

Henning Hermjakob
European Bioinformatics Institute
hhe@ebi.ac.uk

Acknowledgments

This document attempts to capture the recommendations of many members of the PSI steering group, PSI advisory committee, and working group and research group chairs as well as the foundational work that is documented in the references.

Glossary

PSI-SG   Proteomics Standards Initiative Steering Group, consisting of selected senior PSI participants and area directors, chaired by the PSI chair.
PSI   Proteomics Standards Initiative (see psidev.sf.net)
PSI Chair   Chair of the PSI-SG and general chair of PSI.
GGF   Global Grid Forum (see www.ggf.org)
WG   Working Group.

Intellectual Property Statement

The PSI takes no position regarding the validity or scope of any intellectual property or other rights that might be claimed to pertain to the implementation or use of the technology described in this document or the extent to which any license under such rights might or might not be available; neither does it represent that it has made any effort to identify any such rights. Copies of claims of rights made available for publication and any assurances of licenses to be made available, or the result of an attempt made to obtain a general license or permission for the use of such proprietary rights by implementers or users of this specification can be obtained from the PSI Steering Group.

The PSI invites any interested party to bring to its attention any copyrights, patents or patent applications, or other proprietary rights which may cover technology that may be required to practice this recommendation. Please address the information to a PSI Chair (see contact information at the PSI website).

Full Copyright Notice