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Discussion Starter Questions

1. What genomics tools and databases are you currently using in your research?
2. For any non-NCBI tools and resources you use, would it aid your work if the resources were integrated with CGR?
3. When you think about the tools and resources that are currently available to you, which work well and why?
4. What unmet needs exist in the area of eukaryotic comparative genomics research?
5. This is a "blue sky" question. Put yourself in a frame of mind where there are no limits or constraints on a new comparative genomics resource. Anything is possible. What would that resource look like?
6. Regarding what you have heard about CGR, what appeals to you the most, and why? (e.g., functionality, available resources)
7. Regarding what you have heard about CGR, do you have any questions, concerns, or ideas for development?
8. Are you aware of other resources that have similar functionality as CGR?
9. As a [role], are there any reasons why you may not use CGR?
10. Are there any non-NCBI tools not already mentioned that you think would be helpful to you and other researchers to include in the CGR?
11. Are there any NCBI tools that you rely on for comparative genomics that were not already mentioned today?

Introduction Script

- **When entering Zoom meeting:** Good [morning/afternoon]! How are you?
- **If they do not turn on camera:** I know turning on cameras is a pain, but we've found these kinds of conversations go much smoother if everyone has their camera on. Your comfort is the most important thing here, so if you're not comfortable turning it on, that's okay. Are you comfortable turning on your camera?
- My name is [name] and I am a [role] for the MITRE Corporation.

- MITRE is a not-for-profit company that operates the Health Federally Funded Research and Development Center – or Health FFRDC – on behalf of the government.
- NCBI asked the Health FFRDC to speak with you, as an unbiased third party, to help inform the evolution of the CGR initiative.
- I'm here to facilitate today's discussion to help NCBI understand the resources you use to conduct comparative genomics and how CGR may fill gaps or remove barriers that you may experience.
- I am not an expert in genomics but [name] is and they may ask clarifying questions as needed. Say hi [name].
- Hello! [Scientist gives one sentence explanation of background]
- We also have [name] taking notes to ensure we capture the information you provide us accurately. Say hi [name].
- Hello! [Notetaker gives one sentence explanation of background]
- We encourage you to share your thoughts and feelings as candidly as possible. We will aggregate our findings and the data that we gather from these interviews will be non-attributional.
- If you have any questions or concerns following our conversation today, please don't hesitate to contact us.
- Do you have any questions before we get started?
- If you have no further questions, let's get started.

Closing Remarks

Thank you again for joining us today. Your feedback will be very important as we continue to develop CGR, and we hope we can reach out to you again. If you have additional feedback, questions, or concerns, please feel free to contact us.

Facilitation Roles and Responsibilities

- **All team members will:**
 - Mind [facilitation essentials](#) when asking questions
 - Be on camera
 - Pay close attention
 - Mind your body language
 - Debrief within two hours of the interview
 - Have advanced Zoom access

- **Facilitator:** The facilitator will lead the conversation, establish a warm and welcome environment, and make all efforts to not bias responses to agreed-upon questions. The facilitator will:
 - Introduce the agenda at the beginning of the session
 - Ask primary questions
 - Ask secondary questions when additional clarity is needed.
 - Provide space for the scientist and notetaker to ask technical or clarifying questions
 - Close the session by thanking participants
 - Review notes for accuracy
- **Scientist:** The scientist will serve as a co-facilitator and notetaker. The scientist will:
 - Alert facilitator if they have a follow-up question or clarification by raising their hand
 - Ask follow-up questions to gain greater clarity on participant answers based on their knowledge of genomics environment and CGR
 - Mark all names of tools, databases, and platforms, as well as acronyms and genomics-specific terms
 - Review notes for accuracy
- **Notetaker:** The notetaker will capture detailed notes on the responses from participants. The notetaker will:
 - Capture verbatim comments/feedback
 - Make note of factors that may aid analysis such as passionate comments, body language, or non-verbal activity. Note these cues with (parenthesis)
 - Mark unheard sentences with an ellipsis ...
 - After the interview, the notetaker will clean up the notes and add headers to denote when each question was asked
 - The notetaker will save the notes for facilitator and scientist to review

Facilitation Essentials

- **Overall goal:** Gather data objectively without providing viewpoints or opinions to participants.
- **Prepare:** Review all interview notes from previous interviews (if available)
- **Be conscious of body language:** For example, avoid head nodding. We often do this unconsciously however body language indicates your agreement.
- **Paraphrase:** Briefly summarize the person's key points in their own words and confirm shared understanding. "I heard you say...", "You mentioned..."
- **Avoid leading questions/statements:** Leave questions open and avoid value statements in your questions that the participant didn't use (e.g., good, bad, helpful, unhelpful, etc.)
- **Probe:** Listen for inconsistent, vague, or cryptic comments and probe for understanding. Request more information using phrases like: "Would you please talk a little more about...?" "Would you give me an example of what you mean?" "Is there anything else?"
- **Avoid asking 'why':** People tend to respond to "why" with a quick, rational answer without details, and because it can make the participants feel interrogated.
 - Instead, ask questions to determine:
 - (1) influence— "what prompted you to do that?"

- (2) attribution— “what features of that do you particularly like/dislike?”
 - This is a less directive approach to ask people “what” or “how” they feel about the object of discussion.
- **Use pauses:** After a participant responds, try to wait three seconds before moving on—very often, someone will fill the silence with valuable insights.

Post Session Debrief and Wrap-up

1. Conduct session de-brief with all facilitators and notetakers as soon as possible after the session—while the session is still fresh in everyone’s minds.
2. Identify the key themes and takeaways
3. Highlight resources or stakeholders mentioned to add to the environmental scan research
4. Finalize notes with preliminary theme tagging