

ANNOUNCEMENT: ISHAM Working Group on Black Yeasts

Black yeasts and related fungi are increasingly recognized as agents of human and animal mycoses, and although infections are uncommon, they are significant because of high degrees of morbidity and mortality. Knowledge on antifungals is still in its infancy. Recent developments enable the distinction of entities that appear to differ strongly in pathogenicity (from superficial colonization to systemic invasion) and host species (from humans to cold-blooded sea animals) and provide insight into routes of dispersal and infection.

Scientists, clinicians and workers in applied fields have a wealth of information on these fungi, which is, however, hardly accessible. We wish to combine these data and bring workers interested in black yeasts together, as we may learn a lot from each other. Above all, we can build up a consortium with sufficient critical mass and impact to stimulate sequencing of some entire genomes of black yeasts. The availability of genome data will enormously boost diagnostics, ecology, evolution and virulence studies.

A simple website has been launched: [www.blackyeast.org](http://www.blackyeast.org), it will be updated very regularly. There is a section to display interesting new publications. We invite everyone to show their latest research data; just send me a PDF and your paper will be placed on the web.

We would like to organize an inaugural meeting at CBS in The Netherlands as soon as possible; a second meeting is scheduled in China in 2008. For the first meeting we plan to start with the programme on a Thursday afternoon and continue till Saturday mid day, depending on the amount of material to be presented. We will organize some nice dinners and pleasant evenings in between. For the date there are several suggestions most likely it will be around 26-28 April, 2007. We expect about 20-30 participants, but if necessary we can accommodate more. The idea is that every participant gives a short oral presentation, just to inform everyone what he or she is doing in this area, or to present research or clinical data. Could you indicate whether you would in principle be interested to attend? I will communicate a preliminary programme soon. Please note that the workshop is a low-budget event. No fee will be charged, but we will probably not be able to support travel and expenses of participants.

I hope to see you all at CBS next year. Best regards,

Sybren de Hoog

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