Bioc Technical Advisory Board Minutes

8 January 2026

Present: Laurent Gatto, Gabriele Sales, Kasper Hansen, Maria Doyle, Vince Carey, Michael Lawrence, Nicholas Cooley, Lori Kern, Andres Wokaty, Michael Love, Marcel Ramos, Henrik Bengtsson, Alex Mahmoud, Levi Waldron, Robert Castelo, Rafael Irizarry, Helena Crowell, Hervé Pages, Gabriel Grajeda, Ludwig Geistlinger, Wolfgang Huber
Absent: Jacques Serizay

:00 - :05 December [minutes](#) approved.

:05 - :06 Alex received a [development grant](#).
- 10k into numfocus Bioc project
- scope: services created over past years;
  e.g., status dashboard, authentication server, bioc2u, webr binaries,
  hubs ingestion system, Slack/Zulip redirect pages, etc. (7 in total)

:06 - :07 March meeting will be joint with CAB;
  expecting a change to time/date in March.

:08 - :33 Discussion led by Gabriel Grajeda and Rafa Irizarry [[slides](#)].
- lightweight infrastructure for sparse and spatial genomic data in Bioconductor
- motivated by RCTD ([spacexr](#) package) and the [smallcount](#) package (work in progress)
- outlook on future spatial support

:34 - :39 Hackathon concepts for [EuroBioC2026](#) (Turku, Finland).
- models from other communities:
  - Galaxy [cofest](#)
  - ISMB [collaboration fest](#)
  - scverse [events](#)
- How will the bioc hackathon be set up?
  Topics and subcommunities of interest?
  - aggregation on [TreeSE](#), tidyomics applied to TreeSE
    (Michael Love), tidyomics open challenges?
  - NCBI model: [NCBI Edirect Cookbook](#)

:40 - :43 New developments in [r-universe](#) infrastructure for Bioc package developers.
- brief overview of build report comparison [[slides](#)]
- other core-level developments of interest (none of note)
- Andres on harvesting [Windows binaries from r-universe](#)
  (after termination of Microsoft support)
- Quick summary but not actively discussed:
  - Vince working on AnnotationWorkflow to update BiocAnnotationPipeline
    - consolidate and unify collections of scripts/SQL/R programs
    - use targets package to define multistage processes
  - ingestion and review process ongoing overseen by Lori;
    a speculative [overview](#) process from Vince
  - GPU-oriented container from Alex
  - Lots of SparseArray and annotation work from Hervé

:44 - :60 Continuation of sparse discussion.
- handling in Python to be investigated (limit 2^{64} vs. ^{31} in R)
- Zulip channel to continue sharing of expertise will be created

Open discussion/possible catalyst re: TAB e-mail exchange (not discussed).
(1) How can the core best solicit *needed & actionable* advice
    from the *broad* forum of the TAB?
(2) How can the distributed developer network exchange relevant information
    in a timely manner, to help them coordinate where advantageous,
    and to increase scientific output or value?