

Computational Biology and Bioinformatics in Nigeria

Segun A. Fatumo^{1,2,3*}, Moses P. Adoga^{4,5}, Opeolu O. Ojo^{6,7}, Olugbenga Oluwagbemi^{8,9}, Tolulope Adeoye¹⁰, Itunuoluwa Ewejobi^{8,9}, Marion Adebisi^{8,9}, Ezekiel Adebisi^{8,9}", Clement Bewaji¹¹", Oyekanmi Nashiru¹"

¹H3Africa Bioinformatics Network (H3ABioNet) Node, National Biotechnology Development Agency (NABDA), Federal Ministry of Science and Technology (FMST), Abuja, Nigeria, ²Human Genetics Department, Wellcome Trust Sanger Institute, Cambridge, United Kingdom, ³International Health Research Group, Department of Public Health & Primary Care, University of Cambridge, Cambridge, United Kingdom, ⁴Computational and Evolutionary Biology/Bioinformatics, Faculty of Life Sciences, University of Manchester, Manchester, United Kingdom, ⁵Microbiology Unit, Department of Biological Sciences, Nasarawa State University, Keffi, Nigeria, ⁶Centre for Molecular Biosciences, University of Ulster, Coleraine, United Kingdom, ⁷Chevron Biotechnology Centre, Federal University of Technology, Yola, Nigeria, ⁸Department of Computer and Information Sciences, Covenant University, Ota, Nigeria, ⁹H3ABioNet Node, Covenant University Bioinformatics Research (CUBRe), Ota, Nigeria, ¹⁰University of Hradec Kralove, Kralove, Czech Republic, ¹¹Department of Biochemistry, University of Ilorin, Ilorin, Nigeria

Abstract: Over the past few decades, major advances in the field of molecular biology, coupled with advances in genomic technologies, have led to an explosive growth in the biological data generated by the scientific community. The critical need to process and analyse such a deluge of data and turn it into useful knowledge has caused bioinformatics to gain prominence and importance. Bioinformatics is an interdisciplinary research area that applies techniques, methodologies, and tools in computer and information science to solve biological problems. In Nigeria, bioinformatics has recently played a vital role in the advancement of biological sciences. As a developing country, the importance of bioinformatics is rapidly gaining acceptance, and bioinformatics groups comprised of biologists, computer scientists, and computer engineers are being constituted at Nigerian universities and research institutes. In this article, we present an overview of bioinformatics education and research in Nigeria. We also discuss professional societies and academic and research institutions that play central roles in advancing the discipline in Nigeria. Finally, we propose strategies that can bolster bioinformatics education and support from policy makers in Nigeria, with potential positive implications for other developing countries.

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