

2014 Annual General Meeting – Executive Board Report



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During the past year, the Executive Board (EB) has continued to meet on a regular basis, has held regular meetings with the Operational Board (OB) and has convened additional meetings open to the full EMBnet constituency, either via Skype or using Adobe Connect for larger meetings. These meetings have allowed us to discuss a range of issues relating to the work of the Project Committees (PCs), to *EMBnet.journal*, to the website, to the Stichting accounts, to membership, etc.

Overall, the year has been another busy one; in this report, we provide a brief overview of our ongoing efforts to build on the foundations created in previous years, and on the initiatives and affiliations we have forged.

Following the 2013 AGM in Valencia (May 2013), members of the EB participated in, and presented EMBnet at the EBI-Wellcome Trust Summer School in Hinxton, UK (June 2013); they also organised and trained on the NGS bioinformatics course at KEMRI-Wellcome Trust in Kilifi

(August 2013). The EB also supported the development of two new QuickGuides.

Overall, EMBnet's training strategy has been dominated by our leadership of [GOBLET](#)¹ (the Global Organisation for Bioinformatics Learning, Education and Training), which now has around 30 members. Working through GOBLET has significantly increased our level of interaction and cooperation with a range of major international societies and networks, and especially this year with the International Society for Computational Biology (ISCB). Notable highlights have included the establishment of the first education poster track at [ISMB/ECCB 2013](#)², and development of a Community of Special Interest (COSI) around Computational Biology Education (CoBE), to be launched at [ISMB 2014](#)³. The ISCB also hosted a GOBLET interim meeting alongside ISMB/ECCB 2013, which saw a range of presentations: e.g., from Lonnie Welch (on curriculum guidelines for bioinformatics and computational biology), from Ana Conesa (on multidisciplinary, multi-institutional PhD programmes), from Anupama Jigisha (on the ISCB Student Council intern initiative), and from Niklas Blomberg (on how ELIXIR will safeguard life science research in Europe). Later, a pan-European bioinformatics training strategy meeting was held at The Genome Analysis Centre (TGAC), UK (March 2014), in part to discuss how GOBLET and ELIXIR can work together in future to best serve their communities in the coming years.

During the year, we have also devoted a lot of time to working closely with our allied EU-funded projects. Specifically, members of EMBnet helped organise and/or attended a range of [AllBio events](#)⁴: these included a number of 'hackathons' (August 2013, Nijmegen, the Netherlands; September 2013, Amsterdam, the Netherlands; October 2013, Uppsala, Sweden; November 2013, Alnarp, Sweden), an *RNA-seq data analysis workshop* (January 2014, Espoo, Finland), the *AllBio/EMBRACE metagenomics interoperability workshop* (April 2014, Amsterdam, the Netherlands), and the AllBio AGM (September 2013, London, UK).

Within SeqAhead, EMBnet Nodes were involved in events covering a range of problems in

1 www.mygoblet.org/

2 www.iscb.org/ismbeccb2013

3 www.iscb.org/ismb2014

4 www.allbioinformatics.eu/doku.php?id=public:events

NGS data analysis: these included the *NGS data and the Variation Calling Challenge* (May 2013, Udine, Italy); *Hadoop and NGS data processing hackathon III* (June 2013, Pula, Italy); workshops on the *Future demands and challenges in ICT and bioinformatics tools for NGS* (June 2013, Pula, Italy), *NGS methods for identification of mutations and large structural variants* (March 2014, Lausanne, Switzerland) and *Assessment of training methods in NGS data analysis* (March 2014, Oeiras, Portugal); and the *NGS data after the Gold rush workshop and Management Committee Meeting* (May 2014, Norwich, UK). For references, see the '[SeqAhead 2013-2014 Events Web page](#)⁵.

Throughout the year, we have described these and our other activities in the monthly *EMBnet.digest* and in *EMBnet.journal*. For example, we made a special report on EMBnet's silver anniversary AGM in the [May 2013 digest](#)⁶, we provided a round-up of the year's activities in the [December issue](#)⁷, and we provided a report on our work with GOBLET and invited EMBnet to participate in a GOBLET survey in [February's digest](#)⁸. The most notable change for the digest has been a new, much simpler look-and-feel, starting from the January 2014 issue.

For the Journal, the most notable change has been a move to an instant access model, in which articles are published as soon as peer-review and layout have been completed – articles will henceforth be collated into volumes only once a year, commencing with volume 20. During 2013, the bulk of the journal work involved preparation of [volume 19\(1\)](#)⁹ (which included reports from the EMBnet 2013 AGM, held 17-18 May in Valencia) and [proceedings of the The Next NGS Challenge Conference](#)¹⁰: *Data Processing and Integration* conference, held 14-16 May in Valencia, and of the [NETTAB 2013 workshop](#)¹¹ on *Semantic, Social and Mobile Applications for Bioinformatics and*

Biomedical Laboratories, held 16-18 October in the Venice Lido.

Following the successful ratification of the new Statutes, which became legally binding in April 2013, we have been formally able to accept individual members, a facility made possible by the implementation of the online fee-payment module. The new statutes also ushered in changes to the internal structure of the organisation. In particular, Committee Chairs now have the flexibility to convene their own working groups, without having to proceed via cumbersome election processes.

The 2014 AGM will provide an opportunity to review how some of these changes have been working in practice. It will be a chance to strategically re-group, to build on some of these initiatives, and to prioritise new projects and funding opportunities. This year, one member of the EB will be up for re-election: Goran Neshich. We have not yet received any additional candidacies for this position, but welcome applicants to submit personal statements about their plans for and commitments to this role.

This year, we would like to thank, in particular, Domenica D'Elia for her energy and fortitude in coordinating and sustaining the many successful activities of the P&PR PC; Rafael Jimenez for his ongoing technical support of the website; and Lubos Klucar for his patient and consistent work in managing the production of *EMBnet.journal*. As always, there's still a lot more work to do. We therefore encourage you all to contribute your energies and visions to EMBnet, to ensure EMBnet's continued success as the Global Bioinformatics Network!

Chair: T. K. Attwood

Secretary: A. Gisel; **Treasurer:** E. de Villiers;

Members: E. Bongcam-Rudloff, G. Neshich

5 www.seqahead.eu/

6 www.embnet.org/sites/default/files/digest/EMBnetDigest_2013-05.pdf

7 www.embnet.org/digest/embnetdigest-december-2013

8 www.embnet.org/sites/default/files/digest/EMBnetDigest2014-02_1.pdf

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