

## 2015 Annual General Meeting – Executive Board Report



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**Received** 9 November 2015; **Published** 21 December 2015

Attwood TK *et al.* (2015) *EMBnet.journal* **21**, e855. <http://dx.doi.org/10.14806/ej.21.0.855>

During the last year, the Executive Board (EB) endeavoured to meet on a regular basis, and to hold meetings with the Operational Board (OB); fewer meetings were held with the full EMBnet constituency. Aside from the usual issues involved in organising large meetings online (regardless of the chosen technology), the principal obstacle to holding more frequent meetings related to personnel: above all, i) Andreas Gisel (EB Secretary) was seconded to a post in Nigeria, where his Internet connection proved to be extremely unreliable, and maintaining contact with him was often very difficult; and ii) Goran Neshich stepped down as a member of the EB on 15 December 2014. Despite these hurdles, it's been another busy year, and we've worked hard to try to keep the momentum going. This report gives a brief overview of our efforts to move EMBnet, and our affiliated projects and initiatives, forward.

Specifically, since the 2014 Annual General Meeting (AGM) in Lyon (26-30 May 2014), working

closely with our affiliates, members of the EB participated in, and/or helped to organise, a range of research and educational meetings, including conferences, hackathons, workshops, courses and tutorials – some of these are summarised in the table below.

In addition to this full programme of meetings, the EB worked closely with the Publicity & Public Relations Project Committee (P&PR PC) to sponsor relevant conferences: in particular, the [SAGS-SASBI Joint Congress, Kwalata Game Ranch \(ZA\)](http://www.sasbi-sags2014.org.za/)<sup>1</sup>, 23-26 September 2014, and the [Joint NETTAB 2014 Workshop, Turin \(IT\)](http://www.igst.it/nettab/2014/)<sup>2</sup>, 15-17 October 2014. We also worked with the P&PR PC both to create and disseminate the monthly *EMBnet.digest*<sup>3</sup>, and to develop and publish four new *QuickGuides*<sup>4</sup>.

EMBnet's training strategy continued to focus on our leadership of the [Global Organisation for Bioinformatics Learning, Education and Training \(GOBLET\)](http://www.mygoblet.org/)<sup>5</sup>, which now has around 40 organisational and individual members. Interaction and cooperation with a range of major international societies and networks has been facilitated through GOBLET, significantly increasing EMBnet's visibility. Amongst others, notable achievements in the last year include publications in *Bioinformatics*<sup>6</sup>, *EMBnet.journal*<sup>7</sup> and *PLoS CB*<sup>8</sup>; development of a [joint training strategy](https://www.elixir-europe.org/news/elixir-and-goblet-publish-joint-training-strategy)<sup>9</sup> with ELIXIR; running education and training workshops in Manchester, Boston and Toronto; launching an open, global survey of bioinformatics training needs; and working with the ISCB to launch the [Computational Biology Education \(CoBE\) Community of Special Interest \(COSI\)](http://cosi.iscb.org/wiki/CoBE:Home)<sup>10</sup>, to harmonise the ISCB and GOBLET training communities. EMBnet can be rightly proud to have spearheaded this highly successful initiative – for further details, please refer to the [May 2015 edition of \*EMBnet.digest\*](http://www.embnet.org/sites/default/files/digest/EMBnet_digest-05-May.2015.pdf)<sup>11</sup>.

1 [www.sasbi-sags2014.org.za/](http://www.sasbi-sags2014.org.za/)

2 [www.igst.it/nettab/2014/](http://www.igst.it/nettab/2014/)

3 [www.embnet.org/embnet-digest](http://www.embnet.org/embnet-digest)

4 [www.embnet.org/embnet-quickguides](http://www.embnet.org/embnet-quickguides)

5 [www.mygoblet.org/](http://www.mygoblet.org/)

6 [www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/25189782](http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/25189782)

7 [journal.embnet.org/index.php/embnetjournal/article/view/751/1092](http://journal.embnet.org/index.php/embnetjournal/article/view/751/1092)

8 [journals.plos.org/ploscompbiol/article?id=10.1371/journal.pcbi.1004143](http://journals.plos.org/ploscompbiol/article?id=10.1371/journal.pcbi.1004143)

9 <https://www.elixir-europe.org/news/elixir-and-goblet-publish-joint-training-strategy>

10 [cosi.iscb.org/wiki/CoBE:Home](http://cosi.iscb.org/wiki/CoBE:Home)

11 [www.embnet.org/sites/default/files/digest/EMBnet\\_digest-05-May.2015.pdf](http://www.embnet.org/sites/default/files/digest/EMBnet_digest-05-May.2015.pdf)

| Sponsor / Project     | Title   | Format           | Location        | Date              |
|-----------------------|---|------------------|-----------------|-------------------|
| AllBio                | Broadening the Bioinformatics Infrastructure to Unicellular, Animal & Plant Science | Congress         | Florence (IT)   | 11-13 Jun 2014    |
| AllBio/SeqAhead       | Epigenetics, coding & non-coding RNA  | Workshop         | Bari (IT)       | 25-26 Jun 2014    |
| AllBio/SeqAhead       | RNA-seq data analysis   | Tutorial         | Bari (IT)       | 27 Jun 2014       |
| GOBLET/SEB            | Bioinformatics  | Workshop         | Manchester (UK) | 4 Jul 2014        |
| AllBio/ISBE           | Managing Big Data   | Workshop         | Berlin (DE)     | 9-11 Jul 2014     |
| ISCB/ISMB/GOBLET      | The online world of bioinformatics education  | Workshop         | Boston (USA)    | 11-15 Jul 2014    |
| AllBio                | Open Science & Reproducibility  | Workshop         | Norwich (UK)    | 15-17 Sep 2014    |
| AllBio                | Final Consortium Meeting  | Meeting          | Amsterdam (NL)  | 29-30 Sep 2014    |
| ELIXIR/BioMed-Bridges | A Common Vocabulary to Classify Resources in the Life Science Domain                | Workshop         | Brussels (BE)   | 16 Oct 2014       |
| GOBLET                | Train the High-School Teacher Outreach  | Workshop         | Toronto (CA)    | 14 Nov 2014       |
| GOBLET                | 3rd AGM   | Business Meeting | Toronto (CA)    | 15-16 Nov 2014    |
| SeqAhead              | e-Infrastructures for Massively Parallel Sequencing                                 | Workshop         | Uppsala (SE)    | 19-20 Jan 2015    |
| SeqAhead              | Next Generation Sequencing: a look into the future                                  | Conference       | Bratislava (SK) | 16-17 Mar 2015    |
| ELIXIR                | AllHands  | Conference       | Hinxton (UK)    | 30 Mar-1 Apr 2015 |

Throughout the year, we have described these and our other activities in EMBnet.digest and EMBnet.journal. For example, we made a special report on EMBnet's 26th AGM in the [May 2014 digest](#)<sup>12</sup>; we reviewed highlights of ISMB 2014, especially the creation of the ISCB/GOBLET CoBE COSI, in the [July issue](#)<sup>13</sup>; we provided a round-up of the year's activities in [December's digest](#)<sup>14</sup>; we said farewell to AllBio in the [February issue](#)<sup>15</sup>; and, as mentioned above, we reviewed some of GOBLET's major achievements since its establishment in November 2012 in May's digest.

For the Journal, having moved to an instant-access model, articles are now published immediately on completion of peer-review and layout, and are collated into volumes only once a year. During 2014, the bulk of the journal work involved preparation of volume 20 (which included reports on GOBLET, AllBio and EMBnet's 2014 AGM), and volume 20, supplement A, containing proceedings of the *NGS Data After the Gold Rush* conference, held 6-8 May in Norwich (UK). Volume 21 is now open for submissions, and kicks off with our article reviewing the [Longevity of Biological Databases](#)<sup>16</sup>.

One of the biggest challenges for the EB this year was the loss of our primary contact with the

12 [www.embnet.org/sites/default/files/digest/EMBnetDigest\\_2014-05.pdf](http://www.embnet.org/sites/default/files/digest/EMBnetDigest_2014-05.pdf)

13 [www.embnet.org/sites/default/files/digest/EMBnetDigest\\_2014-07\(1\)\\_0.pdf](http://www.embnet.org/sites/default/files/digest/EMBnetDigest_2014-07(1)_0.pdf)

14 [www.embnet.org/sites/default/files/digest/EMBnet-digest-Dec-2014.pdf](http://www.embnet.org/sites/default/files/digest/EMBnet-digest-Dec-2014.pdf)

15 [www.embnet.org/sites/default/files/digest/EMBnet-digest-02-Feb.2015.pdf](http://www.embnet.org/sites/default/files/digest/EMBnet-digest-02-Feb.2015.pdf)

16 [journal.embnet.org/index.php/embnetjournal/article/view/803/1209](http://journal.embnet.org/index.php/embnetjournal/article/view/803/1209)

local organising committee for the planned AGM in Serbia, following Goran Neshich's decision to step down from the EB in December. We therefore held an extraordinary meeting of the OB, 18-20 February 2015, in Amsterdam (NL). Here, in an attempt to invigorate EMBnet, we formulated a new investment strategy; this will be presented at the forthcoming AGM, which Pedro Fernandes kindly volunteered to host in Oeiras (PT). The AGM will provide an opportunity for open discussion, both to suggest improvements and/or extensions to the strategy, and to commit to implementing it. This year, the terms of three members of the EB will end: Terri Attwood, Andreas Gisel and Etienne de Villiers. However, no candidacies for these positions were received. Our recommendation is therefore that an Interim Board should remain in place to oversee implementation of the rejuvenation strategy, the success of which should be evaluated at the 2016 AGM.

This year, we'd like to give special thanks to Axel Thieffry and Domenica D'Elia, who've worked tirelessly to sustain and coordinate the many activities of the P&PR PC; and Lubos Klucar for his proficient work in managing the production of EMBnet.journal. As always, there's still a lot to do. We therefore encourage you all to engage with, and contribute to, EMBnet, to ensure that EMBnet can continue to live up to its name: the Global Bioinformatics Network.

**Chair:** T.K. Attwood

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

**Member:** E. Bongcam-Rudloff

3 June, 2015