

**From:** [Scott Allen Jackson](#)  
**To:** [Divseek Meetings](#); [Peter Wenzl](#)  
**Subject:** Re: Invitation to a DivSeek roundtable discussion  
**Date:** Wednesday, December 09, 2015 6:30:07 PM

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Hi, Has the location for this meeting in San Diego been set yet? I probably need to make hotel reservations.

Thanks, Scott Jackson

On Nov 12, 2015, at 1:55 AM, Divseek Meetings <[meetings@divseek.org](mailto:meetings@divseek.org)> wrote:

Dear DivSeek partners and colleagues interested in DivSeek,

The DivSeek Initiative will convene a **roundtable discussion between 13:00 and 17:00 on January 8, 2016, in San Diego**. The focus will be to solicit input about DivSeek's role and identity in the larger landscape, its organizational structure, and its role in promoting access to and exchange of genetic diversity data.

We **invite 1-2 members from your organization** to attend and will follow up shortly with details about the venue.

In the meantime, we provide some updates on DivSeek activities. The DivSeek Charter has now been endorsed by 59 organizations. Since the Partners' Assembly (PA) meeting in January 2015 in San Diego, eight Steering Committee (SC) members were elected through electronic voting; the first SC meeting was held in Rome in May 2015 and the second is to be held in Bonn in December 2015. The 2016 Partners' Assembly will take place during spring-summer and will be announced as soon as that date is set.

According to the Charter, the DivSeek Initiative aims to (1) facilitate networking among partners interested in the application of state-of-the-art genotyping and phenotyping technologies to deepen our understanding of crop diversity, (2) promote the development of common standards to link germplasm with characterization data and to enable interoperability among information systems, (3) develop an annual work plan with a budget and a resource mobilization plan, and (4) organize capacity-building workshops.

In keeping with these stated goals and principles, DivSeek has been undertaking a landscaping study to take stock of ongoing research that is relevant to the Initiative, providing the basis for discussing DivSeek's identity in a larger context.

In addition, over the course of the year, an SC subcommittee was tasked

to help identify an organizational (governance) structure that will enable DivSeek to define and execute a work plan and seek external funding. DivSeek has supported the use of permanent unique identifiers (PUIDs) for tracking germplasm and facilitating data integration. A study funded by JFU member organizations at Arizona State University (ASU) was asked to examine strategies for data sharing in other community-driven initiatives to provide a foundation for a discussion about DivSeek policies. Finally, several capacity building workshops are being organized to promote the adoption of standards and sharing of data and information.

The **topics for discussion** at the January roundtable include:

- **The identity of DivSeek.** The landscaping study documents more than 50 projects relevant to DivSeek goals and principles that are currently underway around the world (see <http://www.divseek.org/landscape> for a draft list). These projects either focus on evaluating over a dozen crops at the genotypic and phenotypic levels or the development of information systems, software tools and data standards. How should DivSeek interact with these projects to help researchers network, develop and adopt common standards, improve interoperability among information systems, and promote information sharing?
- **Data sharing and private-sector involvement.** The team at ASU will summarize its findings from a study on data-sharing in genetics research based on a review of eight community-driven initiatives. Lessons learned will be presented in the context of DivSeek to seek input from public and private sector colleagues.
- **DivSeek organizational structure.** A report from the SC will outline a refined organizational (governance) structure that should enable DivSeek to become more inclusive, responsive, and capable of launching externally-funded projects.
- **Permanent Unique Identifiers (PUID).** DivSeek supports the use of PUID for crop germplasm as a way to track samples, link them to genotypic and phenotypic information, enable data integration, and promote interoperability among diverse information systems. We will update you on progress in this area.
- **Capacity Building.** Members of the SC are exploring the possibility that DivSeek co-organize capacity-building workshops, including training in ontologies and developing standards for integrating data across species, geographies and laboratories. We are seeking your guidance on areas to prioritize.

We hope to see you at the DivSeek roundtable discussion on Jan. 8 in San Diego, and we look forward to your input!

Regards and best wishes,

*Susan McCouch*

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Chair, DivSeek Partners' Assembly