

EDITORIAL

The 2007 Web Server Issue of *Nucleic Acids Research* is the fifth in a series of annual special issues dedicated to web-based software resources for analysis of molecular biology data. It is freely available online under NAR's open access policy and print copies are available for separate purchase.

The present issue reports on 130 web servers. A handful of these are updates to existing web servers, but the overwhelming majority are new resources. The distribution of topics provides a snapshot of challenging problems in current research. DNA and genes are the focus of a third of the web servers, which are dedicated primarily to gene annotation, EST analysis, transcription factor binding site prediction or microarray data analysis. Proteins are the subject of another third, with a majority of those dedicated to structure prediction, docking, or functional site analysis. RNA is the topic of one in nine, which are primarily for structure or alternate splicing prediction. The remainder forms an eclectic mix of servers for alignment, phylogenomics, text mining, and biomolecular networks. The scientists and programmers who have provided these resources deserve our immense thanks. They epitomize the scientific spirit of work shared for the benefit of all.

Also included in the present issue is the Bioinformatics Links Directory 2007 update by Joanne Fox, Scott McMillan, and Francis Ouellette of the UBC Bioinformatics Centre. The directory, at http://bioinformatics.ca/links_directory, is a searchable compilation of web servers published in this and previous Web Server issues together with other useful tools, databases and resources for life sciences research. I would like to thank these authors for their tireless work for the community.

The Web Server issue would not be possible without the conscientious efforts of literally hundreds of reviewers. Thanks to you all. My work was made immeasurably easier by the excellent editorial assistance of Fay Oppenheim. Thank you. Thanks also to Karen Otto of NAR and Claire Bird and Emma Westgate of Oxford University Press for their invaluable assistance. Finally, I would like to thank NAR executive editor Rich Roberts for giving me the opportunity to participate in the creation of this important resource.

For the 2008 Web Server issue, I hope to have a special emphasis on network and pathway analysis and biological text mining, along with topics more generally related to DNA, RNA, and proteins. Authors wishing to submit manuscripts for the 2008 Web Server issue MUST contact me (at narwbsrv@bu.edu) to check the suitability of their proposed submission by 31 December 2007 at the latest. A maximum one page summary of the web server function, along with the URL address of the fully functional website, should be submitted for this purpose. Detailed instructions and requirements are presented at http://www.oxfordjournals.org/nar/for_authors/submission_webserver.html and this information should be consulted before sending in the summary. The deadline for submission of articles is 31 January 2008.

Gary Benson

