

Dear ICBO 2014 Participant,

It is with great pleasure that we welcome you to Houston, Texas for the 5th International Conference on Biomedical Ontology! Since the inaugural ICBO in Buffalo in 2009, the conference has emerged as the premier forum for dissemination of work in applied ontology. This year is no exception.

We have an outstanding program, and for that, we thank you. Without the support of the community advancing the field, the conference could not thrive. We were duly impressed at the quality of workshops, tutorials, scientific papers, early-career papers, panels, posters, and software demonstrations submitted this year. We also have the fortune of distinguished keynote speakers, panelists, and invited-update presenters.

With an increased emphasis on applications of ontology this year, we have unique panels with NASA and the developers of MedDRA. With NASA, we will be confronting the immediate and critical data challenges in promoting and studying the health of astronauts. With MedDRA, we are addressing the issue of how to transform this resource for the future.

We also are co-located with Energizing Health, which brings together innovators and investors to catalyze new information technology to improve health. We know that ontology will play a critical role.

The field of biomedical ontology has come a long way since the first ICBO. As always, the goal is to create ontologies that work together for efficient information management, including interoperability and reasoning. With the advent of datasets that are increasing exponentially in size, the net result could tragically be ever-larger silos with lost opportunities for scientific discovery.

Yet there is reason to be optimistic in the shadow of such challenges, as ICBO 2014 brings new findings that apply to their solutions. We hope this conference serves as a catalyst for your work and for the advancement of biomedical ontology at large.

We also trust that the setting in Houston, Texas will be a refreshing environment that heightens the senses, sharpens the intellect, opens the mind, and fosters a collaborative spirit. We welcome you!

Sivaram Arabandi

William Hogan

Brian Lang