

# 2018-04-01 VIVO Updates

**VIVO Camp** It's not too late to make arrangements to. Join for VIVO Camp at the Biomedical Library on the campus of the University of California San Diego. VIVO Camp is two and a half days of training regarding VIVO. We cover implementation strategy, data ingest and management, tools for use with VIVO, VIVO ontology, SPARQL, customizations and much more. For more information and to register for VIVO camp, please visit [The VIVO Camp site](#)

**VIVO Conference** The VIVO Conference will be held June 6-8 at the JB Duke Hotel on the campus of Duke University. Join colleagues from around the world in presentations and discussions regarding the representation and presentation of information regarding scholarship. Register today! <http://vivoconference.org>

**Change of address** As part of an effort to clarify the relationship between Duraspace and the VIVO Project, I am changing my email address to [mconlon@ufl.edu](mailto:mconlon@ufl.edu). Older addresses will be forwarded, but Google Docs need to be shared with [mconlon@ufl.edu](mailto:mconlon@ufl.edu). Changing addresses is never straightforward, I expect a bit of disruption. I appreciate everyone's patience in this change.

**New in the Apps and Tools Catalog** The [Apps and Tools Catalog](#) is a place to find software that works with VIVO. New this week in the catalog is software for making queries of VIVO from Python. The VIVO RDFLIB Sparqlstore by [Ted Lawless](#) is a set of functions that make it easy for python programmers to request and get data from VIVO. Check it out here: [VIVO RDFLIB Sparqlstore](#)

**11th RDA Plenary, Berlin** I had the pleasure of attending the Research Data Alliance meeting in Berlin. RDA is a great group – very focused on sharing research data – policy, culture, technology – and on producing changes needed to improve data sharing. A full trip report is available here [2018-03-21 Trip Report -- 11th RDA Plenary, Berlin, Germany](#)

**Outreach and Engagement Call** This Thursday at 1 PM US Eastern, the [Outreach and Engagement Interest Group](#) will have its call. All are welcome! Share stories, concerns, questions about developing VIVO community at your institution.

**Action Planning** As many of you may know, the VIVO Project held a significant strategy meeting on March 1. The group identified five "action planning areas" — each is tasked with developing goals, engaging the community, and executing their goals over the course of the coming year. One of the action planning areas is "Product Evolution". This should come as no surprise, and I hope for most it comes as a welcome relief. Now we will have an open process for discussing the evolution of the software.

The VIVO software has remained mostly unchanged for several years. There have been improvements in technical infrastructure, addressing bugs and performance issues, while simplifying the build process, and technical documentation has been developed. The coming release continues the recent approach of updating technical dependencies, while introducing the triple pattern fragments API, a significant new feature for semantic web developers looking to access VIVO data.

But over these years, VIVO sites have developed their own solutions to pressing needs not addressed by the project. The creativity, ingenuity and craftsmanship of these sites has been overwhelming — sites have built their own front-ends, their own means for optimizing the system, their own APIs, their own widgets and visualizations, their own internationalization improvements, local analytics systems, their own editing systems, and most have developed their own custom tools for gathering, and managing data.

Such independent action speaks to the basic validity of the underlying design and architecture of the system. It is possible to do all these things with the software provided by the project. But it shouldn't be required. The software should do more of common value for the community. And the community should have the means to develop together, so that the improvements made by one site become improvements that can be used by all sites.

Progress is being made on working together. Since the beginning of the year we have new interest and new effort. The committers group is meeting regularly to establish best practices. The developers group is meeting regularly to write, commit, review, and merge code. The ontology group has developed a definitive version of the VIVO ontology in preparation for enhancements. A first open two week sprint will be held April 23-May 4 to ready the next release, while practicing our new ways of working together.

The product evolution effort has identified a pressing need — the aging and difficult presentation layer for VIVO. Combining several of the most often expressed needs (look and feel, use of modern technology, developer engagement, user experience, functionality, and response) the effort seeks to design and build an MVP front end for VIVO using VIVO data over the course of the year. The group will know if it has succeeded if the groups with custom front ends are able to migrate to the new front-end.

It is an exciting time and there are many questions. VIVO is an open community. Please ask questions and join efforts.

- To get involved with action planning, contact [Julia Trimmer](#)
- To get involved with development, contact [Andrew Woods](#)
- To get involved with product evolution, contact [Paul Albert](#)

And for any question you may have about anything related to the VIVO project, please post to [Vivo-community@googlegroups.com](mailto:Vivo-community@googlegroups.com) or [VIVO-tech@googlegroups.com](mailto:VIVO-tech@googlegroups.com)

Go VIVO!

Mike

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