



Guidelines and policies for International Human Epigenome Consortium associate membership

The International Human Epigenome Consortium (IHEC) aims to define and coordinate the production of reference maps of human epigenomes for key cellular states relevant to health and diseases, to facilitate rapid distribution of the data to the research community, and to accelerate translation of this new knowledge to improve human health.

IHEC offers researchers who are not currently associated with an IHEC member consortia the opportunity to apply to join IHEC as non-voting associate members. Associate members are expected to contribute to the aims of IHEC by generating or interpreting epigenomic datasets that meet established quality and metadata standards. See <http://ihec-epigenomes.org/research/reference-epigenomestandards>. All epigenomic data produced with an IHEC label must be made freely available to the research community through submission to the IHEC data portal and in a raw format to the public repositories (such as the European Genome-phenome Archive, the database of Genotypes and Phenotypes, the European Nucleotide Archive ENA, DNA Data Bank of Japan). Interpretations/contributions to cross-consortium integrative analyses of existing datasets must also be made freely available to the research community.

Associate members are expected to actively engage in IHEC activities - i.e. participate in working groups as appropriate, may attend IHEC annual meetings, and to abide by all policies approved by the International Human Epigenome Consortium. See <http://ihec-epigenomes.org/about/ihec-membership/associated>. Failure to abide by these rules and policies may result in suspension of membership. Prior to attending closed IHEC member meetings, associate members will be required to sign a conflict of interest certification.

Investigators that wish to apply for Associate Member status should submit a letter of intent to (mhirst@bcgsc.ca and j.walter@mx.uni-saarland.de) that describes their planned contribution (i.e. datasets, analyses) and a list of all personnel that will be part of this agreement, along with their titles and affiliations. The letter should also include a statement that indicates their willingness to abide by all relevant policies, as stated above. Letters will be submitted to the IHEC International Scientific Steering Committee for discussion and approval. Applicants will be notified of the decision following this meeting. See <http://ihec-epigenomes.org/about/committees/issc>.