

vifabio's Internet Guide: Collection policy

Virtual Library of Biology (vifabio)
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Objective and audience

vifabio's **Internet Guide** makes high-quality and professionally verified links from the biological sciences available on the Internet.

Biologists involved in research, teaching and learning and those interested in natural history are the audience of vifabio and the Internet Guide.

The resources are classified by target audience. Thus, it is possible to gather Internet sources for beginners and experts in one database and present them separately as needed.

Topics, resource types and indexing depth

The collection of Internet resources focuses on the topics of biology, botany and zoology as fundamental sciences in the classical sense, the special subject collection areas of the UB Frankfurt. Resources from the applied sciences of land and forest management, biotechnology, medicine, pharmacy and veterinary sciences are not normally collected in vifabio's Internet Guide, as per the guidelines from the DFG (German Research Foundation) for special subject collections and virtual libraries.

Restriction by geography (author or area of discussion) or a particular language is not provided, but most resources are available in English or German. Company websites and job boards are not included in the Internet Guide, but our partner Verband Biologie, Biowissenschaften und Biomedizin in Deutschland (**VBIO**) makes such links available.

23 distinct Internet **resource types** are indexed. Following the rules, the home page of a website is recorded in the Internet Guide. In particular cases, should a site have subsections that offer significantly different information than is described on the homepage, more pages can be included as separate resources. Detailed indexing on a general basis is not planned.

Quality criteria

The quality control of Internet sources for a subject guide is a process that involves checking a candidate against a variety of criteria in form and content based on the audience and the collection profile.

It is not easy to standardise this process and set objective criteria across multiple institutions. Guidance for the creation of vifabio's quality criteria was taken from the [selection criteria used by Intute](#)¹ (formerly BIOME), a scientific portal in the United Kingdom, and [work by Bargheer](#)² (2002).

Three sets of tests were developed: examination of the *context of the information* with regard to collection profile and audience, the positioning of the resource in the topic and investigation of the authority and prestige of the resource and its author.

The *quality of the information* is concerned with the content itself, its coverage as well as its accuracy and currency.

Formal and technical qualities are concerned with ease of use, access, service, maintenance and positioning of the website.

Fulfilling the content quality criteria is critical. Formal and technical criteria are secondary. For example, good design and usability does not balance inappropriate content and therefore will not mean a website will be indexed.

¹<http://www.intute.ac.uk/healthandlifesciences/policy.html>

²<http://webdoc.gwdg.de/ebook/aw/2003/bargheer/v10.pdf>