

## **InCoB'09 – first time in Singapore**

The 8th International Conference in Bioinformatics (InCoB), jointly organized by the National University of Singapore (NUS) School of Computing, NUS Departments of Biochemistry and Biological Sciences, Institute for Infocomm Research (I<sup>2</sup>R), Bioinformatics Institute (BII) and Nanyang Technological University (NTU) School of Computer Engineering, was held at Biopolis from 7-11 September 2009. InCoB is the flagship event of the Asia Pacific Bioinformatics Network (APBioNet), an international organization founded in 1998 with its secretariat based in Singapore. This is the first time InCoB is held in Singapore, with previous events held in Bangkok, Penang, Auckland, Busan, Delhi, Hong Kong and Taipei.

InCoB'09 was officially opened at 9.00 a.m. on Wednesday 9 September 2009. Mr. Lim Chuan Poh, Chairman of Singapore's Agency for Science, Technology and Research (A\*STAR), graced the occasion as Guest of Honour. This year, more than 440 delegates from 19 countries worldwide participated in InCoB'09, one of the largest attendances in the history of InCoB. The scientific meeting featured a record number of ten keynote speakers, including Dr. Robert Huber, joint-recipient of the 1988 Nobel Prize for Chemistry; Dr. Chris Sander, director of the Computational Biology Center at Memorial Sloan-Kettering Cancer Center; Dr. Peer Bork, from EMBL, the most cited European researcher in Molecular Biology and Genetics according to ISI; Dr. Tim Hubbard, Head of Informatics at Europe's Wellcome Trust Sanger Institute; among many others.

A Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) between Wizfolio.com, an NUS start-up company, the Association for Medical and Bioinformatics for Singapore (AMBIS), and the APBioNet, was established on the same morning to collaborate on a new global bibliographic WEB 2.0 service that allows for easy management of scientific literature for APBioNet and AMBIS members, anytime anywhere with Internet access.

InCoB traditionally includes several satellite meetings. This year's InCoB featured several, including the Workshop on Education in Bioinformatics and Computational Biology, WEBCB, was held on 7<sup>th</sup> September as part of InCoB'09. This meeting brought together bioinformatics educators in the Asia-Pacific region and included a discussion on the minimal bioinformatics skills required by life sciences graduates, and how these skills should be defined. The inaugural Clinical Bioinformatics Symposium (CBAS), held on 8<sup>th</sup> September 2009, marked the launch and formation of a Clinical Bioinformatics Consortium that aims to seek representatives from institutions in Singapore and the region to strengthen ties and build up strong links for collaborations in the field of Clinical Bioinformatics.

On 10 September 2009, members of the Asian Bioinformatics Centre (ABC) Initiative officially launched the Asian Bioinformation Repository Initiative, and

signing the Singapore Resolution for Minimum Information about a Bioinformatics Investigation, the MIABi initiative, to establish a process for combating "spam" publication, lack of reproducibility of bioinformatics investigations and disappearing databases and resources.

InCoB'09 saw a record 88 full paper submissions, of which approximately 50% have been accepted for publication in BMC Genomics (Impact Factor 3.93), BMC Bioinformatics (Impact Factor 3.49) and also in Bioinformation. The accepted papers were presented at the scientific meeting, along with new bioinformatics technologies and recent publication highlights.

The best paper award, by peer review, was given to Choo Khar Heng, Tan Tin Wee and Shoba Ranganathan for their work on "A comprehensive assessment of N-terminal signal peptide prediction methods".

The best poster award goes to Vachiranee Limviphuvadh, Ling Ling Chua, Rabi'Atul Adawiyah Bte Rahim, Frank Eisenhaber, Sharmila Adhikari and Sebastian Maurer-Stroh for their work on "Analysis of the molecular mechanisms of known and predicted disease mutations in LGI epilepsy genes".

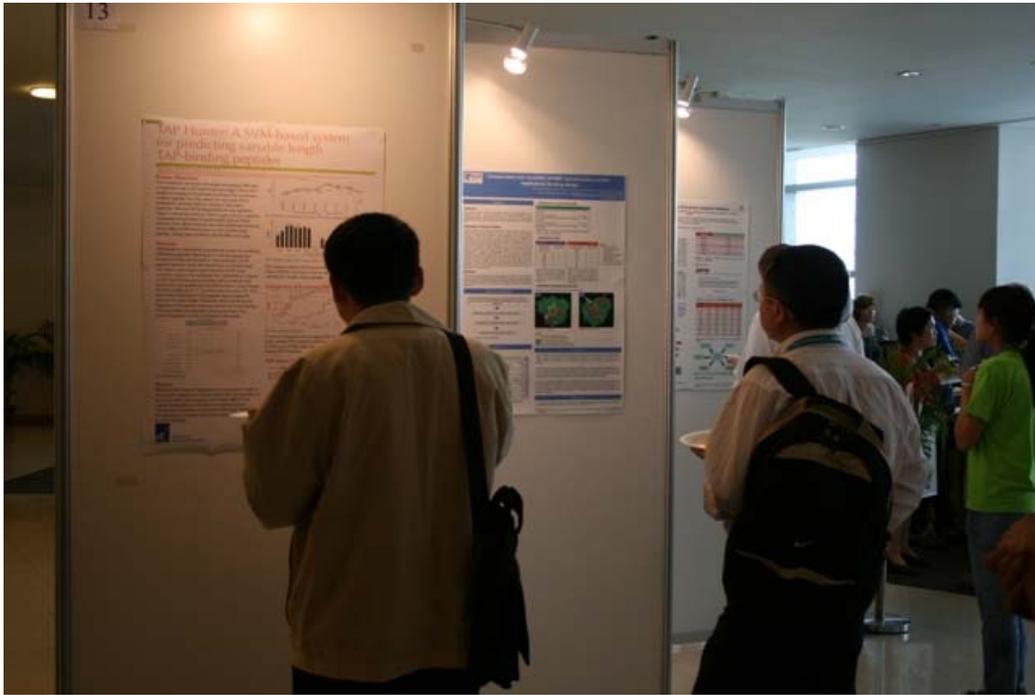
InCoB'09 was sponsored by a number of key industry partners including Lilly and IDBS, as well as the Singapore Tourism Board (STB) and the publisher, BioMed Central. APBioNet and InCoB is affiliated with and endorsed by the International Society for Computational Biology (ISCB), the foremost bioinformatics organization in the world. "We are proud to be the organizers of InCoB'09", said the Conference Organising Chairman, Dr Victor Tong, "and for pioneering a number of firsts for the InCoB conference series."



**Figure 1.** MoU signing between Wizfolio.com, AMBIS and APBioNet, witnessed by A\*STAR Chairman Lim Chuan Poh.



**Figure 2.** Prof Robert Huber giving a lecture on “Proteins and their Structures, Basic Science and Application”.



**Figure 3.** Poster Session.