

---

# *Reconnaissance Paper*

---

-Samriddhi

## Executive Summary

This paper provides a thorough overview of the digital footprint of the Broad Institute of MIT and Harvard, identifying numerous subdomains, hosts, email addresses, IP addresses, DNS records, internal documents, and cloud storage buckets linked to the company using a variety of passive reconnaissance techniques. Malicious actors might use these resources to undertake focused attacks on the Broad Institute's infrastructure.

The results demonstrated that the institute's website runs on a NGINX HTTP server and makes use of HTML5. Additional information on network components, hosting, IP addresses, SSL/TLS versions, and geolocation was obtained using tools such as Netcraft. These facts provide useful information that threat actors can use to exploit security weaknesses.

Additionally, Metagoofil helped discover various public documents containing sensitive information on subjects like genetic mutations and healthcare data, which may contain proprietary research or sensitive PII. Such data poses a security risk as it could be misused for identity theft or data leaks.

The Broad Institute should implement several preventative security measures to reduce these threats. Regular vulnerability assessments and penetration tests, secure coding techniques, timely security patch and update applications, careful website and network infrastructure monitoring, limiting access to sensitive data, and frequent security and awareness training for staff are a few of these.

In conclusion, the results underscore the need for a proactive cybersecurity strategy, stressing the necessity of ongoing observation, assessment, and adjustment to protect the organization's security posture from possible dangers.

## Introduction

The Broad Institute of MIT and Harvard is a world-renowned biomedical and genomic research institute founded in 2004. The institute focuses on advancing knowledge in areas such as genomics, personalized medicine, chemical biology, cancer research, and infectious diseases. With a collaborative approach, the Broad Institute brings together scientists from MIT, Harvard, and affiliated hospitals to tackle complex scientific challenges through interdisciplinary research. The institute is dedicated to improving human health by driving innovation in biomedicine, making groundbreaking discoveries, and developing transformative technologies. Its contributions span various sectors, including healthcare, pharmaceuticals, biotechnology, and academic research, positioning the Broad Institute as a leading force in the life sciences.

As a repository of large-scale genomic data, Broad Institute would be an interesting case study for understanding how high-value organizations protect sensitive information, manage cyber risks, and, by exploring their digital footprint, can reveal valuable networking or partnership data.

## Passive Reconnaissance Tools

1. **Spiderfoot:** It is a comprehensive OSINT tool that is used for domain discovery. It collects data from multiple sources and gives a detailed description of emails, domains, IP address information, certificate logs, etc. for a target website.

✚ Summary of Output: The Spiderfoot scan showed information about cloud storage, email addresses of actual employees of Broad Institute, and social media presence.

The first screenshot shows the 'Cloud Storage Bucket' section of the Spiderfoot interface. It displays a table with the following data:

Data Element	Source Data Element	Source Module	Identified
<input type="checkbox"/>	https://broadinstitute.blob.core.windows.net	broadinstitute.org	sfp_azureblobstorage

The second screenshot shows the 'Emails' section of the Spiderfoot interface. It displays a table with the following data:

Data Element	Source Data Element	Source Module	Identified
<input type="checkbox"/>	cgeorges@broadinstitute.org	broadinstitute.org	sfp_grep_app
<input type="checkbox"/>	dianew@broadinstitute.org	broadinstitute.org	sfp_skymail
<input type="checkbox"/>	gadgetz@broadinstitute.org	broadinstitute.org	sfp_skymail
<input type="checkbox"/>	gavinha@broadinstitute.org	broadinstitute.org	sfp_grep_app
<input type="checkbox"/>	gavinha@broadinstitute.org	broadinstitute.org	sfp_grep_app
<input type="checkbox"/>	gavinha@broadinstitute.org	broadinstitute.org	sfp_grep_app
<input type="checkbox"/>	gavinha@broadinstitute.org	broadinstitute.org	sfp_grep_app
<input type="checkbox"/>	gavinha@broadinstitute.org	broadinstitute.org	sfp_grep_app

The third screenshot shows the 'Social Media Presence' section of the Spiderfoot interface. It displays a table with the following data:

Data Element	Source Data Element	Source Module	Identified
<input type="checkbox"/>	github: https://github.com/andychisholm	Andy	sfp_keybase

✚ How information can be used by an attacker: Attackers can exploit the email addresses, cloud storage information from the Spiderfoot's scan to social engineer, do phishing attacks that could lead to data breaches and unauthorized access to the organization. Additionally, the social media presence of an employee can be used for malicious purposes.

✚ Suggested Controls: Broad Institute can use email filtering and monitoring and train employees in phishing and social engineering attacks. They should also limit public exposure to email addresses by using generic contact forms on websites.

2. **Shodan:** A search engine used for ports and devices on the internet. It gives information about operating systems, hosts, open ports, etc.

🚩 Summary of Output: The shodan search showed that Broad Institute is using some of the unsecured ports like port 25,21,80. It also gave information about the SSL certificate used by the organization.

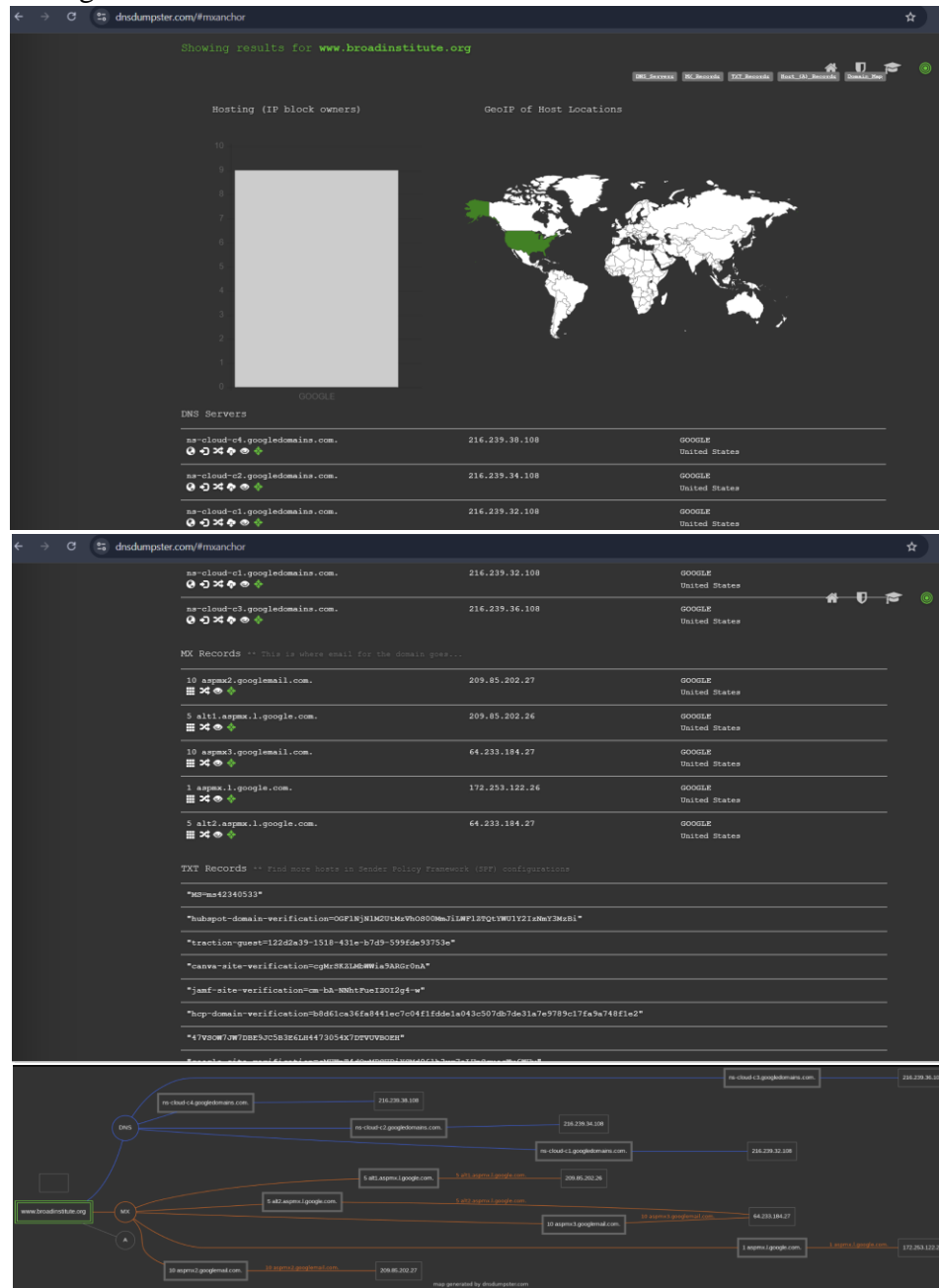
The image shows two screenshots from the Shodan search engine. The top screenshot displays the search results for the query 'broadinstitute.org'. It shows 18 total results, with a list of top ports (443, 587, 21, 25, 465) and top organizations (The Broad Institute, Inc., Google LLC). A detailed view of the results for 69.173.70.223 is shown, including the IP address, organization (The Broad Institute, Inc.), and a list of open ports (21, 25, 465). The bottom screenshot shows the SSL certificate details for the host 35.244.201.44. It includes the certificate's data (Version: 3, Serial Number: 9045e576e0b2a318a18026554146080d129), signature algorithm (sha256WithRSAEncryption), issuer (CA=, O=Google Trust Services, CN=), validity period (Not Before: Jun 23 23:40:08 2024 GMT, Not After: Sep 21 22:43:01 2024 GMT), subject (CN=broadinstitute.mobi), and the public key algorithm (rsaEncryption).

🚩 How information can be used by an attacker: Attackers could use open ports or outdated operating systems as entry points for attacks.

🚩 Suggested Controls: Regularly scan and close unused or unnecessary ports, patching and updating all internet-facing systems, and employing firewalls and intrusion detection/prevention systems (IDS/IPS) can be implemented.

3. **DNS Dumpster:** a DNS enumeration tool that is used to discover DNS records, subdomains, and other infrastructure related data for a target domain. A passive tool which does not interact directly with target's network.

- Summary of Output: The DNS Dumpster showed DNS server locations, MX records, TXT records and the infrastructure of Broad like the mail servers used by the organization.



- How information can be used by an attacker: Information on subdomains or DNS records can enable domain spoofing, phishing, or targeted attacks on specific server of the infrastructure.
- Suggested Controls: The use of DNS security measures like DNSSEC, monitoring of DNS records for unauthorized changes and implementing Split DNS to keep internal records separate from public ones can be done.

4. **Netcraft:** Based on publicly available data, Netcraft gathers data and gives information like hosting information, phishing or malware data, technologies used by the target's website.

✚ Summary of Output: The Netcraft results showed network details, Web trackers/technologies, hosting details, IP addresses, etc.

The first screenshot shows the 'Network' section of the Netcraft report for broadinstitute.org. It includes details such as the site title, rank, description, and various IP addresses and their delegations. The second screenshot shows the 'Sender Policy Framework' (SPF) and 'DMARC' sections, along with a 'Web Trackers' section that includes pie charts for companies and categories. The third screenshot shows the 'Site Technology' section, categorized into Server-Side, Client-Side, Content Management System, and PHP Application, with details on the technologies used and popular sites using them.

**Network**

Site	Domain
<a href="http://www.broadinstitute.org/">http://www.broadinstitute.org/</a>	<a href="http://www.broadinstitute.org/">broadinstitute.org</a>

**IP delegation**

IP range	Country	Name	Description
157.140.0.0/16	United States	IANA IP-Space-ADDRESS	Internet Assigned Numbers Authority
157.140.0.0/16	United States	RFC 1918	RFC 1918
157.140.0.0/16	United States	SPICA-3	SPICA-3
157.140.0.0/16	United States	SPICA-3	SPICA-3

**Sender Policy Framework**

A host's Sender Policy Framework (SPF) describes who can send mail on its behalf. This is done by publishing an SPF record containing a series of rules. Each rule consists of a qualifier followed by a specification of which domains to apply this qualifier to. For more information please see [open-spf.org](http://open-spf.org/).

**DMARC**

**Web Trackers**

Web Trackers are third-party resources loaded onto a webpage. Trackable resources include social sharing widgets, JavaScript files, and images. These trackers can be used to monitor individual user behaviour across the web. Data derived from these trackers are primarily used for advertising or analytics purposes.

2 known trackers were identified.

**Companies**

Company	Primary Category	Tracker
Google	Analytics	Google Analytics
Wistia	Video	Wistia

**Categories**

Category	Tracker
Analytics	Google Analytics
Video	Wistia

**Site Technology** (fetched today)

**Server-Side**

Includes all the main technologies that Netcraft detects as running on the server such as PHP.

Technology	Description	Popular sites using this technology
SSL	A cryptographic protocol providing communication security over the Internet	<a href="http://www.dreepi.com/">www.dreepi.com</a> , <a href="http://www.microsoft.com/">www.microsoft.com</a> , <a href="http://www.google.com/">www.google.com</a>

**Client-Side**

Includes all the main technologies that run on the browser (such as JavaScript and Adobe Flash).

Technology	Description	Popular sites using this technology
JavaScript	Widely-supported programming language commonly used to power client-side dynamic content on websites	<a href="http://www.amazon.com/">www.amazon.com</a> , <a href="http://www.twitch.tv/">www.twitch.tv</a> , <a href="http://www.instagram.com/">www.instagram.com</a>

**Content Management System**

A content management system (CMS) is a computer program that allows publishing, editing and modifying content as well as maintenance from a central interface.

Technology	Description	Popular sites using this technology
Drupal	An open source content management system	<a href="http://www.adina.gr/">www.adina.gr</a> , <a href="http://www.insipq.gr.uk/">www.insipq.gr.uk</a> , <a href="http://www.prognosis.com">www.prognosis.com</a>

**PHP Application**

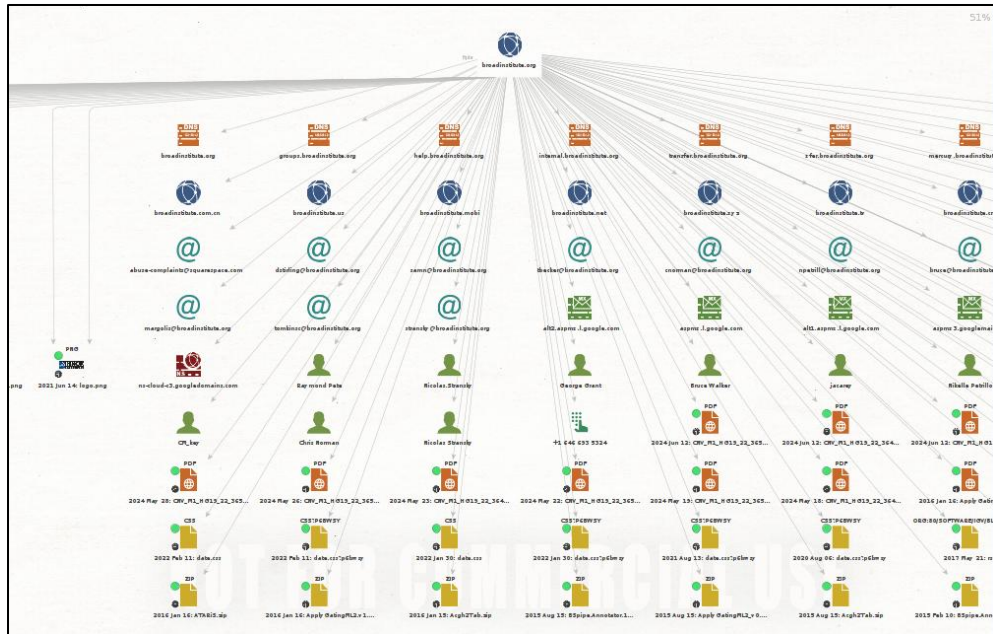
PHP is an open source server-side scripting language designed for Web development to produce dynamic Web pages.

Technology	Description	Popular sites using this technology
Drupal	An open source content management system	<a href="http://base-contacts.afral.com">base-contacts.afral.com</a>

✚ How information can be used by an attacker: Attackers could identify known vulnerabilities in web technologies and attempt to exploit them.







- ✚ How information can be used by an attacker: Attackers can perform social engineering or impersonation attacks using social media or email accounts.
- ✚ Suggested Controls: Employees should be educated on privacy settings on their social media accounts, restricting themselves from sharing their contact details publicly.

**7. Whois:** A Whois scan for a target domain can provide important information about the owner of the domain, registration details, contact information, Admin name, location, etc.

- 🚩 Summary of Output: The Whois scan revealed that the organization is registered in MA(US), IANA ID and the Registrar URL, server.

```
-cat $(cat /dev/urandom | tr -dc 'a-z0-9' | fold -n 64 | xargs sha1sum) | \
$ curl --silent https://whois.broadinstitute.org/
Registrar Name: broadinstitute.org
Registry Domain ID: A28487fa3693d31ab858026e330001776-LDOR
Registrant Name: whois.squarespace.com
Registrar URL: https://domains.squarespace.com
Updated Date: 2020-05-17T20:48:26Z
Creation Date: 2002-05-17T20:48:26Z
Registrar Expiry Date: 2027-05-17T20:48:26Z
Registrar: Squarespace Domains LLC
Registrar IANA ID: 895
Registrar Abuse Contact Email: abuse-complaint@Squarespace.com
Registrar Abuse Contact Phone: +1.6466692532
Domain Status: clientDeleteProhibited https://icann.org/epp/clientDeleteProhibited
Domain Status: clientTransferProhibited https://icann.org/epp/clientTransferProhibited
Registrant Type: Individual
Registrant Name: REDACTED FOR PRIVACY
Registrant Organization: Broad Institute
Registrant Street: REDACTED FOR PRIVACY
Registrant City: REDACTED FOR PRIVACY
Registrant State/Province: MA
Registrant Postal Code: REDACTED FOR PRIVACY
Registrant Country: US
Registrant Phone: REDACTED FOR PRIVACY
Registrant Phone Ext.: REDACTED FOR PRIVACY
Registrant Fax: REDACTED FOR PRIVACY
Registrant Fax Ext.: REDACTED FOR PRIVACY
Registrant Email: Please query the RDNS service of the Registrar of Record identified in this output for information on how to contact the Registrant, Admin, or Tech contact of the queried domain name.
Admin Name: REDACTED FOR PRIVACY
Admin Organization: REDACTED FOR PRIVACY
Admin Street: REDACTED FOR PRIVACY
Admin City: REDACTED FOR PRIVACY
Admin State/Province: REDACTED FOR PRIVACY
Admin Postal Code: REDACTED FOR PRIVACY
Admin Country: REDACTED FOR PRIVACY
Admin Phone: REDACTED FOR PRIVACY
Admin Phone Ext.: REDACTED FOR PRIVACY
Admin Fax: REDACTED FOR PRIVACY
Admin Fax Ext.: REDACTED FOR PRIVACY
Admin Email: Please query the RDNS service of the Registrar of Record identified in this output for information on how to contact the Registrant, Admin, or Tech contact of the queried domain name.
Registry Tech ID: REDACTED FOR PRIVACY
Tech Name: REDACTED FOR PRIVACY
Tech Organization: REDACTED FOR PRIVACY
Tech Street: REDACTED FOR PRIVACY
Tech City: REDACTED FOR PRIVACY
Tech State/Province: REDACTED FOR PRIVACY
```

- 🚩 How information can be used by an attacker: The data obtained from Whois provides detailed information about the domain, registration details, contact information, owner details, etc. (not found for Broad Institute)

- ✚ Suggested Controls: Use domain privacy protection to mask Whois information, which was done by Broad Institute. (Redacted For Privacy as shown in the screenshot above)

8. **Metagoofil:** a metadata gathering tool designed to extract data from public documents that are associated with a particular domain. These documents may include PDFs, Word files, and other commonly used formats.

- ✚ Summary of Output: The Metagoofil output showed documents related to mutations, genetics, and other healthcare related files.

```
(kali@kali)~$
└─$ metagoofil -d broadinstitute.org -t pdf,doc -n 100 -l 200 -f results.html
[*] Searching for 200 .pdf files and waiting 30.0 seconds between searches
[*] Results: 200 .pdf files found
http://www.broadinstitute.org/~ilya/alex/radiological_consequences_chernobyl_accident.pdf
https://www.broadinstitute.org/files/news/pdfs/GAWhitePaperJune3.pdf
https://pubs.broadinstitute.org/mpr/projects/Global_Cancer_Map/Bioinformatics_200107.pdf
https://personal.broadinstitute.org/anne/Du_Oncotarget.pdf
https://personal.broadinstitute.org/bhaas/haas_mycology_2011.pdf
https://personal.broadinstitute.org/tabeel/broade_presentation.pdf
https://alkesgroup.broadinstitute.org/HEATHER/NRG_Henn_2015_mutationload.pdf
https://personal.broadinstitute.org/sfs/correlation.pdf
https://personal.broadinstitute.org/ilya/micromodularity.pdf
https://dream.broadinstitute.org/papers/Marbach2012.pdf
https://personal.broadinstitute.org/sfs/nrg_Xchrom.pdf
https://personal.broadinstitute.org/tabeel/broade2_presentation.pdf
https://satb2-portal.broadinstitute.org/06SATB2_Information_sheet_Provider.pdf
https://satb2-portal.broadinstitute.org/05SATB2_Information_Sheet_Families.pdf
https://personal.broadinstitute.org/anne/Imageassaydevelopmentpostdocjobdescription.pdf
https://satb2-portal.broadinstitute.org/04SATB2_Quick_Facts.pdf
https://satb2-portal.broadinstitute.org/09SATB2_Infographic_Speech.pdf
https://www.broadinstitute.org/files/patents/WO2018027176.pdf
https://personal.broadinstitute.org/flannick/resume/resume.pdf
https://www.broadinstitute.org/files/patents/WO2017147196.pdf
https://personal.broadinstitute.org/armartin/SC/20180912_prs_tutorial.pdf
https://www.broadinstitute.org/files/patents/WO2019094983A1.pdf
https://www.broadinstitute.org/files/patents/WO2019118949A1.pdf
https://personal.broadinstitute.org/anne/publications/22_Baltus_NatGenetics_2006.pdf
https://alkesgroup.broadinstitute.org/EPI511_2017/HSPH_Price_013117_EPI511Week2.pdf
https://www.broadinstitute.org/files/patents/WO2018057812.pdf
https://personal.broadinstitute.org/anne/publications/85_Bray_CurrProtoMolBio_2015.pdf
https://www.broadinstitute.org/files/patents/WO2019046636A1.pdf
https://www.broadinstitute.org/files/patents/WO2017074788_0.pdf
https://www.broadinstitute.org/files/patents/WO2017132291.pdf
https://www.broadinstitute.org/files/patents/WO2019089592A1.pdf
https://www.broadinstitute.org/files/patents/WO2018213726A1.pdf
https://www.broadinstitute.org/files/patents/WO2016094872.pdf
https://www.broadinstitute.org/files/patents/US8729130.pdf
https://www.broadinstitute.org/files/patents/WO2017117331_0.pdf
https://www.broadinstitute.org/files/patents/WO2017106290_0.pdf
https://www.broadinstitute.org/files/patents/WO2019113499A1.pdf
https://personal.broadinstitute.org/sfs/personal/gc_page.pdf
https://www.broadinstitute.org/files/shared/infectiousdisease/CHEADRFAppFormRev082916v5.pdf
https://data.broadinstitute.org/compbio1/CodAlignViewFiles/TreePdfs/hg38_120mammals.pdf
[*] Searching for 200 .doc files and waiting 30.0 seconds between searches
[*] Results: 22 .doc files found
https://software.broadinstitute.org/viral/docs/AV454_UserGuide_v20120131.doc
ftp://ftp.broadinstitute.org/pub/igv/CSH_2010/exercises.doc
https://pubs.broadinstitute.org/mpr/projects/Leukemia/table_ALL_AML_predic.rtf
https://pubs.broadinstitute.org/mpr/projects/Computational_Biology/AboutTheseFiles.doc
https://pubs.broadinstitute.org/mpr/projects/SNP_Analysis/Garaway_S6.doc
https://www.broadinstitute.org/files/shared/genomebio/download/gsc_wp_template.doc
https://software.broadinstitute.org/viral/docs/V-Phaser_V-Profiler_UserGuide_updated20120131.doc
https://www.broadinstitute.org/files/shared/mammals/download/BroadHealthUpdate_2011.doc
https://personal.broadinstitute.org/manoli/yeasts/S6.RFC_test/d.SmallORFs.doc
https://www.broadinstitute.org/files/shared/mgp/LocusView/LocusView2_0_documentation.doc
https://pubs.broadinstitute.org/mpr/projects/Ewings_Sarcoma/Appendixx201.doc
https://www.broadinstitute.org/files/shared/diabetes/scandinavs/HeaderDescriptions.doc
ftp://ftp.broadinstitute.org/distribution/seq/msc/coccidioides/manuscript/Neafsey_SupTable3.doc
ftp://ftp.broadinstitute.org/pub/igv/CSH_2011/exercises/igvtools/igvtools_gui_exercise.doc
https://www.broadinstitute.org/files/shared/infectiousdisease/CHEADRFAppFormRev082916v5.doc
https://www.broadinstitute.org/files/shared/genomebio/Enterococcalx20genomesx20whitepaper.doc
ftp://ftp.broadinstitute.org/pub/papers/compmd/assisted_assembly/Arachne/Layout/MergeContigs.doc
https://portals.broadinstitute.org/gpp/public/dir/download/dirpath-protocols/screening8filename=Ochip_processing_Protocol_draft122108.doc
https://portals.broadinstitute.org/gpp/public/dir/download/dirpath-protocols/screening8filename=Large_scale_infection_090111.doc
https://www.broadinstitute.org/files/shared/genomebio/DengueX20surveillanceX20inX20LX20mosquitoes.doc
https://pubs.broadinstitute.org/mpr/projects/Ewings_Sarcoma/Smith_X20etX20al_X20supplementalX20appendixx201.doc
[*] Done!
```

- ✚ How information can be used by an attacker: Metadata from internal documents can reveal sensitive details, including ongoing research which can be exploited.
- ✚ Suggested Controls: The use of metadata cleaning tools before publishing documents on the internet, educating employees on metadata privacy practices.

9. **theHarvester:** is an open-source reconnaissance tool that is used to collect information from public sources and search engines. The information usually consists of email addresses, IP addresses, ASNS, hostnames, etc.



- 

[illegible]

-