

GOBLET Election 2019 – Candidate Statements



Domenica D'Elia

Affiliation: CNR – Institute for Biomedical Technologies, Bari, Italy

Statement: As a representative of EMBnet in GOBLET and Chair of EMBnet, I'd be delighted if GOBLET could take into consideration my candidacy to the position of member of the GOBLET Executive Board. The main reason for my candidacy, also discussed with and supported by the EMBnet Executive Board (in cc), relies on the belief that my presence in the GOBLET Executive Board would bring a significant contribution to the consolidation of our collaboration.

Like you may know, EMBnet was among the founders of GOBLET, being Education & Training in Bioinformatics a pillar of EMBnet mission. Motivated by this shared objective, EMBnet and GOBLET signed an agreement on August 2017 for the production of educational material that has brought to excellent results thanks to the professional dedication of Teresa K. Attwood, former Chair of EMBnet, and supported by GOBLET and EMBnet members.

For the reasons aforementioned, my main objective will be the enforcement of the partnership among our organisations aiming to promote E&T activity in Europe and beyond.

As a first step forward, EMBnet would be glad to submit a proposal to host the 2020 AGM of GOBLET. This event will represent a unique opportunity for our communities to interact with each other to work together and in the common interest under the light of new emerging challenges in the education and training of next-generation scientists. Cutting-edge solutions are indeed required, and to this aim, the EC is dedicating funding programmes. GOBLET and EMBnet together could bring an essential contribution to the development of new and innovative training programmes and tools that could be appreciated and funded by the EC.



Javier De Las Rivas

Affiliation: Cancer Research Center (CiC-IBMCC), Consejo Superior de Investigaciones Científicas (CSIC) and University of Salamanca (USAL), Spain

Statement: Currently I am PI and Group Leader of the Bioinformatics and Functional Genomics Research Group in the CiC-IBMCC (institution described above) and also Professor of Bioinformatics at the Master in Cancer Biology (USAL, Salamanca, Spain). I am also the current President of SolBio (Iberoamerican Society for Bioinformatics; <http://www.soibio.org/>) that is member of GOBLET and that promotes the development of Bioinformatics in a huge region of Latin-America including 23 countries. My proposal to become a formal Member of one of the Committees of GOBLET and also, if it is considered useful, Member of the Executive Board is with the idea of continue the effort to promote Bioinformatics Learning, Education and Training worldwide. This will be specially with the idea of increasing collaboration between national and international institutions working in this new academic, scientific and professional field that is "Bioinformatics". A better coordination of the efforts on the education and training of Bioinformatics can only be achieved if GOBLET keeps close links and regular contacts with: (I) international societies (ISCB), regional societies (SolBio, APBioNet, H3ABioNet) and national societies; (II) international or large-scale national projects or programmes focused on Bioinformatics (such as ELIXIR in EU, bioinformatics.ca<<http://bioinformatics.ca>> in Canada, Australian Bioinformatics Network in Australia, etc); (III) worldwide institutions that are key pioneers in the field: EBI-EBML, Broad Institute, Institut Pasteur, Swiss Institute of Bioinformatics, etc; (IV) international platforms that have been most successful in the field (mainly as bioinformatics software developers) and that are very much community-driven (such as Bioconductor or Cytoscape); and (V) community-driven open initiatives (such as bioinformatics.org<<http://bioinformatics.org>>). So, if I am elected I will try to promote this larger collaborative effort and get together more often with all these stakeholders that work in the field of Bioinformatics.



Asif Khan

Affiliation: Dean & Associate Professor, Perdana University School of Data Sciences; Director, Perdana University Centre for Bioinformatics, Malaysia; President, Asia-Pacific Bioinformatics Network

Statement: I started attending GOBLET AGM only recently, since 2017 in Portugal. I enjoyed my first AGM session with a lot to share from my experience as a long-standing ExCo member and office bearer of Asia-Pacific Bioinformatics Network (APBioNet), and also much to learn from the GOBLET team. I even made an impromptu pitch to bring GOBLET to Asia. Although the bid went to Toronto, the proposal was well received. It was formally approved the following year, with AGM 2019 to be held in Jakarta, co-located with the International Conference on Bioinformatics (InCoB 2019). It has been a busy, but rewarding year thus far, all efforts leading up to the upcoming GOBLET AGM 2019 and InCoB 2019 in September.

After attending my first AGM, I volunteered to help out with the PR Comm, then chaired by Ann Meyer, who had done a great work in shaping the committee. I enjoyed the regular conference call with the small team. I offered to help manage the Facebook page, which did not exist back then, and also contributed to the newsletter. Sometime early this year, I took up the responsibility of being the Acting Chair for the PR Comm. It took a while to get things moving, but we eventually did, and I feel that the PR Comm is now ready to fully shoulder its responsibilities.

I would like to continue assisting the GOBLET PR Comm., leveraging on my previous experience with social media, SEO, SMO, and marketing to help grow the activities of GOBLET PR Comm, with the goal to promote the vision and mission of GOBLET. This ties up with driving membership and assisting with fund-raising. As such, the PR Comm. also actively works with the Fundraising Comm. to brainstorm on ways attract funding to help support GOBLET activities.

I believe in GOBLET's vision and mission and I think that as a global organisation, there is more that can be done and needs to be done, in particular in Asia. GOBLET has come a long way since its early days, and what differentiates it from other organisations I have worked before is the drive and commitment of the Executive Comm. members.

GOBLET is important to me as a platform to connect with other bioinformatics educators, upskill to be a better trainer, leverage on the resources to train others, and participate in policy making and standards development to catalyse the transformation of bioinformatics education globally.



Eija Korpelainen

Affiliation: Product Manager, CSC-IT Center for Science Ltd., Finland

Statement: I have 18 years of experience in providing bioinformatics training at national level, so I know the challenges of training different audiences in the ever-changing field of bioinformatics in a scalable manner. I firmly believe that international collaboration is the key, so I have been involved in GOBLET from the start. I have also long experience with ELIXIR and EMBnet, allowing me to find synergies with these networks.

My current interests include tackling the training needs in the different “seqs” of single cell omics, and enabling trainers to make use of cloud computing and VMs/containers. I’m also excited about experimenting with eLearning approaches and bringing bioinformatics to high schools.



Annette McGrath

Affiliation: Team Leader, CSIRO, Australia

Statement: I have been involved in GOBLET since attending my first AGM in 2013. In 2016, I hosted the GOBLET AGM in Brisbane and I have also served on the Executive Board since 2016. GOBLET, for me, has always been a fantastic way to connect with other trainers and training coordinators across the world and to work together on common challenges that we all face. While much has been done, much work remains to do. I will bring to the GOBLET Executive Board my experience in training and training coordination gained over the past number of years through highly productive and enjoyable collaborations with a number of GOBLET members. These efforts have helped contribute to the establishment of a vibrant training community in Australia. I would like to work with the GOBLET members and Executive Board to see GOBLET continue to grow to reach new communities, to connect and engage with other organisations with similar goals, to champion policies and procedures that would lead to a scale up training and education and to address, support and enable the changing needs of our training and education communities worldwide. Over the next 3 years, I would also like to see GOBLET grow and increase its visibility, to engage better and meet the needs of our individual members, and to work with other GOBLET members to help build its sustainability.



Celia van Gelder

Affiliation: Programme Manager DTL Learning; Training Coordinator ELIXIR-NL; ELIXIR Training Platform Leader

Statement: Since the start of GOBLET, I have been deeply involved in its activities. I organised the GOBLET kick off in Amsterdam in 2012 and acted as Treasurer in the first year. After that followed 3 years as co-chair of the LET committee (together with Nicky Mulder). Currently I fulfil the Treasurer role in the Exec Committee.

As a trainer – although my own trainer days are not so frequent anymore - and training coordinator and organiser (both in the Netherlands but also as co-lead of the ELIXIR Europe Training Platform), I strongly believe in working together, sharing our experiences (both good and bad), our best practices, our materials etc. For me, GOBLET is the worldwide Community of Practice for bioinformatics training and we all share the same training challenges, since we know there are still so many people out there that need to be trained in bioinformatics. We can only unlock the full global potential of trainers and training efforts if we work together towards our common goals.

We know that many people in GOBLET are struggling to find the time to participate in the GOBLET activities, because it is often an add-on to their day-job. But it shouldn't be like that! Going forward we are going to try out a new governance structure that hopefully will allow members to become active for specific (short-term) tasks and I hope and expect that this will help mobilize the immense training knowledge and expertise of the GOBLET community.

I would like to offer my time and expertise and stay involved in the leading of GOBLET. Important topics for me are: a) develop the GOBLET pitch, set out a strategy to increase the number of organisational members, and put GOBLET better on the map b) extend collaborative activities with other organisations (e.g. through joint grant proposals or collaboration agreements mentioning specific activities) c) find a good role for the increasing number of individual members, a powerful group of people to which we need to connect better d) bring GOBLET to the next level and work towards getting a solid financial basis that will allow us to hire a GOBLET Project Manager, to run day-to-day GOBLET business.