

Summary of Agenda and Minutes of Pathoplexus General Assembly Meeting

Date and time:

20 November 2025, 3 pm CET

Place:

Virtual (Zoom)

Members present:

Emma Hodcroft (chair)
Alan Rice
Alejandra Gonzalez Sanchez
Allison Black
Anja Bedeker
Anna Parker
Arthur Shem Kasambula (joined 3:30pm)
Chaoran Chen
Cornelius Roemer
Emily Smith
Emma Griffiths
Finlay Maguire
Franziska Bächler
George Githinji
Gültekin Ünal
Jamie Southgate
Laura Fahey
Michael Bridger
Peter van Heusden
Richard Neher
Senjuti Saha
Stephen Kanyerezi
Tanja Stadler
Theo Sanderson
Tracey Calvert-Joshua
Vitor Borges

Head of the meeting:

Emma Hodcroft

Keeper of the minutes:

Chaoran Chen

Agenda

1. Determination of quorum (5 active members present)
2. Election of keeper of the minutes
3. Brief introduction of new members present
4. Election of new Executive Board (EB) member:
 - a. Announcement of the resignation of Tommy Lam
 - b. Nomination of Senjuti Saha as new Executive Board (EB) member
 - i. Does Senjuti accept the nomination?
 - c. Vote by all active members present on the election of Senjuti as new EB member.
5. Brief update on the successes of the first year of Pathoplexus
6. Discussion of the membership criteria for Pathoplexus
7. EOB/open discussion

Minutes:

Start of the Meeting: 15:05 CET 2025-11-20

1. Determination of quorum (5 active members present)

- 25 active members present → quorum reached

2. Election of keeper of the minutes

- Chaoran Chen was elected as the keeper of the minutes.

3. Brief introduction of new members present

- Vitor Borges
- Alan Rice
- Alejandra Gonzalez Sanchez
- Senjuti Saha
- Stephen Kanyerezi
- Laura Fahey
- Other new members, not present at the moment: Nick Goldman, Arthur Shem Kasambula

Welcome to all new members!

4. Election of new Executive Board (EB) member:

- a) **Announcement of the resignation of Tommy Lam**
- b) **Nomination of Senjuti Saha as new EB member**
 - i) **Does Senjuti accept the nomination?**
Yes, Senjuti accepts the nomination.
- c) There are no further nominations for EB members.

d) Vote by all active members present on the election of Senjuti as new EB member

- The assembly votes on the election of Senjuti with **24 out of 24 votes**

5. Brief update of the successes of the first year of Pathoplexus (by Theo Sanderson)

- GA to establish Pathoplexus on 12 August 2024, followed by the launch of the website on 27 August with 4 pathogens
- Added mpox on 9 December, RSV & HMPV on 22 May and measles on 27 August
- Pathoplexus in action:
 - Ebola outbreak in Uganda, first sequence shared in 24h
 - Supported sharing of first ebola sequences from DRC in September 2025
 - More direct mpox sequence submissions than any other database in 2025
- Recognitions
 - Open Research Data prize in 2024
 - ETH4D grant to build training resources
- Technical improvements
 - 1000s of commits, ~20 PRs merged every week

Comments and questions:

- Emma clarified that Pathoplexus still does not have dedicated funding, but Loculus is supported by a few academic grants, which will allow hiring of developers. Contributions to Loculus feed into Pathoplexus.

Arthur Shem Kasambula joined.

- Richard and Emma reminded members that they should be vocal about feedback and what features or additions they would like to see.
- George commented that it was particularly nice to see an ecosystem of tools and resources using Pathoplexus. Emma added that Pathoplexus is happy to link to all resources, and asked Members to spread the word about building tools and having them linked.

Arthur introduced himself

- The name of the working group within PHA4GE where Pathoplexus features was clarified to be “Public sequence repositories” (in some places called “Data repositories”)

6. Discussion of the membership criteria for Pathoplexus

- Emma introduced the topic with a short background of the history of Pathoplexus membership:
 - Initially members were those who contributed to Pathoplexus and Loculus development and launch, and membership was kept small as the organization is new. However, moving forward Pathoplexus should consider different membership options.
 - Members have real power in the Pathoplexus Association, including voting in/out the Executive Board, influencing budget, and changing the Statutes, and this should be kept in mind.
 - According to the Statutes, we do have the option to have non-voting members
 - Some starting scenarios were outlined, from a fairly small, closed membership with highly active members, to a very large, open membership with few membership requirements.

Discussion:

- Members discussed ways to balance openness with responsible governance as Pathoplexus grows. There was strong support for keeping membership accessible and welcoming, while ensuring that those who vote or steer the organisation are committed to its mission and values.
- Several ideas were raised for distinguishing between *voting* and *non-voting* members, or between *active* and *inactive* members. A commonly supported concept was introducing a simple mechanism to demonstrate activeness (such as periodic renewals or activity checks), so that voting power reflects engagement without becoming burdensome to manage.
- Participants also reflected on how membership models work in other associations (including other “Verein” structures and similar mechanisms in other countries), noting both risks of sudden takeovers by new, disengaged members and successful examples of large organisations that maintain shared values through clear governance and expectations. Some expressed concern that overly strict entry criteria or nomination systems could discourage participation or reduce diversity, especially for contributors from under-resourced settings.
- Overall, the discussion emphasised:
 - maintaining openness and transparency as core Pathoplexus principles
 - protecting the organisation’s mission and values as membership expands
 - keeping requirements proportionate, fair, and practical
 - ensuring mechanisms do not disadvantage those with limited resources
- The group broadly agreed that simple, value-based commitments and light-touch mechanisms to confirm membership activeness could help balance inclusivity with responsible governance, and that further refinement should continue with these principles in mind.

George Githinji left. Allison Black left.

7. EOB/Open discussion

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Meeting was closed at 16.01