

COMPUTER MODELS IN NEUROSCIENCE: ARE THEY ANY GOOD?

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*All models are wrong
but some are useful*



George E.P. Box

But which ones?

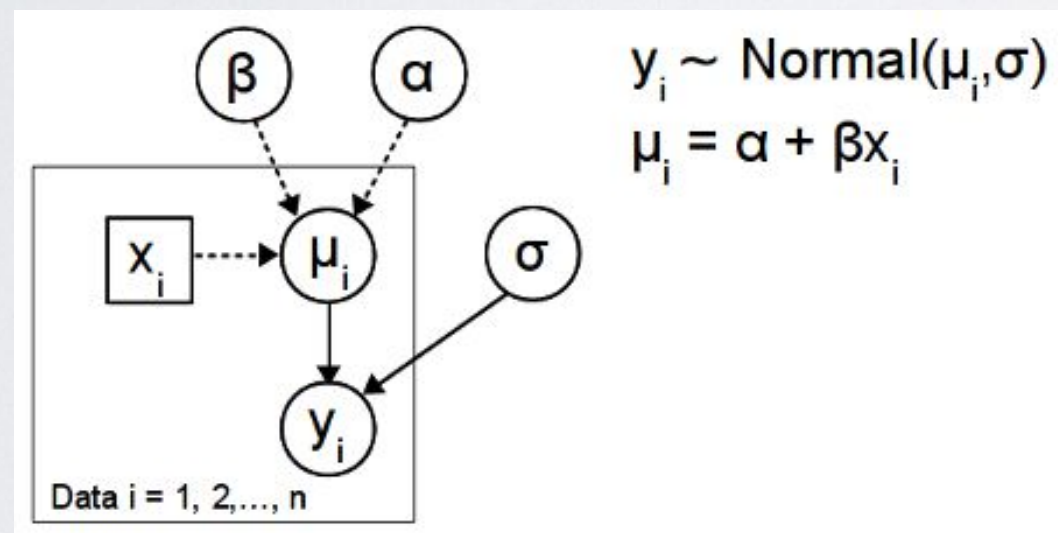
$$\begin{cases} \frac{dV_m}{dt} = \frac{I}{C_m} - \frac{\bar{g}_K n^4}{C_m} (V_m - V_K) - \frac{\bar{g}_{Na} m^3 h}{C_m} (V_m - V_{Na}) - \frac{\bar{g}_l}{C_m} (V_m - V_l) \\ \frac{dn}{dt} = \alpha_n(V_m)(1 - n) - \beta_n(V_m)n \\ \frac{dm}{dt} = \alpha_m(V_m)(1 - m) - \beta_m(V_m)m \\ \frac{dh}{dt} = \alpha_h(V_m)(1 - h) - \beta_h(V_m)h \end{cases}$$

Biophysically-detailed Models

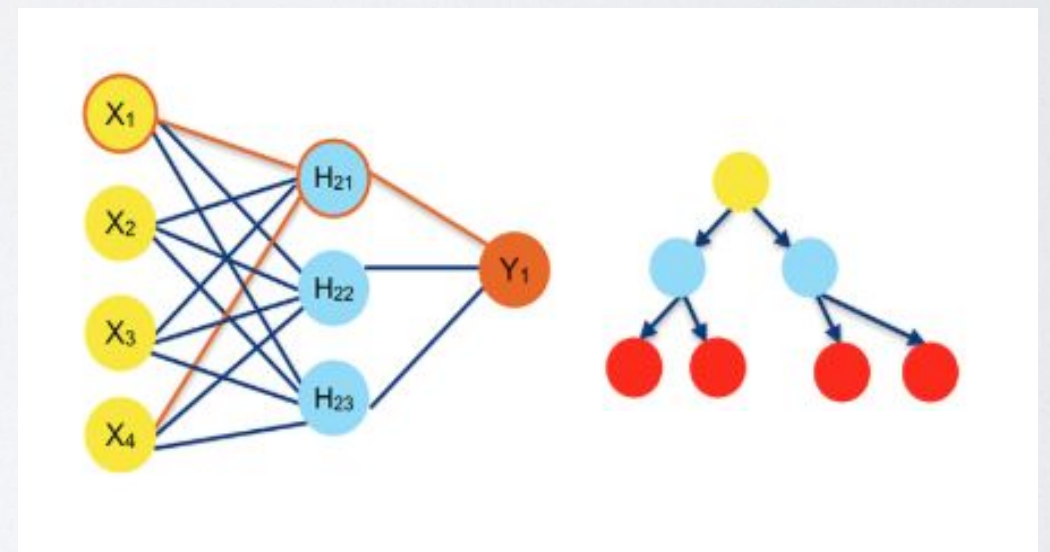
$$\begin{aligned} C \frac{dV}{dt} &= -g_L(V - E_L) + g_L \Delta_T \exp\left(\frac{V - V_T}{\Delta_T}\right) - g_e(t)(V - E_e) - g_i(t)(V - E_i) - w \\ \tau_w \frac{dw}{dt} &= a(V - E_L) - w \end{aligned}$$

At spike time ($V > 20$ mV): $V \rightarrow EL$
 $w \rightarrow w + b$

Reduced Models



Statistical Models



Machine Learning Models

EXAMPLE: A brief history of cosmology

Heliocentrism



Geocentrism



EXAMPLE: A brief history of cosmology

Experimentalists

Modelers

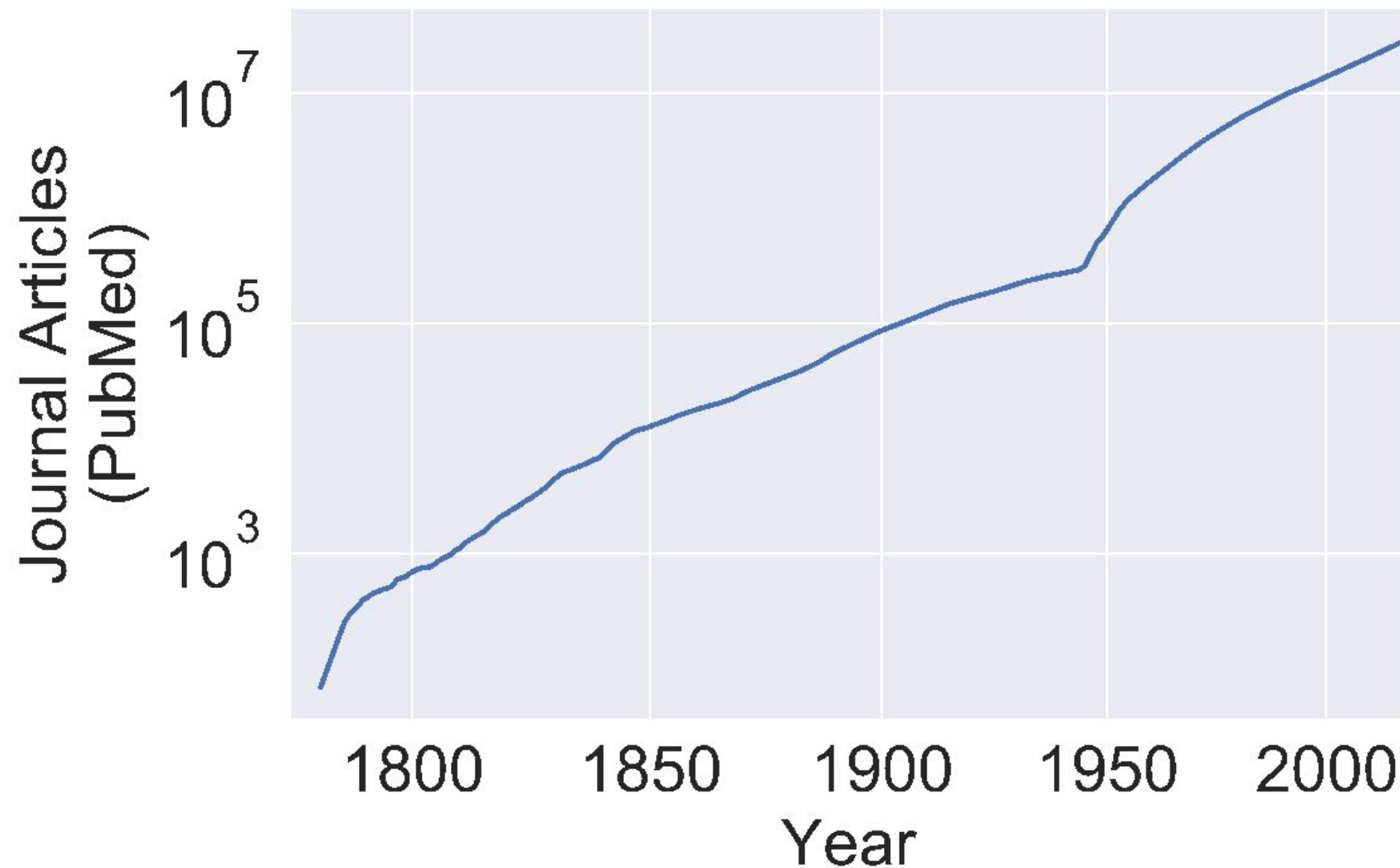
	Babylonians	Brahe	Galileo	Le Verrier
Ptolemy	Pass	Fail	Fail	Fail
Copernicus	Pass	Fail	Fail	Fail
Kepler	Pass	Pass	Unclear	Fail
Newton	Pass	Pass	Pass	Fail
Einstein	Pass	Pass	Pass	Pass

Pass

Fail

Unclear

Global scientific output doubles every nine years



How can we:

- 1) evaluate models against *all* relevant data?
- 2) do it automatically?
- 3) do it publicly and transparently?



SciDash

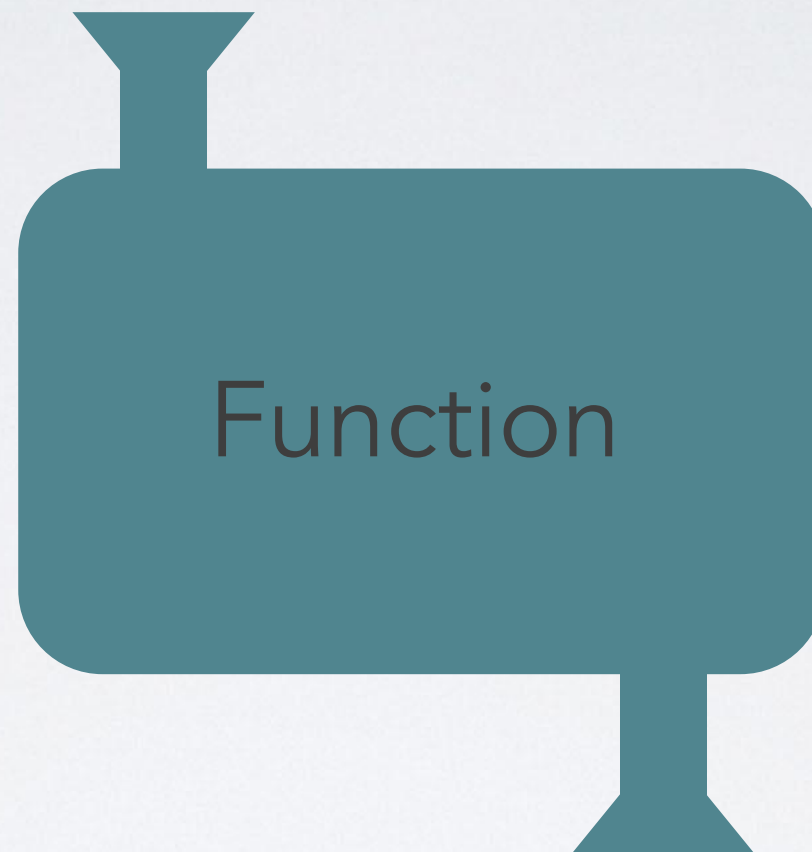
Collections of empirically-informed unit tests.

Evaluate models according to which tests they pass.

What is a UNIT TEST?

“... a strict, written contract that the piece of code must satisfy.”

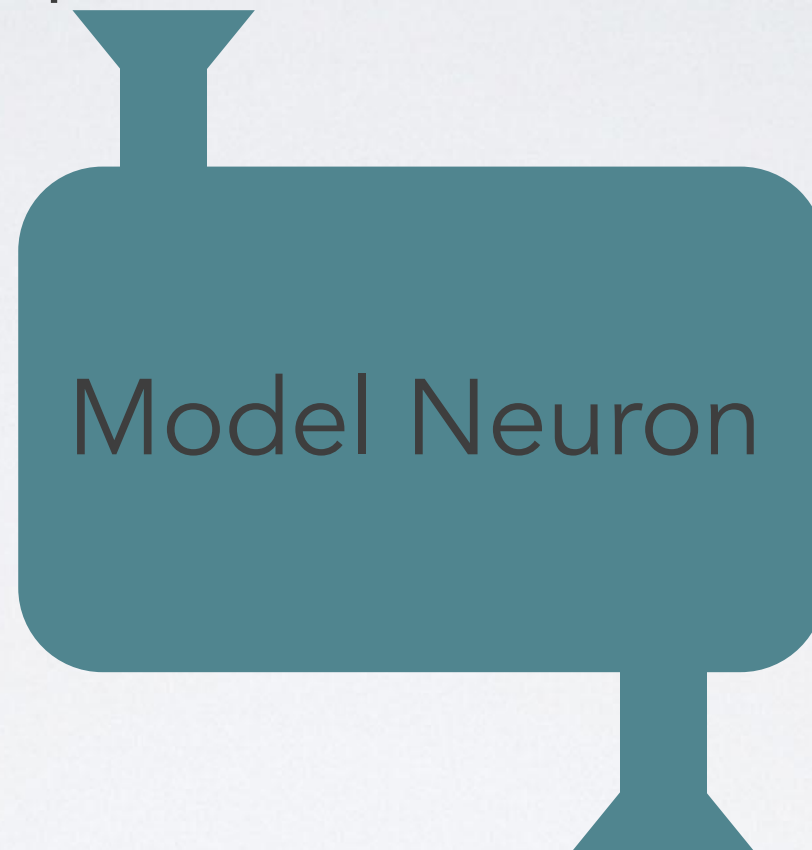
Input



Function

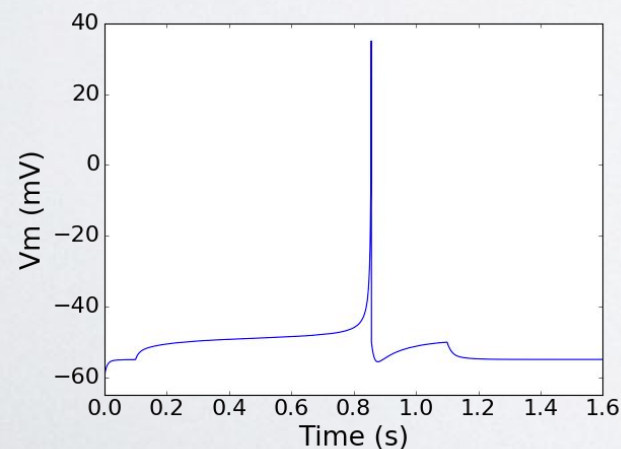
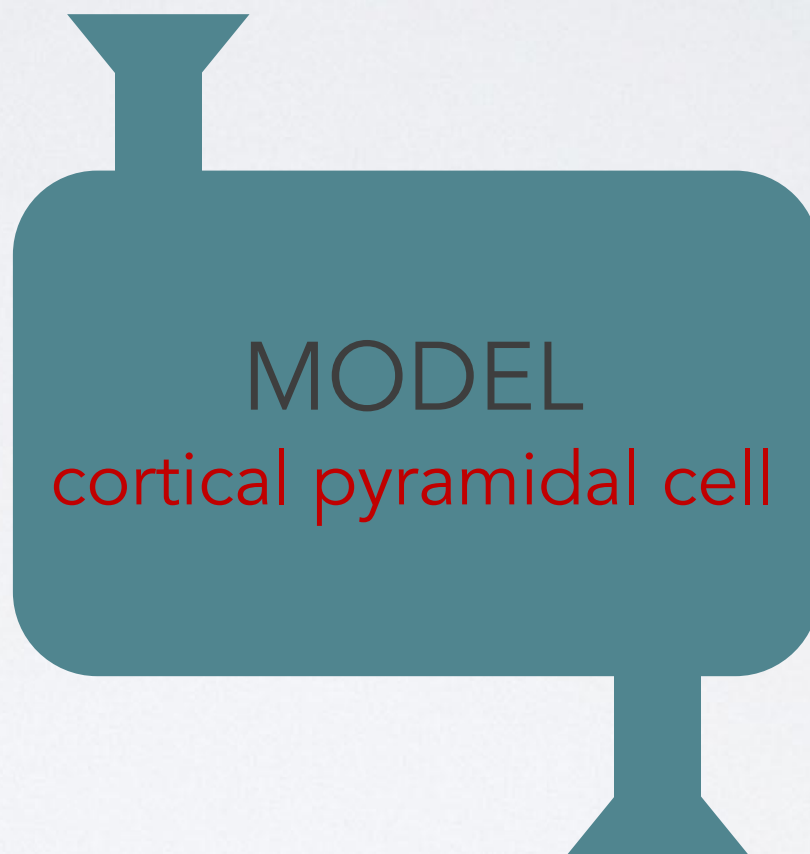
Output

Input during Simulation
Experiment

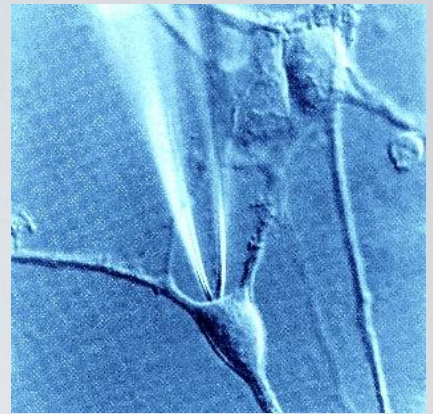


Predicted Observations from
Simulated Output

Input: 100 pA current injected
to soma for 800 msec

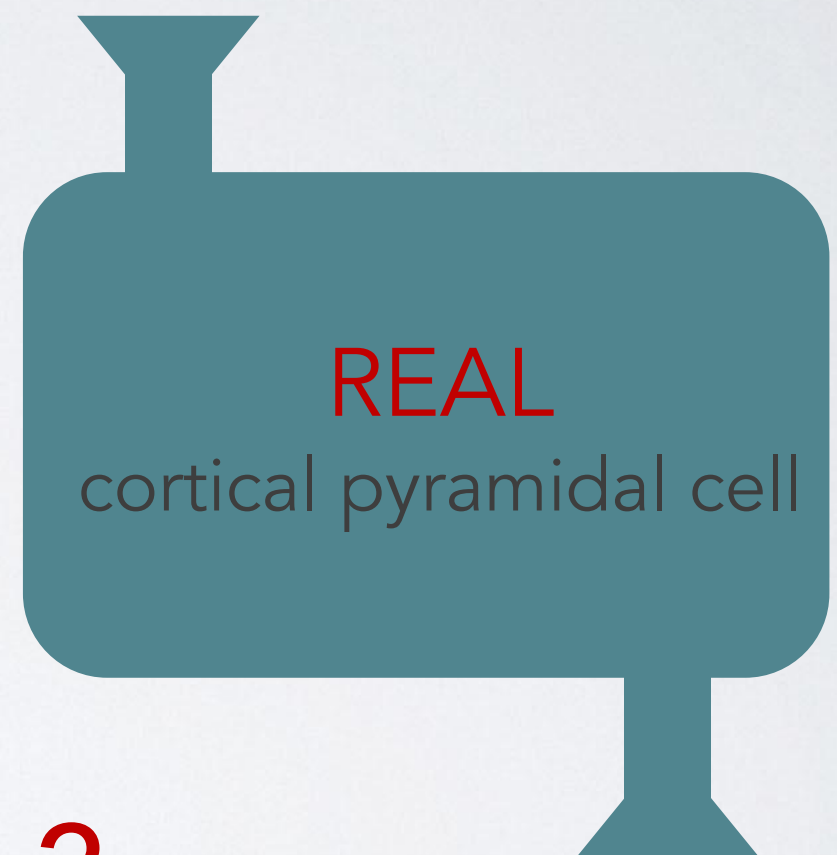
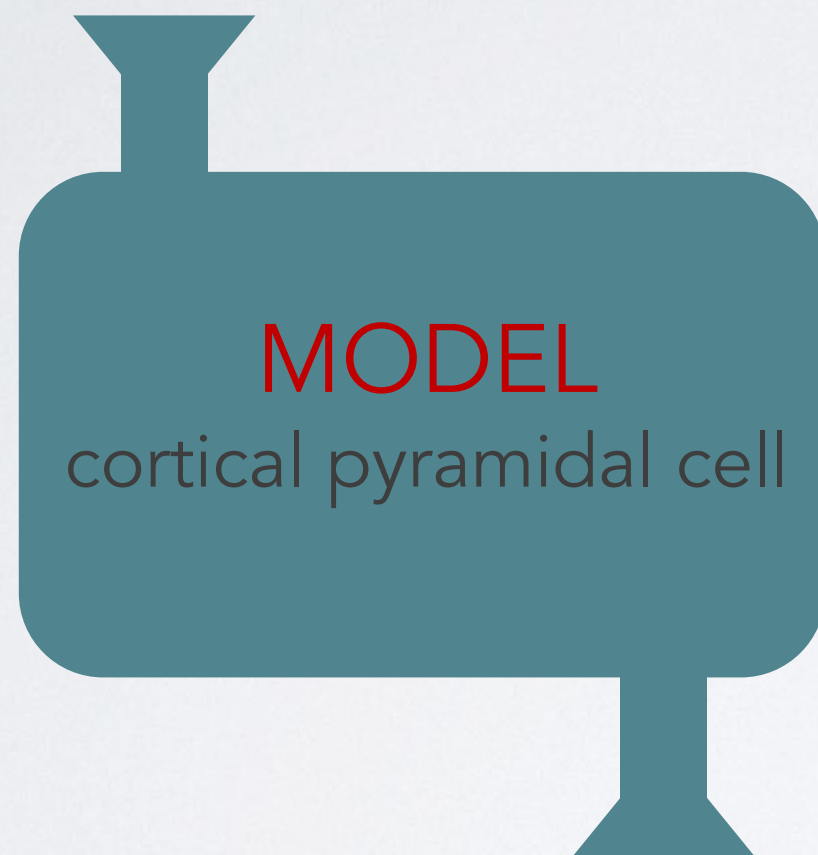


Output: predicted membrane
potential waveform



100 pA current injected
to soma for 800 msec

100 pA current injected
to soma for 800 msec



predicted membrane
potential waveform

?

recorded membrane
potential waveform





SciDash



SciUnit, a Pythonic framework for data-driven unit testing that separates the interface from the implementation, respecting the diversity of conventions for modeling and data collection.



NeuronUnit

NeuronUnit, an extensible SciUnit-driven library for the testing of neuron, neural circuit, and ion channel models using common simulators against multiple data sources.

The screenshot shows the SciDash web interface with a table of test results. The table has columns for Name, Score, Score Type, Model, Hostname, and Owner. The table is filtered to show tests with a score of -0.766. The table is sorted by Score Type (ZScore) and then by Score (descending). The table shows 10 rows of test results.

Name	Score	Score Type	Model	Hostname	Owner
InjectedCurrentAPWidthTest	-0.766	ZScore	MitralCellModel (LJcleland2013)	Justas' PC	justasb
TimeConstantTest	0.207	ZScore	MitralCellModel (LJcleland2013)	Justas' PC	justasb
InputResistanceTest	0.452	ZScore	MitralCellModel (LJcleland2013)	Justas' PC	justasb
RestingPotentialTest	-0.468	ZScore	MitralCellModel (LJcleland2013)	Justas' PC	justasb
InjectedCurrentAPAmplitudeTest	-0.013	ZScore	MitralCellModel (Davison2003)	Justas' PC	justasb
InjectedCurrentAPThresholdTest	-0.009	ZScore	MitralCellModel (Davison2003)	Justas' PC	justasb
InjectedCurrentAPWidthTest	-1.132	ZScore	MitralCellModel (Davison2003)	Justas' PC	justasb
TimeConstantTest	0.766	ZScore	MitralCellModel (Davison2003)	Justas' PC	justasb
InputResistanceTest	-0.352	ZScore	MitralCellModel (Davison2003)	Justas' PC	justasb
RestingPotentialTest	-0.334	ZScore	MitralCellModel (Davison2003)	Justas' PC	justasb

A SciDash portal to identify test repositories on GitHub, make it easy to locate them, execute suites of unit tests locally or in the cloud, and visualize results online with rich markup.



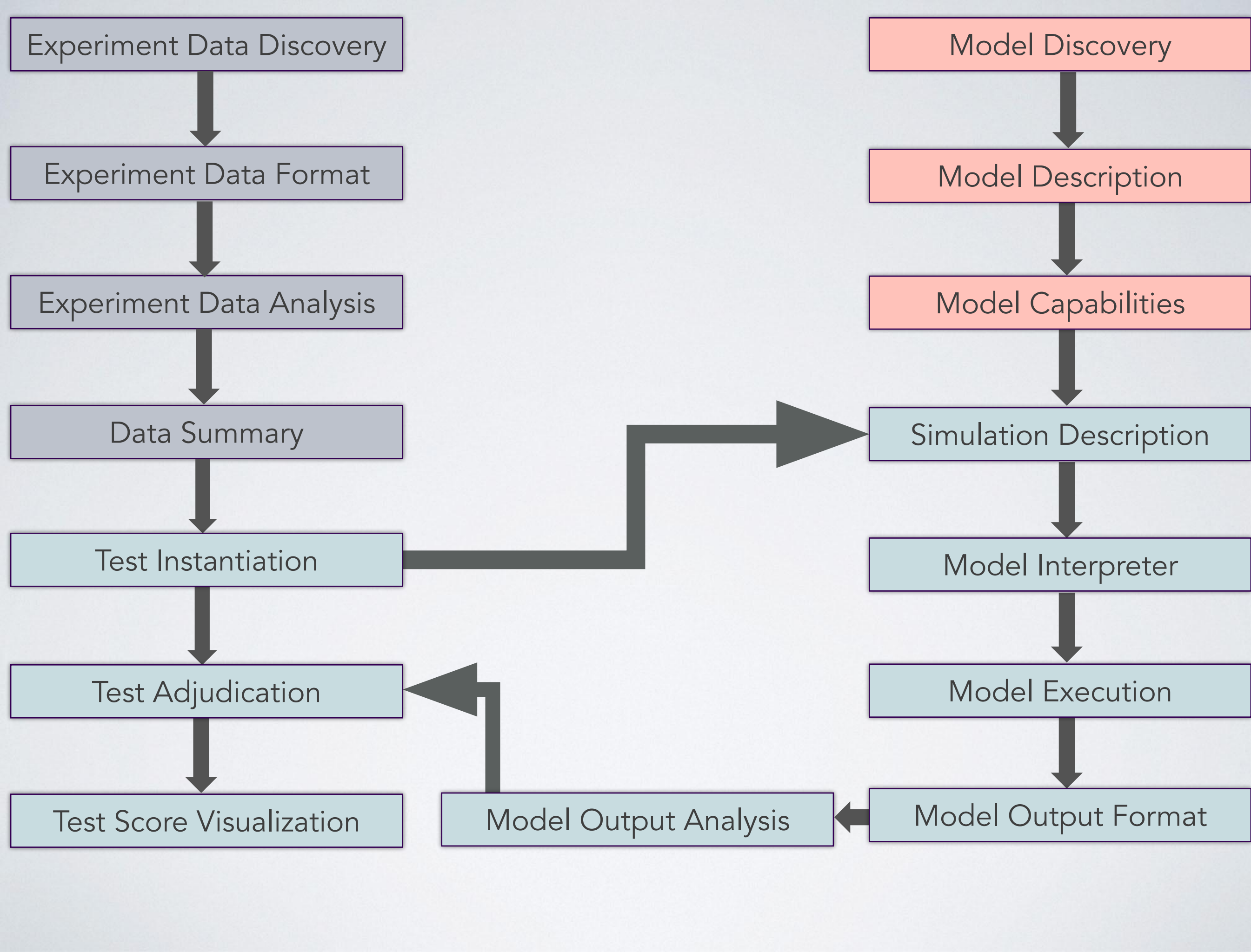
SciDash

Interoperable: Repositories of unit tests.

Rigorous: Evaluate models based on tests they pass.

Transparent: Share model evaluations on the web.

Reproducible: Models/data/tests are linked and public.



Associated Resources & Standards

Experiment Data Discovery

CRCNS.org

Experiment Data Format

Neurodata Without Borders

Experiment Data Analysis

NEO / ElePhanT

Data Summary

NeuroElectro / Allen Cell Types

Test Instantiation

NeuronUnit

Test Adjudication

NumPy / SciPy

Test Score Visualization

SciDash

Model Output Analysis

NEO / ElePhanT

Model Discovery

Open Source Brain / NeuroML-DB

Model Description

NeuroML

Model Capabilities

PyNN / Comp. Neuro. Ontology

Simulation Description

SED-ML

Model Interpreter

jNeuroML

Model Execution

NEURON

Model Output Format

NWB / Sonata



[NeuroML] Database

Visual Cortex Layer 2/3 Pyramidal Cell (Stimulated) Network

Model Type: Network

Neurolex IDs: [Neocortex primary visual area pyramidal layer 2-3 cell](#)

Keywords: Mouse

Publication: [Smith, et. al. \(2013\) Dendritic spikes enhance stimulus selectivity in cortical neurons in vivo.](#)

Authors: Spencer L Smith Ikuko T Smith Tiago Branco Michael Häusser

Translators: Michael Hausser Tiago Branco

Sources:



[View OpenSourceBrain Model](#)



[View GitHub Model](#)

[View OpenSourceBrain on SciCrunch](#) [View GitHub on SciCrunch](#)

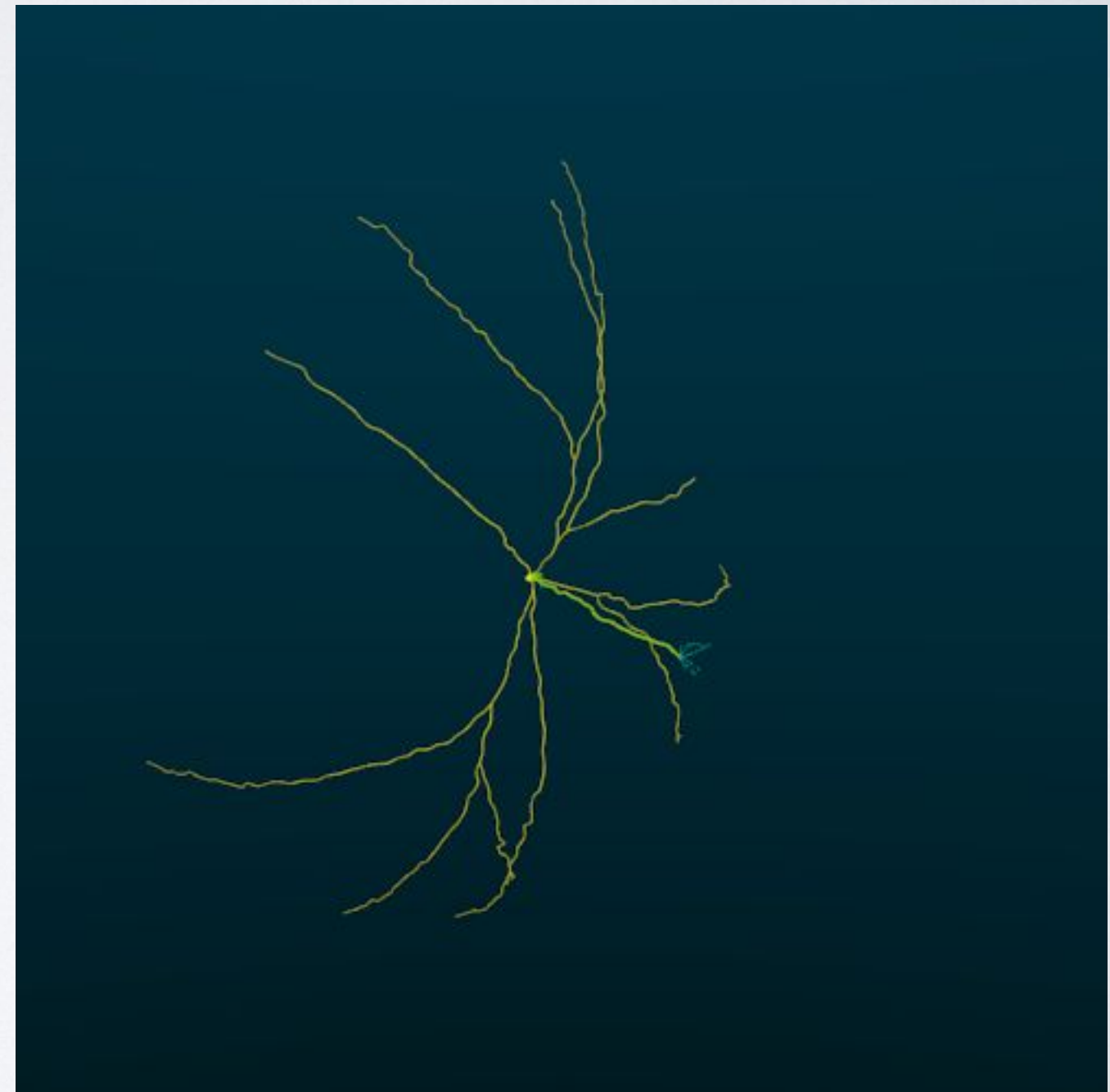
Files:

[Download NeuroML Version](#)

Model ID	NeuroML File	
NMLNT001592	L23_Stim.net.nml	(view NeuroML)
NMLCL001594	L23_NoHotSpot.cell.nml	(view NeuroML)
NMLCH001591	ca.channel.nml	(view NeuroML)



L-Measure Metric	Value
<u>Soma Surface</u>	14744.5 μm^2
<u>Number of Stems</u>	6.0
<u>Number of Bifurcations</u>	15.0
<u>Number of Branches</u>	34.0
<u>Overall Width</u>	1195.43 μm
<u>Overall Height</u>	1618.8 μm
<u>Overall Depth</u>	738.53 μm
<u>Average Diameter</u>	2.71858 μm
<u>Total Length</u>	9804.39 μm



APPLICATION: Simulation of *C. elegans*

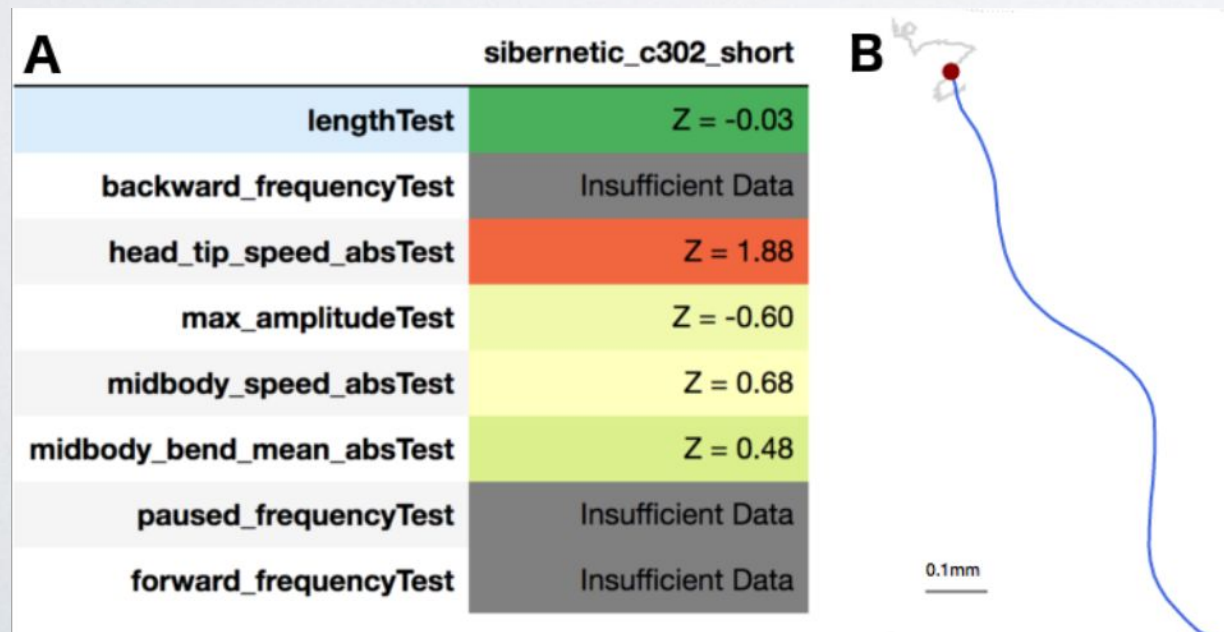
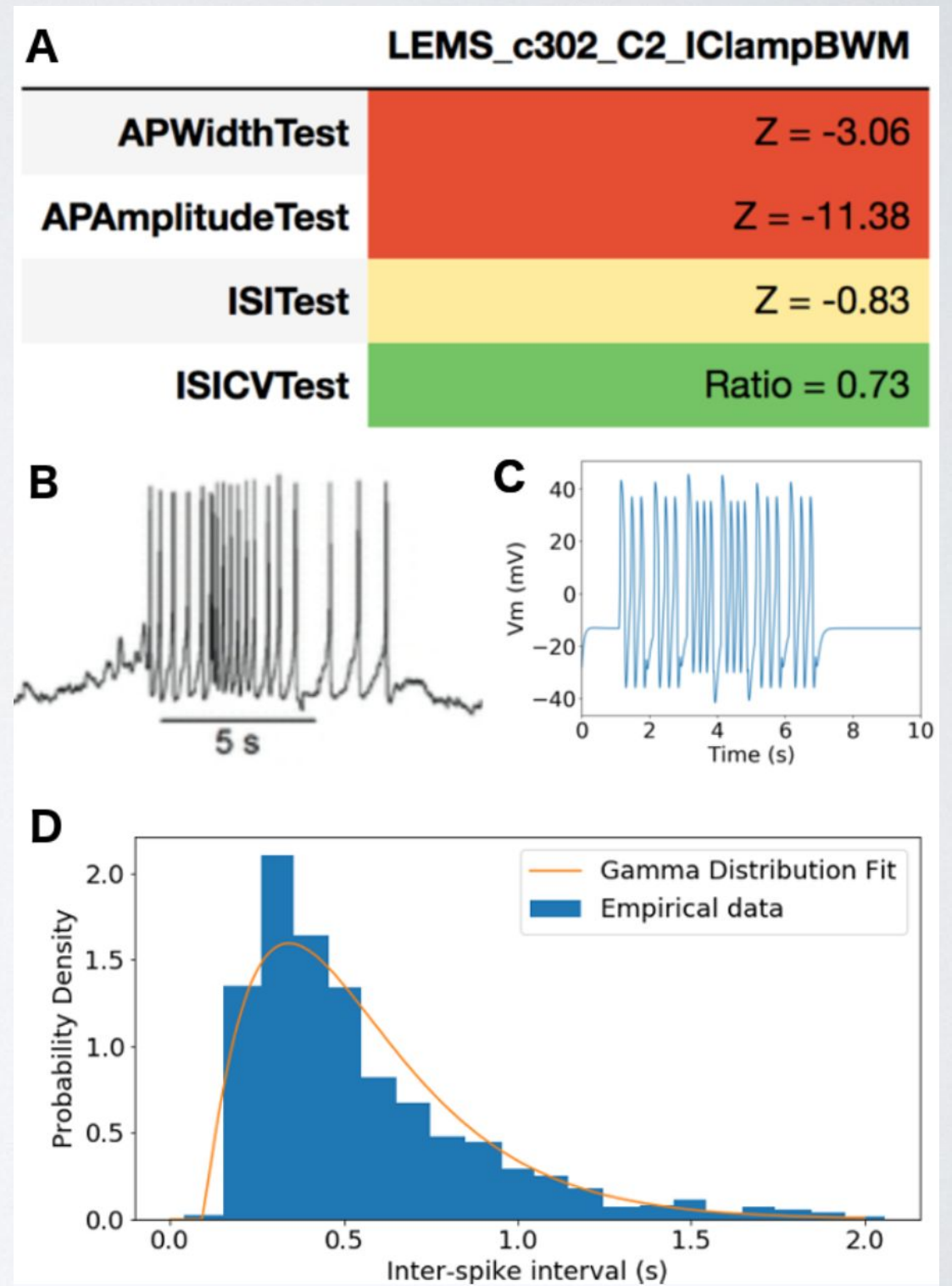
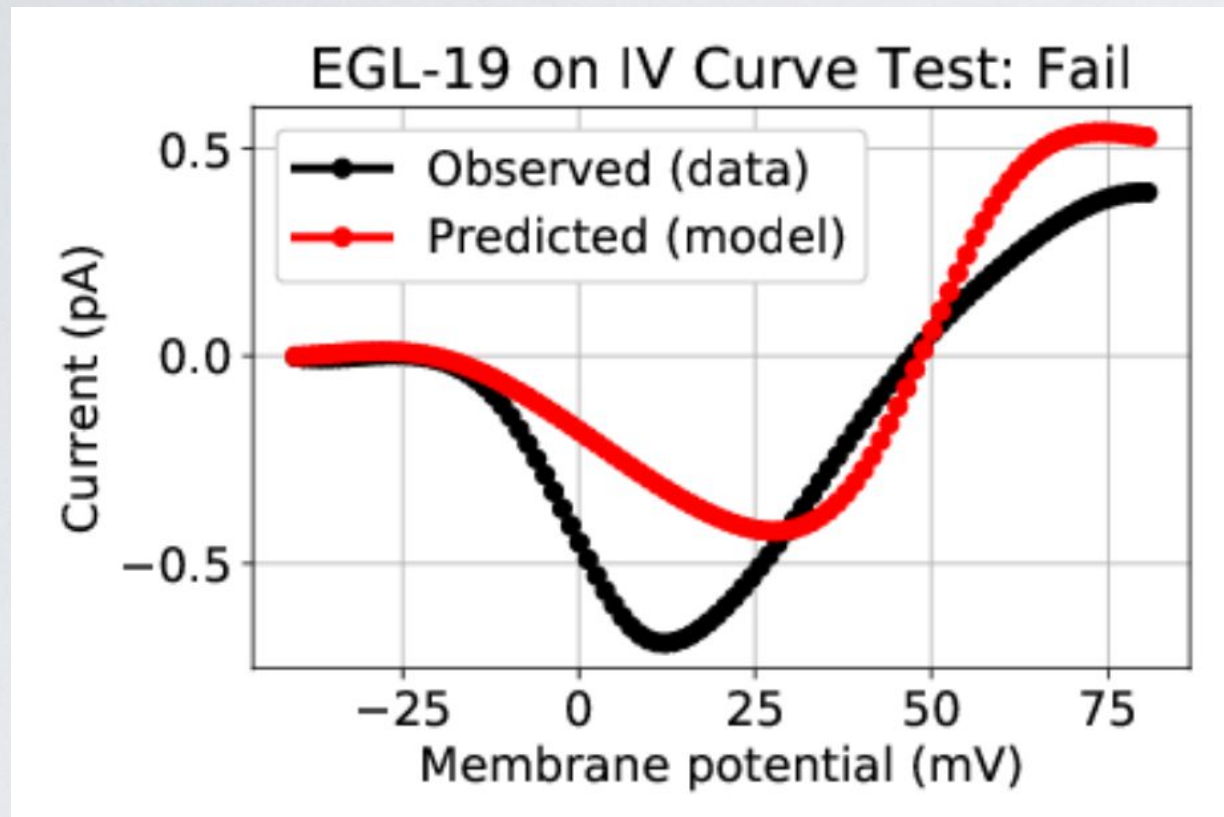


https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Caenorhabditis_elegans



<https://openworm.org>

APPLICATION: Simulation of *C. elegans*



Visualization Portal



Name

Score

head_tip_speed_absTest

1.877

midbody_bend_mean_absTest

0.476

max_amplitudeTest

-0.597

lengthTest

-0.033

midbody_speed_absTest

0.682

Visualization Portal

	InjectedCurrentAPAmplitudeTest	InjectedCurrentAPThresholdTest	InjectedCurrentAPWidthTest	TimeConstantTest	InputResistanceTest	RestingPotentialTest
Shen1999	0.85	0.87	0.49	0.94	0.69	0.76
MiglioreShepherd2008	0.68	0.80	0.71	0.89	0.68	0.76
Migliore2014	0.67	0.82	0.91	0.80	0.50	0.69
LiCleland2013	0.90	0.96	0.44	0.84	0.65	0.64
Davison2003	0.99	0.99	0.26	0.44	0.72	0.74
Chen2002	0.99	0.77	0.41	0.93	0.78	0.76
BhallaBower1993	0.96	0.92	0.31	0.81	0.62	0.73

Project Partners





Sharon Crook



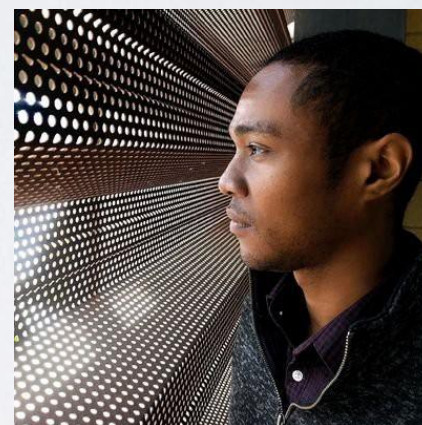
Justas Birgiolas



Zhiwei Liang



Russell Jarvis



Vergil Haynes



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NINDS (U19NS112953)
NIDCD
(R01DC018455)
NIMH (R01MH106674)
NIBIB (R01EB021711)

Google
Human Brain Project
Mayo Clinic
INCF