Semantic Web Applications and Tools for Life Sciences
SWAT4LS – 2009

SWAT4LS (Semantic Web Applications and Tools for Life Sciences) is a workshop that aims at providing a venue to critically discuss benefits and limits of Semantic Web technologies and tools in the Life Sciences.

The second edition of SWAT4LS was held in Amsterdam Science Park on November 20th 2009. The workshop was attended by nearly sixty people, with a worldwide attendance, and received in total twenty-seven submissions, out of which fifteen for full papers and twelve for posters and demos.

The final programme consisted of three keynotes, six talks, three short talks selected from posters, five demos, about ten posters and a panel discussion. The keynotes were given by Alan Ruttenberg (Semantic Web Technology to Support Studying the Relation of HLA Structure Variation to Disease), Michael Schroeder (Prediction of drug-target interactions from literature by context similarity) and Barend Mons (CWA: The meta-analysed Semantic Web, getting rid of ambiguity and redundancy). Overall, the programme was balanced between applications, tools and perspective contributions.

A review form was circulated at the end of the workshop. Feedback from participants showed a unanimously high appreciation of the workshop, and an almost equally unanimous request for tutorials and practical sessions.

Overall, a lot of progress has been made in the application of Semantic Web to Life Sciences. While there are still concerns about scalability and performance, there is a consensus that the technology is now mature enough for practical applications. However, at the same time, a "killer application" that shows the potential of the Semantic Web in this area of science has yet to be unveiled. Perhaps, like the ubiquitous changes XML has brought about, the transformation will be subtle but nevertheless far reaching.

The SWAT4LS organizers wish to thank the programme committee, the authors and all participants for their contributions to the success of this workshop.

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1   http://www.vl-e.nl
2   http://www.nbic.nl

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