

Announcing first-ever American Association of Anatomists Virtual Microscopy Database

April 5 2017

The American Association of Anatomists (AAA) launches their first-ever [Virtual Microscopy Database](#) available to educators and researchers worldwide.

The Virtual Microscopy Database (VMD) was created as a centralized repository where a community of anatomy and histology scholars and researchers can share a large selection of virtual tissue slides for enhancing education, research, and scholarship.

"This project was born out of the Digital Histology Interest Group within AAA - in our discussions many of us lamented the fact that our digital slide collection was limited in diversity, so we were each on the hunt for different slides, rare tissues, or something each of us lacked. VMD meets these needs, all in one place and helps us build a community for not only resource sharing but also networking and collaboration," noted Lisa Lee, Ph.D., of the University of Colorado.

The VMD Management team, made up of histology educators Haviva Goldman, Ph.D. of Drexel University, Michael Hortsch, Ph.D., of the University of Michigan, and Lisa Lee, Ph.D, of the University of Colorado, have used virtual microscopy in their courses for years and were interested in creating a central repository of high-quality digital slides.

As members of the American Association of Anatomists, Drs. Goldman, Hortsch, and Lee applied for and were awarded \$50,000 of funding

from the Association's Innovations Program to make the VMD a reality.

Fellow VMD collaborator, Dr. Haviva Goldman added that "Educators can freely incorporate these images into their educational materials in ways that will work best for their own teaching needs and curriculum. This kind of flexibility is invaluable and will allow for substantial innovation."

The VMD is a free resource and will continue to accept digital tissue slide submissions from interested donors.

"More and more schools forego the expensive purchase and maintenance of microscopes and glass histology slides that can break and instead use virtual microscopy with computers to teach students the microscopic structure and function of cells, tissues, and organs. As no single slide collection is complete and flawless, pooling image collections from many different schools and making them available to all histology educators and researchers in form of the VMD electronic database is a perfect solution," concluded Dr. Michael Hortsch.

Provided by American Association of Anatomists

Citation: Announcing first-ever American Association of Anatomists Virtual Microscopy Database (2017, April 5) retrieved 3 May 2024 from <https://medicalxpress.com/news/2017-04-first-ever-american-association-anatomists-virtual.html>

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