

CONNECT

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"A journey of a thousand miles must begin with a single step."
- Lao Tzu (Chinese Taoist Philosopher)

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Note to Readers...

RSG-India proudly presents the first volume of its monthly e-newsletter 'CONNECT'. For some, RSG-India is simply a student body with an affinity for Bioinformatics; for us, it is an organization with a mission - "to spread awareness about Bioinformatics". 1400 student members, a core team of 20 Bioinformatics students / researchers and more than 15 initiatives is just a small visible fraction of our meticulous and direction oriented teamwork.

In the first edition, we introduce a special column highlighting our initiatives and major achievements till date. Here, we throw light on national / international projects and collaborations / tie-ups apart from few other initiatives and activities. On a lighter and a much interactive front, we also present to you the 'Top-ten posts of the month', along with the 'Topic of the month (TOTM)'. Finally, we give a description about Computational Biology (CompBio) Discussion Group - yet another initiative by RSG-India.

We hope you find this issue of the newsletter appealing and interesting, and join RSG-India to support our third for research excellence!

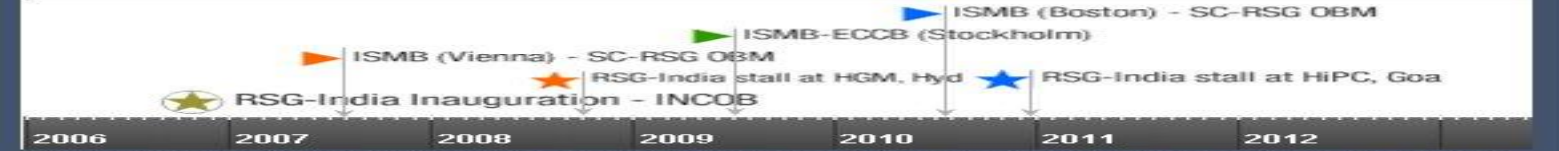
RSG-India's Initiatives - A stroll down memory lane ...



RSG-India was launched on December 20th, 2006. Since then we have been a part of various international / national conferences, workshops, meetings, virtual projects, collaborations, events etc., exemplifying our journey on the road to success. We can sense a small but transformational change taking place around us.

- ✓ The dawn of December 20th, 2006 witnessed the inauguration of RSG-India, at INCOB 2006. The occasion was graced by the Director of ISCB.
- ✓ The annual international conference on Intelligent Systems for Molecular Biology (ISMB) is the major meeting of the International Society for Computational Biology (ISCB). Our members represented RSG-India at ISMB 2007 (Vienna), ISMB-ECCB 2009 & SCS-05 (Stockholm) and ISMB 2010 (Boston). They offered exclusive travel fellowship (meant for SC-RSG leaders) for attending the events. At ISMB 2007 & ISMB 2010, members represented RSG-India in the SC-RSG Open Business Meetings (OBMs) and spread the mission of RSG-India to Indians studying and working abroad.
- ✓ In September 2008, at the 'Human Genome Meeting' held at Hyderabad, RSG-India had a stall, which was the very first time that any Student Council group had an independent stall at a major international conference.
- ✓ We would also like to inform you that the High performance computing group has provided us an opportunity to be a part of the HIPC-2010 to be held in Goa from December 19th to 22nd, 2010. We have also been allotted a stall to showcase our achievements and spread our mission.

Timeline - RSG-India at International Conferences



These were just the keynote points of the international conferences that we represented as a part of RSG-India. The saga for excellence shall continue! ... will be continued ...

TOP 10 POSTS ON THE MESSAGE BOARD

1. ANNOUNCEMENT - Graduate Aptitude Test In Engineering - GATE 2011.
<http://tinyurl.com/2c9gw45>
2. RESOURCE - Computer Modeling essential for Genomics - Nature India.
<http://tinyurl.com/23azfan>
3. RESOURCE - Lab management for the development of early-career scientists - HHMI.
<http://tinyurl.com/33uz66f>
4. QUERY - Regarding migrating to wet lab from bioinformatics.
<http://tinyurl.com/3yvmdln>
5. CONFERENCE (International) - 19th Annual International Conference on Intelligent Systems for Molecular Biology and 10th European Conference on Computational Biology - ISMB- ECCB 2011 (VIENNA).
<http://tinyurl.com/37d4gcq>
6. CONFERENCE (National) - 2nd Annual Biotechnology Conference for Students (ABCS) 2010 at PIT, Pune.
<http://tinyurl.com/39ezavs>
7. VIRTUAL CONFERENCE - Bioinformatics to Systems Biology 2010 (BSB'10).
<http://tinyurl.com/376mwrz>
8. WORKSHOP - Working with Pathogen Genomes at International Centre for Genetic Engineering and Biotechnology (ICGEB), New Delhi.
<http://tinyurl.com/38zndxg>
9. OPENING (National) - PhD Programme at National Center for Cell Sciences (NCCS).
<http://tinyurl.com/2v8vng3>
10. SCHOLARSHIP - Offered by the Ministry of Science and Technology, Govt. of India.
<http://tinyurl.com/2vqc46x>



Topic of the Month
<http://tinyurl.com/29t35wv>

Basic concepts of Linux

Last month, we had a very informative discussion about Linux, dealing with essential topics as well as its use in Bioinformatics. The highlights of the discussion are as follows:

- ✓ The discussion began with a brief introduction to Linux and the history of its evolution. Primarily, it is a free and open source OS, which can be installed in a wide variety of computer hardware, including those with even minimal resources.
- ✓ Members shared their views on the wide range of Bioinformatics software (Ex: AutoDock, PyMol, etc.) that can be exploited effectively using Linux.
- ✓ Different versions of Linux developed specifically for Bioinformatics including BioLinux, BioPuppy, DNA Linux, etc. were touched upon in brief by few of the members.
- ✓ Last but not least, members also put forth their views on the safety issues of Linux. Linux has file encryption of upto 512 bits which is almost impossible to crack. Hence, Linux is regarded very safe and requires no antivirus unlike Windows. The several advantages that Linux has over Windows was also posted in the concluding thread.
- ✓ An interesting blog on how-to's of Linux shared by one of the RSG members, Satish Balakrishnan is available at the link: <http://satishscripts.blogspot.com/>



CBDG was first initiated on 25th July 2009 at VIT, Vellore and has successfully conducted 17 such sessions till date. RSG-India's vision in the long run is to create a formidable network of such groups in all major institutions across India, which offer a degree in Bioinformatics. On the same note, one such CBDG was very recently initiated at SirMVIT, Bangalore. The inaugural session witnessed a guest lecture cum discussion on "The scope, applications of Computational Biology in Next Generation Sequencing" by Dr. Vidya Niranjan of Genotypic Technology Pvt. Ltd. The second session encompassed another intriguing guest lecture by Mr. Sudhir Chowhina from University of Virginia, USA.

CompBio Discussion Group (CBDG)

RSG-India, as part of its commitment to help out Bioinformatics students in their endeavor to learn and explore, came up with this novel initiative - 'CompBio Discussion Group'. CBDG is a semi-autonomous body under the aegis of the RSG-India.

CBDG is a platform for students to discuss and share domain knowledge, where in, various activities like group discussions, presentations, journal reviews and project meets are conducted on a fortnightly basis. It functions on the lines of a journal club where in members discuss on some predefined topics that range from journals, tools, software, higher studies and to all general aspects of Bioinformatics. It is also dedicated to creating awareness amongst the students on the career prospects in Bioinformatics / Computational Biology (internships, jobs, projects, scholarships, etc).



CBDG is thus an initiative to enrich students with invaluable skill sets and domain knowledge which helps instill a distinct creativity and novelty in their work at budding stages of their career.