Global Organisation for Bioinformatics Learning, Education & Training

First Quarter 2017 Newsletter

Letter from the Executive Board

Happy New Year! This first newsletter of 2017 brings a number of activity updates, including reports of a metagenomics workshop in Hinxton, and of the special education session of the NETTAB conference in Rome, both held in October. We are particularly pleased to be able to share with you the principal outcomes of the 2016 AGM, held in Brisbane in November: these include new vision and mission statements, a set of focused objectives for the year, and the newly elected officers whose task it will be to drive GOBLET's work forward.

The newsletter also highlights some new member benefits, which we hope will encourage you to get involved. We expect another busy year ahead, and look forward to working with you in preparations for a variety of workshops, conferences and publications throughout the coming months.

We appreciate that GOBLET is built on the contributions of volunteers, and we thank all those who've helped to drive the Foundation forward during its formative years. In particular, we'd like to thank the outgoing Committee Chairs and Executive Board members – Erik Bongcam-Rudloff, Manuel Corpas, Pascale Gaudet, Fran Lewitter, Nicky Mulder, Patricia Palagi, Vicky Schneider and Celia van Gelder – whose contributions have been invaluable.

To learn more about GOBLET visit

www.mygoblet.org

and lend your support!

Not yet a member? Then join us!

Contact

Website:
http://mygoblet.org

Email:
info@mygoblet.org

Twitter:
@mygobletorg

Address:
GOBLET Stichting
CMBI 260 Radboud University
Nijmegen Medical Centre
Geert Grooteplein 26-28
6525 GA - Netherlands

Committees

Executive Board
Terri Attwood, Chair
Michelle Brazas, Secretary
Celia van Gelder, Treasurer
Annette McGrath, Member
info@mygoblet.org

Fundraising
Bruno Gaeta, Chair
frc@mygoblet.org

Learning, Education & Training
Pedro Fernandes, Chair
let@mygoblet.org

Outreach & PR
Ann Meyer, Chair
pr@mygoblet.org

Standards
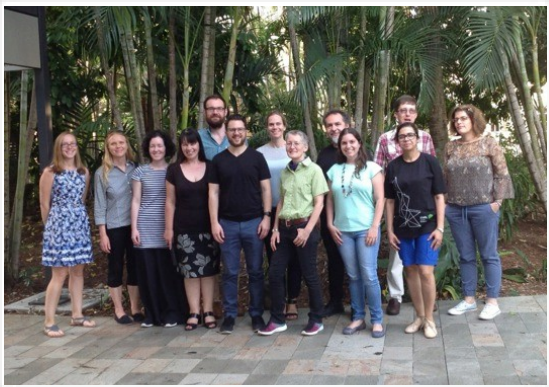Vicky Schneider, Chair
standards@mygoblet.org

Technical
Carlos Horro, Chair
tech@mygoblet.org

Global Organisation for Bioinformatics Learning, Education & Training

GOBLET 2016 AGM – Brisbane, Australia

Attendees at the Goblet 2016 AGM

Hosted by the Australian Bioinformatics And Computational Biology Society (ABACBS), **GOBLET's 2016 AGM** took place from 7-9 November 2016 at the Queensland University of Technology in Brisbane (Australia). The event was preceded by the ABACBS annual conference (1-2 November), a GOBLET-ABACBS workshop on Best Practices in Bioinformatics Training and a GOBLET-ELIXIR Train-the-Trainer workshop (3-4 November).

Seamlessly organised by **Annette McGrath** from CSIRO/Data61, the meeting was attended in person and via video link by members from Europe, the Americas and Australia. During the meeting, time was spent reflecting on GOBLET's progress since its inception, and on honing both the Foundation's vision and mission and its objectives for the coming year. The results of the 2016 elections were also announced. We welcome the new Committee Chairs and Executive Board members, and hope you will help the new officers to meet their objectives, and **make 2017 another successful and productive year!**

Finally, huge thanks to Annette and to all who attended for their massive contributions to the AGM – it was great to see new (and young!) faces, and to feel the energy in the room! For those of you who weren't there, you missed a treat, but we look forward to seeing you at the next AGM in Portugal November 22-24.

http://www.mygoblet.org/about-us/goblet-events/goblet-agm-2016-brisbane

GOBLET's revised vision and mission

The AGM in Brisbane brought many changes to GOBLET including a new vision and mission statements that are more meaningful to GOBLET members.

The vision: to unite, inspire and equip bioinformatics trainers worldwide.
The mission: to cultivate the global bioinformatics trainer community, set standards and provide high-quality resources to support learning, education and training.

Festival of Bioinformatics – Brisbane, Australia

Australia's national bioinformatics conference was held in Brisbane at the Queensland University of Technology (QUT) October 31 to November 2. Organised by the Australian Bioinformatics and Computational Biology Society (ABACBS; pronounced abacus) and a hard-working local organising committee, this year's conference was held in conjunction with a series of fantastic events running from October 31 to November 10: QUT's annual B3: Big Bioinformatics and Biology Symposium, the GOBLET AGM and the Bioconductor Asia meeting, and was called the **AB3ACBS Festival of Bioinformatics**.

The conference kicked off with the **COMBINE Student Symposium** on 31 October. COMBINE is the student sub-committee of ABACBS. This comprised eight student talks and a panel discussion, which was attended by ~80 people. The **AB3ACBS-2016 National Conference** on 1-2 November was attended by 188 delegates and 7 keynote speakers, including GOBLET's own Terri Attwood, who closed the conference with a very well received talk about her adventures on the Road to Utopia.

Attendees at the GOBLET/ELIXIR Train-the-trainer day, during the Best Practices in Bioinformatics Training Workshop

GOBLET's objectives for 2017

The AGM attendees set objectives to guide GOBLET in realizing its vision and mission in 2017. These are:
1. For the training portal to become both a pull mechanism and repository
2. To develop branded materials (*e.g.*, Train-the-Trainer/Teacher packages)
3. To offer training for trainers/teachers and end users
4. To provide training resources (surveys, best-practice guidelines, technologies for classrooms, ice-breakers, *etc.*)
5. To continue work developing training material and course standards
6. To raise funds to be able to meet our objectives
7. To offer a network/community forum
8. To give further consideration to mechanisms for trainer recognition

Global Organisation for Bioinformatics Learning, Education & Training

Festival of Bioinformatics – Brisbane, Australia

The **ABACBS/GOBLET Best Practices in Bioinformatics Training workshop** (November 3-4) was one of 3 workshops to be held after the ABACBS national conference, and proved the most popular workshop, with 44 registrations for the first day.

This provided an excellent forum for Australian bioinformatics trainers to come together, for the first time, to share their expertise and experiences with GOBLET members, and attracted over 40 participants. The focus of the first day was on sharing experiences in a number of topics: teaching bioinformatics to clinical audiences, teaching programming languages, including experiences with Software Carpentry and the use of cloud-based platforms for training delivery. In addition, a session on applying the ISCB Core Competencies to curriculum design provided valuable feedback, with the participants commenting that this application of the competencies could be very useful for "real" course design.

The second workshop day was a joint **GOBLET/ELIXIR Train-the-trainer (TtT)** day. This TtT day was another first for our community, as it was taught by the first cohort of trainers who had completed a TtT instructor course with Sarah Morgan (EBI). Sarah taught this course online over the course of 5 weeks to a group of trainers who had previously attended at least 1 TtT course at the EBI, and who had significant experience in bioinformatics training. The newly-trained TtT instructors delivered a TtT workshop to a group of 16 trainees, and the TtT day attracted very positive feedback from the attendees.

ABACBS/GOBLET Hands-on RNASeq course

As part of the AB3ACBS Festival of Bioinformatics, GOBLET and ABACBS organised a 1-day hands-on RNA-Seq-analysis course, at QUT, Brisbane (AU), on 10 November 2016. The presenter was Eija Korpelainen from the CSC-IT Center for Science (FI).

The workshop introduced participants to RNA-seq data analysis methods, tools and file formats, and covered the entire workflow, from quality control and alignment to quantification and differential expression analysis. Participants learned how to check read quality and remove poor data, align reads to a reference genome and visualise results using the Chipster genome browser, quantify gene expression and analyse differential expression, taking multiple factors into account.

http://www.abacbs.org/abacbsgobletrnaseqcourse/

NETTAB 2016 Education & Training Special Session

On 25-26 October 2016, the NETTAB 2016 Workshop, whose theme was 'Reproducibility, standards and SOP in bioinformatics' was held in Rome, co-organised with the CHARME COST Action and EMBnet. This year, the event also brought together many people from Europe who are active in training and training organisation, in order to participate in various training-focused events.

The first event was a GOBLET/ELIXIR-IT Train-the-Trainer (TtT) tutorial [1], held on 24 October, which was led by Sarah Morgan, Pedro Fernandes and Allegra Via. The TtT initiative forms part of the ELIXIR and GOBLET joint training strategy [2]. On 25 October, the ELIXIR Training Coordinators held their own face-to-face meeting, which was followed on 26 October by a special session on Education and Training [3], chaired by Terri Attwood and Allegra Via. This session provided an interesting overview of various collaborative training strategies and activities from, amongst others, GOBLET, the ELIXIR Training Platform, CHARME, Software/Data Carpentry and EDISON. The GOBLET presentation, which was given by Celia van Gelder, focused on '*Working towards FAIR bioinformatics training*' [4]. The session finished with a panel discussion on '*Challenges in the training arena in the context of reproducibility and standards in bioinformatics',* and closed the meeting.

The Rome event marked the16th edition of NETTAB, an international series of workshops on NETwork Tools and Applications for Biology. It was hosted by the ELIXIR-IT Node and held at the headquarters of the Italian National Research Council.

NETTAB Workshops focus on innovative ICT tools and their applications in bioinformatics. These events are held at different locations in Italy every year, each time with a different theme – such as XML in Bioinformatics, Workflow management, Semantic Web, Biological wikis, Social and mobile applications, Integrative Bioinformatics, and so on. The full list of NETTAB Workshops can be found at the NETTAB webpage → http://www.nettab.org/.

[1] http://www.igst.it/nettab/2016/programme/tutorials/

[2] https://www.elixir-europe.org/news/elixir-and-goblet-publish-joint-training-strategy

[3] http://www.igst.it/nettab/2016/programme/scientific-programme/

[4] http://www.igst.it/nettab/2016/files/2016/11/NETTAB2016_vanGelder.pdf

http://www.igst.it/nettab/2016/

GOBLET/ELIXIR thematic hackathon for metagenomics training materials re-use – follow up
Alex Mitchell

A GOBLET/ELIXIR metagenomics training materials exchange 'hackathon' was held at EMBL-EBI in Hinxton (UK), on Apri 7 2016. The meeting brought together bioinformatics trainers from different institutes around the world, to discuss optimal course design and best practice in training material preparation. The principal aims were to collate a set of metagenomics training materials for broad dissemination; to define a working framework for curating training materials to make them available via the TeSS and GOBLET portals; and to prepare a best-practice report (including the framework for material curation and guidance on the use of such material in the development of new courses), to propagate the approach to the ELIXIR and GOBLET communities.
http://www.mygoblet.org/about-us/goblet-events/joint-gobletelixir-metagenomics-training-material-curation-hackathon
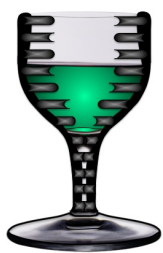
A major outcome of the materials exchange was cross-pollination of ideas and experiences between trainers. It also helped foster collaborative training: following discussions at the meeting, Morgan Langille of Dalhousie University, Nova Scotia (CA) joined the EMBL-EBI trainers and other outside speakers to provide a 3-day EMBL-EBI Metagenomics Bioinformatics course in October. The course was three times over-subscribed and proved highly successful, with very positive feedback highlighting both the content and the quality of the hands-on sessions and training materials.
https://www.ebi.ac.uk/training/events/2016/metagenomics-bioinformatics-1

EMBL-ABR/GOBLET Hands-on training: RNA-seq data analysis

This event from EMBL-ABR Hub and GOBLET, organised by Vicky Schneider and Christina Hall, was hosted by the University of Melbourne, with Eija Korpelainen as the invited international faculty. Over a day and a half (14-15 November 2016), participants were given a hands-on introduction to RNA-seq data analysis, from raw sequence reads to differentially expressed genes. Trainers introduced the theory and practice during brief lectures and hands-on exercises.

https://www.embl-abr.org.au/gobletnov2016/

Global Organisation for Bioinformatics Learning, Education & Training

New member benefits

During 2016, additional membership benefits were introduced to make it easier to join GOBLET and for members to become more engaged with the Foundation's activities.
Specifically, we introduced:

Discounted fees for individuals and organisations residing in low- and middle-income countries, based on the World Bank classification

Multiple-year membership options, to facilitate payment during periods of plentiful funding (the cost is pro rata, based on the number of years and chosen level of membership)

Opportunities for organisational members to nominate additional participant(s) from their organisations to join committees: one additional participant for silver members, and two for gold and platinum members.

Recent Publications

A global perspective on bioinformatics training needs:
http://biorxiv.org/content/ early/2017/02/27/098996

GOBLET's 2016 election results

GOBLET members voted for the next GOBLET Officers in October. The results of the elections were announced at the AGM.

Terri Attwood (Chair) and **Michelle Brazas** (Secretary) are joined by **Celia van Gelder** (Treasurer) and **Annette McGrath** to form the new Executive Board.

The new Committee Chairs are **Bruno Gaeta** (Fundraising), **Pedro Fernandes** (Learning, Education & Training), **Ann Meyer** (Outreach & PR), **Vicky Schneider** (Standards), and **Carlos Horro** (Technical).

THANK YOU to the past chairs for all your hard work and WELCOME to the new chairs!

If you wish to join one of the committees, please send an email to the committee chair.

All members have the potential to shape the future of GOBLET, and to leverage its collective bioinformatics training expertise to further the missions of their own organisations. We therefore encourage you to get involved, and to exploit the environment it provides for trainers to network, support each other and share expertise.