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'Biomedical Facebook': New web portal for drug discovery

Published by Newsroom Editor on 16/09/2013



[1]

Researchers can now use www.granatum.org [2] to socially interact and cooperate, build and share hypotheses, search databases, design and execute in-silico experiments to screen potential chemoprevention drugs ahead of in-vitro and in-vivo test.

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The GRANATUM web portal, a kind of 'Facebook for researchers', is online. It is ready to connect biomedical researchers and provide access to information about cancer research and established pharmaceutical agents from 83 global data sources in an integrated, semantically interlinked manner.

The European GRANATUM project started two years ago. Mission: to build a collaboration platform for biomedical researchers in the field of cancer drug research. Version 1.0 of this web portal is now available at www.granatum.org [2]. It provides access to the globally available biomedical knowledge and data resources that the scientists need to prepare complex experiments to identify novel agents for cancer prevention and to design experimental studies. This will accelerate research and reduce its costs.

Faster research results

Scientists from universities, research institutes and pharmaceutical companies are invited to use the GRANATUM Platform to share their knowledge and cooperatively generate expertise and experimental data, thus producing research results faster. Based on the GRANATUM Biomedical Semantic Model researchers can semantically annotate, manage and access biomedical resources, e.g. public databases, digital libraries and archives, online communities and discussions.

A Scientific Workflow Management System for biomedical experts provides a set of advanced tools to create, update, store, and share in-silico modeling experiments for the discovery of new

chemopreventive agents.

Connecting socially

"The GRANATUM Portal will socially connect biomedical research across national boundaries, ease scientific exchange and, for the first time, allow collaboration in formulating hypotheses and testing potential drugs", explains Prof. Wolfgang Prinz, the coordinator of the GRANATUM project and deputy director of the Fraunhofer Institute for Applied Information Technology FIT.

The GRANATUM Portal is based on the BSCW Shared Workspace System developed by Fraunhofer FIT and OrbiTeam Software GmbH (www.bscw.de [3]). It was designed and built in the GRANATUM project as "A Social Collaborative Working Space Semantically Interlinking Biomedical Researchers, Knowledge And Data For The Design And Execution Of In-Silico Models And Experiments In Cancer Chemoprevention", partially funded by the European Commission as part of the FP7 framework.

The GRANATUM consortium includes seven partners:

National University of Ireland Galway (NUIG-DERI), Cybion Srl. (Italy), Centre for Research and Technology Hellas (Greece), University of Cyprus (UCY/CBC and UCY/CS), German Cancer Research Center (DKFZ), UBITECH (Greece), and Fraunhofer FIT acting as project coordinator.

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[3] <http://www.bscw.de>

[4] <mailto:wolfgang.prinz@fit.fraunhofer.de?subject=Granatum%20Web%20Portal>

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