



RCSB Protein Data Bank Advisory Committee

Terms of Reference

Original Date: March 2000

Updated: March 2009, June 2015

The RCSB PDB

The Research Collaboratory for Structural Bioinformatics (RCSB) Protein Data Bank (PDB) provides a global resource for the advancement of research and education in biology and medicine by curating, integrating, and disseminating biological macromolecular structure information. It is a founding member and U.S. data center of the Worldwide Protein Data Bank (wwPDB), the organization responsible for maintaining the PDB archive as the single source of freely and publicly available macromolecular structure data. The RCSB PDB also serves as the “archive keeper” for the PDB archive.

The RCSB PDB is managed by two members of the RCSB: Rutgers, The State University of New Jersey and University of California, San Diego, and is funded by the National Science Foundation, the National Institutes of Health, and the Department of Energy through a cooperative agreement.

RCSB PDBAC Purpose

The RCSB PDB Protein Data Bank Advisory Committee (RCSB PDBAC) is responsible for providing independent advice to the RCSB PDB Director and staff on current and pending issues of policy, operations, technical implementation, and project performance.

RCSB PDBAC Structure

The RCSB PDBAC consists of members chosen from the scientific community, who are recognized experts in their fields, including but not limited to, structural biology, cell and molecular biology, computational biology, information technology, and education. These scientists will be drawn from academia and industry. The AC is appointed by the Director in consultation with other members of the RCSB PDB, the AC Chair, and others. The 3-year term of membership is renewable.

Meetings

The RCSB PDBAC meets once a year. The Director is responsible for developing the meeting agenda in consultation with the Chair and, where deemed appropriate, funding

agency staff. Meetings will typically last a full working day. Travel arrangements will be facilitated by RCSB PDB staff.

At the conclusion of each meeting, a written report will be prepared by the members of the RCSB PDBAC describing its discussions, including any specific conclusions or recommendations with respect to changes in management and policies of the RCSB PDB. As specified by the cooperative agreement, this report shall be provided to the Director within 30 days of the AC meeting. The Director will formulate a response to the report, addressing recommendations made, issues raised for further consideration, *etc.*, and provide the Chair with the response. The report and the attendant responses will be incorporated in the Annual Progress Report submitted to the National Science Foundation.

Scope of Responsibilities

RCSB PDBAC will be asked to comment, advise, or make recommendations for action on topical issues as they arise over the course of the time between meetings, and on any standing agenda items. Examples of such issues are:

- **Deposition Policies and Annotation Practices.** How is the RCSB PDB performing within the current standards of the wwPDB? Are there issues that need to be addressed? Are there aspects of policy that need to be reconsidered? How are new experimental methodologies being incorporated? Are current annotation practices providing the most accurate and reliable data? How is the RCSB PDB meeting the needs of the depositor community?
- **Data Distribution and Query Policies and Practices.** How well are the responsibilities of the RCSB PDB as “archive keeper” for the PDB archive being met? How does the RCSB PDB define its user communities and how well is it meeting their needs? Are effective tools and methods for disseminating macromolecular structure information being offered? Are best practices being used in development and maintenance of services?
- **Education and Outreach.** How does the RCSB PDB define its educational and outreach missions? Is the RCSB PDB correctly prioritizing its approaches to different audiences? Is the RCSB PDB effectively leveraging appropriate web-based technologies and other educators?