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Final Report

The Synthetic Biology conference series (SBx.0) is the preeminent academic meeting in synthetic biology. Organized by the BioBricks Foundation, the SBx.0 conference series brings together leading researchers, students, industry executives, and policy makers from around the world to share, consider, debate, and plan efforts to make biology easier to engineer. Historically held every two years, the SBx.0 conferences are held in alternating locations in the United States, Europe, and Asia to encourage global participation and collaboration so that the ramifications of synthetic biology research and development are most likely to be safe ethical, and beneficial.

On 9-11 July 2013, the 6th installment of the synthetic biology conference series (SB6.0) was held on the campus of Imperial College London (http://sb6.biobricks.org). The SB6.0 conference was attended by over 700 people, and many more were able to participate via video digital conference (http://sb6.biobricks.org/digital-conference/). Over the course of three days, the SB6.0 conference agenda included plenary sessions, workshops, and poster presentations covering topics ranging from the infrastructure needs arising when "Systematic Engineering Meets Biological Complexity" and design-led considerations for "Connecting People and Technologies" to discussions on "Engineering Biology for New Materials," "Assessing Risk and Managing Biocontainment," and "New Directions for Energy and Sustainability."

The $10,150 grant awarded by the U.S. Department of Energy (DE-SC0010233) to the BioBricks Foundation was used to provide partial reimbursement for the travel expenses of leading researchers from the United States to speak at the SB6.0 conference. A total of $9,450 was used to reimburse U.S. speakers for actual expenses related to the SB6.0 conference, including airfare (economy or coach only), ground transportation, hotel, and registration fees. In addition, $700 of the grant was used to offset direct administrative costs associated with selecting speakers (preparing announcements, evaluating abstract submissions) and handling travel arrangements.

Leading U.S. researchers selected to speak at the SB6.0 conference included:

Adam Arkin, Ph.D.
Division Director of the Physical Biosciences Division at the Lawrence Berkeley National Laboratory and Professor in the Department of Bioengineering at UC Berkeley

Jay Keasling, Ph.D.
Professor in the Department of Bioengineering at Berkeley, Senior Faculty Scientist and Associate Laboratory Director of the Lawrence Berkeley National Laboratory, and Chief Executive Officer of the Joint BioEnergy Institute.

Debra Mathews, Ph.D.
Assistant Director for Science Programs for the Johns Hopkins Berman Institute of Bioethics, Assistant Professor in the Department of Pediatrics, and Affiliate Faculty in the McKusick-Nathans Institute of Genetic Medicine, Johns Hopkins School of Medicine.

Richard Murray, Ph.D.
Thomas E. and Doris Everhart Professor of Control & Dynamical Systems and Bioengineering at Caltech.

Sarah Richardson, Ph.D.
Distinguished Postdoctoral Fellow in Genomics at the Lawrence Berkeley National Laboratory and the Department of Energy Joint Genome Institute.

and others (for a complete listing of speakers presenting at the SB6.0 conference see http://sb6.biobricks.org/speakers/)

The SB6.0 conference was the largest synthetic biology conference to date, and highlights of the SB6.0 conference have been published in a special issue of ACS Synthetic Biology (http://pubs.acs.org/toc/asbcd6/3/3). The BioBricks Foundation appreciates the support of the U.S. Department of Energy in helping to make this most influential and important conference in the field of synthetic biology a success.