

[REDACTED]

Von: foi-officer <foi-officer@unimelb.edu.au>
Gesendet: Dienstag, 22. Februar 2022 06:23
An: [REDACTED]
Cc: foi-officer
Betreff: RE: [EXT] Request under FOI Act

Dear Marvin,

I have followed up with the Doherty Institute in response to your final question. The answer below was provided:

At the time there was no established method for sequencing SARS-CoV-2. In order to maximise the number of sequencing reads for nCoV-2019 (named at the time) we elected to dedicate an entire flow cell to the positive culture sample to maximise our recovery of the viral reads and not spend reads on sequencing a negative sample.

I trust this is of assistance and wish you well.

Kind regards,

Eugene

From [REDACTED]
Sent: Tuesday, 8 February 2022 7:57 PM
To: foi-officer <foi-officer@unimelb.edu.au>
Subject: AW: [EXT] Request under FOI Act

External email: Please exercise caution

Dear Eugene,

Thank you very much.
Your answer fully satisfies my request.

Is there any specific reason, why the authors of the study did not perform negative controls for all the genome sequencing methodology?

Many thanks
Marvin

Von: foi-officer <foi-officer@unimelb.edu.au>
Gesendet: Dienstag, 8. Februar 2022 04:01
An: [REDACTED]
Cc: foi-officer <foi-officer@unimelb.edu.au>
Betreff: RE: [EXT] Request under FOI Act

Dear Marvin,

Apologies for the delay in response – I have made some preliminary enquiries and write to advise that the Doherty Institute can provide the following answers to your questions regarding the “Isolation and rapid sharing of the 2019 novel coronavirus (SARS- CoV- 2) from the first patient diagnosed with COVID- 19 in Australia” publication.

1. Can you confirm, that the negative control culture was grown in the same conditions (37°C, 5% CO2) and maintenance media (consisting of 10mL EMEM, 7% FBS, 2mM L-glutamine, 1 mM sodium pyruvate, 1500mg/L sodium bicarbonate, 15 mM HEPES and 0.4mg/ml geneticin) to 95% confluency in 25cm2 flasks, and that, for the negative control, maintenance media was removed and 10 mL viral culture media (EMEM as above but FBS reduced to 2%) was added?

As background, Doherty researchers define a control to be a component of an experiment intended to eliminate alternative explanations for experimental results, due to 'confounding variables'. It does this by as closely as is feasible replicating all components of the experiment other than the variable being measured. In this case, it means our negative controls have been treated in the same media conditions and changes as our positives.

2. Could you please provide me with the exact documentation of the negative control experiment.

There is no specific documentation for this experiment. Assuming your question relates to the methodology used to create this control, these are not documented or included in publications. As mentioned above, they are presumed to follow as much as it is feasible the original experiment, replicating all components of the experiment other than the variable being measured.

3. Regarding genome sequencing from the infected cell culture, did you perform control experiments to exclude that also other virus genomes could have been assembled de novo or via alignment using other reference genomes?

We did not look for other viral genomes. Our assembly was performed against the released Wuhan-1 reference sequence as we were looking for SARS-CoV-2.

4. Did you perform control experiments to exclude that the target virus genome could have been assembled de novo or via alignment from the negative control culture?

Sequencing and denovo assembly was only performed on positive, infected material.

5. If the answer for 3. and 4. is yes, could you please provide to me the documented negative control procedure for the genome sequencing?

N/A – see responses to 3 and 4.

I trust these responses satisfy your queries.

Kind regards,

Eugene

Eugene Toh (he/him) | Information Regulation Officer
Information Regulation | Information Governance Services | Legal and Risk
The University of Melbourne
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I acknowledge the Traditional Owners of the land on which I work, and pay my respects to the Elders, past and present.



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From: foi-officer <foi-officer@unimelb.edu.au>

Sent: Wednesday, 2 February 2022 9:40 AM

To: [REDACTED]

Cc: foi-officer <foi-officer@unimelb.edu.au>
Subject: RE: [EXT] Request under FOI Act

Dear Marvin,

Thanks for your email and apologies for the delay – I've followed up w/ relevant authors of the publication and am hoping to have an answer to your questions soon. I'll keep you updated.

Regards,

Eugene

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: Tuesday, 1 February 2022 4:55 AM
To: foi-officer <foi-officer@unimelb.edu.au>
Subject: AW: [EXT] Request under FOI Act

External email: Please exercise caution

Dear Sir or Madam,

This is a kind reminder regarding my request.

Many thanks
Marvin Haberland

Von: foi-officer <foi-officer@unimelb.edu.au>
Gesendet: Donnerstag, 23. Dezember 2021 01:45
An: [REDACTED]
Cc: foi-officer <foi-officer@unimelb.edu.au>
Betreff: FW: [EXT] Request under FOI Act

Dear Marvin,

We have received preliminary advice from the Doherty Institute that your questions can be answered directly, outside of the formal FOI process. However as the University is entering its shutdown period (24th Dec – 3rd Jan), we will not have a response until mid-late January. If you're happy to proceed on this basis, we will continue liaising with the Doherty and get answers to your questions as soon as possible.

Please don't hesitate to contact me if you have any questions.

Kind regards,

Eugene

Eugene Toh (he/him) | Information Regulation Officer
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From: foi-officer <foi-officer@unimelb.edu.au>
Sent: Tuesday, 14 December 2021 9:01 AM
To: [REDACTED]
Cc: foi-officer <foi-officer@unimelb.edu.au>
Subject: FW: [EXT] Request under FOI Act

Dear Marvin,

I write to acknowledge receipt of your below email to The Peter Doherty Institute for Infection and Immunity. We will make preliminary enquiries and come back to you with further advice in due course.

Kind regards,

Susan Maye ([she/her/hers](#)) | Manager, Information Regulation
Information Governance Services | Legal and Risk | Chief Operating Officer Portfolio
The University of Melbourne, Parkville Campus, Victoria, Australia
E: susan.maye@unimelb.edu.au T: +61 3 903 54268 / MS Teams Meet: Zoom / Teams

Please note that the University is closed for business from 25 December to 3 January, reopening on Tuesday, 4 January 2022.

To manage end of year workload and resourcing, we ask that you engage with us as early as possible. The team will be managing urgent matters on a priority basis during December and January as we will have reduced staff available during this period.

Many University staff remain working remotely. My usual hours of work are Monday to Thursday 9:30am to 5:30pm and every second Friday.

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: Friday, 10 December 2021 2:48 AM
To: Doherty Reception <doherty-reception@unimelb.edu.au>
Subject: [EXT] Request under FOI Act

External email: Please exercise caution

Dear Sir or Madam,

Under the FOI Act, I would like to request the following information and/or documentation regarding the publication "Isolation and rapid sharing of the 2019 novel coronavirus (SARS- CoV- 2) from the first patient diagnosed with COVID- 19 in Australia" published by several authors of your house.

1. Can you confirm, that the negative control culture was grown in the same conditions (37°C, 5% CO₂) and maintenance media (consisting of 10mL EMEM, 7% FBS, 2mM L-glutamine, 1 mM sodium pyruvate, 1500mg/L sodium bicarbonate, 15 mM HEPES and 0.4mg/ml geneticin) to 95% confluency in 25cm² flasks, and that, for the negative control, maintenance media was removed and 10 mL viral culture media (EMEM as above but FBS reduced to 2%) was added?

2. Could you please provide me with the exact documentation of the negative control experiment.
3. Regarding genome sequencing from the infected cell culture, did you perform control experiments to exclude that also other virus genomes could have been assembled de novo or via alignment using other reference genomes?
4. Did you perform control experiments to exclude that the target virus genome could have been assembled de novo or via alignment from the negative control culture?
5. If the answer for 3. and 4. is yes, could you please provide to me the documented negative control procedure for the genome sequencing?

Please send your answer to [REDACTED]

Please confirm that you received this FOIA request.

Many thanks and kind regards

Marvin Haberland