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What is i-FAB?

An international collaborative community of all people related to foot and ankle biomechanics

Broad aims:

To connect FAB people regardless of discipline, sector and location

To promote integration of research activities

Accelerate research developments

Stronger learning and collaborative community

Build international activities to address common research challenges



What is i-FAB?

It is **NOT** a new biomechanics Society, Technical group, Association, Interest group or any other traditional form of Scientific organisation

It is an initiative and a project designed to establish a new method of working for anyone interested in foot and ankle biomechanics

The project seeks to establish a series of IT tools which people in the community, including existing organisations and groups, can use to best meet their own objectives

Our objective is to facilitate research developments in all areas of foot and ankle biomechanics, there are no pre existing areas of priority

How the IT tools are used is for the users in the community to decide



Why do we need i-FAB?

Multiple stakeholders related to foot and ankle biomechanics

- Industry
- Clinical
- Academics

Currently there is no vehicle for cohesion between these groups.

Conferences main vehicle for connectivity

i-FAB intends to be the vehicle for greater integration of research activities related to foot and ankle biomechanics



Why do we need i-FAB?

- The foot is uniquely complex
- Many experimental, measurement and computational challenges
- Requires co-ordinated effort to address these challenges.

Increase visibility of FAB - ensure we attract high calibre researchers to foot and ankle research

Critical mass of research activity could be formed (greater than the sum of the parts).



The proposed community would be driven by

- the collective desire to improve our understanding of foot and ankle biomechanics as it applies to health and disease,
- the design, development and evaluation of surgical approaches and surgical devices used on the foot and ankle,
- and insoles, footwear and surfaces which influence foot and ankle biomechanics.

Community has philosophy of inclusively so that as many perspectives on the foot and ankle can be integrated.



How will this be achieved?

Principal vehicle will be a **collaborative workspace**

Using a Wikipedia model

New way for working collaboratively and acting as a community

Web based environment for presenting, storing, retrieving and contributing to information, data and the activities within an online community.

It is not a web site which only gives out information

It is an IT infrastructure for collaborative working

Comprises tools to enable users to shape community wide activities.



i-FAB Collaborative workspace

Examples.

- International project repository.
- Free project web site hosting, forums, and repository.
- Clustering of research activity around key areas defined as important by the community



i-FAB Collaborative workspace

Development of specific online communities -

Post graduate student community

User generated forums around specific topics

User generated voting – e.g. methodology consensus, terminology, conference programme development



i-FAB Collaborative workspace

Conference calendar/reminders

Code/software sharing

Repository of conference abstracts

Free hosting of conference web sites.

Monthly email of new journal papers

News bulletins



i-FAB Collaborative workspace

Good evidence of collaborative workspaces being beneficial and popular and easy to use from other sectors

University of Salford will provide i-FAB workspace through existing IT services



i-FAB first “get together”

September 2008

hosted by Dr Alberto Leardini

and colleagues from the
Movement Analysis Laboratory, Institute Orthopedic Rizzoli,
Bologna, Italy.

The meeting will seek to drive the i-FAB objectives, the development of international projects, international consensus and communication amongst researchers.

Not the usual conference format!



Timetable

July 2nd 2007 – public launch

- Initial registration of members (from ISB delegation)
- Web site live
- September 2008 – Italy get together



July 2007-December 2007

- Dissemination of i-FAB activities through newsletters, conference presentations
- Approach key academic, clinical and industry stakeholders worldwide (early adopters)
- Development of phase 1 collaborative workspace – five international test sites

Workspace to go public in 2008.



Funding

This is currently unfunded

In order to approach suitable funding agencies we expect to:

- 1) Provide evidence for the need for i-FAB (so please register)**
- 2) Identify leaders**

Thus, first 12 months (2007-2008) is a preparatory phase for i-FAB



What you can do to help.....

- 1) Register to join i-FAB
- 2) Put September 2008 in your diary
- 3) Contribute and respond to calls for information and support from the Steering group over the next 12 months





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