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Up-coming courses

- **GTPB course: Chromosome Structure Determination Using Modelling & Hi-C Data ([CSDM15](#))**, 24-27 Nov 2015, Oeiras (PT). **Application deadline:** 15 Nov
- **H3ABioNet free hands-on course: RNA-Seq data analysis with Chipster**, 16 Nov 2015, [CHPC](#), Cape Town (ZA). **Registration deadline:** 1 Nov
- **Edinburgh Genomics Course: [Linux for Genomics](#)**, Scotland (UK), 25 Jan 2016. **Registration deadline:** 11 Jan
- **[Human and Vertebrate Genomics: Bioinformatics Tools and Resources](#)**, Mahidol University, Bangkok (TH), 7-12 Feb 2016. **Application deadline:** 13 Nov
- **Call for training topics for the 2016 Galaxy Community Conference ([GCC2016](#))**, 26-27 Jun 2016. **[Topic nomination](#)** closes 16 Oct
- **[CSHL 2016 Summer Course on Statistical Methods for Functional Genomics](#)**, Cold Spring Harbor Laboratories, New York (US), 23 Jun-6 Jul 2016. **Application deadline:** 31 Mar

News

- **The Chair of the African Union Commission visited the Swedish University of Agricultural Sciences**, Uppsala (SE), 21 Sep 2015, to discuss cooperation with research and education partners in Africa. [Read more here.](#)

Events

- **[Functional Genomics & Systems Biology: From Model Organism to Human Health](#)**, Wellcome Genome Campus, Hinxton (UK), 28-30 Oct 2015. **Registration deadline:** 11 Oct
- **Workshop: Molecule Trajectories in Cellular Spaces**, 16-17 Nov 2015, Lyon (FR). **More info and free registration [here.](#)**

Job opportunities

- **4-year fully funded PhD positions** available at the Vienna Biocenter, Vienna (AT). More info: www.vbcphd.at
- **Junior Bioinformatics position at Humanitas Research Hospital**, Milan (IT), in the laboratory of Inflammation and Immunology in Cardiovascular Pathologies. **Contact person: [Dr. Paolo Kunderfranco.](#)**
- **Postdoc in [Bioinformatics & Systems Immunology](#)**, Institut Curie, Paris (FR). **Application deadline:** 30 Dec 2015

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EMBnet contribution to Bioinformatics in Sri Lanka

*by Kanchana Senanayake,
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The [IBMBB](#) (Institute of Biochemistry, Molecular Biology and Biotechnology, University of Colombo) became the Sri Lankan National node of EMBnet in 2007, when it was unanimously voted in at the AGM in Málaga (ES). The aim of this InFocus is to thank EMBnet for its contribution to our Bioinformatics MSc course, the first cohort of which has now successfully graduated. Needless to say, EMBnet made a significant contribution to developing the field of bioinformatics in Sri Lanka.

Dr. Erik Bongcam-Rudloff, current Chair of EMBnet, visited IBMBB in 2006, responding to an invitation made by SIDA and UPPMAX, University of Uppsala (SE). He convinced us to join EMBnet, highlighting the benefits we could receive as a member of this bioinformatics community. Prior to his visit, we could only organise 1- or 2-day workshops when experts in the field visited Sri Lanka. In 2009, supported by EMBnet, IBMBB initiated discussions with the University of Colombo School of Computing (UCSC) to start a joint MSc programme in bioinformatics. Guided by EMBnet, IBMBB and UCSC began formulating the course structure and syllabus. As a result, the first Bioinformatics MSc programme in Sri Lanka commenced in May 2012. This is a 4-semester, full-time course, with a research project that begins half-way through the third semester course-work and runs throughout the fourth semester.

Along the way, we continued to receive invaluable support from EMBnet. Dr. Jose Valverde (EMBnet Spain), ran a 4-day course on Structural & Functional Analysis of Proteins, and supervised an MSc disser-



ation. He generously held discussions with our researchers to solve their problems and provide new insights into their research projects. Drs Goran Neshich and Emiliano Barreto (EMBnet Brazil and EMBnet Colombia respectively) extended their support by evaluating MSc dissertations.

We have now produced five Bioinformatics MSc graduates. Three students did not want to proceed with a research project to earn the Master degree, so they will graduate with Postgraduate Diplomas in Bioinformatics. We hope EMBnet will continue to extend its support towards further development of bioinformatics in Sri Lanka.

