

Appendix 3.

John Innes Centre (JIC) Systems Biology Forum (Summary Notes)

An informal meeting to discuss the GARNet interim report on Arabidopsis systems biology in the UK was held at the JIC on the 20th March 2006.

JIC, UEA and IFR staff were invited to attend and provided with background information about the report (JIC Q&A V4.pdf).

Present at meeting:- Jonathan Jones, Nick Harberd, Ian Bancroft, Mike Bevan, John Turner, Andy Maule, Caroline Dean, Jan Kim, Mike Ambrose, Alison Smith and David Studholme.

Attendees were asked for guidelines to aid selection of a community wide project in plant systems biology

Guidelines suggested by GARNet

- More than one group
- Interdisciplinary; mix of wet and dry
- Enabling projects, foundation for further responsive mode funding

Guide lines suggested by JIC

- Transparency of criteria, panel members and abstracts of funded projects
- Hypothesis/question driven science preferred
- Diverse approaches to systems biology
- "Nucleation capacity" ; future proposals can "join in"
- ERA-PG approaches to systems biology to be encouraged
- Exemplars to be included in remit; e.g. How do plants grow? Evolution and adaptation

Comments

Projects should be organised and managed to facilitate longer term studies in systems biology, e.g. 5yr grant terms

Suggestions for "nucleation capacity" and modular format so others can join in and access expertise, personnel and data

All data produced should be readily available and in a standard format for others to download and use. Need to address cross-referencability of data and interoperability of databases

Many thought that current suggestions of an organ or pathway were not inclusive and appeared to be centred on data collection rather than a science/hypothesis driven. Big biological question such as plant growth would be more inclusive and accessible to the community.