Bioinformatics Training Network (BTN)

Celia van Gelder
Secretary BTN
June 2, 2012
What is BTN?

- The BTN is a **global community-based project** that aims to:
  - bring together people involved in bioinformatics training (trainers & organizers),
  - provide a **centralised** facility to **share** materials, to list training events (including course contents and trainers),
  - and to **share and discuss training experiences**.

- **Relation BTN & SLING (FP7)**
  **Serving Life-Science Information for the Next Generation**
  SLING WP02 User Training
  WP02 Leader Cath Brookbanks, EBI
Who are we?

Founders in 2009

**UK:** Vicky Schneider, Teresa Attwood, Jennifer McDowall, Phil Jones, James Watson, David Judge, Cath Brookbanks  
**Switzerland:** Marie-Claude Blatter  
**Germany:** Aidan Budd, Kristian Rother  
**Portugal:** Pedro Fernandes  
**Italy:** Allegra Via  
**South America:** Javier De Las Rivas  
**Finland:** Tommi Nyronen  
**Denmark:** Thomas Blicher  
**Belgium:** Wouter van der Gool

Joined in 2010:

**Belgium:** Joachim Jacob  
**Canada:** Michelle Brazas  
**The Netherlands:** Celia van Gelder

Joined in 2011:

**Africa:** Nicky Mulder  
**Spain:** Federico Moran

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**Who’s involved in BTN anno 2012:**

- > 20 representatives from > 13 countries  
- BTN Organizing Committee:  
  - Allegra Via (chair),  
  - Teresa Attwood (co-chair),  
  - Celia van Gelder (secretary)
BTN & BTN Activities

What it does

• Yearly BTN network meetings
  • The training community meets, discusses, shares, acts etc etc.
    • 2010 & 2011: In UK, funded by SLING
    • 2012: In NL, funded by BTN members themselves
• Publish about bioinformatics training
• Organize events (e.g. workshops)
• Develop & populate www.biotnet.org
  • Website with freely available bioinformatics course materials
  • Uploaded by all trainers that subscribe to the website

Who your communities are

• BTN community of trainers & organisers
• All other trainers that can download freely the course materials from the BTN website
• webstats 2011: 10000 visitors (of which 5700 unique visitors), 48000 pages, 5 pg/visit
BTN Training Activities

What you train
BTN does not train.
The trainers that are part of BTN train bioinformatics in all its aspects.

Who you train
BTN does not train.
Target audiences for the trainers that are part of BTN range from postdoc, PhD, master, undergraduate, high school (teachers and/or pupils).

What resources you offer
• BTN currently offers freely bioinformatics course materials
• Training community: BTN offers a body of training expertise to all who need it
BTN Publications about bioinformatics training

2010

*Bioinformatics training: a review of challenges, actions & support requirements.*

Schneider, M.V. et al. (2010), *Briefings in Bioinformatics, 11*(6), 544-551.

2011

*Bioinformatics Training Network (BTN): A community resource for bioinformatics trainers*


*10 simple rules for developing a short bioinformatics training courses*


2012:

*SLING document: Bioinformatics training for life scientists - Guidelines for best practice*

Planned: *Position Paper about Best Practices*
BTN Event

- Workshop Bioinformatics Training for Life Scientists – Showcases and Challenges from tutors’ perspectives
- Date: September 9, 2012 (9-17 hrs), ECCB2012, Basel

- Topics will include:
  - Current state of the art and challenges in bioinformatics training for life scientists
  - Successful showcases of teaching bioinformatics to life science researchers
  - Exchange views on the future of Bioinformatics Training, going global

- Please send in your abstract for oral contribution and share your training experiences with the community!!
Technical support behind biotnet.org:
Peter Walter, External Services Group at EBI
(Group Leader, Rodrigo Lopez)
• Trainers & Organisers
  • have entered their training profile and uploaded course materials and/or provided hyperlinks to their material

• Training Materials

• Training Facilities
• Courses & Events - Event calendar by iAnn
• Useful Links

• All material is freely downloadable

• Registration is necessary when you want to upload material and when you want to rate material of your colleagues
Towards BTN 2.0

• Content & functionality of website
  – We now have a prototype & lessons learned
  – Build further on website functionalities:
    (e.g., course-centred pages, moderation&admin rights, document info)

• Identity
  – BTN is an independent community which has been so far supported by SLING and
    hosted by EBI
  – The community is growing and expanding and needs increasing autonomy
  – We need to better define the BTN membership

• Sustainability
  – SLING funding ends
  – Find other / new partners, funding? Introduce minimal subscription fee?

• Hosting of website
  – Need for adm access rights to people indicated by the community (which may even
    change from one year to the other)
  – Need for a completely free management of the website contents
  – Checking out options
# BTN Needs & Dreams

## What the issues are
- **BTN Identity**: independent community, everybody is free to enter on basis of personal training expertise
- **BTN Sustainability & growth**: 2012- SLING funding ends; BTN is on its own

## What you can’t do that you’d like to be able to do
- Administer the website

## What your dream is
- To move forward to BTN2.0, with global collaboration / ‘investment’
- BTN will become the place where trainers logically go look when in need for
  - (inspiration for) training materials.
  - network of colleagues, training community

## Your vision for how a group like B³CB might help you to get there

A group like this could help by providing strategic oversight, by bringing together a growing number of important and relevant societies and networks to join and help evolve BTN2.0, with outreach and links to global communities of trainers, and offering resources that are greater than the sum of their parts to world-wide communities.
**Celia van Gelder**

| MSc Chemistry, University of Nijmegen (NL) |
| Education position at Expertise Centre CAOS/CAMM (cheminformatics & bioinformatics) |
| PhD Nijmegen University (NL), 1996 – Biochemistry & Bioinformatics |
| Education officer at Royal Dutch Chemical Society (KNCV) & CAOS/CAMM/CMBI (1996-2002) - *brining bioinformatics & cheminformatics tools to Dutch students via web* |
| Project Leader Education @ Netherlands Bioinformatics Centre (since 2003) |
| Bioinformatics teacher @ University of Nijmegen (since 1999) |
| Coordinator Education@CMBI (since 1999) |
| Founder & chair of teacher network for Dutch polytechnic schools (‘HBO’) with a bioinformatics BSc programme (since 2002) |
| Founder of NBIC/CMBI Bioinformatics@school programme (2005) |
| Member of BTN (2010), Secretary of BTN (2012) |

**In summary, you see yourself as:**
- I am well up-to-date about bioinformatics basics, but no expert.
- My keywords: connecting people, education&training, bioinformatics