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The Pistoia Alliance and Scilligence Announce HELM Web Editor

The Pistoia Alliance and Scilligence Corporation are pleased to announce the release of the HELM Web Editor which brings HELM's industry standard biomolecular representation to the browser, greatly enhancing the deployability of the technology for its adopters

As the therapeutic utilization of complex and unique biomolecules has become commonplace in drug discovery R&D, scientists have struggled to represent these entities in their information systems, forcing them to use various "pick and mix" approaches that include multiple nomenclatures and textual descriptions. HELM, the open biomolecular representation standard, has solved this problem by providing a means to represent various types of complex macromolecules (e.g. nucleotides, proteins, antibodies and antibody-drug conjugates) including those that contain non-natural elements such as chemically modified amino acids.

The Pistoia Alliance formalized the HELM notation, originally created by Pfizer scientists as an open standard in early 2013, and publicly released the related software toolkit and editor to the Open Source community. Since its release, HELM has benefited from a growing ecosystem of global adopters and contributors including organizations such as Bristol Myers Squibb, Pfizer, Novartis, Roche, GSK, Ionis, Merck and Co, Scilligence, NextMove Software, ACD/Labs, Arxspan, BioChemfusion, Dassault Systèmes BIOVIA, ChemAxon, Perkin-Elmer, quattro research, EMBL-EBI, NCBI (PubChem) and RDKit.

While the original HELM Applet editor, supporting HELM Notation 1.0 and developed using Java, made it easier for scientists to draw and view macromolecules, technology evolved, leaving the applet unsupported by many browsers. The new HELM Web Editor is completely built on JavaScript, which removes dependencies and increases the compatibilities with modern browsers.

2017 will see further updates to the web editor to add monomer and ruleset management, support for the HELM 2.0 ambiguity features and antibody editing.

As major contributors to this project, Novartis AG and Ionis Pharmaceuticals are adopting the new HELM Web Editor.

Dr. Eric Swayze, Vice President of Chemistry and Neuroscience Drug Discovery at Ionis Pharmaceuticals adds: “The new HELM Web Editor makes it easier for our scientists to adopt the HELM technologies, which helps them to more efficiently represent and register complex chemically modified biomolecules, which facilitates exchange of information within the team.”

Dr. Jinbo Lee, CSO of Scilligence adds: “We appreciate the opportunity working on the project. The new HELM Web Editor’s zero-footprint and enhanced usability will help the scientific community including life-science, academic and technology organizations adopt the HELM standard.”

About Pistoia Alliance

The Pistoia Alliance is a global, not-for-profit members’ organization made up of life science companies, technology and service providers, publishers, and academic groups working to lower barriers to innovation in life science and healthcare R&D. It was conceived in 2007 and incorporated in 2009 by representatives of AstraZeneca, GSK, Novartis and Pfizer who met at a conference in Pistoia, Italy. Its projects transform R&D through pre-competitive collaboration. It overcomes common R&D obstacles by identifying the root causes, developing standards and best practices, sharing pre-competitive data and knowledge, and implementing technology pilots. There are currently over 80 member companies; members collaborate on projects that generate significant value for the worldwide life sciences R&D community, using the Pistoia Alliance’s proven framework for open innovation.
www.pistoiaalliance.org

About Scilligence

Scilligence is a leading innovator of web-based cheminformatics and bioinformatics solutions designed for any device, browser, and platform. Scilligence’s tools enhance the knowledge sharing and productivity of researchers in discovery and development of small molecule and biologic therapeutics.