

# Package ‘ontologySimilarity’

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## Description

Calculate similarity between ontological terms and sets of ontological terms based on term information content and assess statistical significance of similarity in the context of a collection of terms sets - Greene et al. 2017 <[doi:10.1093/bioinformatics/btw763](https://doi.org/10.1093/bioinformatics/btw763)>.

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## ontologySimilarity-package

### *Functions for Calculating Ontological Similarities*

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## Description

Functions for calculating semantic similarities between ontological terms or sets of ontological terms based on term information content and assessing statistical significance of similarity in the context of a collection of sets of ontological terms.

## Details

Semantic similarity and similarity significance functions based on Resnik and Lin's measures of similarity. Computationally intensive functions are written in C++ for performance.

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## References

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Resnik, P. (1995). 'Using information content to evaluate semantic similarity in a taxonomy'. Proceedings of the 14th IJCAI 1, 448-453.

Lin D (1998). 'An Information-Theoretic Definition of Similarity.' In Shavlik JW (ed.), *Proceedings of the Fifteenth International Conference on Machine Learning (ICML 1998)*, Madison, Wisconsin, USA, July 24-27, 1998, pp. 296-304.

create\_sim\_index      *Create similarity index for list of term sets*

## Description

Create light-weight similarity index for fast lookups of between term set similarity.

## Usage

```
create_sim_index(
  ontology,
  term_sets,
  information_content = descendants_IC(ontology),
  term_sim_method = "lin",
  combine = "average"
)
```

## Arguments

ontology	ontology_index object.
term_sets	List of character vectors of ontological term IDs.
information_content	Numeric vector of information contents of terms (named by term)
term_sim_method	Character string equalling either "lin" or "resnik" to use Lin or Resnik's expression for the similarity of terms.
combine	Character string - either "average" or "product", indicating whether to use the best-match-product' method, or function accepting two arguments - the first, the similarity matrix obtained by averaging across term sets in term_sets, and the second averaging across those in term_sets2.

**Value**

Object of class `sim_index`.

**See Also**

`link{get_sim} get\_sim\_p sample\_group\_sim`

---

descendants_IC	<i>Get information content based on number of descendants each term has</i>
----------------	---

---

**Description**

Calculate information content of terms based on frequency with which it is an ancestor of other terms. Useful as a default if there is no population frequency information available as it captures the structure of the ontology.

**Usage**

`descendants_IC(ontology)`

**Arguments**

`ontology`      `ontology_index` object.

**Value**

Numeric vector of information contents named by term.

---

gene_GO_terms	<i>Gene Ontology annotation of genes</i>
---------------	--

---

**Description**

`list` object containing character vectors of term IDs of GO terms annotating each gene, named by gene. Users can select a list of annotations for a subset of the annotated genes using a character vector of gene symbols, e.g. `gene_GO_terms[c("ACTN1", "TUBB1")]`, which can then be used in functions for calculating similarities, e.g. `get\_sim\_grid`. Note that these annotation vectors contain annotation from all major branches of the Gene Ontology, however one can simply extract the terms only relevant to one by calling the function in the `ontologyIndex` package: `intersection_with_descendants`.

**Format**

List of character vectors.

## References

Annotation downloaded from Gene Ontology consortium website, <http://geneontology.org/>, dated 20/02/2024.

---

get\_asym\_sim\_grid      *Get asymmetrical similarity matrix*

---

## Description

Create a numeric matrix of similarities between two lists of term sets, but only averaging over the terms in sets from A the similarities of the best matches in sets from B.

## Usage

```
get_asym_sim_grid(A, B, ...)
```

## Arguments

A	List of term sets.
B	List of term sets.
...	Other arguments to be passed to <a href="#">get_sim_grid</a> .

## Value

Numeric matrix of similarities

## See Also

[get\\_sim\\_grid](#) [get\\_profile\\_sims](#)

---

get\_profile\_sims      *Get similarities of term sets to profile*

---

## Description

Get numeric vector of similarities between each item in a list of term sets and another ‘ontological profile’, i.e. a single term set. Similarity averaging over terms in `term_sets`.

## Usage

```
get_profile_sims(profile, term_sets, ...)
```

**Arguments**

profile            Character vector of term IDs.  
 term\_sets        List of character vectors of ontological term IDs.  
 ...                Other arguments to pass to [get\\_sim\\_grid](#).

**Value**

Numeric vector of profile similarities.

**See Also**

[get\\_asym\\_sim\\_grid](#) [get\\_sim\\_grid](#)

---

get\_sim

*Calculate the group similarity of a set of row/column indices*

---

**Description**

Calculates the similarity of a group within a population by applying the function specified by `group_sim` to the pairwise similarities of group members.

**Usage**

```
get_sim(pop_sim, ...)

## S3 method for class 'integer'
get_sim(pop_sim, ...)

## S3 method for class 'numeric'
get_sim(pop_sim, group = seq(length(pop_sim)), ...)

## S3 method for class 'matrix'
get_sim(pop_sim, group = seq(nrow(pop_sim)), ...)

## S3 method for class 'sim_index'
get_sim(pop_sim, group = seq(pop_sim[["N"]]), ...)

## Default S3 method:
get_sim(pop_sim, group, type, group_sim = "average", ...)
```

**Arguments**

pop\_sim            An object representing the similarities of an indexed population of objects.  
 ...                Other arguments to be passed to `get_sim`.  
 group              Character or integer vector specifying names/indices of subgroup for which to calculate a group similarity p-value.

type	Either "matrix", "sim_index" or "numeric" - the type of the <code>pop_sim</code> object.
group_sim	String Either "average" or "min", determining how to calculate the similarity of a group of term sets over all pairwise combinations of group members

**Value**

Numeric value of group similarity

**See Also**

[get\\_sim\\_p](#) [sample\\_group\\_sim](#)

---

**get\_similarity\_rank\_matrix**

*Get matrix of similarity rank from similarity matrix*

---

**Description**

Given a lower triangular similarity matrix, construct a distance matrix where the rows are the ranks of the column cases with respect to similarity to the row case. If relative similarity is of interest, this rank-transformation may reduce bias in favour of high similarity scores in downstream analysis.

**Usage**

```
get_similarity_rank_matrix(similarity_matrix, symmetric = TRUE)
```

**Arguments**

similarity_matrix	Lower triangular numeric matrix of similarities, where the rownames and colnames are identical to the case IDs.
symmetric	Logical value determining whether to 'symmetrify' resultant matrix by averaging rank similarity of A -> B and B -> A.

**Value**

Matrix of rank similarities.

---

get_sim_grid	<i>Get similarity matrix of pairwise similarities of term sets.</i>
--------------	---

---

## Description

Using either an `ontology_index` object and numeric vector of information content per term - or a matrix of between-term similarities (e.g. the output of `get_term_sim_mat`), create a numeric matrix of ‘between-term set’ similarities. Either the ‘best-match-average’ or ‘best-match-product’ approach (i.e. where the 2 scores obtained by applying the asymmetric ‘best-match’ similarity function to two term sets in each order are combined by taking the average or the product respectively). Either Lin’s (default) or Resnik’s definition of term similarity can be used. If `information_content` is not specified, a default value from `descendants_IC` is generated.

## Usage

```
get_sim_grid(
  ontology,
  information_content,
  term_sim_method,
  term_sim_mat,
  term_sets,
  term_sets2 = term_sets,
  combine = "average"
)
```

## Arguments

<code>ontology</code>	<code>ontology_index</code> object.
<code>information_content</code>	Numeric vector of information contents of terms (named by term)
<code>term_sim_method</code>	Character string equalling either "lin" or "resnik" to use Lin or Resnik’s expression for the similarity of terms.
<code>term_sim_mat</code>	Numeric matrix with rows and columns corresponding to (and named by) term IDs, and cells containing the similarity between the row and column term
<code>term_sets</code>	List of character vectors of ontological term IDs.
<code>term_sets2</code>	Second set of term sets.
<code>combine</code>	Character string - either "average" or "product", indicating whether to use the best-match-product’ method, or function accepting two arguments - the first, the similarity matrix obtained by averaging across term sets in <code>term_sets</code> , and the second averaging across those in <code>term_sets2</code> .

## Details

Note that if any term set within `term_sets` has 0 terms associated with it, it will get a similarity of 0 to any other set. If you do not want to compare term sets with no annotation, take care to filter out empty sets first, e.g. by ‘`term_sets=term_sets[sapply(term_sets, length) > 0]`’.

**Value**

Numeric matrix of pairwise term set similarities.

**See Also**

[get\\_term\\_sim\\_mat](#) [get\\_sim\\_p](#) [get\\_asym\\_sim\\_grid](#)

**Examples**

```
library(ontologyIndex)
data(hpo)
term_sets <- list(
  `case1` = c("HP:0001873", "HP:0011877"),
  `case2` = c("HP:0001872", "HP:0001892"),
  `case3` = "HP:0001873")
get_sim_grid(ontology=hpo, term_sets=term_sets)
```

---

get\_sim\_p

*Get similarity p-value*

---

**Description**

p-value of group similarity, calculated by estimating the proportion by random sampling of groups the same size as group which have at least as great group similarity than does group.

**Usage**

```
get_sim_p(pop_sim, ...)

## S3 method for class 'integer'
get_sim_p(pop_sim, ...)

## S3 method for class 'numeric'
get_sim_p(pop_sim, group, ...)

## S3 method for class 'matrix'
get_sim_p(pop_sim, group, ...)

## S3 method for class 'sim_index'
get_sim_p(pop_sim, group, ...)

## Default S3 method:
get_sim_p(
  pop_sim,
  group,
  type,
  min_its = 1000,
```

```

max_its = 1e+05,
signif = 0.05,
log_dismiss = log(1e-06),
group_sim = "average",
...
)

```

### Arguments

pop_sim	An object representing the similarities of an indexed population of objects.
...	Arguments for <code>get_sim_p</code> .
group	Character or integer vector specifying names/indices of subgroup for which to calculate a group similarity p-value.
type	Either "matrix", "sim_index" or "numeric" - the type of the <code>pop_sim</code> object.
min_its	Minimum number of simulated group similarities to calculate
max_its	Maximum number of simulated group similarities to calculate
signif	Threshold p-value of statistical significance
log_dismiss	Threshold of log probability, below which to trigger return of current estimated p-value
group_sim	String Either "average" or "min", determining how to calculate the similarity of a group of term sets over all pairwise combinations of group members

### Value

p-value.

### See Also

[get\\_sim](#) [sample\\_group\\_sim](#)

---

`get_sim_p_from_ontology`

*Get similarity p-value for subgroup term sets*

---

### Description

Compute a similarity p-value by permutation for subgroup of a list of term sets

### Usage

```

get_sim_p_from_ontology(
  ontology,
  term_sets,
  information_content = descendants_IC(ontology),
  term_sim_method = "lin",
  combine = "average",
  ...
)

```

**Arguments**

ontology	ontology_index object.
term_sets	List of character vectors of ontological term IDs.
information_content	Numeric vector of information contents of terms (named by term)
term_sim_method	Character string equalling either "lin" or "resnik" to use Lin or Resnik's expression for the similarity of terms.
combine	Character string - either "average" or "product", indicating whether to use the best-match-product' method, or function accepting two arguments - the first, the similarity matrix obtained by averaging across term sets in term_sets, and the second averaging across those in term_sets2.
...	Other arguments to be passed to <a href="#">get_sim_p</a> .

**Value**

Numeric value.

**See Also**

[get\\_sim\\_p](#) [create\\_sim\\_index](#)

---

get\_term\_set\_to\_term\_sims

*Get 'term sets to term' similarity matrix*

---

**Description**

Create a numeric matrix of similarities between term sets and individual terms.

**Usage**

`get_term_set_to_term_sims(term_sets, terms, ...)`

**Arguments**

term_sets	List of character vectors of ontological term IDs.
terms	Character vector of ontological terms.
...	Other arguments to be passed to <a href="#">get_sim_grid</a> .

**Value**

Numeric matrix of term set-to-term similarities

**See Also**

[get\\_sim\\_grid](#)

---

get_term_sim_mat	<i>Get term-term similarity matrix</i>
------------------	--

---

## Description

Get matrix of pairwise similarity of individual terms based on Lin's (default) or Resnik's information content-based expression.

## Usage

```
get_term_sim_mat(
  ontology,
  information_content,
  method = "lin",
  row_terms = names(information_content),
  col_terms = names(information_content)
)
```

## Arguments

ontology	ontology_index object.
information_content	Numeric vector of information contents of terms (named by term)
method	Character value equalling either "lin" or "resnik" to use Lin or Resnik's expression for similarity of terms respectively.
row_terms	Character vector of term IDs to appear as rows of result matrix.
col_terms	Character vector of term IDs to appear as cols of result matrix.

## Value

Numeric matrix of pairwise term similarities.

## See Also

[get\\_sim\\_grid](#) [resnik](#), [lin](#)

---

GO\_IC*Gene Ontology terms information content.*

---

**Description**

Numeric vector containing the information content of Gene Ontology terms based on frequencies of annotation data object gene\_GO\_terms. The object can be derived using the function get\_term\_info\_content and data object go from the ontologyIndex package.

**Format**

List of character vectors.

---

group\_term\_enrichment *Identify enriched terms in subgroup*

---

**Description**

Create a table of terms ranked by their significance of occurrence in a set of term sets amongst an enclosing set, with p-values computed by permutation. Terms are subselected so that only the minimal set of non-redundant terms at each level of frequency within the group are retained.

**Usage**

```
group_term_enrichment(  
  ontology,  
  term_sets,  
  group,  
  permutations = 1000L,  
  min_terms = 2L,  
  mc.cores = NULL,  
  ...  
)
```

**Arguments**

ontology	ontology_index object.
term_sets	List of character vectors of ontological term IDs.
group	Integer/logical/character vector specifying indices/positions/names of subgroup for which to calculate a group similarity p-value.
permutations	Number of permutations to test against, or if NULL, perform no permutations and return the unadjusted p-values for the occurrence of each term.
min_terms	Minimum number of times a term should occur within the given group to be eligible for inclusion in the results.

mc.cores	If not null and greater than on, the number of cores use calculating permutations (passed to <code>mclapply</code> ).
...	Arguments to pass to <code>fisher.test</code> .

### Value

`data.frame` containing columns: `term` (with the term ID); `name` (term readable name); `in_term` (number of sets in the given group of containing the term); `in_no_term` (number of sets in the given group not containing the term); `out_term` and `out_no_term` (equivalently for the sets not in the given group); `p` (the p-values calculated by permutation for seeing a term with such a strong association, measured using Fisher's exact test, in a group of term sets the size of the given group among `term_sets`). Rows ordered by significance (i.e. the `p` columns).

### See Also

[sample\\_group\\_sim](#) [create\\_sim\\_index](#)

---

lin	<i>Calculate Lin similarity score of two term sets</i>
-----	--

---

### Description

Warning! This function is slow - performing large numbers of 'between term-set' similarity calculations should be done using [get\\_sim\\_grid](#).

### Usage

`lin(ontology, information_content, term_set_1, term_set_2)`

### Arguments

ontology	ontology_index object.
information_content	Numeric vector of information contents of terms (named by term)
term_set_1	Character vector of terms.
term_set_2	Character vector of terms.

### Value

Numeric value.

### References

Lin D (1998). 'An Information-Theoretic Definition of Similarity.' In Shavlik JW (ed.), *\_Proceedings of the Fifteenth International Conference on Machine Learning (ICML 1998)*, Madison, Wisconsin, USA, July 24-27, 1998, pp. 296-304.

**See Also**

[resnik](#), [get\\_term\\_sim\\_mat](#)

---

resnik

*Calculate Resnik similarity score of two term sets*

---

**Description**

Warning! This function is slow - performing large numbers of ‘between term-set’ similarity calculations should be done using [get\\_sim\\_grid](#).

**Usage**

```
resnik(ontology, information_content, term_set_1, term_set_2)
```

**Arguments**

ontology	ontology_index object.
information_content	Numeric vector of information contents of terms (named by term)
term_set_1	Character vector of terms.
term_set_2	Character vector of terms.

**Value**

Numeric value.

**References**

Resnik, P. (1995). ‘Using information content to evaluate semantic similarity in a taxonomy’. Proceedings of the 14th IJCAI 1, 448-453.

**See Also**

[lin](#), [get\\_term\\_sim\\_mat](#)

---

sample_group_sim	<i>Draw sample of group similarities</i>
------------------	--

---

## Description

Draw sample of group similarities of groups of given size

## Usage

```
sample_group_sim(pop_sim, ...)

## S3 method for class 'integer'
sample_group_sim(pop_sim, ...)

## S3 method for class 'numeric'
sample_group_sim(pop_sim, ...)

## S3 method for class 'matrix'
sample_group_sim(pop_sim, ...)

## S3 method for class 'sim_index'
sample_group_sim(pop_sim, ...)

## Default S3 method:
sample_group_sim(
  pop_sim,
  type,
  group_size,
  group_sim = "average",
  sample_size = 10000,
  ...
)
```

## Arguments

pop_sim	An object representing the similarities of an indexed population of objects.
...	Other arguments to be passed to sample_group_sim.
type	Either "matrix", "sim_index" or "numeric" - the type of the pop_sim object.
group_size	Integer giving the number of members of a group.
group_sim	String Either "average" or "min", determining how to calculate the similarity of a group of term sets over all pairwise combinations of group members
sample_size	Number of samples to draw.

## Value

Numeric vector of random group similarities.

**See Also**

[get\\_sim](#) [get\\_sim\\_p](#)

---

sample\_group\_sim\_from\_ontology  
*Draw sample of group similarities*

---

**Description**

ample of group similarities for random groups of given drawn from the given ontology argument

**Usage**

```
sample_group_sim_from_ontology(  
  ontology,  
  term_sets,  
  information_content = descendants_IC(ontology),  
  term_sim_method = "lin",  
  combine = "average",  
  ...  
)
```

**Arguments**

ontology	ontology_index object.
term_sets	List of character vectors of ontological term IDs.
information_content	Numeric vector of information contents of terms (named by term)
term_sim_method	Character string equalling either "lin" or "resnik" to use Lin or Resnik's expression for the similarity of terms.
combine	Character string - either "average" or "product", indicating whether to use the best-match-product' method, or function accepting two arguments - the first, the similarity matrix obtained by averaging across term sets in term_sets, and the second averaging across those in term_sets2.
...	Other arguments to be passed to <a href="#">get_sim_p</a> .

**Value**

Numeric vector of group similarities.

**See Also**

[sample\\_group\\_sim](#) [create\\_sim\\_index](#)

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