

Instructions for Organizers of NIMBioS Investigative Workshops

NIMBioS Investigative Workshops focus on a broad topic or set of related topics at the interface of biology and mathematics and have relatively large size (up to 35 participants). Workshops attempt to summarize/synthesize the state of the art and identify future directions, and they have potential for leading to one or more future Working Groups. Workshops meet at NIMBioS just once for up to 2.5 days. This document provides instructions for organizers and describes some *best practices* for conducting a successful NIMBioS Workshop.

Before the Workshop:

- *At least two weeks* before the Workshop meeting, **provide NIMBioS (Jennifer Spar, jspar@nimbios.org) and participants with a clear but flexible AGENDA for the meeting**, including the overall goals. *Flexibility is important*. Be prepared for last minute schedule changes from cancellations due to a variety of reasons.
- **The AGENDA should include times for breakfast, lunch, a reception, and a group photograph**. If you have questions about scheduling a group photo or scheduling breakfast, lunch, or the reception, please contact Jennifer Spar (jspar@nimbios.org).
- Have participants provide short introductions (1 brief paragraph) on the Workshop's WordPress site, if the Workshop has one. At the organizers' request, NIMBioS will create a WordPress site to facilitate group communication and information sharing for the workshop. This is an interactive tool for sharing resources and comments before, during and after the meeting. All participants will receive an official email from WordPress inviting you to join the site. You will be asked to click on the link in the email from WordPress to accept the invitation. Before the meeting, we encourage you to introduce yourself to the rest of the group by writing a post with some details about your background and what you hope to gain from the meeting. Full details on how to post, comment and upload files to the WordPress site will be available at the WordPress site created for your workshop.
[How-to on NIMBioS WordPress for Organizers](#)
- *At least two weeks before the Workshop*, provide participants via the WordPress site access to relevant background information related to the Workshop topic (e.g. papers, presentations, datasets). Organizers should also ask participants to post resources they feel are relevant to the topic as well.
- Select a subset of participants to give presentations on topics focused on the goals of the Workshop (e.g. needed background, available data, existing models). Ensure that presenters and co-organizers are clear about what their roles will be in the upcoming Workshop.

During the Workshop:

- *On the first day of the Workshop*, have participants briefly introduce themselves and give their research perspectives on the goals of the group. Encourage the use of the WordPress site, if there is one.
- *At the start of each day*, communicate the objectives for the day to the group.
- Remember that everyone in the group has different levels of expertise in different areas. Allow for plenty of questions and discussion after presentations.
- If forming subgroups within the group, ensure that participants in each subgroup clearly understand their objectives. Link these objectives to the larger Workshop goals.
- Ensure that participants in each subgroup understand how their work will tie in to the work of the other subgroups to achieve the overall Workshop goals.
- Be organized, but flexible. Allow new ideas to be explored, but keep the group focused on the ultimate Workshop goals.
- Before the conclusion of the Workshop:
 - Identify potential Working Groups that could arise from the Workshop and define who will take the lead in preparing the Working Group applications; and
 - if publications or products will result from the Workshop, define the products that will be produced and who will take the lead in organizing the creation of the product(s).

After the Workshop:

- *Immediately following the Workshop*, write an informal summary of the main ideas/activities of the meeting and post it to the WordPress site for all participants to reference.
- *Within two weeks of the conclusion of the Workshop*, provide the [necessary reports](#) to NIMBioS via email to the Associate Director for Scientific Activities Sergey Gavrilets (sergey@nimbios.org). See http://www.nimbios.org/research/reporting_policy for Reporting Requirements for Organizers
- Submit Workshop-related Working Group applications to NIMBioS, if applicable.
- Post presentation slides from the Workshop on the WordPress site.
- Follow-up with Workshop participants who have volunteered to submit working group applications and/or lead production of [publications and/or products](#) to monitor progress and address any issues that arise.
- Be sure to report to NIMBioS any publications or other products that arise from work related to the Workshop. Visit <http://www.nimbios.org/research/acknowledgment> for suggested acknowledgment formats and information about press releases. For NIMBioS logo image files for inclusion in presentations about NIMBioS-related work, visit <http://www.nimbios.org/logos/> Results may be reported at: <http://www.nimbios.org/research/products>