



**CIFAR**



**12PM**

5PM in London (GMT), 2AM in Tokyo (GMT+9)

**Welcome and Panel: Multiscale  
Human: Definitions, Maps, Models**

**Moderator:** Katy Börner, *Indiana University*

**Panelists:**

- Griffin Weber, *Harvard Medical School (Human Reference Atlas)*
- Karen Miga, *UC Santa Cruz (Pangenome)*
- Clair Walsh, *University College London (Human Organ Atlas)*
- Caterina Strambio, *University of Massachusetts Medical School (4D Nucleome Network)*
- Aviv Regev, *Genentech, Inc. (Human Cell Atlas)*
- Peter Hunter, *Bioengineering Institute New Zealand (SPARC)*
- Maryann Martone, *National Center for Microscopy and Imaging Research (NCMIR)*
- Gary Bader, *University of Toronto, Canada (CIFAR co-director)*

Video: [CIFAR MacMillan Multiscale Human](#)



**Katy Börner, *Indiana University***  
***(HuBMAP, SenNet, HRA, CIFAR Co-Director)***

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# Welcome!

To the first hour of 24!

Each hour will introduce a unique topic related to the multiscale mapping of the human body.

We will cover data, maps and models and the role of 2D/3D visualizations in understanding complex multiscale biological systems.

You'll also learn about the program's founders, funding avenues, and the collaborative efforts advancing this research.

We are glad you can join.

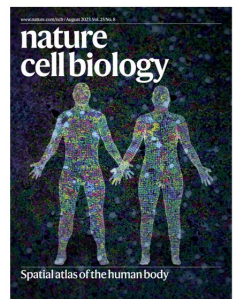
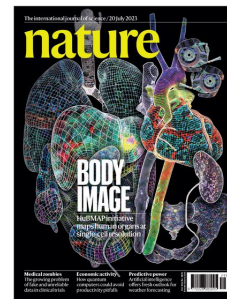
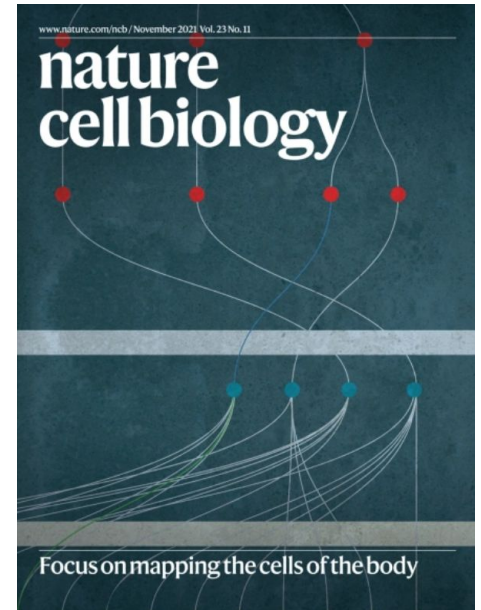
Previous 24h Events: [Science Map 2021](#) | [Human Reference Atlas 2022](#) | [Interactive Data Visualizations 2023](#)

# Human Reference Atlas

## The Human Reference Atlas (HRA)

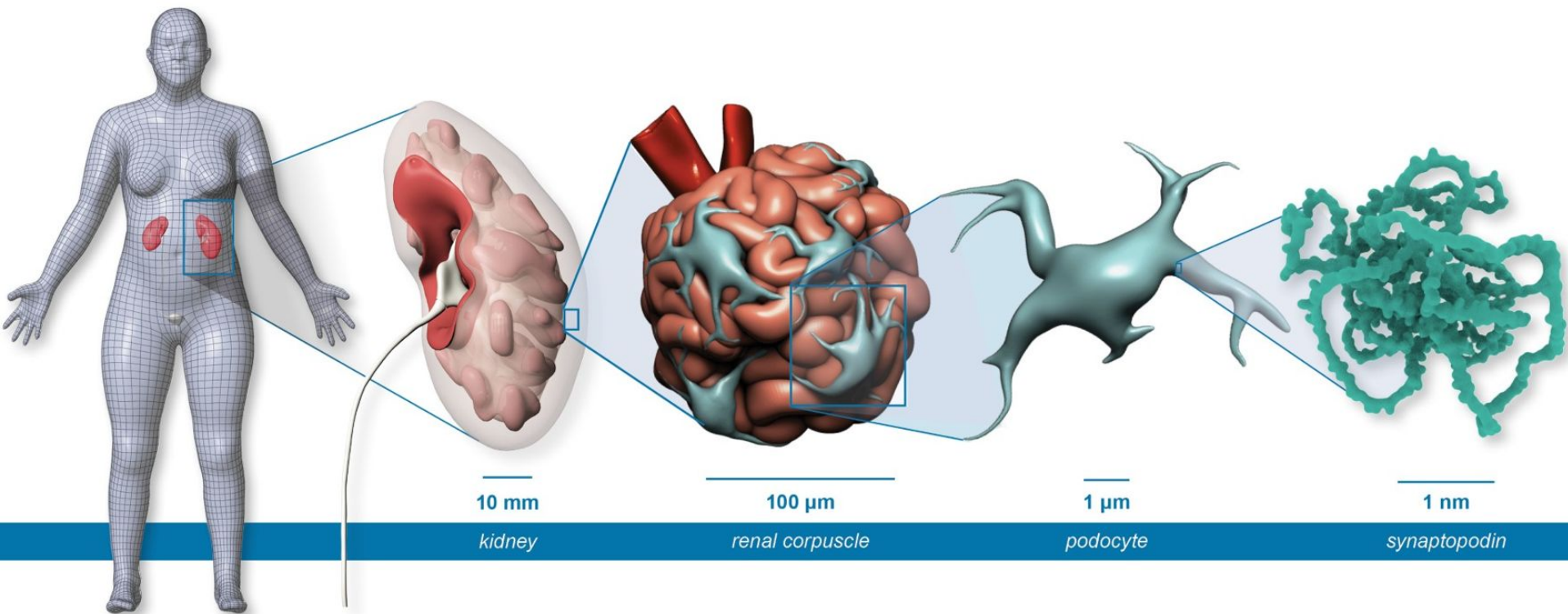
1. defines the 3D space and shape of anatomical structures and cell types that are of biomedical relevance plus the biomarkers used to characterize them. Anatomical structures, cell types and biomarkers are validated and represented in/added to ontologies (Uberon/FMA, CL, HGNC).
2. defines how new datasets can be mapped to the HRA, e.g., spatially using the Visible Human CCF or Vasculature CCF (or both, see next slide), via ASCT+B ontology terms/IDs, or via gene expression data as in Azimuth.
3. it is
  - authoritative (there exists expert agreement and it was validated by data),
  - computable (supports API queries, UIs),
  - published as LOD (connected to gene, disease, and other ontologies and data),
  - open (anyone can use the HRA data and code), and
  - continuously evolving (e.g., as new technologies become available).

<https://www.nature.com/articles/s41556-021-00788-6>



# Human Reference Atlas

A multiscale, high-resolution, three-dimensional, ontologically aligned atlas of anatomical structures and cells in the healthy human body



# HRA-focused HIVE Marker Paper

Accepted as *Nature Methods* 'Resource' paper

The preprint is at

<https://www.biorxiv.org/content/10.1101/2024.03.27.587041v3>

Thanks go to all 170+ Core and HRA Team authors who made this possible.

It is our hope that this joint paper helps align efforts and optimize data formats, APIs.

The screenshot shows the bioRxiv preprint page for the paper "Human BioMolecular Atlas Program (HuBMAP): 3D Human Reference Atlas Construction and Usage". The page includes the Cold Spring Harbor Laboratory logo, the bioRxiv logo, and navigation links. The title is prominently displayed, followed by a list of authors and their affiliations. The abstract is visible, and there are options to download the PDF, print, or share the paper. The page also features a search bar, a "New Results" section, and a "Subject Area" dropdown menu.

CSH Cold Spring Harbor Laboratory

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**Human BioMolecular Atlas Program (HuBMAP): 3D Human Reference Atlas Construction and Usage**

[Katy Börner](#), [Philip D. Blood](#), [Jonathan C. Silverstein](#), [Matthew Ruffalo](#), [Sarah A. Teichmann](#), [Gloria Pryhuber](#), [Ravi Misra](#), [Jeffrey Purkerson](#), [Jean Fan](#), [John W. Hickey](#), [Gesmira Molla](#), [Chuan Xu](#), [Yun Zhang](#), [Griffin Weber](#), [Yashvardhan Jain](#), [Danial Qaurooni](#), [Yongxin Kong](#), HRA Team, [Andreas Bueckle](#), [Bruce W. Herr II](#)

doi: <https://doi.org/10.1101/2024.03.27.587041>

This article is a preprint and has not been certified by peer review [what does this mean?].

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**Abstract**

The Human BioMolecular Atlas Program (HuBMAP) aims to construct a reference 3D structural, cellular, and molecular atlas of the healthy adult human body. The HuBMAP Data Portal (<https://portal.hubmapconsortium.org>) serves experimental datasets and supports data processing, search, filtering, and visualization. The Human Reference Atlas (HRA) Portal (<https://humanatlas.io>) provides open access to atlas data, code, procedures, and instructional materials. Experts from more than 20 consortia are collaborating to construct the HRA's Common Coordinate Framework (CCF), knowledge graphs, and tools that describe the multiscale structure of the human body (from organs and tissues down to cells, genes, and biomarkers) and to use the HRA to understand changes that occur at each of these levels with aging, disease, and other

Posted May 22, 2024.

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**COVID-19 SARS-CoV-2 preprints from medRxiv and bioRxiv**

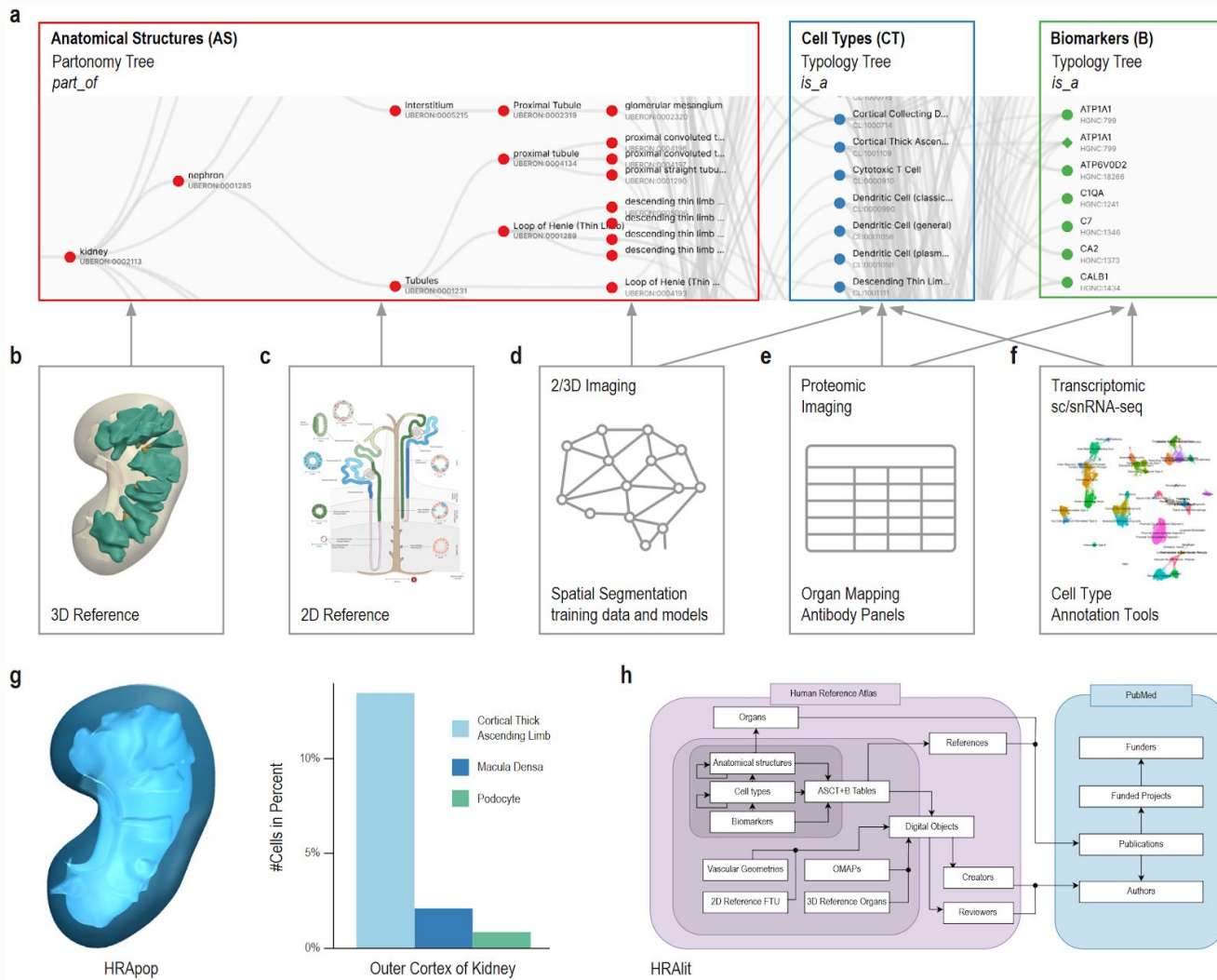
**Subject Area**

**Bioinformatics**

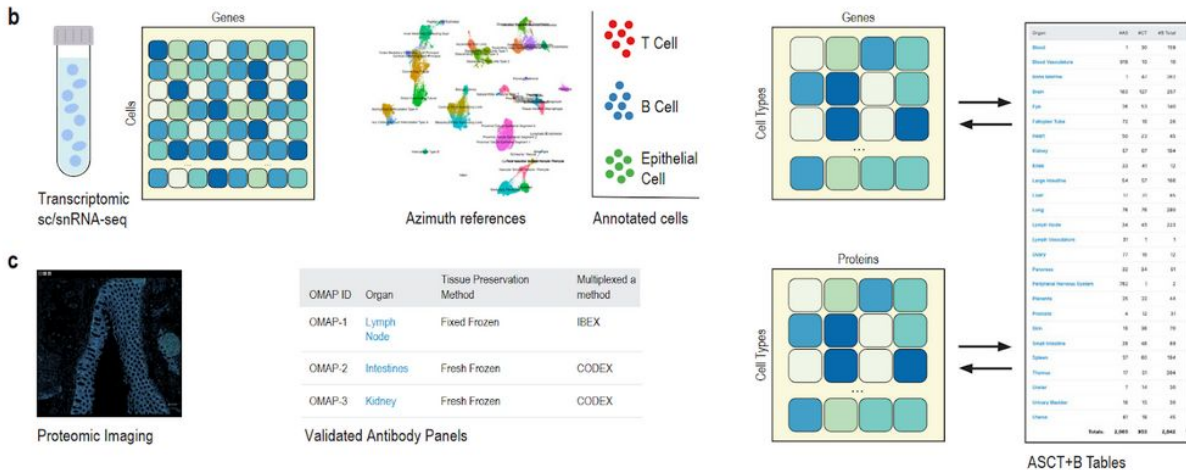
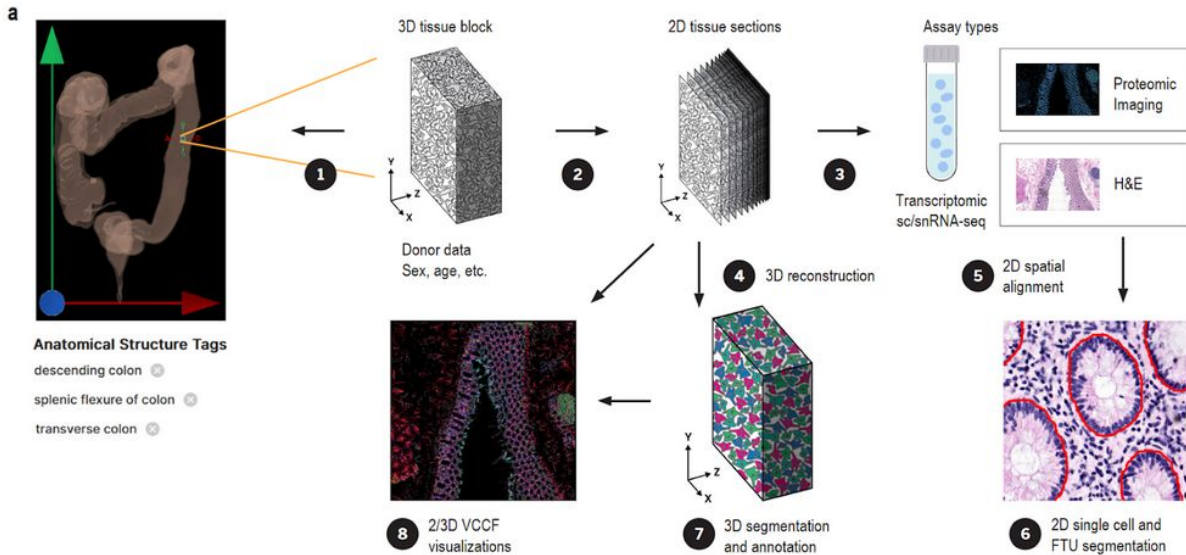
**Subject Areas**

All Articles

- Animal Behavior and Cognition
- Biochemistry
- Bioengineering
- Bioinformatics
- Biophysics

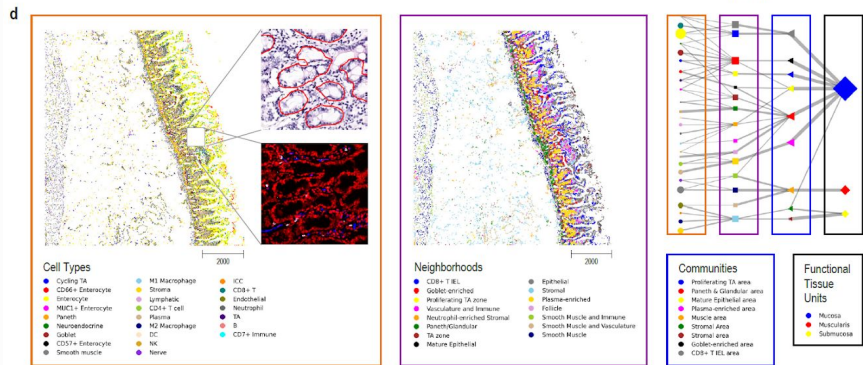
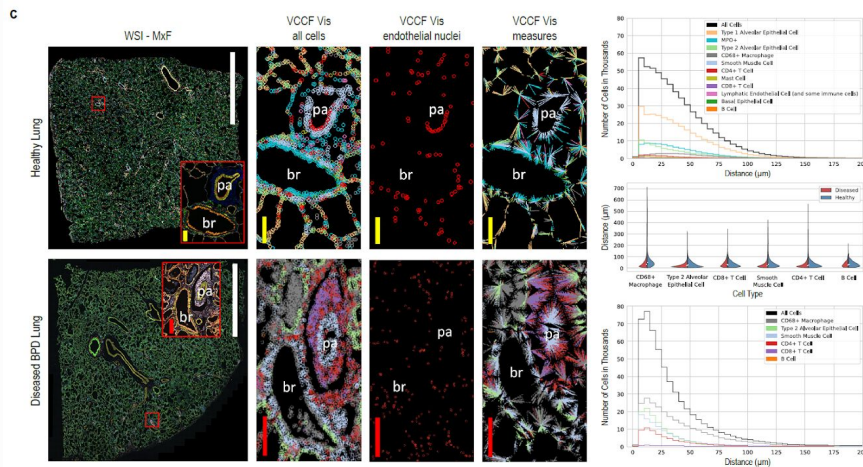
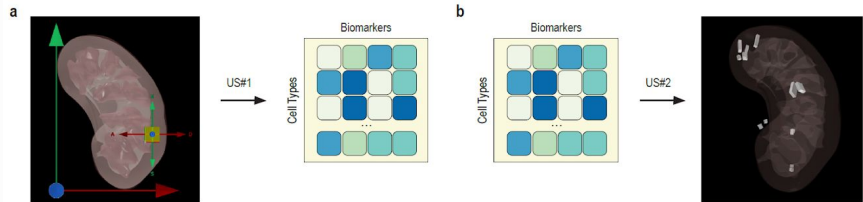


**Figure 1: Human Reference Atlas (HRA) components and linkages.** **a.** The anatomical structures, cell types and biomarkers (ASCT+B) tables document the nested *part\_of* structure of organs (e.g., cells that make up functional tissue units, successively larger anatomical structures, an entire organ such as the kidney, which is *part\_of* the body). The cells that make up (are *located\_in*) each of the anatomical structures are organized in a multi-level cell type typology with 'cell' at the root and more and more specialized child nodes. The biomarkers used to *characterize* cell types might have one of five types: genes, proteins, metabolites, proteoforms, and lipids organized in a biomarker typology. Gray arrows indicate crosswalks that connect other HRA DOs to ASCT+B tables. **b.** The HRA 3D reference objects represent the shape, size, location, and rotation of 1,218 3D anatomical structures of 356 types for 65 organs with crosswalks to ASCT+B tables. Shown are 'renal papilla' and 'renal pyramid' in the kidney. **c.** 2D reference illustrations document the shape, size, and spatial layout of 3,726 2D cells of 131 types for 22 FTUs in 10 organs with crosswalks to ASCT+B tables. Shown is the kidney nephron. **d.** Labeled training data exist for FTUs in five organs with crosswalks (gray arrows) to anatomical structures and cell types in the ASCT+B tables. **e.** 13 Organ Mapping Antibody Panels (OMAPs) are linked to 197 Antibody Validation Reports (AVRs) and there exist crosswalks to cell types and biomarkers in ASCT+B tables. **f.** 10 Azimuth references for healthy adult organs plus crosswalks to cell types and biomarkers in ASCT+B tables. **g.** Cell type populations from single cell experimental data exist for 74 3D anatomical structures across 23 organs with 13 unique UBERON IDs in the HRA. Shown is the 'outer cortex of kidney' on left and a bar graph that plots the percentage of cells for three cell types in this anatomical structure on right. **h.** The HRAlit database links HRA DOs to existing ontologies (e.g., UBERON, CL), expert ORCID, publication evidence, funding, and experimental data used for HRApop computation.



**Figure 2: Mapping experimental data to the HRA. a.** A 3D tissue block is spatially registered and semantically annotated using the Registration User Interface or the Millitome, see (1). A smaller part of the tissue block might be used for sc/snRNA-seq analysis (not shown) or cut into tissue sections (2). Tissue sections are analyzed using the very same or different assay types (3). Shown are single cell transcriptomics (e.g., sc/snRNA-seq), OMAP-aligned spatial proteomics (e.g., CODEX, Cell DIVE), and high resolution hematoxylin and eosin (H&E) stained histology images. Spatial alignment of different assay types for the very same or different tissue sections is non-trivial (5). H&E data is used to segment functional tissue units (FTUs) using trained machine learning models (6). 3D reconstruction of tissue volumes is accomplished by aligning data from multiple serial tissue sections computationally (4) followed by 3D segmentation and annotation (7). 2D or 3D data is analyzed to identify the distance of different cell types to the vasculature (VCCF Visualizations) as a multiscale common coordinate framework from which no other cell is very distant (8). **b.** Single cell/nucleus data (sc/snRNA-seq) is stored as a cell by gene matrix; cell types are annotated using Azimuth or other cell type annotation tools; results are aggregated to cell type by gene biomarker expression value matrices that are aligned with the ASCT+B tables; and are used in diverse HRA user interfaces (e.g., Exploration User Interface and FTU Explorer). **c.** OMAP-aligned spatial data generated using validated antibody panels linked to AVR is analyzed to compute cell type by protein biomarker expression value matrices that are aligned with the ASCT+B tables using semi-automated workflows.





**Figure 3: Human Reference Atlas Usage.** **a.** User story #1 (US#1) lets a user define a 3D volume inside of the HRA reference body using the RUI and it predicts cell type populations and mean expression values for cell types in that volume. **b.** User story #2 (US#2) reads cell type population data and predicts the 3D origin of tissue, shown as a collection of extraction sites that have a similar cell type population. **c.** HRA can be used to compare the distribution of parenchymal cells including endothelial, epithelial, and muscle that compose the blood vessels, airways and gas exchanging functional lung structures, and resident immune cells including macrophages, to local vasculature (VCCF Visualizations) in healthy (top) and diseased (bottom) lung using multiplexed immunofluorescence microscopy images with bronchiole (br) and an accompanying small pulmonary artery (pa). Scale bar legend: white: 5 mm, red: 200  $\mu\text{m}$ , yellow: 100  $\mu\text{m}$ . The graphs on the right show distance distributions for cell types present in the healthy lung (top) and diseased BPD lung (bottom); the violin plot (middle) shows a comparison between distance distributions for cell types common in both datasets. **d.** Multi-level cell neighborhoods can be computed to analyze and communicate the structure and function of FTUs; tissue image with cell type annotations and zoom into H&E with FTU segmentations (red outlines) and zoom into the multiplexed image (CODEX) is shown in left, neighborhoods are given in the middle; hierarchy of FTUs, neighborhoods, communities, and cell types are shown on the right.



**Griffin Weber, *Harvard Medical School***  
***(Human Reference Atlas)***

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# Vasculature Common Coordinate Framework

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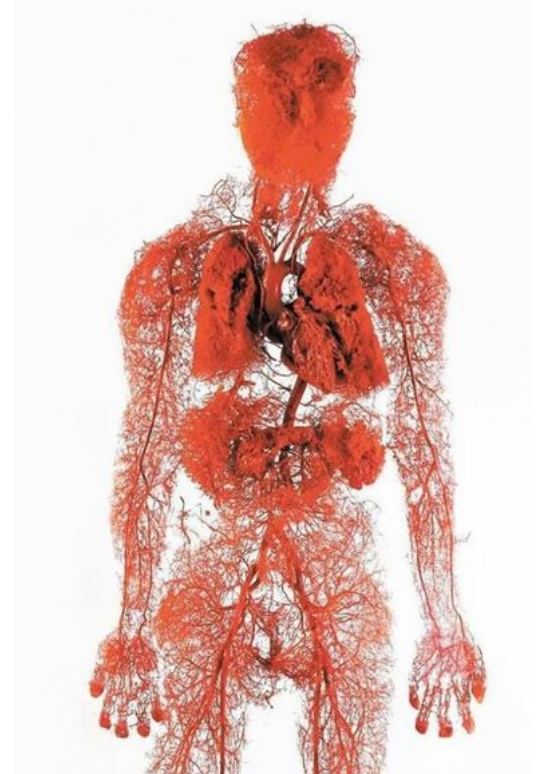
Avinash Boppana

Bruce W Herr II

Ushma Patel

Zorina Galis

Katy Börner



<https://bodyworlds.com/>

# Multiscale Maps of Roads

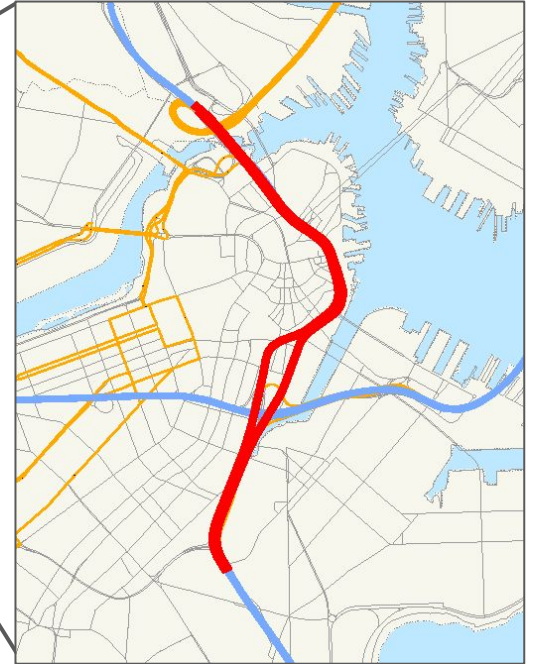
(similar to multiscale maps of blood vessel pathways through the body)

Daily traffic, U.S. National Highway System



Note: Major flows include domestic and international freight moving by truck on highway segments with more than twenty five FAF trucks per day and between places typically more than fifty miles apart.  
Source: U.S. Department of Transportation, Federal Highway Administration, Office of Freight Management and Operations, Freight Analysis Framework, version 4.3, 2017.

Boston “Central Artery”

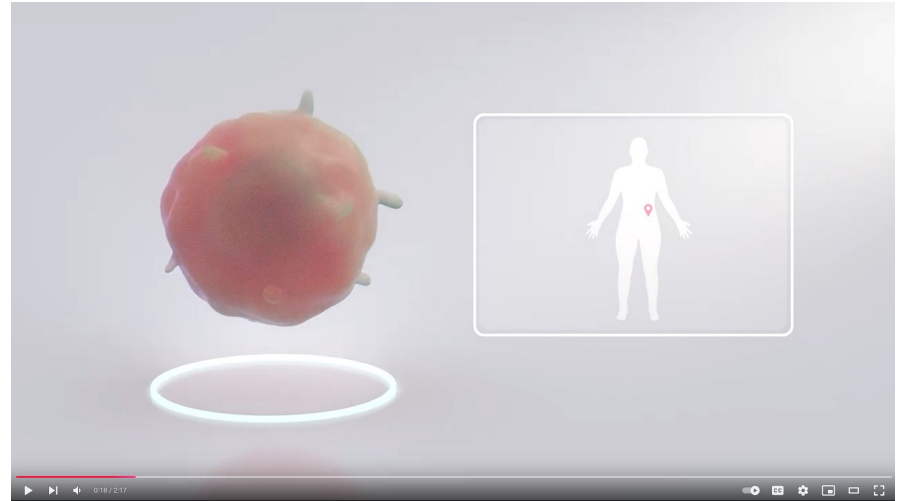


John F. Fitzgerald Expressway, By Sswonk, Public Domain,  
<https://commons.wikimedia.org/w/index.php?curid=4538754>

Trucks follow roads to deliver  
a package to a house



Blood cells follow vessels to  
deliver oxygen to organs

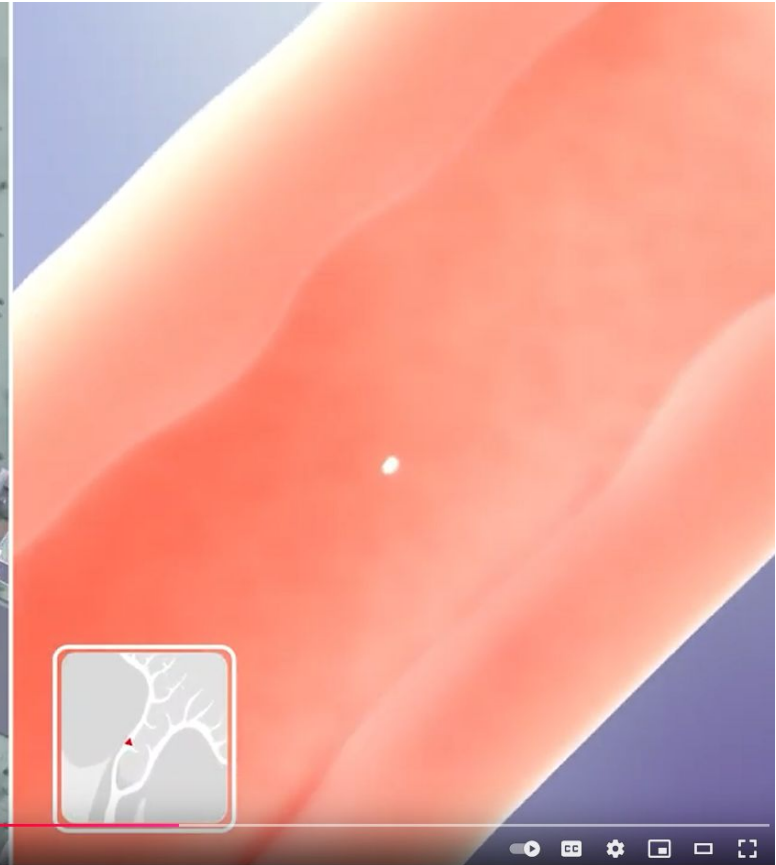


[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zQeMgxo8n\\_U](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zQeMgxo8n_U)

Highway (1000 km)

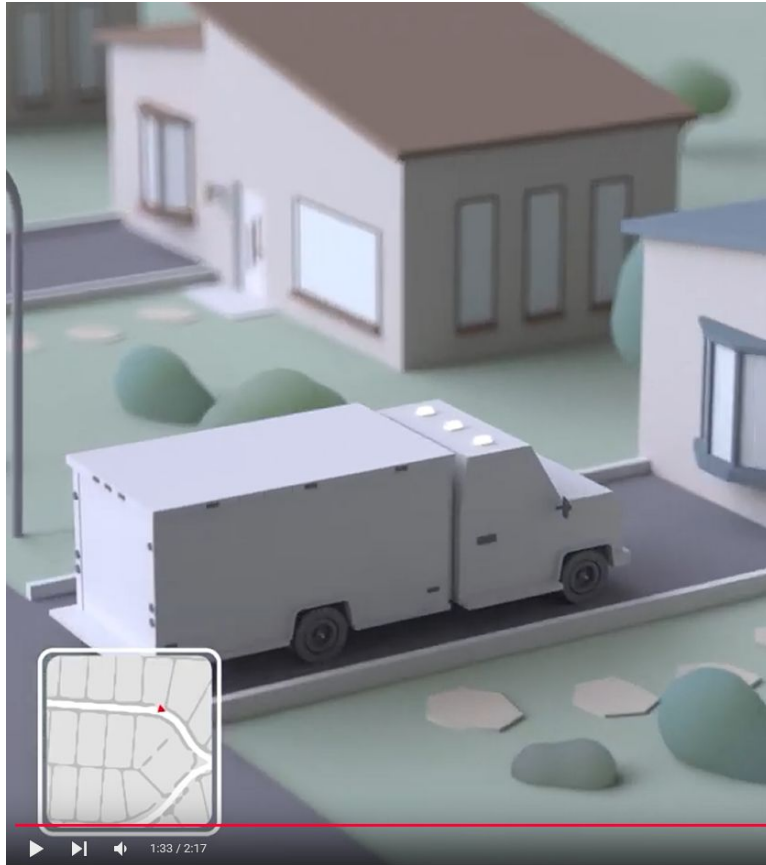


Artery (1 m)

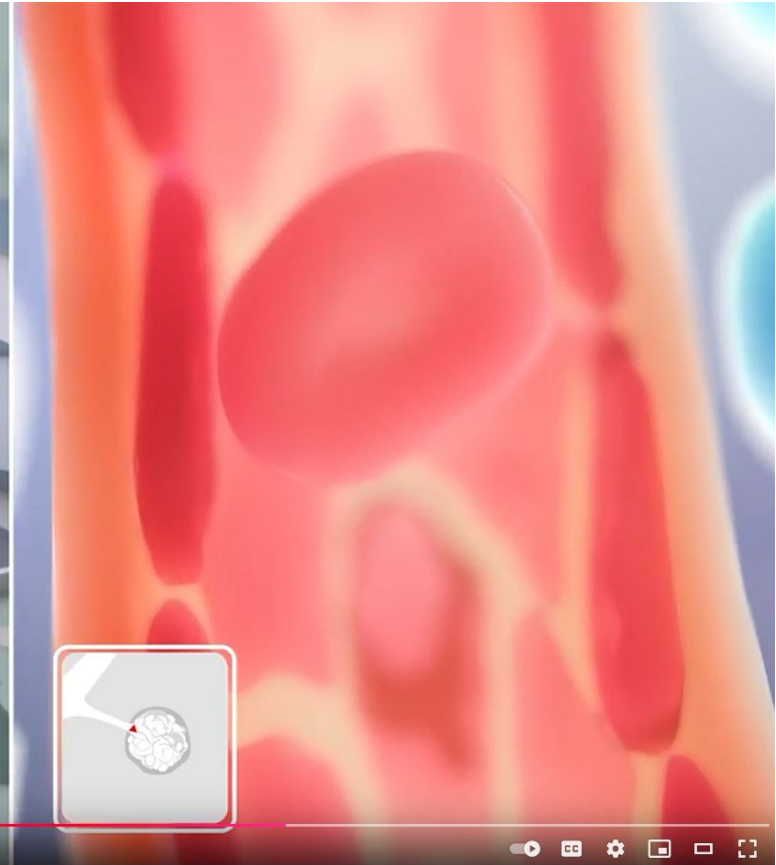


[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zQeMgxo8n\\_U](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zQeMgxo8n_U)

Street (1 km)



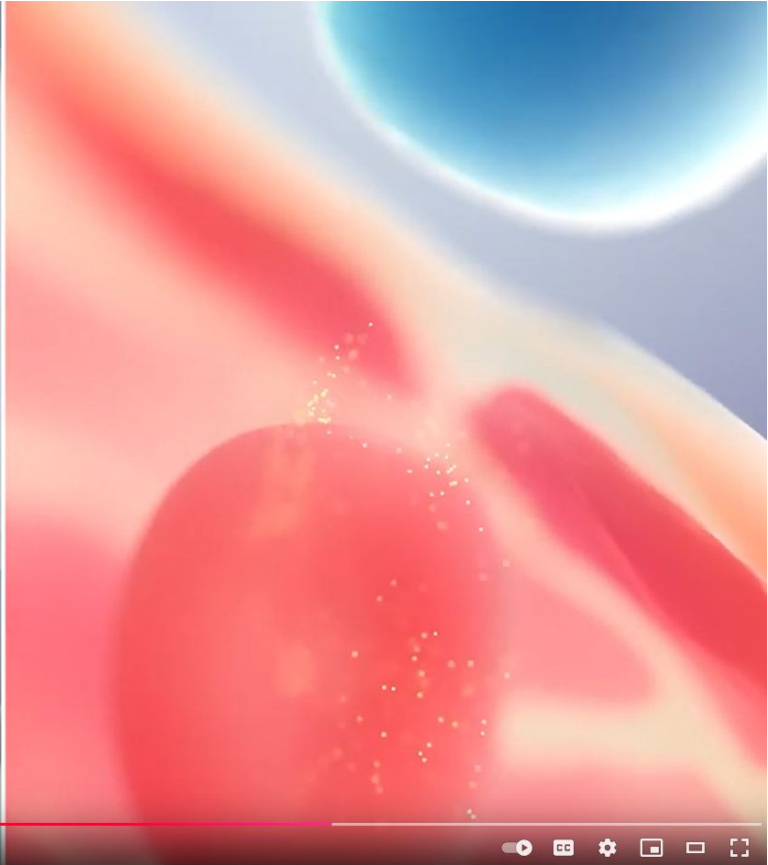
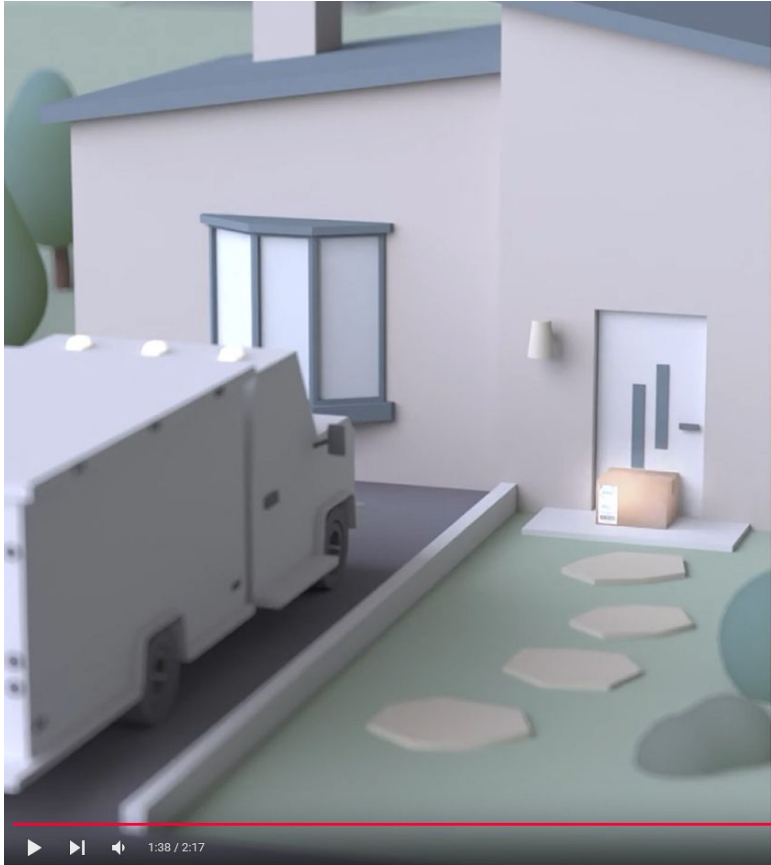
Arteriole (0.5 cm)



[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zQeMgxo8n\\_U](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zQeMgxo8n_U)

Driveway (10 m)

Capillary (0.5 mm x 0.01 mm)

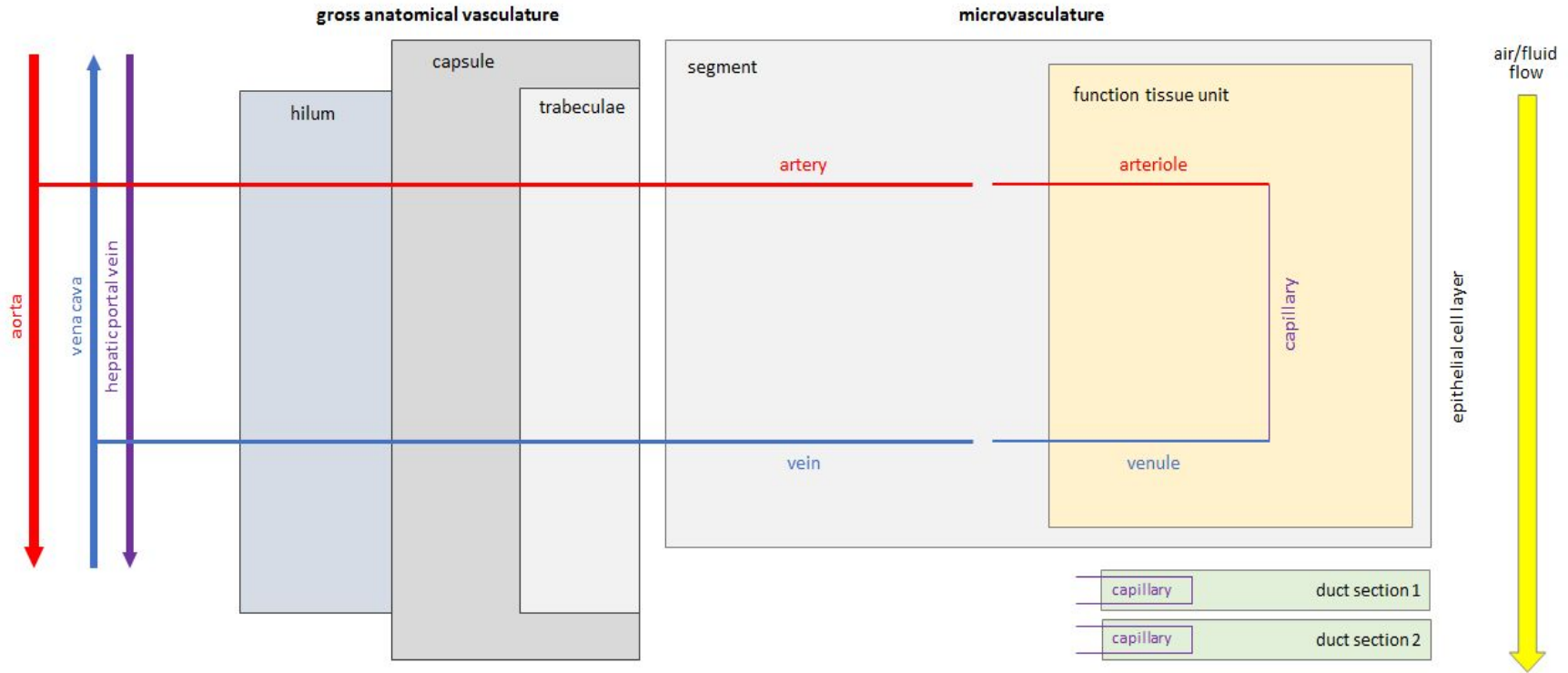


[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zQeMgxo8n\\_U](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zQeMgxo8n_U)



# Blood Vasculature to Organ Crosswalk Diagrams

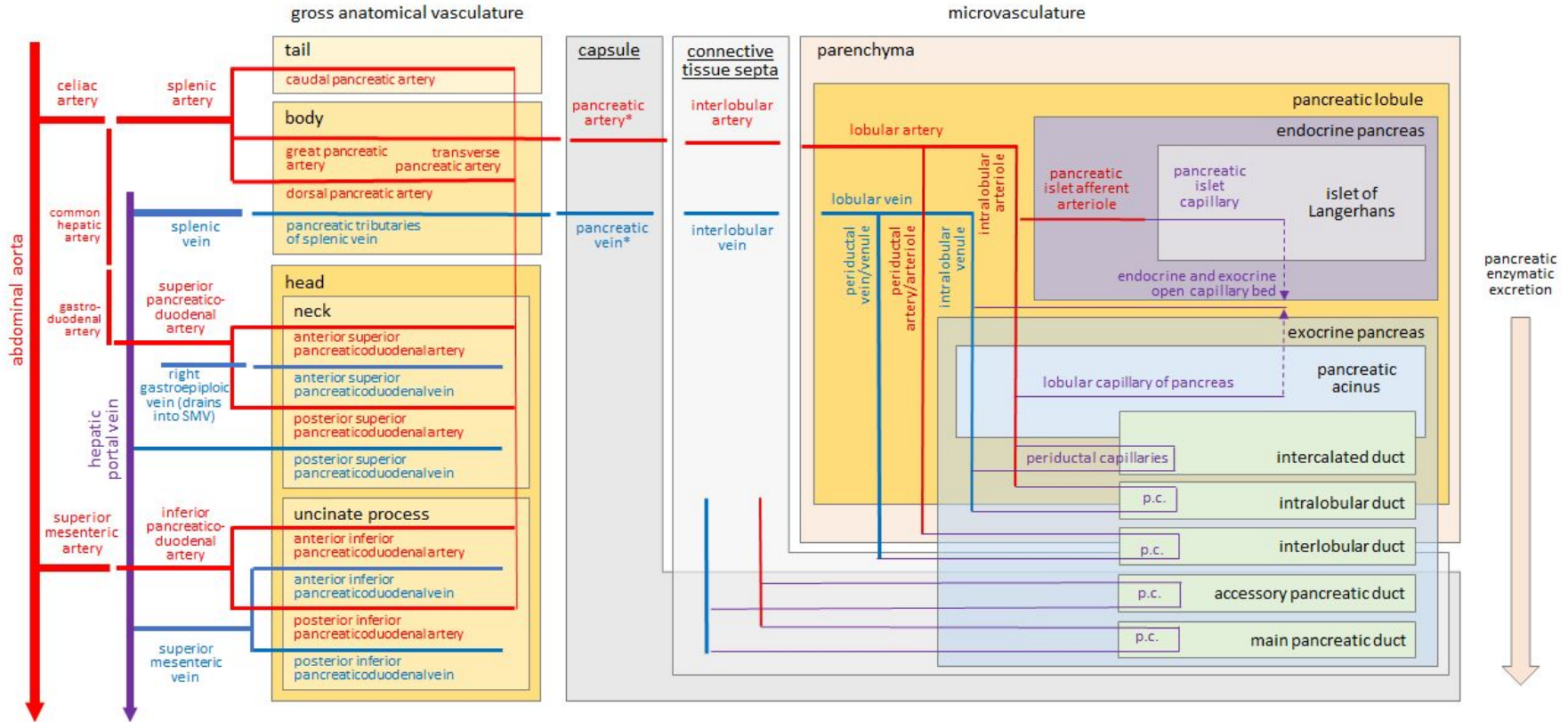
## Template



Boppana A, Lee S, Malhotra R, Halushka M, Gustilo KS, Quardokus EM, Herr BW 2nd, Börner K, Weber GM. Anatomical structures, cell types, and biomarkers of the healthy human blood vasculature. Sci Data. 2023 Jul 19;10(1):452. doi: 10.1038/s41597-023-02018-0.

# Blood Vasculature to Organ Crosswalk Diagrams

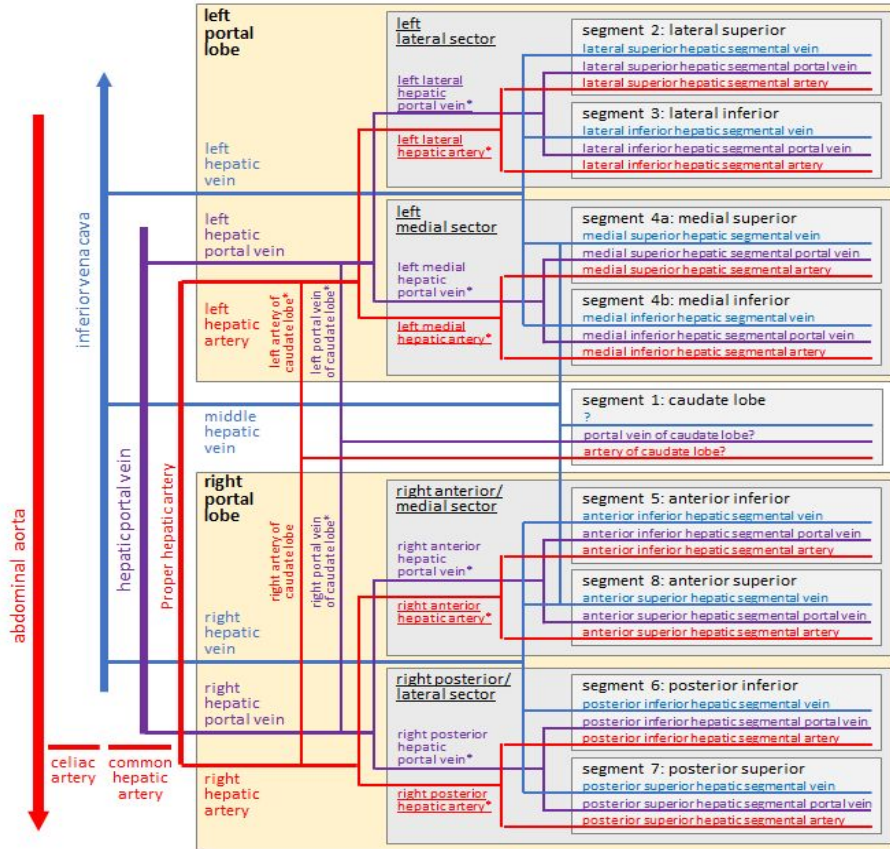
## Pancreas



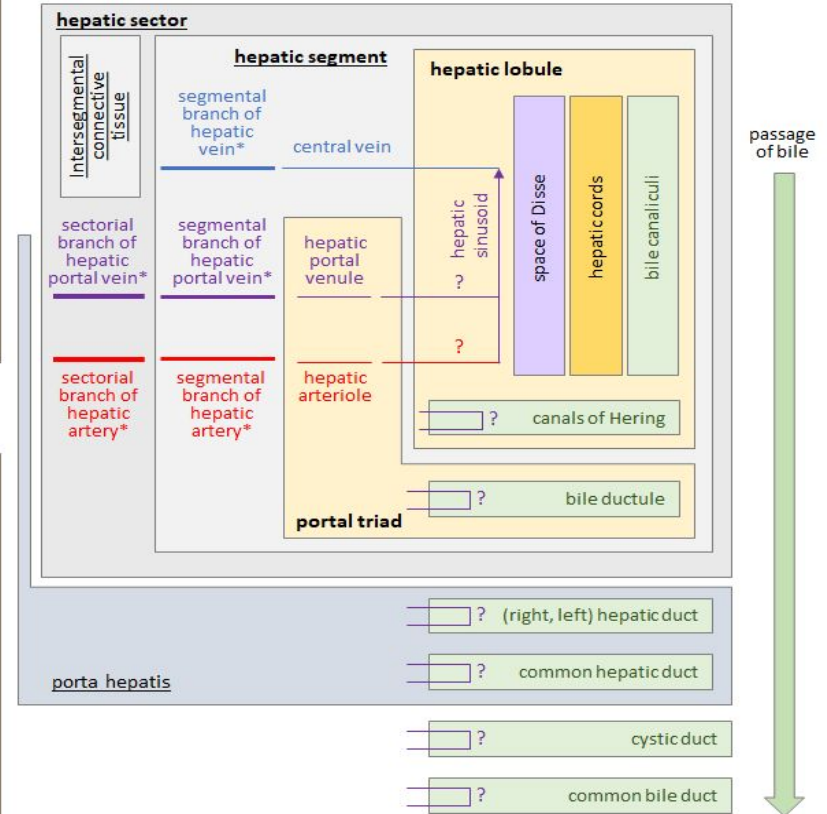
# Blood Vasculature to Organ Crosswalk Diagrams

## Liver

gross anatomical vasculature

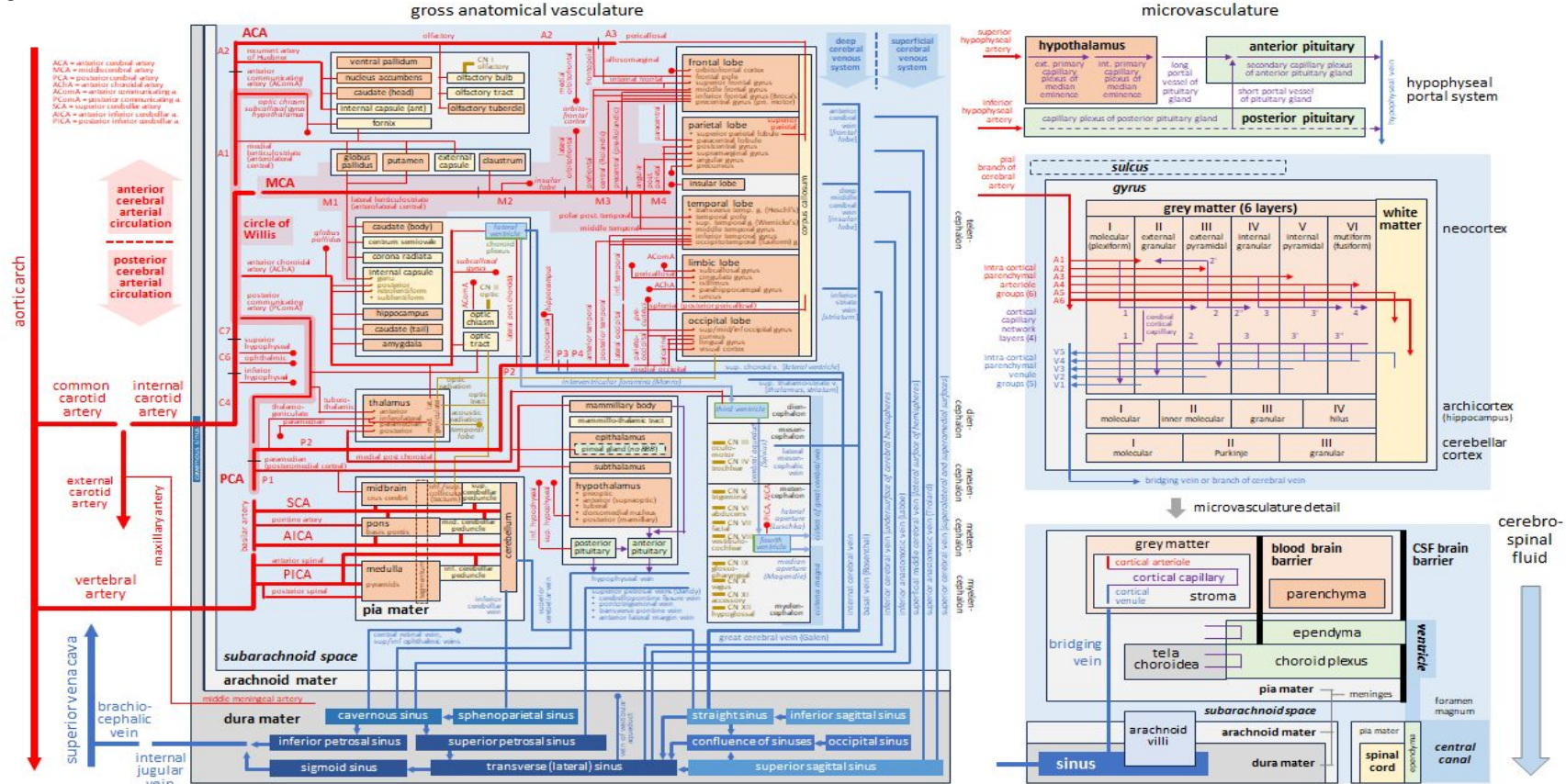


microvasculature



# Blood Vasculature to Organ Crosswalk Diagrams

## Brain





**Karen Miga, *UC Santa Cruz (Pangenome)***

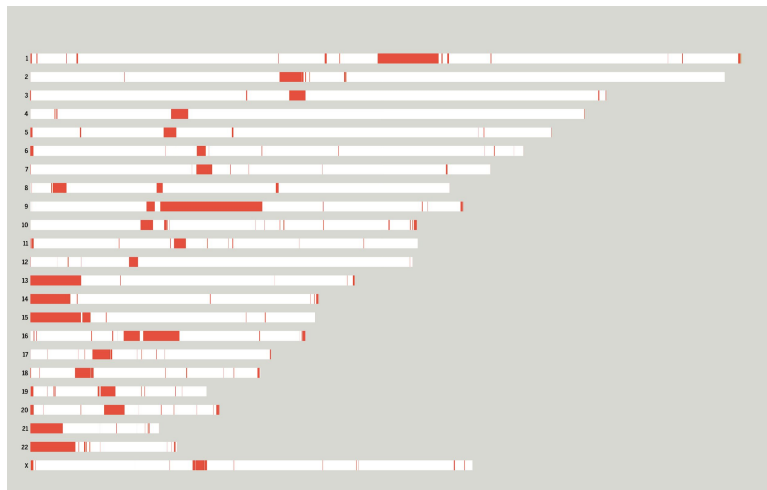
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# A Need to Modernize the Human Reference Genome

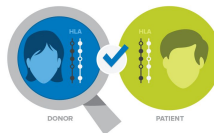


- The human reference genome is a foundational resource in human genetics and **like most technology-driven resources, is overdue for an upgrade.**
- Improvements in long-read sequencing and assembly methods allow the **production of high-quality genomes**
- The current structure is a **linear haplotype, largely representing a single individual.** This introduces biases and excludes sequence variation.

# One genome cannot represent the genetic diversity of the human species



## HLA-A Typing:



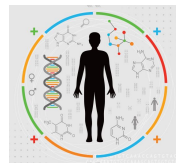
Autoimmunity Allergy, Transplant (allogeneic stem cell transplant, solid organ, and blood marrow)

## SMA Locus

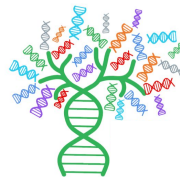


Leading cause of early infant death (1:6,000-10,000 live births)

## CYP2D6



Responsible for the metabolism of around 25% of clinically used drug



# Human Pangenome Reference Consortium



- Call to action from NHGRI to improve representation of **global genomic diversity** (common alleles, ~1% AF)
- **Organized a team of researchers with expertise in long read technologies, complex variation, and T2T assemblies.**



TELOMERE-TO-TELOMERE CONSORTIUM



VERTEBRATE  
GENOMES  
PROJECT

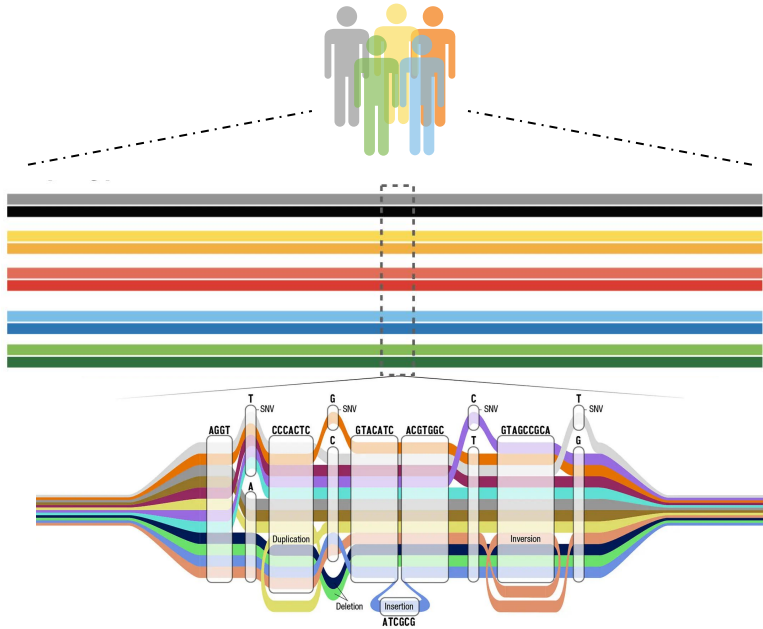
A PROJECT OF THE G10K CONSORTIUM



- **Develop a new, non-linear reference data structure and foster an innovative ecosystem of pangenomic tools**

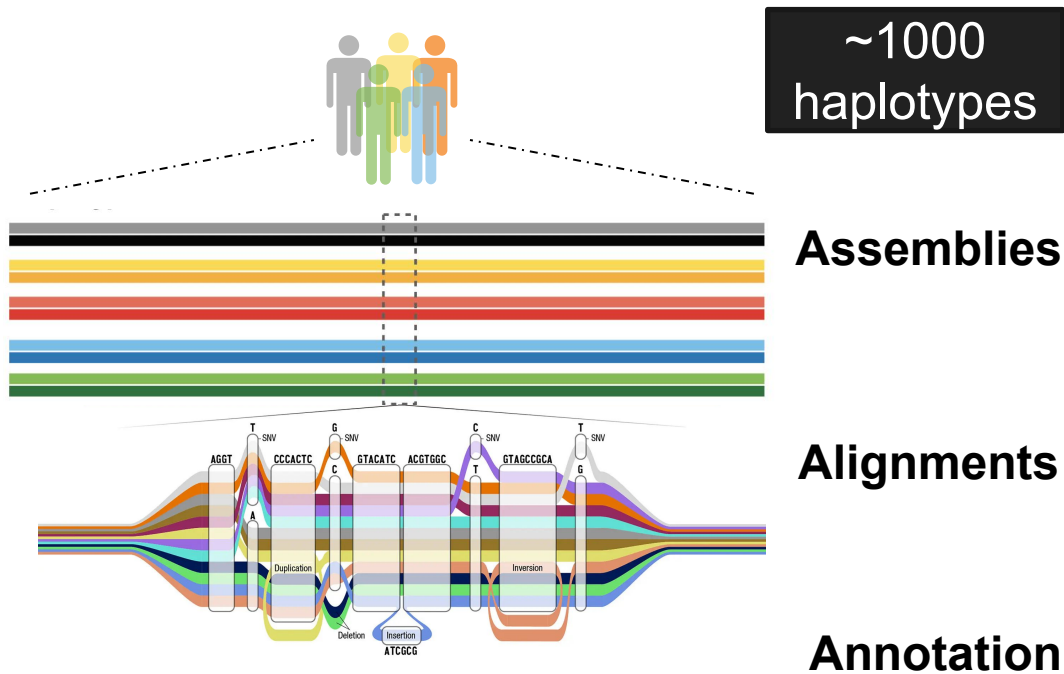


# Pangenome reference resource will better represent and serve humanity



One genome can introduce bias in genomics medicine initiatives

# Pangenome reference resource will better represents and serve humanity



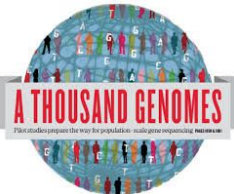
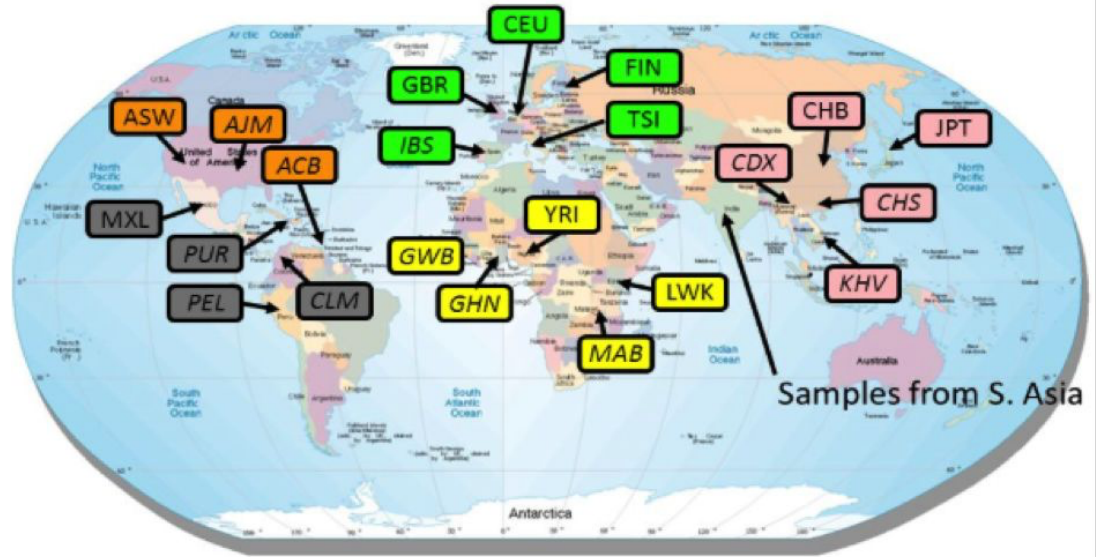
OPEN  ACCESS

New Tooling Ecosystem

- Pangenome construction: T2T Assemblies, QC, Genome Annotation
- Read/assembly alignment and variant calling

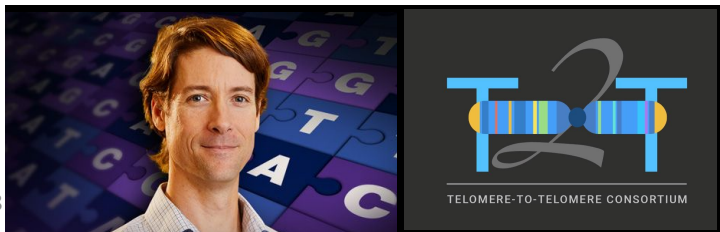
# Who is currently represented in the Pangenome?

Pangenome should comprehensively capture most common variants, defined as variants at **>1% frequency**, in human populations globally



## Phase I: Use of 1000 Genomes Cell Lines

# Advancement in automated T2T assemblies



Rautiainen, M., Nurk, S., Walenz, B.P. et al. **Telomere-to-telomere assembly of diploid chromosomes with Verkko.** Nat Biotechnol (2023)



Cheng, H., Jarvis, E.D., Fedrigo, O., Koepfli, K.P., Urban, L., Gemmell, N.J., Li, H. **Haplotype-resolved assembly of diploid genomes without parental data.** Nat Biotechnol (2022)

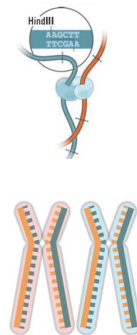
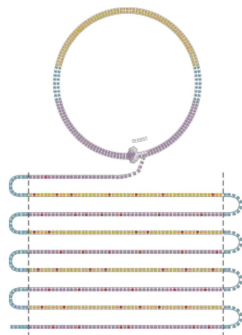
## Assembly methods: **verkko** and **hifiasm-UL**

Both methods rely on a combination of long accurate reads (**PacBio HiFi**) + ultra-long data (**ONT-UL**) + Phasing data (**illumina** HiC or Strand-Seq/verkko only)

**PacBio**

Oxford  
**NANOPORE**  
Technologies

**illumina**



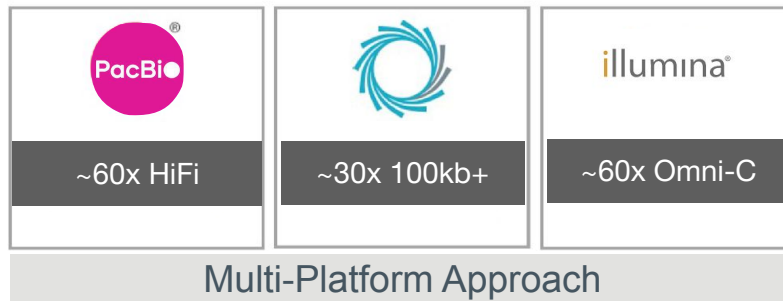
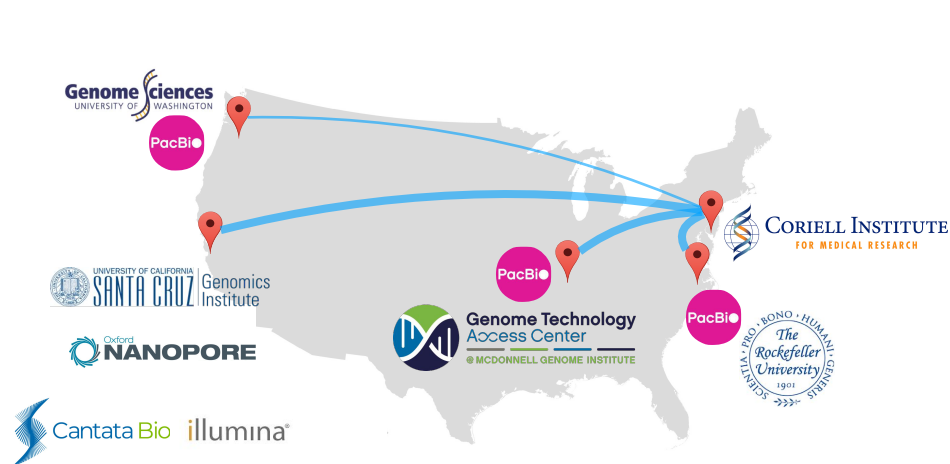
# Advancement in automated T2T assemblies



Rautiainen, M., Nurk, S., Walenz, B.P. et al.  
Telomere-to-telomere assembly of diploid chromosomes with Verkko. *Nat Biotechnol* (2023)



Cheng, H., Jarvis, E.D., Fedrigo, O., Koepfli, K.P., Urban, L., Gemmell, N.J., Li, H. **Haplotype-resolved assembly of diploid genomes without parental data.** *Nat Biotechnol* (2022)



Jarvis\*, Formenti\*, et al. *Nature* 2022

# Draft Release of a Human Pangenome




nature

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Article | [Open Access](#) | [Published: 10 May 2023](#)

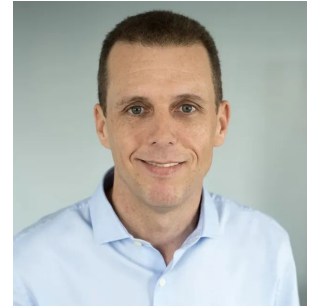
## A draft human pangenome reference

[Wen-Wei Liao](#), [Mobin Asri](#), [Jana Ebler](#), [Daniel Doerr](#), [Marina Haukness](#), [Glenn Hickey](#), [Shuangjia Lu](#), [Julian K. Lucas](#), [Jean Monlong](#), [Haley J. Abel](#), [Silvia Buonaiuto](#), [Xian H. Chang](#), [Haoyu Cheng](#), [Justin Chu](#), [Vincenza Colonna](#), [Jordan M. Eizenga](#), [Xiaowen Feng](#), [Christian Fischer](#), [Robert S. Fulton](#), [Shilpa Garg](#), [Cristian Groza](#), [Andrea Guarracino](#), [William T. Harvey](#), [Simon Heumos](#), ... [Benedict Paten](#) 

[+ Show authors](#)

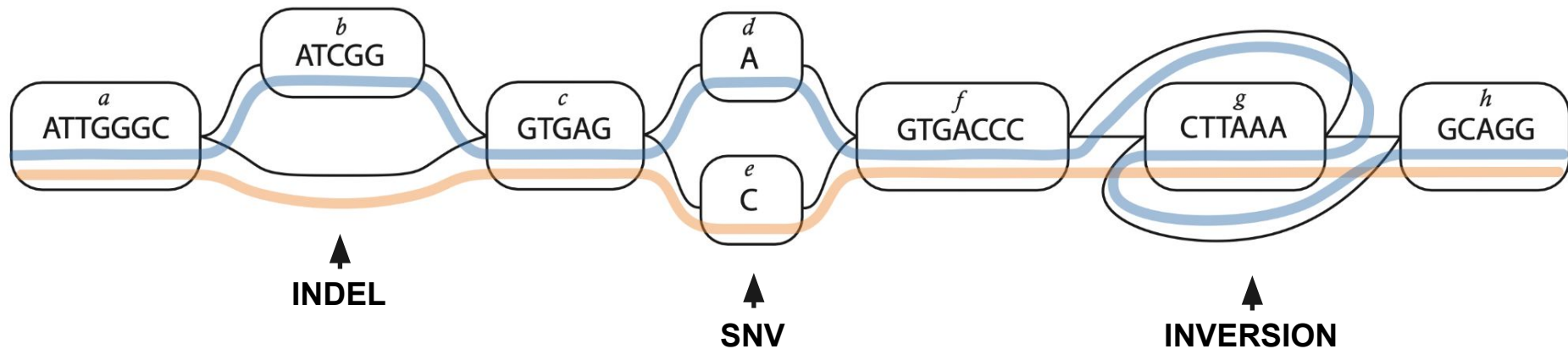
[Nature](#) **617**, 312–324 (2023) | [Cite this article](#)

**5** Citations | **2985** Altmetric | [Metrics](#)

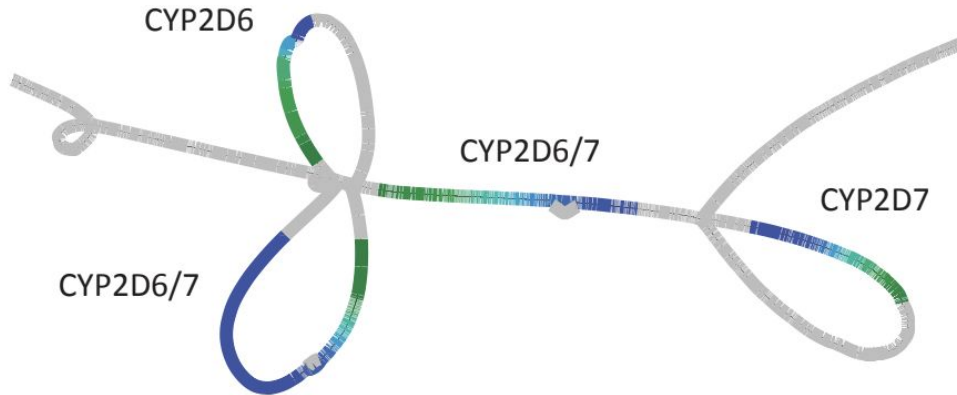


# Genome Graphs

ATTGGGC ATCGG GTGAG A GTGACCC TTAA GCAGG  
ATTGGGC ----- GTGAG C GTGACCC CTTAA GCAGG



# CYP2D6/7 genes: cytochrome P450 family of enzymes

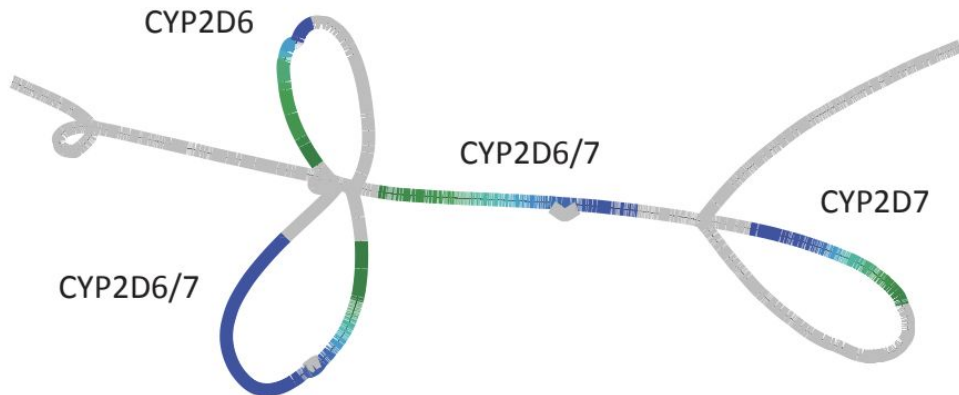


**CYP2D6** is particularly important because it is responsible for the metabolism of around 25% of clinically used drugs, including antidepressants, antipsychotics, analgesics, and beta-blockers.

Variations in the CYP2D6 gene can greatly affect how an individual metabolizes these drugs.



# CYP2D6/7 genes: cytochrome P450 family of enzymes



Count	Frequency	Haplotype name	gene
78	0.87	CYP2D6-CYP2D7	
6	0.07	CYP2D7	
2	0.02	CYP2D6-CYP2D6-CYP2D7	
1	0.01	spacer-CYP2D6-CYP2D7	
1	0.01	CYP2D6-CYP2D7-CYP2D7	
1	0.01	CYP2D6-spacer-CYP2D6-CYP2D7	
1	0.01	CYP2D6-CYP2D7-CYP2D7-CYP2D7	

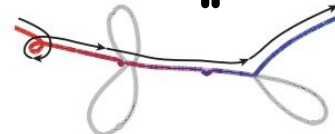
CYP2D6-CYP2D7

GRCh38



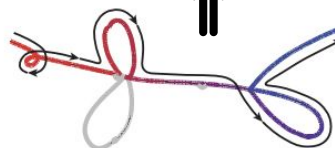
CYP2D7

HG01891#1



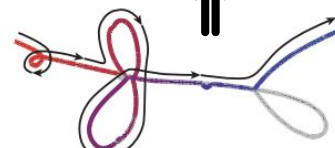
CYP2D6-CYP2D6-CYP2D7

HG03540#1



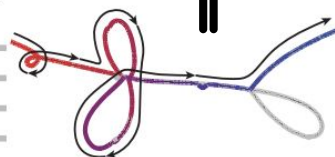
CYP2D6-CYP2D7-CYP2D7

HG00733#1



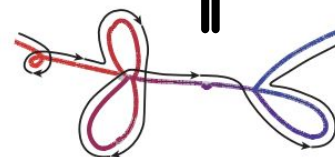
CYP2D6-spacer-  
CYP2D6-CYP2D7

HG00438#2



CYP2D6-CYP2D7-  
CYP2D7-CYP2D7

HG01258#1



# HPRC Pangenome Release Roadmap



**“Alpha” - Draft**  
47 Genomes  
May 2023

**“Beta” - Improvement**  
>170 Genomes  
Early 2025

**1.0 - Stable “T2T”**  
>350 Genomes  
2026

**1.1 - Refinement**  
>550 Genomes  
2028

- HiFi (30x)
- ONT-UL (30x) - R9
- OmniC (30x)
- Illumina (30x)

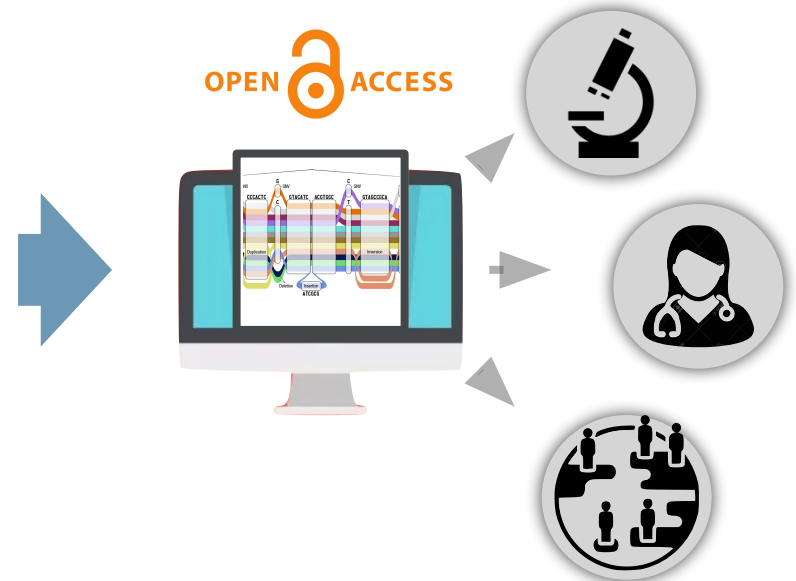
- HiFi (60x), Deep Consensus
- ONT-UL (30x) - R9, R10
- OmniC (30x)
- Illumina (30x)
- Long read RNA (Kinnex, 10M)

- HiFi (60x), Deep Consensus
- ONT-UL (30x) - R10
- OmniC (30x)
- Illumina (30x)
- Long read RNA (Kinnex, 10M)
- FiberSeq (40x)
- Element (30x)

- HiFi (60x), Deep Consensus
- ONT-UL (30x) - R10
- OmniC (30x)
- Illumina (30x)
- Long read RNA (Kinnex, 10M)
- FiberSeq (40x)
- Element (30x)

# HUMAN PANGENOME PROJECT

A Global Human Pangenome Resource





**Caterina Strambio De Castilia,**  
*UMass Chan Medical School (4D Nucleome  
Network, Biolumaging North America,  
QUAREP-LiMi)*

---

# Integration of the 4D Nucleome Nuclear CCF with the HuBMAP Human Reference Atlas (HRA) CCF



Frank Alber  
UCLA



Susanne Rafelski  
AICS



Yin Shen  
UCSF

4DN Integrating and  
Imaging and Omics WG



Laca Bintu  
Stanford



Caterina Strambio  
DC  
UMass Chan

4DN Imaging  
WG

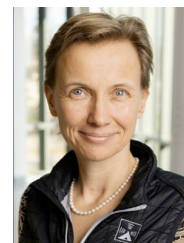


Quan Zhu  
UCSD



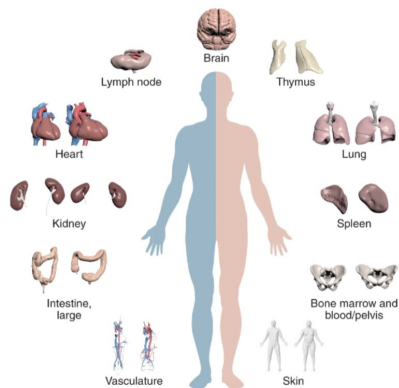
Bogdan Bintu  
UCSD

Benchmarking  
Datasets

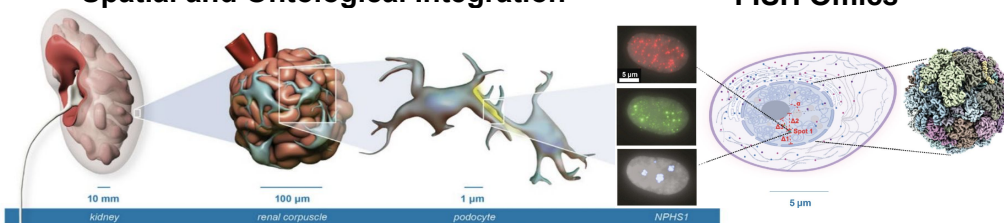


Katy Borner  
Indiana U.

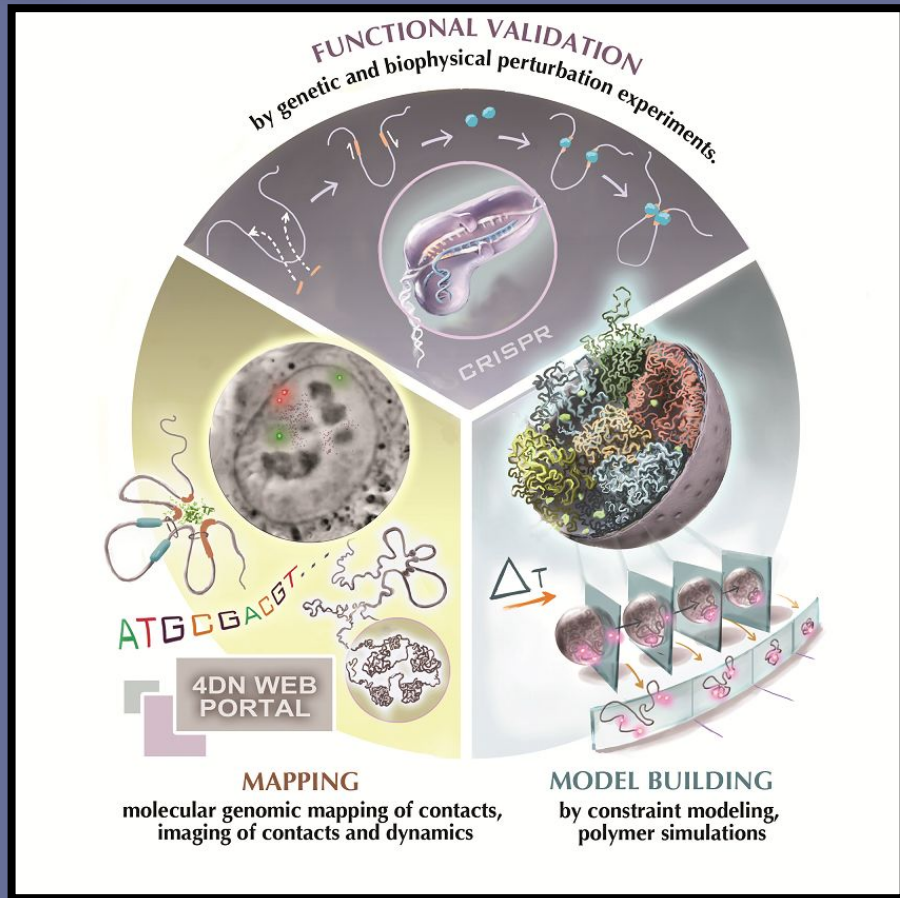
HuBMAP HRA  
CCF



Common Coordinate Framework for  
Spatial and Ontological Integration

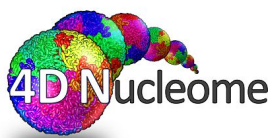


1500 anatomical structures



- Phase 1: 2015-19
- Phase 2: 2020-25
- 4DN Data Portal  
<https://data.4dnucleome.org/>
- Dekker et al. Current state and future aims of the 4D nucleome project. *Molecular Cell*.  
<https://doi.org/10.1016/j.molcel.2023.06.018>



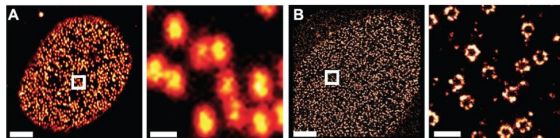


# Production and Utilization of FAIR Imaging Data via Inter-Consortia Partnerships

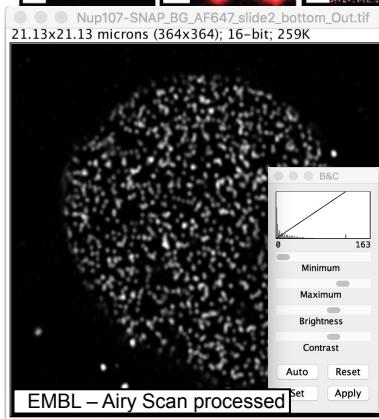
1. **Microscopy Metadata** specifications and **Micro-Meta App** initiated by 4DN to expand the OME Data Model are forming the basis for a **global effort to standardize image acquisition metadata**
2. The 4DN developed **FISH-OMICS Format for Chromatin Tracing (FOF-CT)** for the exchange of results of multiplexed DNA and RNA FISH data
3. The **4DN Nuclear Common Coordinate Framework (CCF)** developed by the IOWG and IWG is being **integrated with the HuBMAP Human Reference Atlas (HRA) CCF**



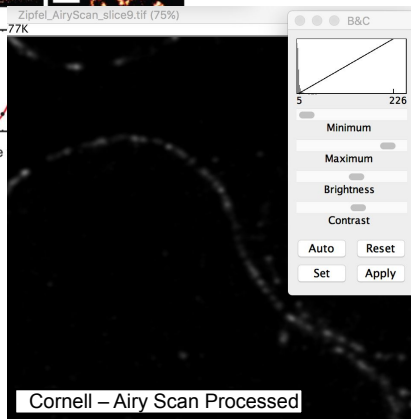
# Data comparability



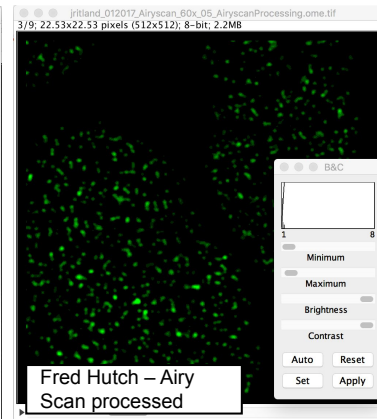
Rob Singer



Jonas Ries



Richard Conroy



Joan Ritland-Politz

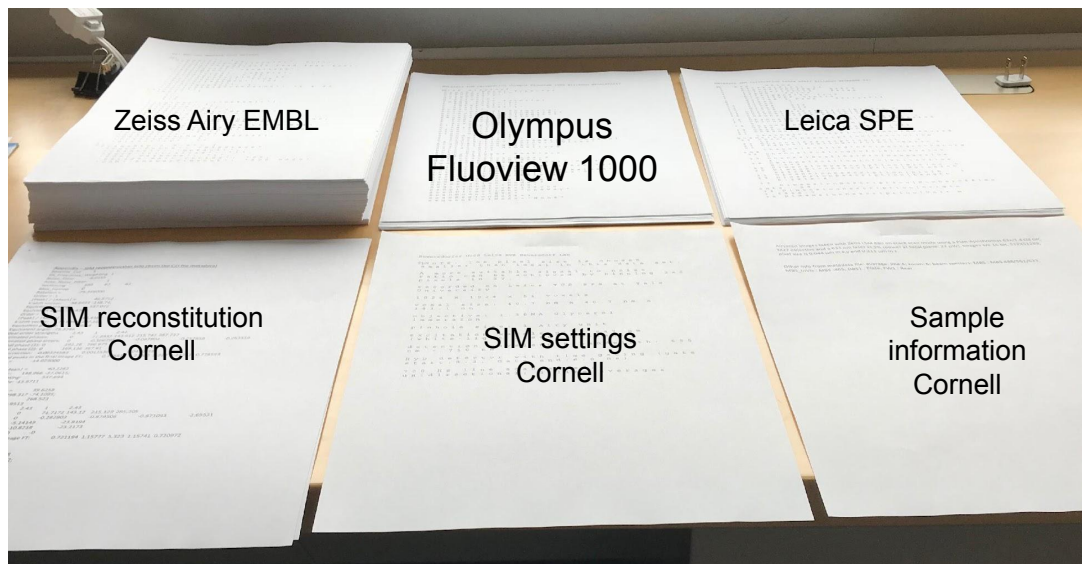




# Metadata comparability



## Example: Metadata documentation



# The 4DN has partnered with a global networks of imaging scientists to build consensus around standardization

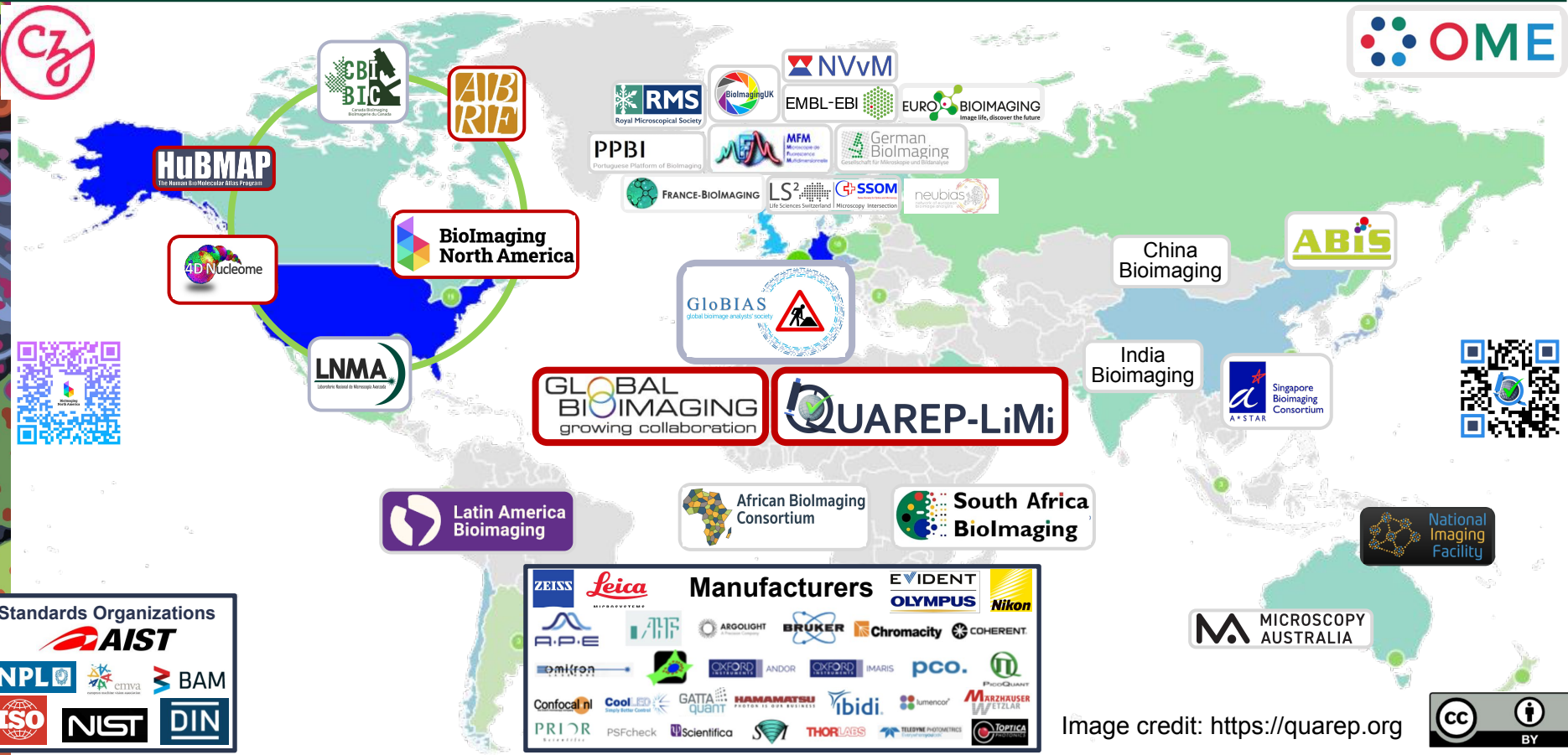


Image credit: <https://quarep.org>



# Community standards: Microscopy Metadata Specifications to expand the OME-data model

Comment

3 Dec 2021

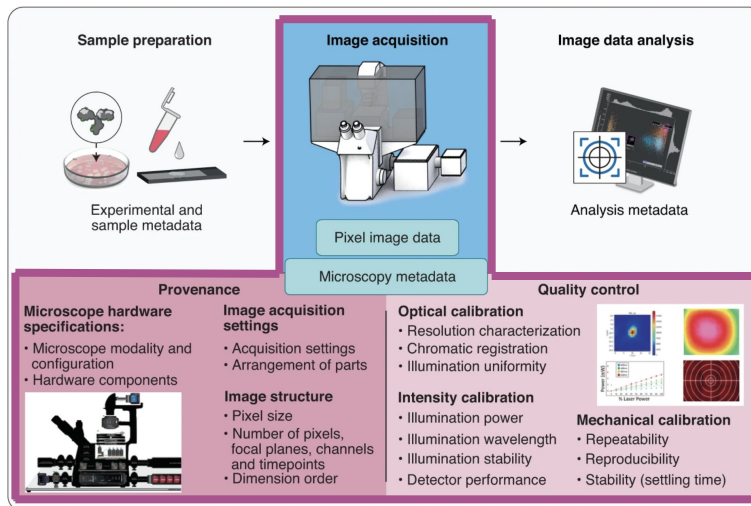
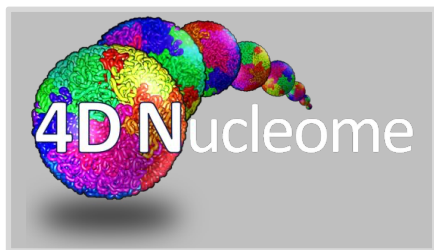
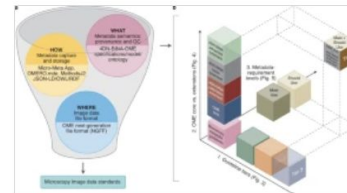
[Nature Methods](#)



## Towards community-driven metadata standards for light microscopy: tiered specifications extending the OME model

Rigorous record-keeping and quality control are required to ensure the quality, reproducibility and value of imaging data. The 4DN Initiative and BINA here propose light Microscopy Metadata Specifications that extend the OME Data Model, scale with experimental intent and complexity, and make it possible for scientists to create comprehensive records of imaging experiments.

Mathias Hammer, Maximiliaan Huisman ... Caterina Strambio-De-Castilla



Hammer et al. (2021) *Nat Methods*;  
<https://doi.org/10.1038/s41592-021-01327-9>



# Community standards: Microscopy Metadata Specifications to expand the OME-data model

Comment

3 Dec 2021

[Nature Methods](#)



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Mathias Hammer, Maximiliaan Huisman ... Caterina Strambio-De-Castilla

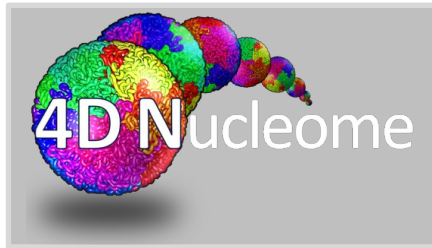
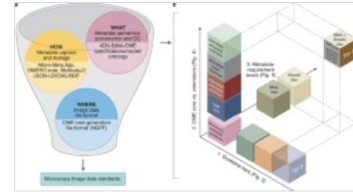


Image Acquisition  
4DN-BINA-OME-Q  
UAREP (NBO-Q)  
Hardware, Acquisition  
Settings and QC

Microscopy specifications

- Microscope modality and configuration
- Hardware components

Image structure

- Pixel size
- Number of pixels, focal planes, channels and timepoints
- Dimension order

Intensity calibration

- Illumination power
- Illumination wavelength
- Illumination stability
- Detector performance

Mechanical calibration

- Repeatability
- Reproducibility
- Stability (settling time)



Hammer et al. (2021) *Nat Methods*;  
<https://doi.org/10.1038/s41592-021-01327-9>



# Community standards: Micro-Meta App implements the NBO-Q Microscopy Metadata Model

Brief Communication

Open Access

3 Dec 2021

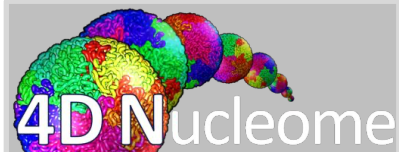
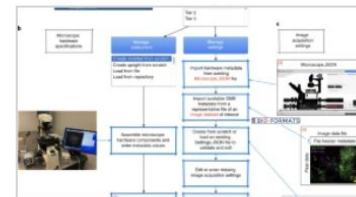
[Nature Methods](#)



## Micro-Meta App: an interactive tool for collecting microscopy metadata based on community specifications

Micro-Meta App is an intuitive, highly interoperable, open-source software tool designed to facilitate the extraction and collection of relevant microscopy metadata as specified by recent community guidelines.

Alessandro Rigano, Shannon Ehmsen ... Caterina Strambio-De-Castilla



QUAREP-LiM



# Partnership with manufacturers to develop community metadata specifications

## The making of microscope camera standards

Cameras are a crucial part of microscopes and are also built into many kinds of instruments. To make their output comparable takes standards.

Vivien Marx

The academics and company scientists in the group Quality Assessment and Reproducibility for Instruments & Images in Light Microscopy (QUAREP-LMI) are developing standards for microscope camera output.

As in other areas of standards development, working with companies is crucial: "after all they are the expert of the hardware they are producing," says Caterina Strambio-de-Castillia, a researcher at the University of Massachusetts Medical School's Program in Molecular Medicine and a Chan Zuckerberg Imaging Scientist, who spearheads this effort within QUAREP-LMI. A separate story in this issue of *Nature Methods* about emerging standards in microscopy can be found in this issue.

Part of the work in developing standards for cameras in microscopy and imaging is about creating common definitions as a public resource. "The QUAREP-ers are moving on all that quite well," says Jason Swedlow of the University of Dundee, who



Cameras are a crucial part of microscopes and imaging systems. Agreeing on standards to provide defined descriptions for aspects such as gain or readout speed is tricky. Credit: W. Bulgar/Science Photo Library

## technology feature

Check for updates

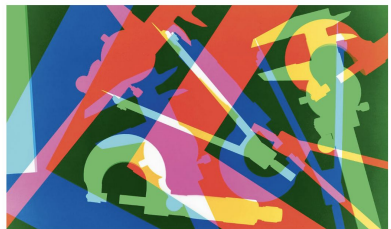
## Imaging standards to ease reproducibility and the everyday

Imaging and microscopy technology advances in leaps and bounds. To address accumulated pain points, academics and companies are making headway on standards.

Vivien Marx

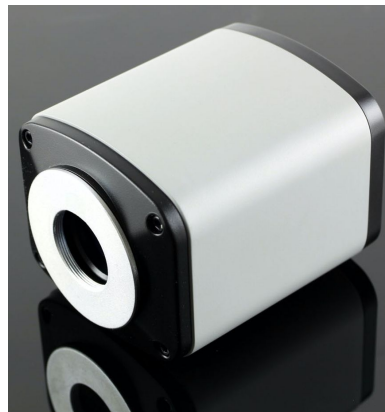
With a view to transparency and reproducibility in microscopy, scientists are hammering out standards to address, for instance, the surprises of fluctuating illumination power, the jungle of file formats, the mysteries of missing metadata and the diversity of camera outputs. A second story in this issue of *Nature Methods* focused on camera standards can be found here.

"We need standards," says Roland Nitschke of the University of Freiburg. Developing standards in imaging is a noble deed that can make some eyes glaze over even beyond the glaze arising from long hours at the microscope. Those who feel they lack the time to pitch in on standards might be glad to hear that some not-so-distant developments stand to help microscopy users pull out their hair a bit less. Here's a peek at how some emerging standards could address real-world pain points.



Emerging standards in microscopy are being set up to address many pain points in the field. Credit: TEK Image/Science Photo Library

- **January – August 2022:** 10+ focused feedback sessions to build consensus
- **Completed first parsing of camera hardware specifications and image acquisition settings!**
- **Due Summer 2023:** Revision of **4DN-BINA-OME-QUAREP** Camera Metadata model + Terms definitions



### Camera

- Manufacturer: **XYZ**
- Catalog Nr: **0000**
- Mount: **C-mount**
- FrameRate: **20 fps**
- ReadOutRate: **30 MHz**

EVIDENT  
OLYMPUS

ZEISS

Leica  
MICROSYSTEMS

Nikon

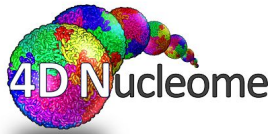
PCO.

Scientifica

OXFORD INSTRUMENTS ANDOR

TELEDYNE PHOTOMETRICS

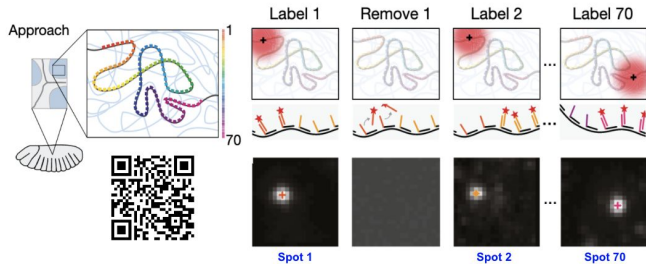
HAMAMATSU  
PHOTON IS OUR BUSINESS



# Why do we need a common format for Chromatin Tracing?



## MULTIPLEXED FISH CHROMATIN TRACING



Mateo et al.,  
<https://doi.org/10.1038/s41586-019-1035-4>

## FOF-CT Data and Metadata Exchange Format

```
##FOF-CT_version=v0.1
##Table_namespace=4dn_FOF-CT_core
##genome_assembly=GRCh38
##XYZ_unit=micron
##lab_name: Siyuan Yale
##experimenter_contact: siyuan.wang@yale.edu
##Software_Title: MINA Analyst
##Software_Type: MATLAB
##Software_Authors: Siyuan Wang
##Software_Description: Custom written software
##Software_Repository: https://campuspress.yale.edu/wanglab/mina-analyst/
##Software_Preferre 2667-2697 (2021). https://doi.org/10.1038/s41596-021-00518-0
##additional_tables: 4dn_FOF-CT_cell 4dn_FOF-CT_bio
##columns=(Spot_ID Trace_ID X Y Z Chrom Chrom_Start Chrom_End Cell_ID)
1 1 110.573964 129.244672 1.79925511 19 4190000 4290000 411
2 1 110.262885 129.093298 2.31765925 19 5890000 5990000 411
3 1 109.743291 129.745431 1.363418 19 7195510 7295510 411
4 1 109.165345 129.784738 0.91529473 19 8055510 8155510 411
5 1 109.176669 129.793967 0.7188798 19 9255510 9355510 411
```

Cell

Nucleus

Chromosome 19

Gene regulatory region

137 RNA species

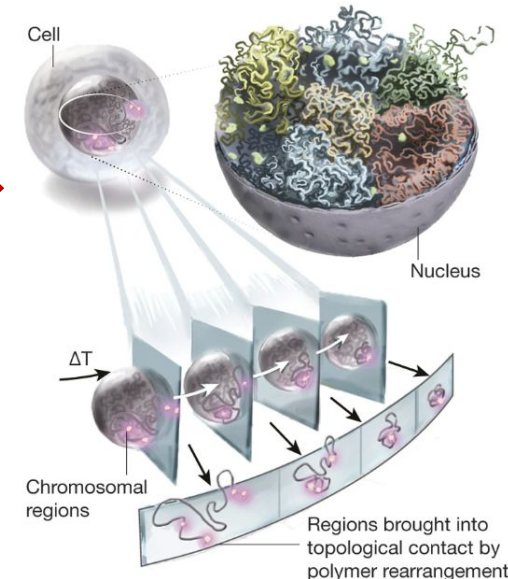
TADs

5-Mb loop #1 #19

58 Mb #90

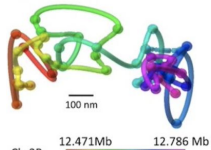
Liu et al., 2020, <https://doi.org/10.1038/s41467-020-16732-5>

## PREDICTIVE MODELING/ AND MECHANISMS



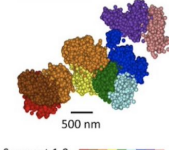
<https://doi.org/10.1038/nature23884>

Drosophila Chr3R - 330 kb trace by ORCA:



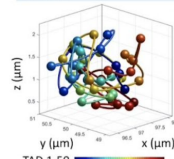
(Mateo et al. 2019)

Human Chr19 - 8.19 Mb trace by OligoSTORM:

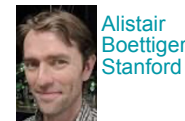


(Nir et al. 2018)

Murine Chr19 - 58 Mb trace by MINA:



(Takei et al. 2021)

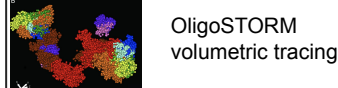
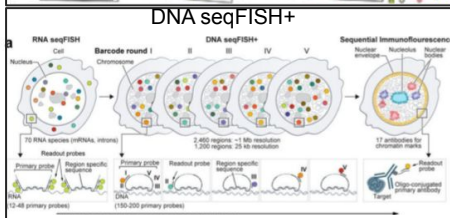
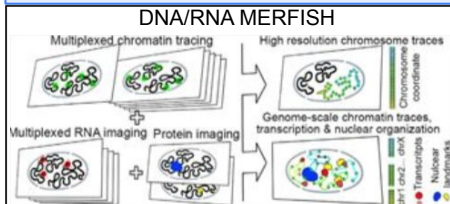




# Development of a Nuclear Common Coordinate Framework

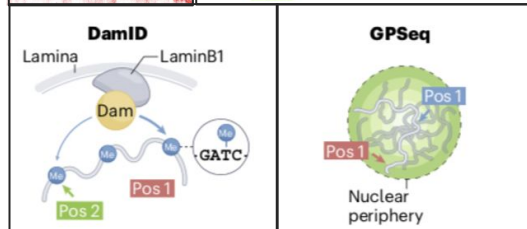
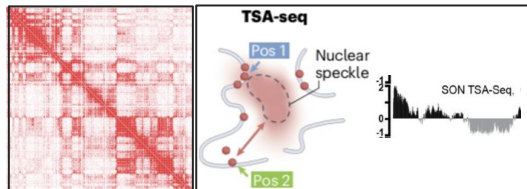
IWG  
FISH-Omics  
Format for  
Chromatin  
Tracing

**Imaging FISH-Omics**  
(multiplexed FISH)  
and other imaging



⋮ etc

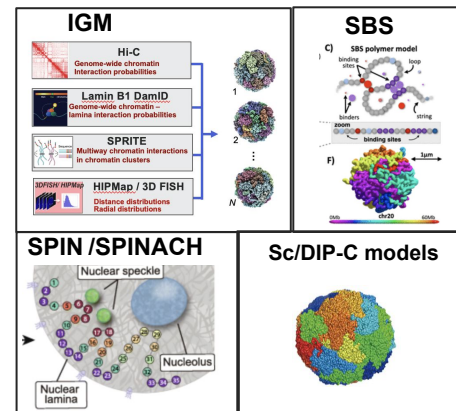
**Single cell and bulk genomics data**  
Cytological mapping data



NAD-seq, SPRITE, etc.

⋮ etc

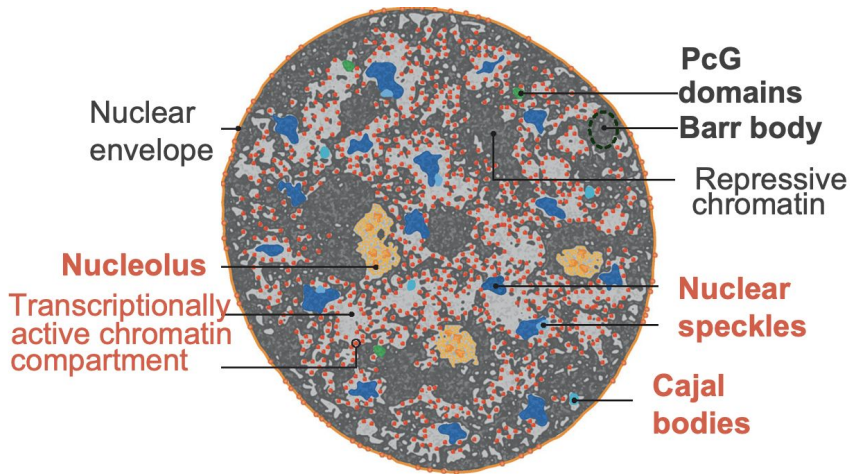
**Computational models and methods**



⋮ etc



# Why do nuclear coordinates matter?

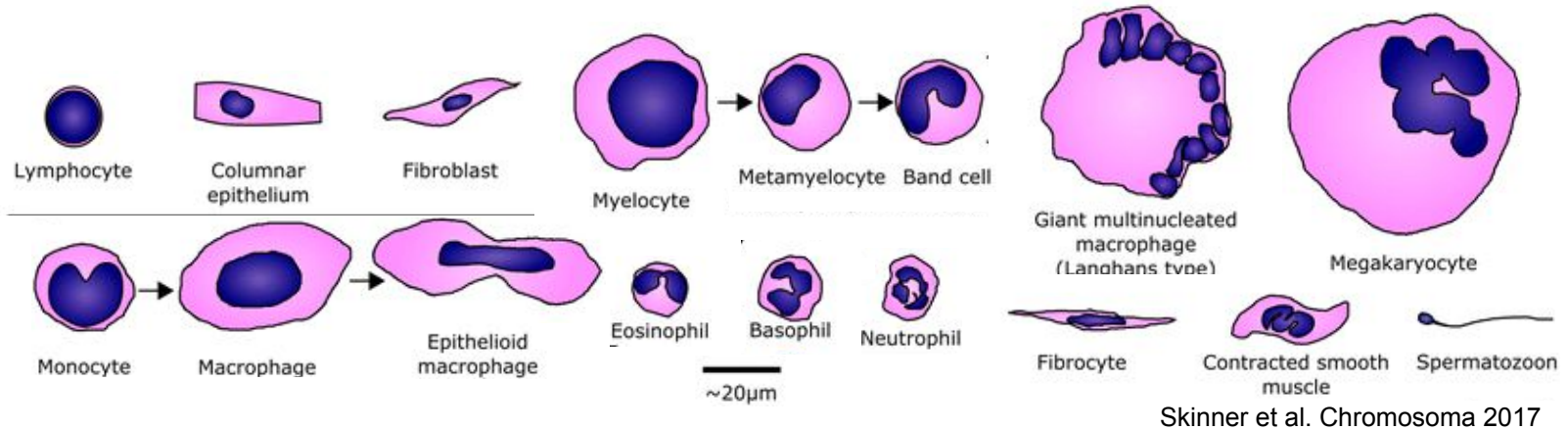


Caudron-Herger et al., Curr.Op.Gen.&Dev. 2012

The nucleus is organized into functional compartments. The spatial proximity to nuclear compartments and nuclear bodies matters.

# Why do nuclear coordinates matter?

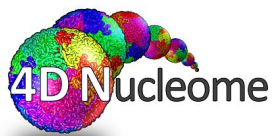
The nucleus **varies widely across cell types, tissues, and differentiation states**. This affects the overall shape, size, and internal nuclear compartment organization.



1) How do we compare data across different cell types and conditions?

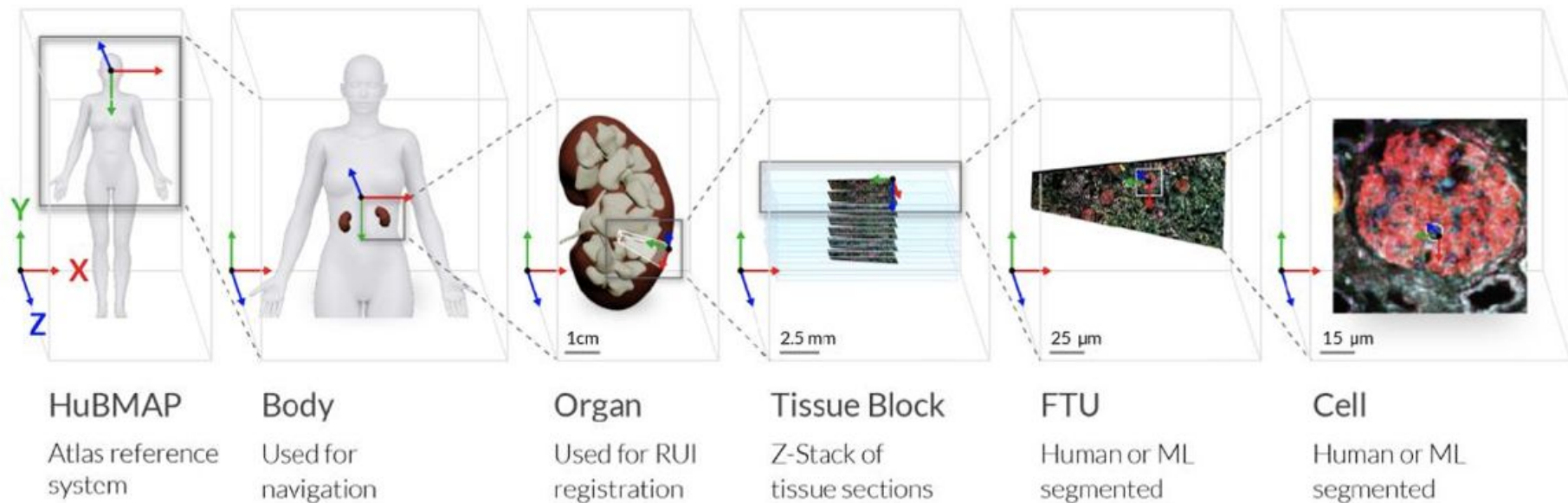
- We need a **shared and systematic way to describe nuclear topography**
- We need a **reference system to quantitatively characterize describe the nuclear landscape**

2) What are the **minimum requirements for a nuclear landscape reference system** (e.g., with respect to the location of nuclear compartments and landmarks)?



# What is a Common Coordinate Framework?

A **standard spatial coordinate system** is used to integrate spatial and molecular data across different laboratories, bio-samples, specimens, and conditions and **move past the use of single standardized samples**. The HuBMAP Human Reference Atlas effort developed a recent example.

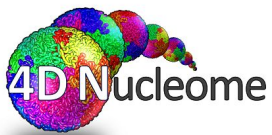


**Borner et al. (2020)**  
<https://doi.org/10.48550/arXiv.2007.14474>

**Herr et al., (2023)**  
<https://doi.org/10.1038/s41597-023-01993-8>

**Borner et al., (2022)**  
<https://doi.org/10.1038/s42003-022-03644-x>

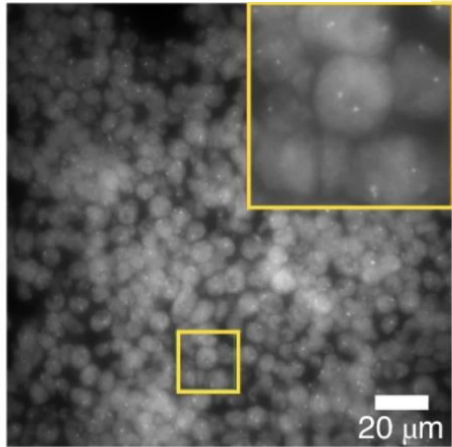
**Borner et al., (2024)**  
<https://doi.org/10.1101/2024.03.27.587041>



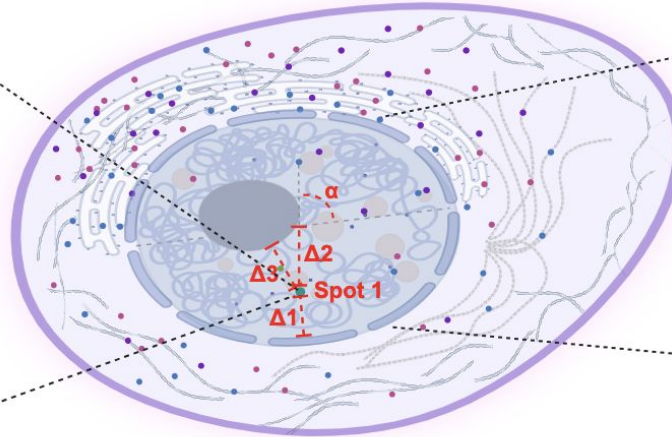
# 4DN Nuclear Common Coordinate Framework (CCF)

The goal is to have a set of recommendations how to measure and store nuclear information together with locations of loci.

Multiplexed FISH

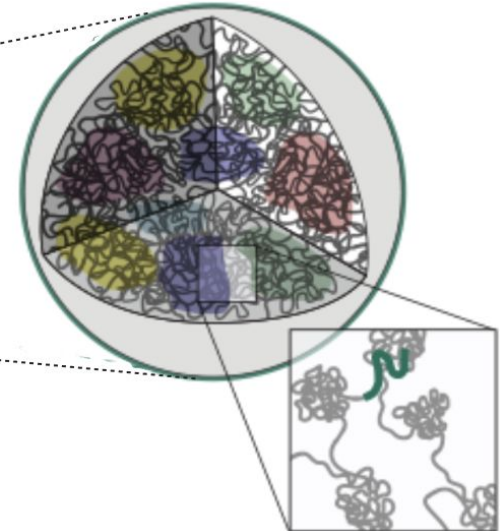


Liu, M., Yang, B., Hu, M. *et al.* (2021). 10.1038/s41596-021-00518-0



Spot 1 ( $\Delta 1$ ,  $\Delta 2$ ,  $\Delta 3$ ,  $\alpha$ )

Models from genomics data (Hi-C)

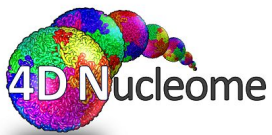


An underlying common 'language' for describing and indexing the data in a spatially explicit and semantically consistent way to integrate knowledge from diverse data types (i.e., multiplexed FISH and 3C methods) and sources and build coherent predictive models of 4D Nucleome structure and function



## **Recommendations for Nuclear CCF best practices: should be minimally intrusive and widely applicable**

- **A nuclear boundary marker is necessary (but not sufficient):**
  - Examples: DAPI, Nucleoporin, Lamina (LaminA/C, LaminB)
- **Other markers are required for triangulation and breaking symmetry:**
  - Examples: Nucleoli, Nuclear speckles, Histone epigenetic markers, RNA polymerase, mRNA transcripts
- **Key requirements:**
  - Easy-to-use,
  - Different options for different experimental designs
  - Consider methods that do not require the use of fluorescence markers and use Machine Learning to predict nuclear markers localization:
    - Brightfield images
    - Fluorescence background (from DNA/RNA FISH-Omics probes)
    - Autofluorescence



# Recommendations for Nuclear CCF best practices: should be minimally intrusive and widely applicable

- **A nuclear boundary marker is necessary (but not sufficient):**
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  - Consider methods ... fluorescence markers and use Machine Learning to predict nuclear markers localization:
    - Brightfield images
    - Fluorescence background (from DNA/RNA FISH-Omics probes)
    - Autofluorescence

Different methods have to be tested to develop best practices for Nuclear CCF

# Ongoing: acquisition of benchmarking datasets @ Center for Epigenomics, UCSD



Quan Zhu  
UCSD

## • Optimization

- Tested different nuclear markers
- Tested Chromatin Tracing probe library

## • Model System

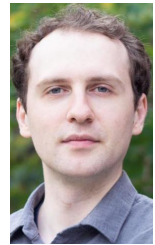
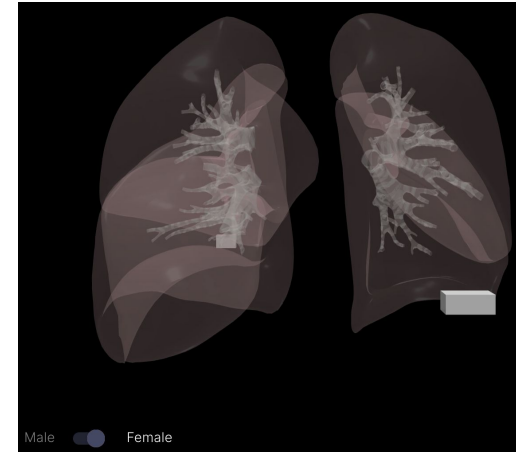
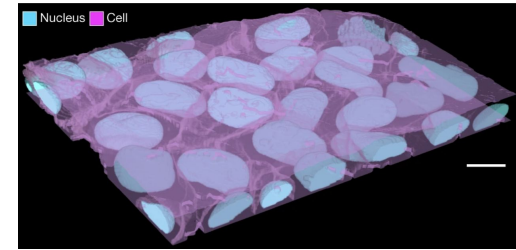
- WTC-11 hiPSC
- Human adult lung sections (from HuBMAP)

## • Ongoing experiments:

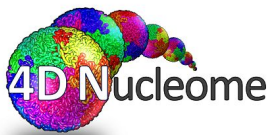
- RNA and DNA MERFISH
- Multiple markers: DAPI, Lamina, NPC, Nucleoli, RNA Polymerase II, SC35, Histone epigenetic markers, PCNA
- Brightfield image

## • Questions

- What combination of markers are necessary and sufficient?
- What protocol should be used for
- Can we use machine learning approaches to predict the position of nuclear landmarks in stain-free transmitted light, background fluorescence, or autofluorescence images?



Bogdan Bintu  
UCSD

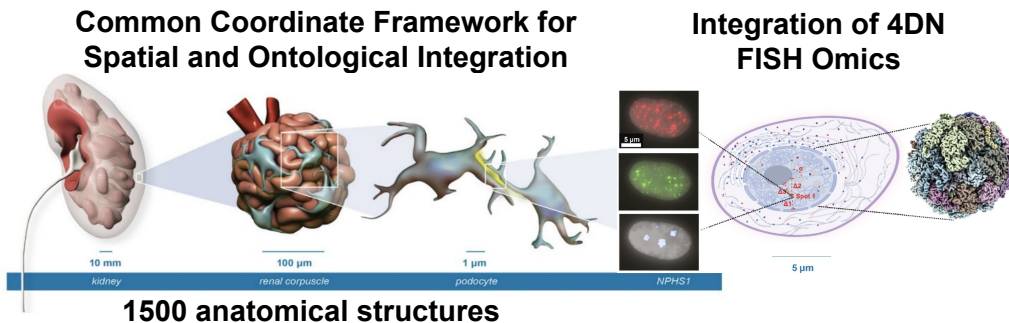
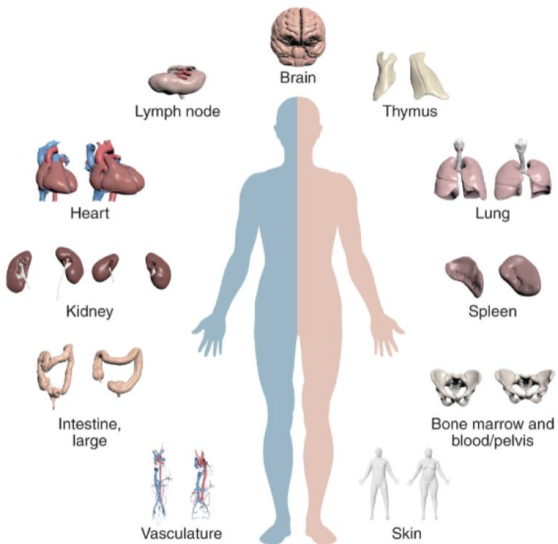


# Next Steps: Integration of Nuclear CCF with the HuBMAP Human Reference Atlas



Questions:

- What is the role of the chromatin organization and gene expression regulation in determining the organization of microenvironments in healthy and diseased Functional Tissue Units (FTUs)
- Determine how the molecular and cellular functions for a given cell type compare across organs (for example, genes essential in water transport across the kidneys, intestines, and lungs)



267 Donors

2358 Samples

3080 Datasets

31 Organs

18 Collections





**Aviv Regev, Genentech, Inc. (*Human Cell Atlas*)**

---

The background of the slide features several overlapping, semi-transparent blue organic shapes that resemble cells or tissue structures. These shapes are scattered with numerous small, multi-colored dots in shades of red, green, and cyan, suggesting a molecular or genetic composition. The overall aesthetic is clean and scientific.

**Claire Walsh, *University College London***  
***(Human Organ Atlas)***

---

An anatomical model of a human organ, possibly a liver or lung, showing a complex network of white, branching vessels (arteries and veins) against a dark red background. The model is cut in half, revealing the internal structure. A semi-transparent grey box is overlaid on the left side, containing text.

# The Human Organ Atlas (HOA)

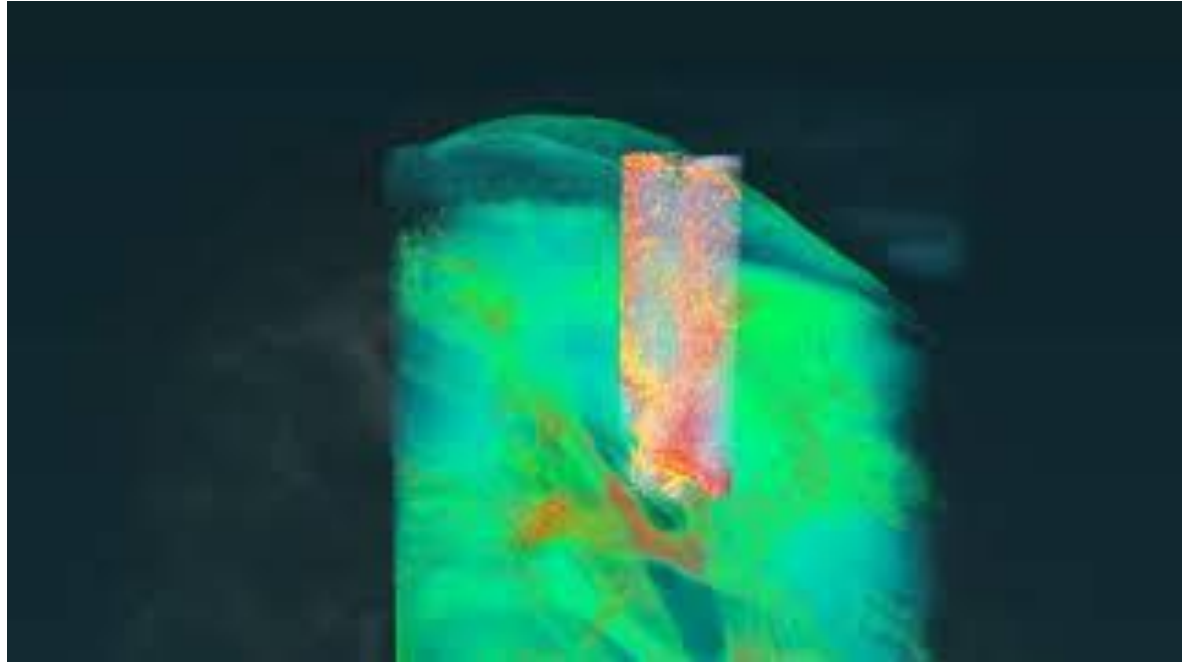
Claire Walsh

[c.walsh.11@ucl.ac.uk](mailto:c.walsh.11@ucl.ac.uk)

@hip\_ct

# Hierarchical Phase-contrast tomography

- Intracellular and extracellular matrix organs can be scanned *ex vivo* at 25-7.8 $\mu\text{m}/\text{voxel}$
- Regions of interest anywhere can then be scanned at higher resolution (down to 0.7  $\mu\text{m}/\text{voxel}$ )
- We can reach single cell resolution in an intact human organs



Video Credit: Paul Tafforeau data credit UCL lead ESRF beamtime md1252

# HiP-CT at the ESRF



Paul Tafforeau

Beamline responsible

BM18

# The Human Organ Atlas HUB (HOAHub)



**Peter Lee**  
Executive Co-Chair  
Co-PI  
UCL



**Max Ackermann**  
Executive Co-Chair  
Co-PI  
Aachen Medical School



**Claire Walsh**  
Director  
Co-PI  
UCL



**Anastasia Yendiki**  
Member  
Co-PI  
Harvard Medical School



**Danny Jonigk**  
Member  
Co-PI  
Aachen Medical School



**Bernadette de Bakker**  
Member  
Co-PI  
Amsterdam UMC



**Paul Tafforeau**  
Beamline responsible  
BM18



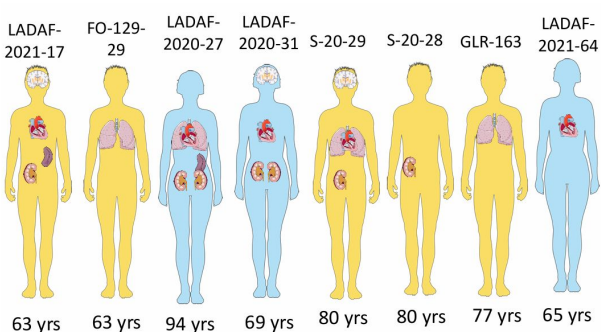
**Stijn Verleden**  
Member  
Co-PI  
Antwerp University



**Alexandre Bellier**  
Member  
Co-PI  
LADAF

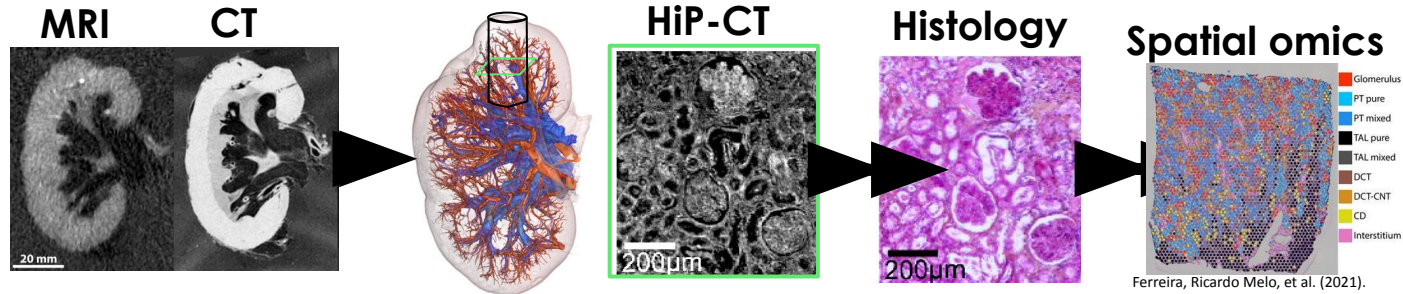
<https://mecheng.ucl.ac.uk/HOAHub/>

# 1. Human Organ Atlas

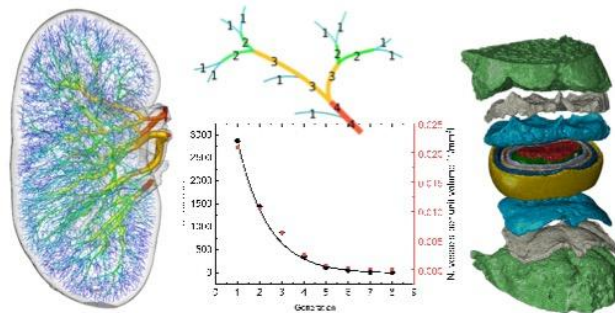


[human-organ-atlas.esrf.eu](http://human-organ-atlas.esrf.eu)

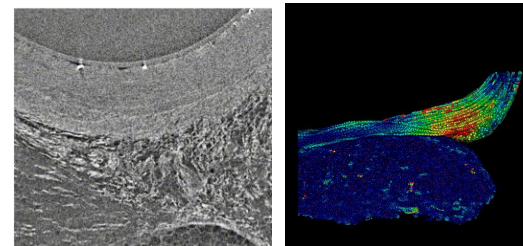
# 2. Correlation



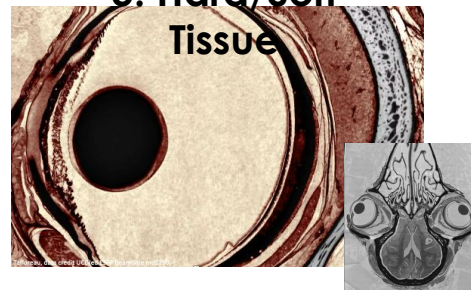
# 3. Quantifying & Modelling



# 4. Dynamics



# 5. Hard/Soft Tissue



# The Human Organ Atlas

human-organ-atlas.esrf.fr

Public database with complete organs imaged by HiP-CT in health and disease



école de Chirurgie LADAF  
Laboratoire d'Anatomie Des Alpes Françaises

**Human Organ Atlas** EXPLORE SEARCH

### Patients

<p><b>P. FO-20-129</b> male 54 yo</p> <p>died from COVID-19 21 days after hospitalisation, mechanical ventilation, pulmonary failure, renal failure, bacterial pneumonia with Klebsiella aerogenes, general brain edema, subarachnoid and intracerebral bleeding</p>	<p><b>P. LADAF-2020-27</b> female 94 yo 45 kg 140 cm</p> <p>right cyanosis and right cerebellar ataxia, cognitive disorders of vascular origin, depressive syndrome, atrial fibrillation and hypertensive heart disease, microangiopathic anemia, acute right lung pneumonia (3 before death), cataract of the left eye, squamous cell carcinoma of the skin (left temporal region)</p>
<p><b>P. LADAF-2020-31</b> female 69 yo 40 kg 145 cm</p> <p>Type 2 diabetes, pelvic irradiation to treat cancer of the uterus, right colectomy (stage II) with an ileostomy, bilateral nephrectomy for acute idiopathic renal failure, cystectomy, ureterectomy and peritoneal carcinoma with occlusive syndrome</p>	<p><b>P. GLR-163</b> male 77 yo</p> <p>resection of the lower lobe segment B due to small pulmonary adenocarcinoma (1.4 L, coronary heart disease, arterial hypertension, chronic rheumatic disease (polymyalgia Rheumatica)</p>

### Organs

<p>kidney</p>	<p>heart</p>	<p>lung</p>	<p>spleen</p>
---------------	--------------	-------------	---------------

### Datasets

<p><b>2.45um_VOI-01_upper-lobe-apical</b></p> <p>Vertical column in local tomography at 2.45um pixel size performed by HiP-CT on the baseline BM05 of the left lung from the body donor LADAF-2020-27 using half acquisition protocol.</p>	<p><b>2.45um_VOI-02_lower-lobe-basal</b></p> <p>Vertical column in local tomography at 2.45um pixel size performed by HiP-CT on the baseline BM05 of the left lung from the body donor LADAF-2020-27 using half acquisition protocol.</p>
<p><b>2.45um_VOI-06_lower-lobe-basal</b></p> <p>Vertical column in local tomography at 2.45um pixel size performed by HiP-CT on the baseline BM05 of the left lung from the body donor LADAF-2020-27 using half acquisition protocol.</p>	<p><b>25.08um_complete-organ [2021-10-07 14:06:38]</b></p> <p>Complete scan at 25.08um performed by HiP-CT on the baseline BM05 of the left lung from the body donor LADAF-2020-27 using half acquisition protocol.</p>

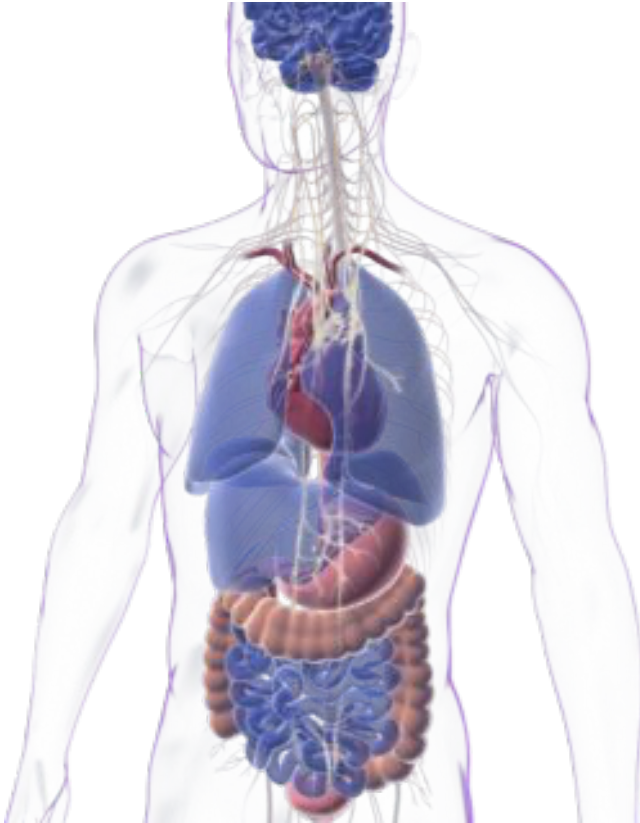




**Maryann Martone, *University of California, San Diego***

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# SPARC: Bridging the body and brain



**Opportunity:** Neuromodulation of end-organ function holds promise in treating many diseases/conditions.

**Challenge:** Mechanisms of action remain poorly understood. Many neuromodulation trials have failed to reach clinical endpoints.

## **SPARC program goals:**

- Deliver detailed, integrated functional and anatomical neural circuit maps for organs and technologies to improve neuromodulation studies
- Provide the scientific foundation necessary to translate advanced and more effective neuromodulation protocols into clinical

# Start exploring at SPARC.science



[Data & Models](#)

[SPARC Apps](#)

[Tools & Resources](#)

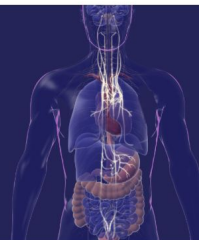
[News & Events](#)

[About](#)

[Submit to SPARC](#)

## SPARC — bridging the body and the brain

The SPARC Portal is an open neuroscience and systems physiology platform containing multi-species data, knowledge, computational modeling and spatial mapping. Share your data and models to drive development of treatments that change lives.



### What Can I Do With SPARC?



#### Browse, View, and Get Data and Models

Freely use curated experimental data, protocols, and models of the peripheral nervous system.

[Find Data and Models](#)



#### View 2D and 3D Anatomical Maps

Discover relationships and datasets with interactive connectivity maps featuring different species.

[View the Maps](#)



#### Create Computational Pipelines

Connect to the  $\alpha^2$ SPARC platform to build and explore modeling and data analysis pipelines.

[Discover  \$\alpha^2\$ SPARC](#)



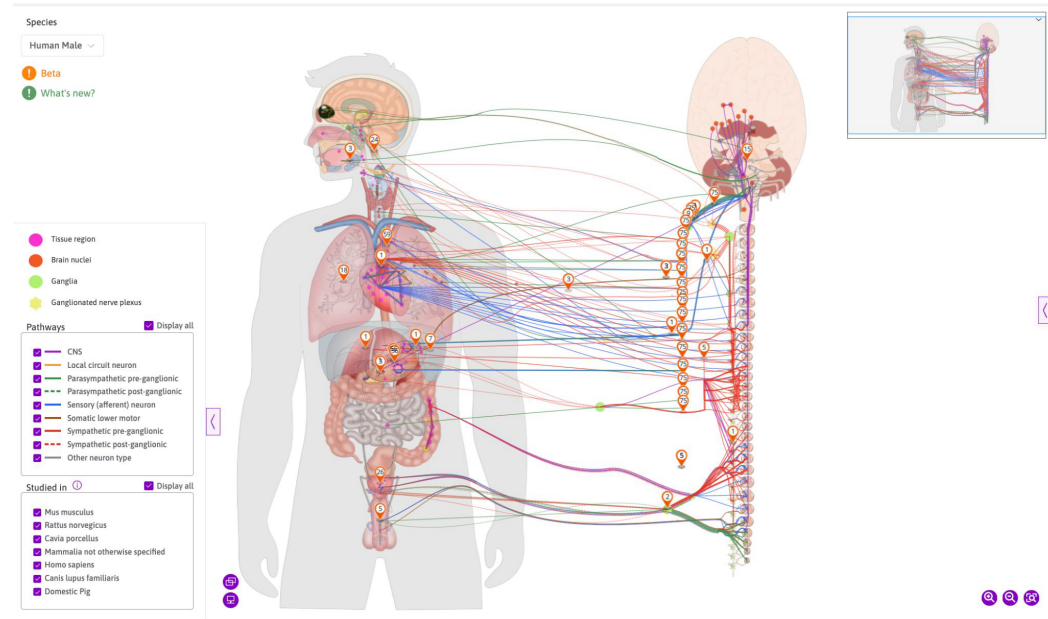
#### Contribute to the Community

SPARC accepts data, devices, and models about the PNS and is compliant with the 2023 NIH Data Sharing Mandate.

[Submit to SPARC](#)

# SPARC Maps and Connectivity KB

- Explore SPARC's interactive 2D and 3D maps of the autonomic nervous system
- These maps are drawn automatically from a knowledge base that contains detailed information about how nerves connect different parts of the body



<https://sparc.science/apps/maps?type=ac>

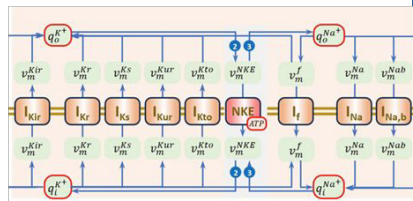
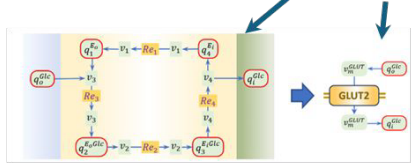
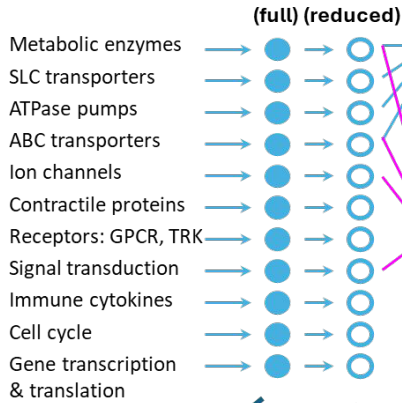
The background of the slide features several abstract, overlapping molecular or cellular structures. These structures are rendered in a light blue, semi-transparent style, with numerous small, multi-colored dots (red, green, blue, yellow) scattered across their surfaces, suggesting a complex, multi-component system. The structures are arranged in a vertical, slightly staggered pattern, creating a sense of depth and movement.

**Peter Hunter, *Bioengineering Institute***  
***New Zealand (SPARC)***

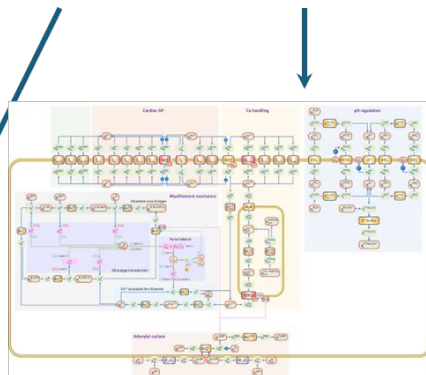
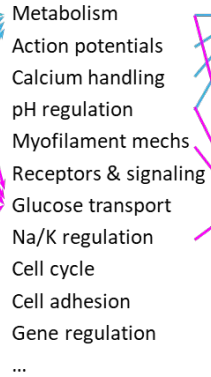
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# Physics-based multiscale modelling

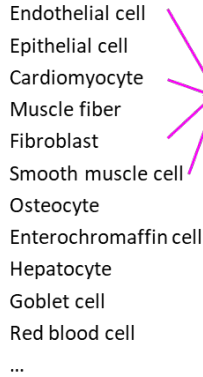
## 1. BG protein templates



## 2. FCUs

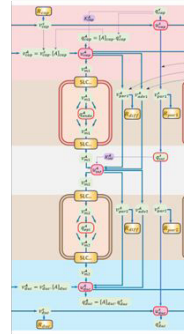
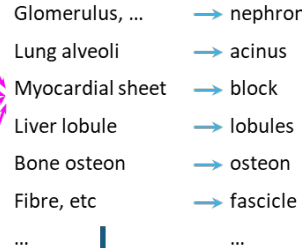


## 3. Cells



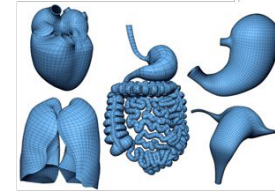
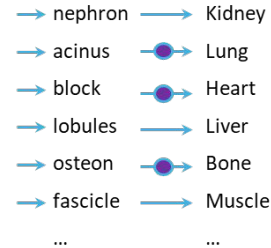
## 4. FTUs

(including 3D structure)



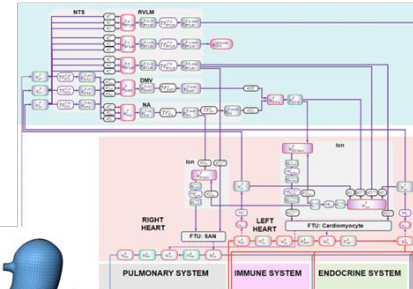
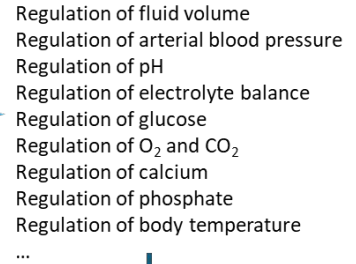
## 5. Organs

● =surrogate

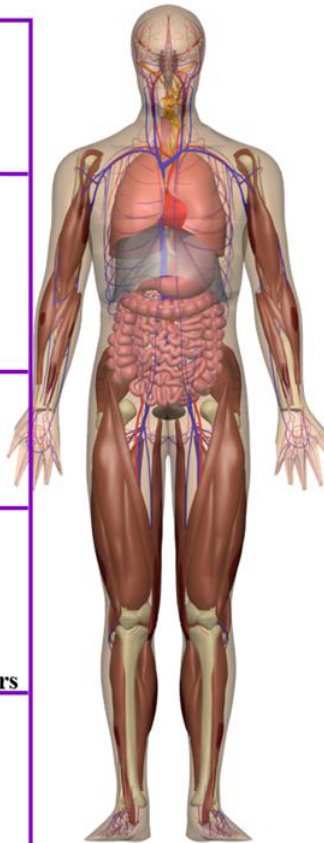
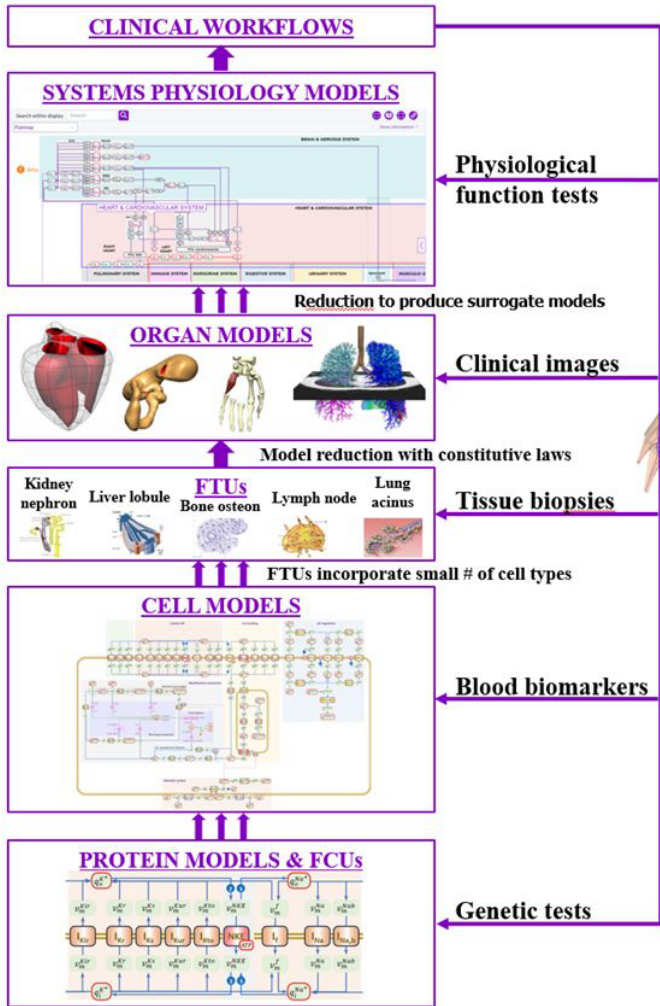


## 6. Systems

(3D anatomical model of the body)



Finite element models that are subsequently reduced (with AI methods) to surrogate models.

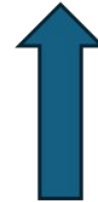


Constrained by  
observed behaviour



Needs AI  
based on  
physics

Model parameters



Constrained by  
physics and genetics



**Gary Bader, *University of Toronto, Canada***  
***(CIFAR co-director)***

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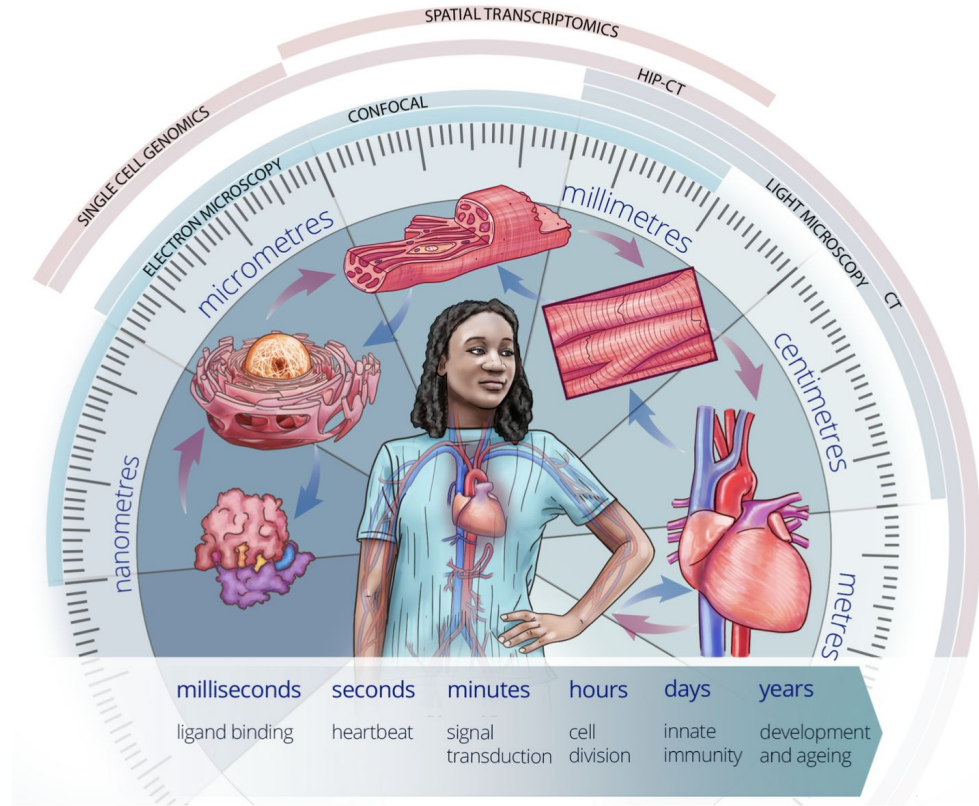
# The CIFAR Multiscale Human Program

Gary Bader, Katy Börner, Sarah Teichmann, Alain Chédotal, Barbara Engelhardt, Ali Ertürk, Ferdia Gallagher, Sidhartha Goyal, Muzlifah Haniffa, Peter Lee, Ed Lein, Dana Pe'er, Aviv Regev, Nozomu Yachie, Peter Zandstra, Mei Zhen  
Guests: Fabian Theis, Maria Brbić, Stefan Bauer et al.


<https://cifar.ca/research-programs/cifar-macmillan-multiscale-human>

# Major goal

To understand how the human body works across scales, from molecules to organs to the whole body to revolutionise our understanding, treatment and prediction of major diseases



# Silos across scales: Molecular biology vs. physiology



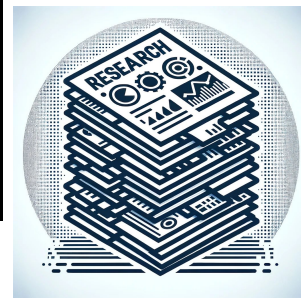
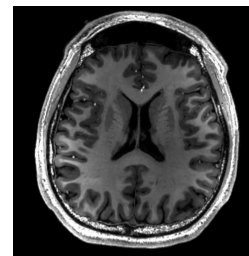
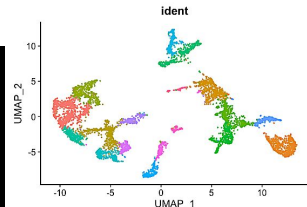
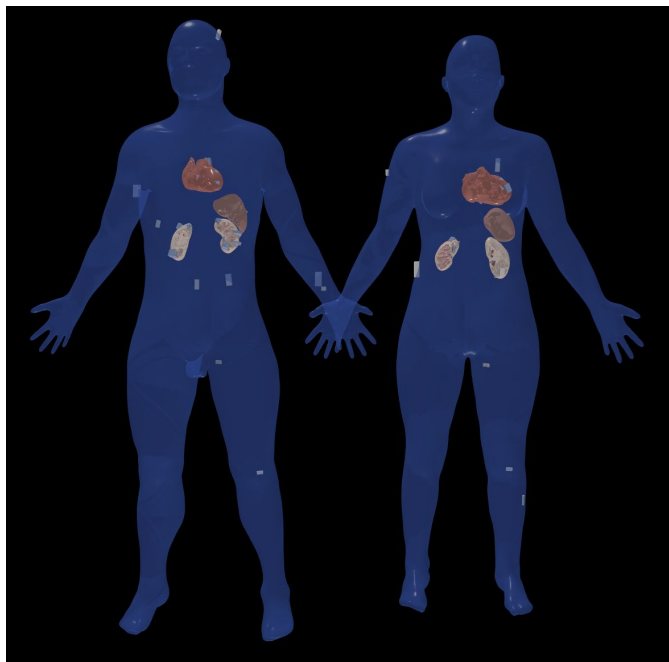
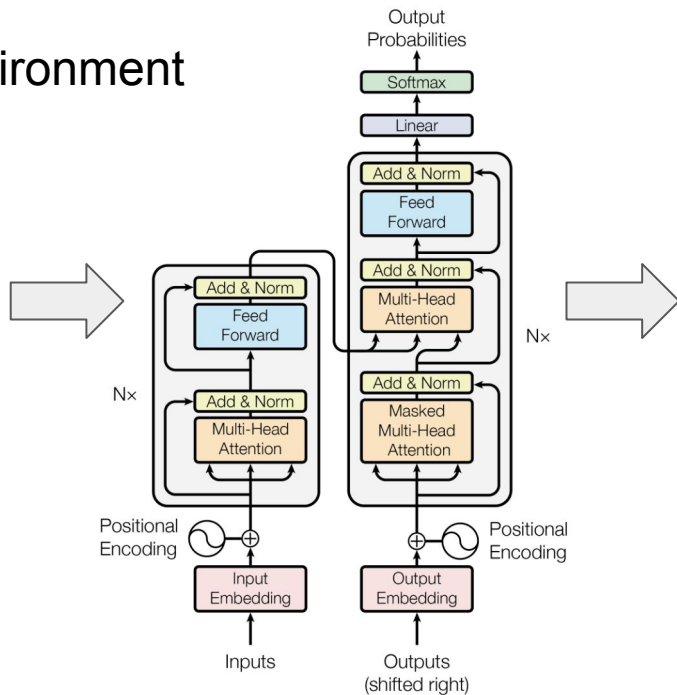
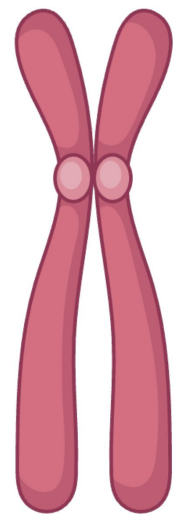
Focus on understanding mechanism at separate scales and rarely integrate

Single cell and spatial genomics creates a bridge via multicellular tissues

Can we develop a unified field that considers how the whole body works across scales?

# The genome as the ultimate generative model

+environment



↑  
Correlated

↓

# Is machine learning a good approach for understanding the body?



Evolution: copy and mutate (+ memorize)

Result: redundancy, variation

Perfect for ML: redundancy helps with pattern recognition, variation helps link data measurements (e.g. regression)

Will require mechanistic insight, multiscale thinking

(Rare events will require mechanism-based interpretation)

# Genetics can link scales



Genome to phenotype relationship works across scales

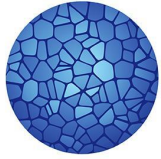
Useful to link scales: SNP, protein, complex, pathway, cell, tissue, organ, body

Large biobanks help us map biology

However, mechanistic insight is challenging to get

May need to combine genetics and mechanistic modeling

# Mapping the human body (structure)



HUMAN  
CELL  
ATLAS



**HuBMAP**  
Human Biomolecular Atlas Program



3D  
Multiscale  
Biomolecular  
Human  
Reference  
Atlas



# Generating the virtual human (function)

Generative model

Mechanistic

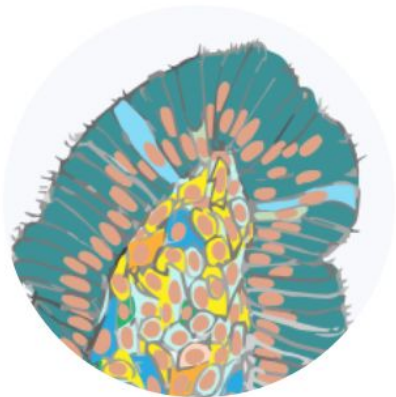
Predictive (e.g., response to perturbation)

Multiscale - how are scales connected?

Medical applications (e.g., digital twin)







**5AM**

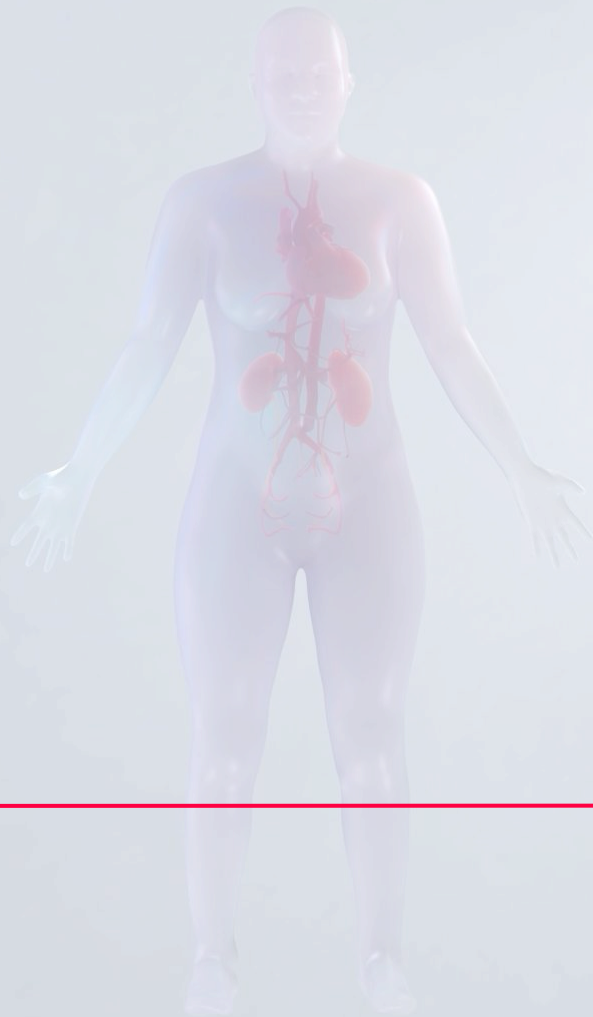
10AM in London (GMT), 7PM in Tokyo (GMT+9)

## **VIDEOS: Human Atlas Insights**

- Mapping the Multiscale Human by Gary Bader,  
*University of Toronto, Canada (CIFAR co-director)*

# Q&A

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<https://humanatlas.io/events/2024-24h>

# Questions

How do we define a Multiscale Human?

How do we map a Multiscale Human?

How do we model a Multiscale Human?

How can LLMs or RAGs be used to advance science and clinical practice?

**Thank you**

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