NIH MICAD Initiative and Guest Author Program Opportunities

In 2003, the National Institutes of Health (NIH) launched the NIH Roadmap for Medical Research initiatives with a vision to transform the nation's medical research capabilities and speed the movement of scientific discoveries from the bench to the bedside (http://nihroadmap.nih.gov).

The Molecular Imaging and Contrast Agent Database (MICAD; http://micad.nih.gov) program has been developed as a key component of the Molecular Imaging Roadmap and is intended to enhance the discovery and availability of novel molecules for molecular imaging. The mission of MICAD is to foster research and development in molecular imaging by providing freely accessible online scientific information on in vivo molecular imaging and contrast agents. MICAD is designed to provide the basic and clinical research communities with concise, up-to-date, and highly relevant information on molecular imaging and contrast agents in an easy-to-read textual format.

The MICAD concept was initially formulated by the Molecular Libraries and Imaging Program Implementation Group (http://nihroadmap.nih.gov/molecularlibraries/members.asp). A trans-NIH panel composed of both NIH staff and extramural experts in molecular imaging was formed to establish the framework for implementing MICAD. Scientists for MICAD were recruited from across the nation to implement, develop, promote, and maintain the database with guidance from the trans-NIH panel. The MICAD program has been developed and is managed jointly by the National Center for Biotechnology Information (NCBI) and the National Cancer Institute (NCI).

The MICAD database is structured as text-based information modeled on the National Library of Medicine "Books" infrastructure (www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/entrez/query/Books.live/Help/bookover.html), which was originally developed for the World Wide Web by NCBI in the Entrez cross-database search system. Using the NCBI "Bookshelf" infrastructure, the MICAD database is organized to present concise, up-to-date information in a printable PDF "chapters" format. For each agent featured in the database, MICAD scientists perform a comprehensive biomedical literature search. The information is then compiled, analyzed, and translated into a standardized chapter format. The MICAD Web site was launched in September 2005, and as of May 2007 more than 200 agents have been included. To accelerate expansion of the database to include all published in vivo molecular imaging and contrast agents, the MICAD program has recently implemented a procedure for members of the imaging community to write and submit entries (chapters) for publication in the database as guest authors. All members of the imaging community are encouraged to consider preparing and submitting chapters of their agents of interest to the MICAD database. Interested individuals should contact the MICAD Scientific Imaging Editors (Kam Leung, PhD, Arvind Chopra, PhD, and Kenneth Cheng, PhD) at micad@ncbi.nlm.nih.gov. The MICAD editors are available to work with individual authors and provide detailed instructions, style guidelines, and a chapter template on chapter preparation.

Names of the contributing authors will be acknowledged and included in the MICAD online publication. Contributions are citable in the following format:

{Author Name}.{Chemical name. Abbreviated name}. In: Molecular Imaging and Contrast Agent Database (MICAD) [database online]. Bethesda (MD): National Library of Medicine (US), NCBI; 2004–{current year}. Available from: http://micad.nih.gov.

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