



## Coordination of Biological and Chemical IT Research Activities

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## Dissemination and Outreach Strategy

WP4 T4.2 (incorporating D4.1: Website)

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# 1. Introduction

The objects of Work Package 4 - Dissemination and Outreach (WP4) are:

- To establish an infrastructure for the effective and timely development, management and dissemination of project outputs, and to ensure these occur.
- To promote the national and international profile of the project and of Biological and Chemical IT in general.
- To establish and maintain links with other related projects and activities, and to handle external liaison.

The Lead on WP4 is Manchester Metropolitan University (MMU). WP4 is concerned with information infrastructure, reporting, management of knowledge, and external linkage. A major component of WP4 is the project website, which will host copies of project reports, links to partners, schedules of events, and so on, as well as linking to the expertise database to be generated by Work Package 1 – Stakeholder Consultation. The efforts of the Work Package will also ensure that the results of the project are documented and archived, as well as communicated to key users and agencies (e.g. national bodies, policy makers) - as such, there are also clear links with Work Package 2 - Strategy and Vision and Work Package 3 - Community Building.

Dissemination and Outreach will be achieved via in-person meetings, attendance at exhibitions, media interviews and articles, press releases, contributions to online discussions and the production of high-level "presentation packs" and information sheets aimed at management and policy makers. A dedicated Communications Group will deal with media enquiries, and act as "spokespeople" for the project.

Within WP4 Task 4.2 the Dissemination and Outreach Strategy<sup>1</sup> will provide a strategy and procedures for dissemination of project outputs, external liaison protocols, document standards and formats, formation of Communications Group. The strategy will focus on the tasks and deliverables of WP4 which are:

1. Project Website
2. Project Publications
3. Edited Collection
4. External Liaison
5. Project Promotion.

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<sup>1</sup> Recommendations from the *FET FP7 projects Quick Communication Guidelines* ([ftp://ftp.cordis.europa.eu/pub/fp7/ict/docs/fet-proactive/press-19\\_en.pdf](ftp://ftp.cordis.europa.eu/pub/fp7/ict/docs/fet-proactive/press-19_en.pdf)) are reflected in this strategy.

## 2. Project Website

A dedicated web site will be developed and promoted, to include both external-facing and internal sections. The main aim of the website will be to provide a general resource in the Chemical and Biological IT field to support the building of a community. It will also provide a unified view of the project, publicising and highlighting the activities and products of COBRA.

The website will be maintained and kept up to date by the coordinator, MMU, as the Lead on WP4. Consideration will be given to the use of social media (eg. Facebook, Twitter) to promote the website and the project. Optimisation techniques will be used to ensure the visibility of the COBRA website. The domain will be registered and hosting continued for at least 2 years beyond the project's end date to ensure the legacy of the project.

This external-facing part of the website will include among other items:

- An overall description of the project and its objectives, including a project brochure, information sheets and other publicity material for the project which will be available for download.
- Details of the project consortium with links to their sites, likewise consortium members will pervade links to the Cobra website on their own websites.
- Links to websites and projects of interest to members of the community.
- News from the project and consortium members, including a newsletter.
- Publicity and information about events put on as part of the project such as the Summer School and conferences.
- Publicity and information about the fellowships available to support the exchange of students or researchers between groups.
- A link to enable participation in the Stakeholder Consultation process for the creation of the European Roadmap for the field.
- Articles and presentations by the members of the consortium and other articles of interest.
- A list of relevant publications in the field.
- A method for contacting the project, a way of joining the project mailing list and information on how to contribute to the project and in particular to the roadmap.
- The publicly available deliverables for the project as they are completed:
  - Online Expertise Database (edited for confidentiality, and password protected)
  - Draft Vision Document / Progress Report
  - Collective Intelligence Site
  - Consultation Report

- Draft Roadmap Document
  - Conferences
  - Summer School
  - Project Publications
  - Edited Collection
  - Annual Project Activity Reports
- A clearly visible and regularly updated RSS feed (updated at least once a month).
  - A project blog will be included on the website, or a key figure in the project will regularly discuss project activities on their personal blog.

The internal section of the website will only be accessible to the members of the consortium and will be used as an intranet for information and document interchange to encourage the collaborative effort of the project.

### 3. Edited Collection

To ensure the legacy of the COBRA project an edited collection will be published at the end of the project. This will be made up of chapters describing different facets of bio/chem IT. This collection will be edited by the four constituent project leads (Amos, McCaskill, Rasmussen, Dittrich), and will contain an assortment of review articles and scientific chapters, encompassing the broad domain of biological and chemical information technologies. A priority for Year 2 will be to identify an appropriate publisher for the collection, agree on the broad content, and sign a publishing agreement. Project members have excellent existing contacts with high-profile publishers (eg. Springer, Oxford University Press, MIT Press) and extensive experience of managing such projects.

### 4. External Liaison and Project Promotion

The consortium will set the tone for an open and enthusiastic information exchange, such that everybody; the Steering Committee, the Work Package leaders and the individual project participants, will participate in dissemination activities within the working groups, between the partners, to the wider scientific community, to policy and decision makers and the broader public. The different interests of the consortium partners have been considered in order to focus the dissemination activities effectively. All partners are committed to maximising the potential impact of the outputs of COBRA by dissemination to relevant stakeholders including researchers, society, industry and regulatory bodies.

Partners will actively promote the project via participation in information and dissemination events, such as conferences or networking meetings, writing of articles for popular magazines/newspapers, contributions to online discussions and blogs, and the regular issue of localised press releases to promote the project and emphasise the local added value of European funding.

A Communications Group will be established to act as a first point of contact with external agencies and individuals and to coordinate the production of communication and publicity Materials. This group will initially consist of the project coordinator (Martyn Amos) and project administrator (Margaret Taylor) together with a consortium member (Steen Rasmussen) with extensive experience in the dissemination and outreach area. The group will coordinate the production and writing of writing of press releases, appearances on broadcast media, and handling of media enquiries. It will also support senior representation of the project at relevant events, such as conferences, knowledge transfer networks and trade fairs, and visits to and from industrial partners. A part of its role will be to ensure that all publicity and promotion material conform to EC regulations including proper use of logos and acknowledgement of funding.

In particular the dissemination and outreach for the project will take place through the following activities:

- Preparation of dissemination material such as newsletters, press releases, flyers, posters, brochures, for project dissemination by all partners. These will be targeted at a range of audiences. Consortium members will strive to disseminate this material on all suitable occasions.
- The use of emerging social-media networks (such as Facebook and Twitter) to broadcast the project.
- Preparation of articles for popular science magazines and newspapers including local press, in order to bring the project to a wider audience beyond the immediate scientific community. The consortium will make contributions to popular scientific press outlets, such as *New Scientist*, *Scientific American*, *La Recherche*, and *Spektrum der Wissenschaft*. Press releases relating to the project's achievements will be made, tied to key milestones in the project such as the Summer School in 2012. These will be targeted at IT journalists and publications as well as the IT correspondents of major publications (like *The Economist*, *FT*, *Le Monde*, *Figaro*, *FAZ*, *Die Zeit*, *Sueddeutsche*, information channels on IT on the web, etc).
- Publications in scientific journals aiming at publishing results and findings in high impact scientific publications (*Nature*, *Science*, *PLoS*).
- Dissemination of results through the channels of the FP7 coordinated actions in which the members of the consortium are already engaged.
- Participation in selected seminars, conference, congresses and forums such as the European Future Technologies Conference and Exhibition (FET) and the International Conference on Unconventional Computation and Natural Computation (UCNC).
- A Wikipedia page about the project will be established with a network of hyperlinks e.g. from other relevant Wikipedia pages and partner websites that point to the Wikipedia page.

To facilitate the effectiveness of the Dissemination and Outreach activities of the project a clear visual identity will be established for the project with a logo, templates and document standards being developed.

A record will be kept of all dissemination activity to be reported in the Periodic Management reports. Communication material (especially press releases, flyers, information sheets and brochures) will be sent to the Project Officer and/or the Information & Communication Officer of the Unit. Main

results and success stories will be reported to the Commission to promote research and shape future initiatives in this area.

## 5. Outreach activities

Work Package 1 – Stakeholder Consultation and Work Package 3 – Community Building will form part of the outreach activities of the project in addition to the dedicated outreach activities as part of WP4. Through the Stakeholder Consultation process in WP1 the project will potentially contact several hundred researchers across Europe who will be made aware of the project and be given the opportunity to become involved in the activities of the project.

The Community Building activities that form Work Package 3 will also in a large part constitute outreach for COBRA. They include:

- Three Annual COBRA conferences organized as satellite events to major conferences. It is anticipated that the first of these will be held towards the end of year 1, perhaps during the European Conference on Artificial Life (ECAL) in Paris, August 2011. The second will take place around the mid-point of the project. The final conference will be scheduled at the end of the project, to serve as a “wrap up” meeting.
- Exchange visits of roughly 3 months in duration which will allow younger researchers to spend time in partner laboratories. Four such visits are planned, short term visits may also be supported. Ideally the exchange should be between an “external” and “internal” group in order to widen the scope of COBRA.
- A single summer school will be held towards the middle of the project, in order to further develop early career researchers and galvanize their involvement in the field. Topics for the summer school include experimental as well as theoretical aspects of (bio-)chemical information technologies. Time will be also devoted to the formation of special interest work groups among the participants.

Wider outreach activities will also take place based upon the existing activities and expertise of the consortium members. Martyn Amos is a contributor to the *Speakers for Schools* initiative (<http://www.speakers4schools.org/>), which provides state schools in the UK with speakers give inspirational talks to young people. Steen Rasmussen participates in the Initiative for Science, Society and Policy (ISSP) (<http://www.science-society-policy.org>), an international forum that seeks to make science and technology an informed and visible component in societal planning and the public debate.

Through these and similar activities the project will offer:

- Tutorials and seminars to other projects
- Presentations to industry / local students / government representatives
- Talks and discussion to interested groups.



## **6. Review of this Strategy**

A mid-term assessment meeting will be held in Month 15 of the project at which exploitation and dissemination activities will be discussed and assessed. This will enable the Dissemination and Outreach Strategy for COBRA to be refined and developed further.