

chem-bla-ics

New open access journal Source Code for Biology and Medicine

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BioMed Central is setting up a new peer-reviewed, open access journal [Source Code for Biology and Medicine](#). It will “encompass all aspects of workflow for information systems, decision support systems, client user networks, database management, and data mining”. Basically, anything that fits into chem-bla-ics. (Thanx to Werner, for pointing me to the website!)

The ‘source code’ aspect is the interesting thing of this new journal. The editorial board set the aim to *publish source code for distribution and use in the public domain in order to advance biological and medical research*. And, in a bit more detail, they list the following goals:

- increase productivity
- reduce discovery times
- reduce search times for source code
- Provide a historical reflection of source code applied
- serve as a repository

This comes close to what open source is trying to achieve too, but I do not differences. For example, the announcement mentions the public domain (see the [Wikipedia entry](#)). I tend to be a bit confused by the use of this term: to me the public domain is where things end up after copyright claims have ended, and everyone is free to do with it whatever he wants, and, very important in this case, that open source software is not in the public domain. Do they mean that they will not allow open source in the new journal?

I also wonder wether we need a journal like this? Open source projects often have other resources available that serve as repository (e.g. [SourceForge](#)), and the use version control systems as repositories (like [CVS](#), [Subversion](#)) is widespread too, which takes care of the historical reflection. Indeed, many open source software is already published in other journals.

The process of picking the journal to submit to, often involves looking up the journals impact factor. Is this new journal expected to get a high impact factor? How many people will regularly read the journal? Will it be read by the right audience, or just by fellow bioinformaticians?

Though I have my doubts about the success of this journal, I am looking forward to the first issue!

Update: [Pedro pointed](#) me to the [About page](#) of the SCFBM, giving details on the types of articles taken into consideration.