

RSG Start-up Kit



1. What is what?

1.1. What is ISCB?

The International Society for Computational Biology (ISCB) is dedicated to advancing the scientific understanding of living systems through computation. ISCB communicates the significance of our science to the larger scientific community, governments, and the public at large. It serves a global membership by impacting government and scientific policies, providing high quality publications and meetings, and through distribution of valuable information about training, education, employment and relevant news from related fields. ISCB membership offers many benefits including reduced conference registration fees to several high impact events and reduced subscription prices for a selection of journals of Computational Biology and Bioinformatics.

The annual meeting of the ISCB is Intelligent Systems for Molecular Biology (ISMB). Over the past sixteen years the ISMB conference has grown to become the largest bioinformatics conference in the world. The ISMB conferences provide a multidisciplinary forum for disseminating the latest developments in bioinformatics. ISMB brings together scientists from computer science, molecular biology, mathematics, and statistics. Its principal focus is on the development and application of advanced computational methods for biological problems.

For more information about ISCB please visit: <http://www.iscb.org>

1.2. What is ISCB-SC?

The ISCB Student Council (SC) is a section of ISCB dedicated to facilitating opportunities of development for students and young researchers in the field of Computational Biology and Bioinformatics. ISCB-SC was the vision of Manuel Corpas and was officially approved by ISCB Board of Directors (BoD) during ISMB 2004.

The declared mission of the ISCB Student Council is to promote the development of the next generation of Computational Biologists through provision of scientific events, networking opportunities, soft skill training, educational resources and career advice. To best suit local needs, the Student Council has taken up the initiative of establishing Regional Student Groups (RSGs). We see these regional groups of students as local windows to global opportunities. All RSGs function in close collaborations with the Student Council catering needs-based solution to their members. See 1.3 below for further details.

The annual meeting of the SC is the Student Council Symposium (SCS), which is held in conjunction with ISMB. The SCS is a forum for students and young researchers in the fields of Computational Biology and Bioinformatics. Participants get the opportunity to present their work to an international audience, build a network within the computational biology community and develop important soft skills in an environment that fosters exchange of ideas and knowledge.

For more information about the SC please visit the official ISCB Student Council website: <http://www.iscb.org>

1.3. What is an RSG?

Regional Student Groups (RSGs) are groups established and managed by the SC. RSGs primarily aim to provide a supra-institutional organization, capable of initiating events that would bring together students and young researchers within a country or region.

Creation and maintenance of a global network of Computational Biology students is a vital and challenging task that requires an organization in place. For this purpose, the SC set up the 'RSG-Committee', which manage RSGs across the world. This committee closely liaises with the leaderships of RSGs and periodically reviews their activities. The SC still remains the parent body of the RSGs. Figure 1 illustrates RSGs' relationships with the SC and the ISCB.

For more information on RSGs please visit <http://www.iscb.org/rsg/>

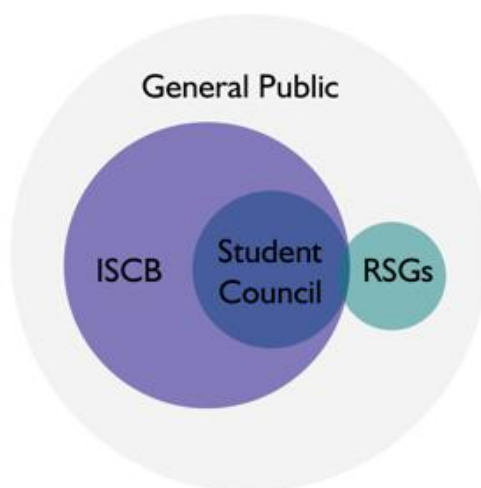


Figure 1. Relationships of RSGs with SC & ISCB

2. Who can start an RSG?

An RSG can be started by any group of dedicated students that want to promote networking, career-building and leadership development opportunities for students from multiple institutions within their local area or region. An RSG starts with:

- One student serving as president and one student serving as secretary; both are required to hold an ISCB membership and joined the SC.
- One faculty advisor to serve as a mentor; he/she is required to hold an ISCB membership.

For information on the procedure of approval for an RSG, refer to section 6.

2.1. Leadership at RSG

The roles of the RSG leadership are listed below. The duties include (but are not limited to) the following:

2.1.1. President

- Provide the vision, execute plans and supervise the outcome of the activities of the RSG through a variety of roles.
- Act as executive head of the RSG and preside over its meetings.
- Supervise the accountability of the RSG for achievable goals, results and finances, which will be reported quarterly to the SC and the SC will provide a comprehensive RSG report annually to the ISCB BoD.
- Promote the scientific development of the young researcher-members of the RSG in the fields of Computational Biology and Bioinformatics.
- Seek out and/or facilitate training opportunities for young researchers.
- Help disseminate resources and information related to the region.
- Nurture a network of local contacts with businesses, academics and local government that have an active interest in Computational Biology research.

2.1.2. Secretary

The Secretary will complement the leadership role of the President.

- Accountable for recording and maintaining all minutes of meetings and all other activities of the RSG.
- Accountable for RSG reports that are submitted to the SC, which are then submitted by the SC to the ISCB BoD.
- Document and maintain contact details (names, addresses, phone numbers and/or emails) within the local network.
- Maintain web resources and periodically update information on the web space provided.
- Ensure prompt communication between the SC and RSG.

RSGs are independent to have additional leadership positions depending on their requirements.

3. Why start an RSG?

The mission of an RSG is to organize events, provide activities and information useful for the development of the students within their local community. An RSG can initiate and establish contacts with local industry and academia creating career opportunities for the students. The advantages of an RSG are listed below:

- Students of Computational Biology and Bioinformatics from more than one institution in a region get together, thus expanding each member's network.
- Students connect with regional and international institutions, thus strengthening bioinformatics in the region.
- Students benefit from the umbrella of the Student Council and the broader opportunities it provides: leadership roles, access to its network, collaboration tools, web-space, support with event planning and help with marketing.

4. How to set up and run your RSG?

4.1. Steps to form an RSG

- Nominate a president, a secretary and a faculty advisor (for ISCB membership criteria, refer to Section 2).
- Prepare a proposal that includes the following information:

- Names and email addresses of the nominated leadership.
- Missions, objectives and goals.
- Activities planned for the first year.

The proposal can be submitted online at the following address: <http://www.iscbosc.org/content/rsg-application-form>

4.2. Periodic updates and changes

4.2.1. Meetings

The RSG leadership is expected to have a schedule of periodic meetings and planned activities. Additionally, the RSG leadership will participate in periodic meetings with the RSG-Committee (Refer: Section 5).

4.2.2. Leadership tenure

It is advised to plan the tenure of the leadership. RSGs are independent to choose their leaders following the expiration of the leadership term. It is hence strongly recommended to setup a protocol for nomination/ election of the new leadership.

4.3. Resources

4.3.1. RSG-Logo

The Student Council has a general template from which RSG's logos can be created. Please contact us (Refer: Section 8), and we can provide a logo, or guidelines for creating one.

4.3.2. Home Page

Each RSG is offered web space on the SC website under the RSG section. The allotted web space is expected to be efficiently used to display information about each RSG and showcase the group's activities.

RSG members are strongly encouraged to register with the SC website (<http://www.iscbosc.org>) to stay updated with all the latest activities in the SC. The website is equipped with a 'Forums' feature to facilitate discussions among members.

4.3.3. Mailing List

A mailing list may be set up to communicate with all the members of the RSG; the mailing list address is to be submitted to the RSG-Committee. The Chair of the RSG-Committee should be made an ex-officio member of the mailing list.

4.3.4. Projectpath accounts

The RSG leadership will be provided with accounts on the ISCB-SC Projectpath website (<http://iscbosc.projectpath.com/>), which is presently serving as a communication platform for all the SC and RSG leaders.

5. Review

The RSG leadership can participate in bi-monthly (every other month) meetings with the RSG-Committee to share their RSGs activities and receive updates on the activities of other RSGs.

An annual report must be submitted summarizing the RSGs activities and accomplishments for the preceding year. This report will be reviewed by the RSG-Committee, after which it will be included in the annual RSG report.

6. Approval of RSG

RSG-Committee will review the submitted proposal and forward the same to the SC leadership. Upon ISCB membership status verification of the leadership and faculty advisor, and review of the proposal, SC will approve the RSG and process a letter stating the same.

RSG approval and benefits are for a term of one year starting on August 1st of the year through July 31st of the following year. If a new RSG is approved mid-year, affiliation and benefits would be valid from the date of approval through end of the term (July 31st).

7. Important Notes

- RSGs are not allowed to solicit or collect any funds in the name of ISCB or ISCB-SC.
- Membership in an RSG does not equate to membership in ISCB; RSG members wishing to become ISCB members must register and pay for membership at <http://www.iscb.org/iscb-membership>.
- RSGs must seek the SC's permission prior to using the latter's name or logo on any publicity material.
- RSG-Committee requests all RSGs to notify and discuss with it events planned such as a conferences, symposia or workshops. Discussions will be mutually beneficial to both the SC and the concerned RSG.

8. Contacts

Several RSGs across the world have been approved by ISCB. Interaction between RSGs is strongly encouraged.

For question(s) not answered above, please write to us at rsg@iscbsc.org. We will be happy to hear from you.

RSG Committee
rsg@iscbsc.org
