

Building a healthy and vibrant volunteer driven community: The Bio-IT project

Marc Gouw – Software Engineer @ Gibson Team



The European Molecular Biology Laboratory

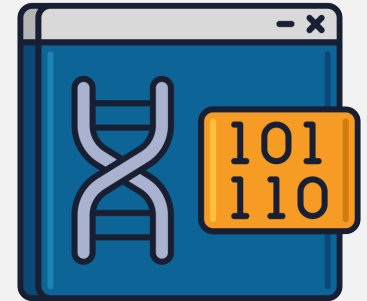


The European Molecular Biology Laboratory



Bioinformatics

Use of computational sciences to organize and analyze biological data

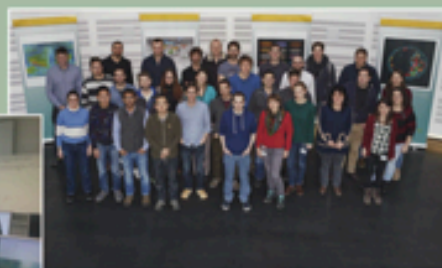


- > 50 % purely bioinformatics
- Many completely computational labs
- 0 labs with no bioinformatics

The Bio-IT project

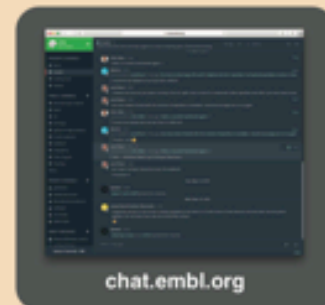
Training & Consulting

Courses & workshops



Consultancy & drop-in sessions

Resource Coordination



chat.embl.org



git.embl.de

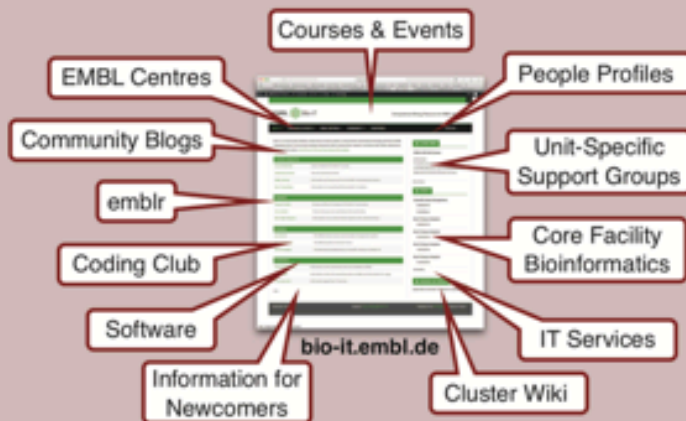


GitLab Pages

git

Bio-IT

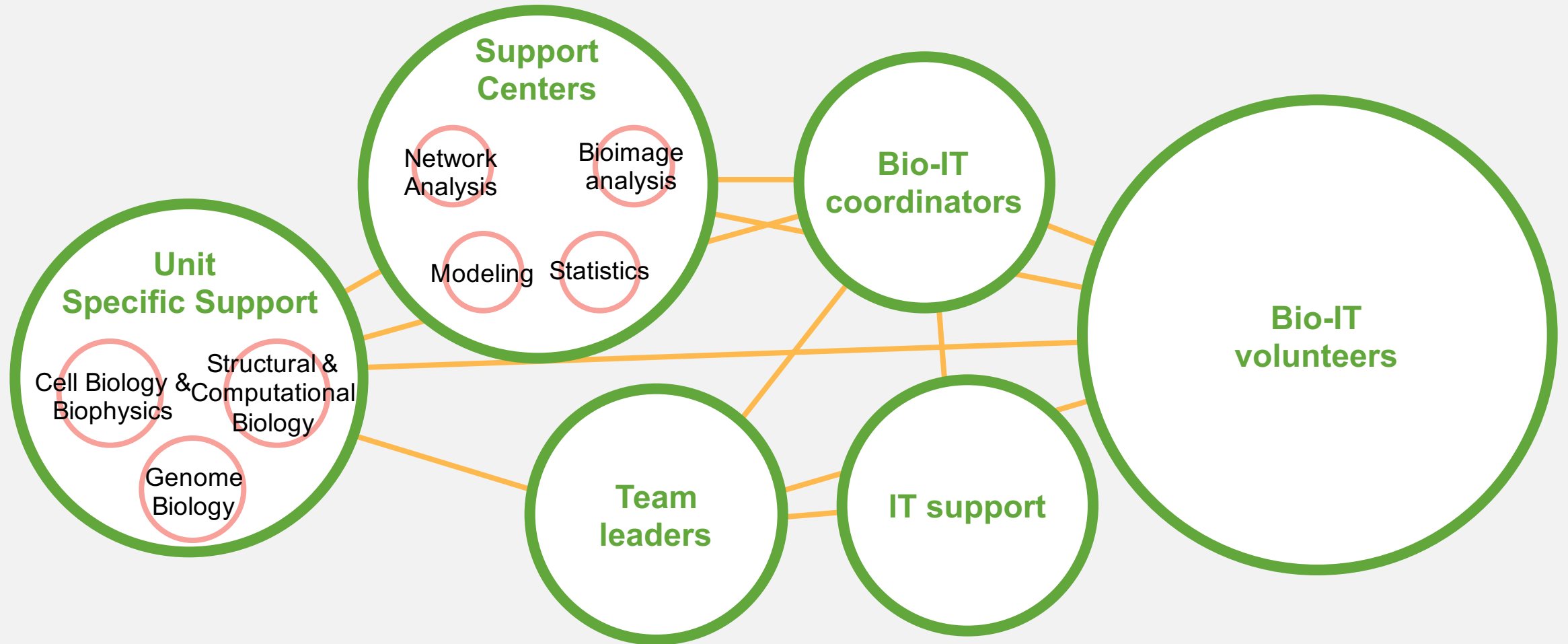
Information Dissemination



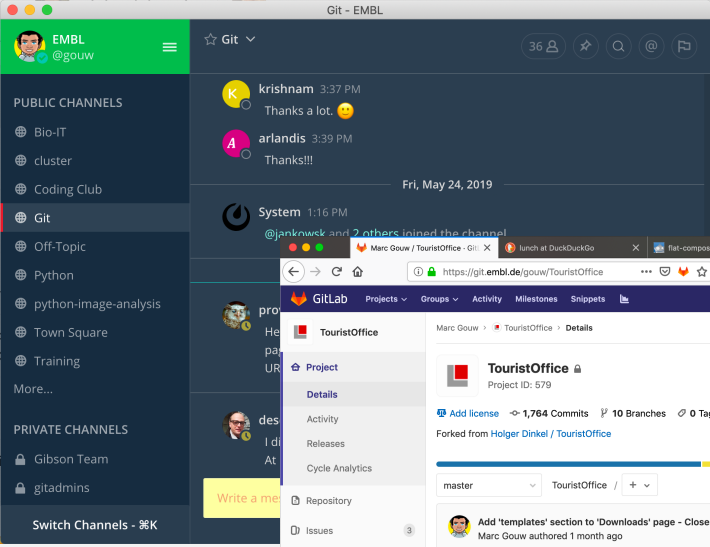
Community Building



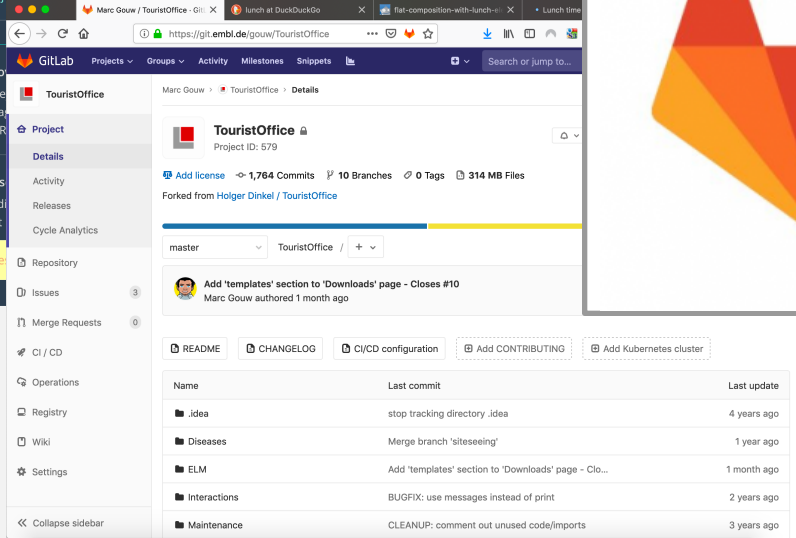
The Bio-IT community



Example 1: GitLab, Chat & GitLab Pages



chat

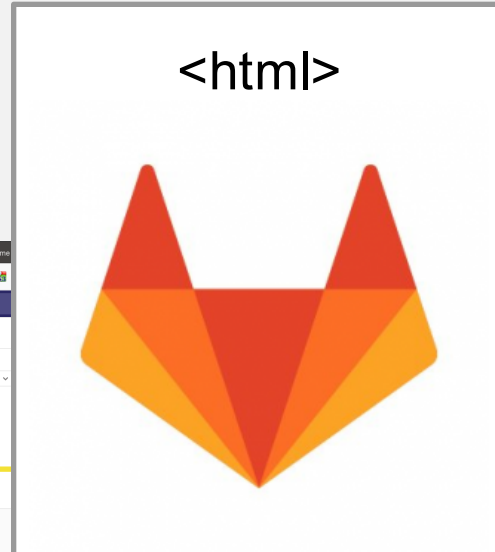


pages

git.embl.de

The screenshot shows a Mattermost chat window on the left with a sidebar listing channels like 'Bio-IT', 'cluster', 'Coding Club', 'Git', 'Off-Topic', 'Python', 'python-image-analysis', 'Town Square', and 'Training'. The main chat area shows messages from 'krishnam', 'arlandis', and 'System'. The right side shows a GitLab browser window for the 'TouristOffice' project, displaying commit history and a table of files.

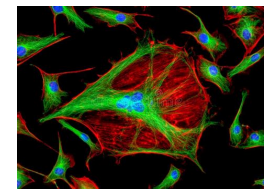
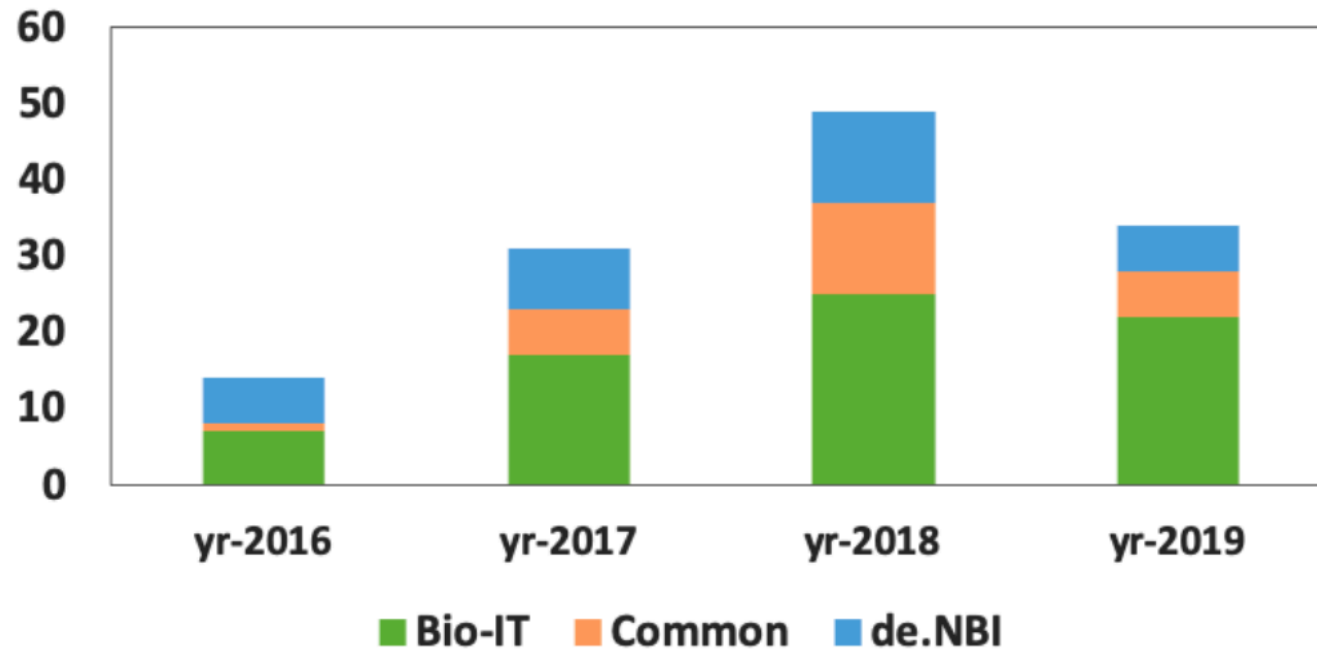
| Name | Last commit | Last update |
|--------------|--|-------------|
| .idea | stop tracking directory .idea | 4 years ago |
| Diseases | Merge branch 'sitseeing' | 1 year ago |
| ELM | Add 'templates' section to 'Downloads' page - Clo... | 1 month ago |
| Interactions | BUGFIX: use messages instead of print | 2 years ago |
| Maintenance | CLEANUP: comment out unused code/imports | 3 years ago |



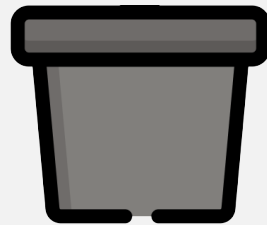
- Locally hosted **GitLab**
 - > 1200 users
 - Chat (mattermost)
 - Websites (pages)

Example 2: Courses

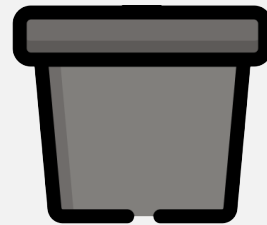
Course Overview



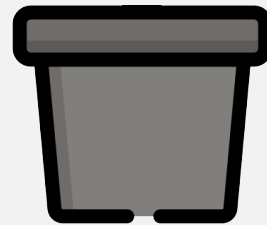
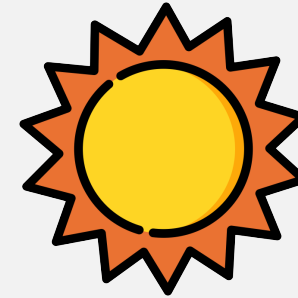
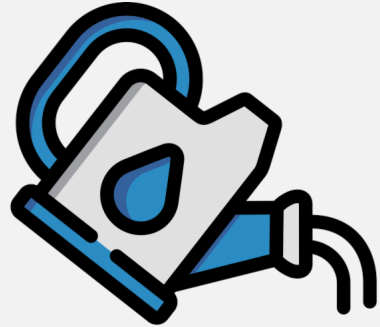
Growing a healthy and vibrant volunteer driven community



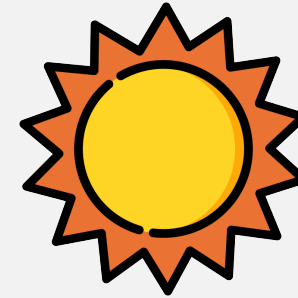
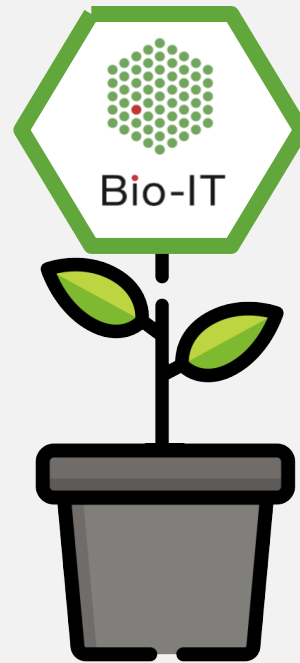
Growing a healthy and vibrant volunteer driven community



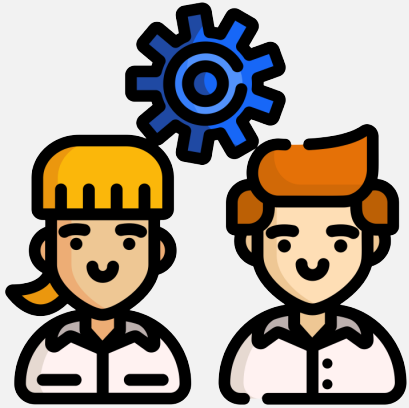
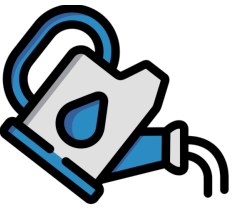
Growing a healthy and vibrant volunteer driven community



Growing a healthy and vibrant volunteer driven community

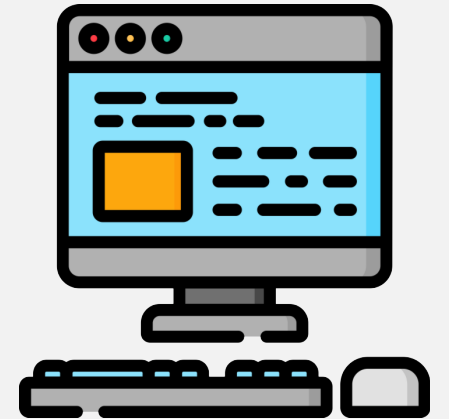


Institutional support

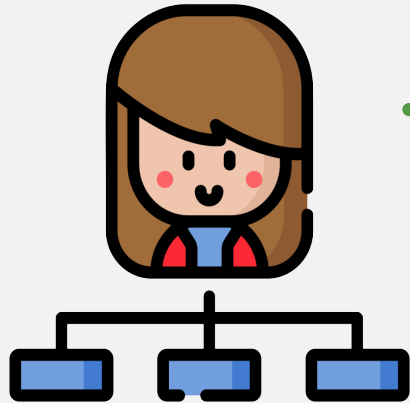
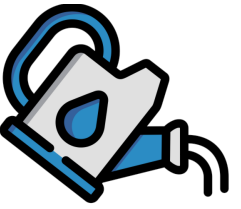


- Directly support **essential roles**
 - **Bio-IT coordinators** (full time staff for Bio-IT)
 - Support from de.NBI

- **Event & course organization** support
 - Rooms, equipment, lunch & coffee

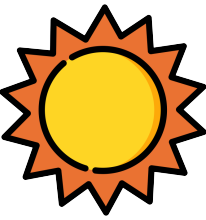


Institutional support



- Encourage participation at **Team Leader** level
 - Bio-IT contributions count as **infrastructure** contributions

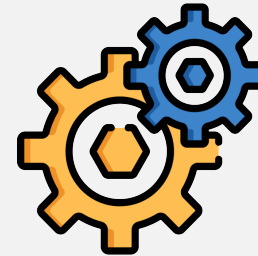
The Bio-IT coordinators



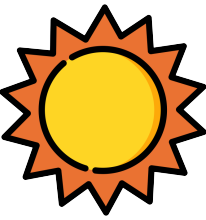
Toby Hodges
Zeller team



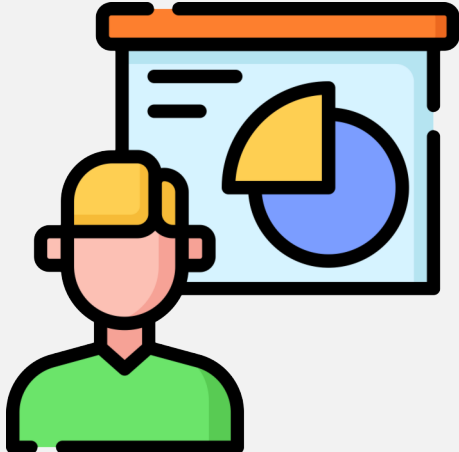
Malvika Sharan
Gibson team



Volunteer motivation

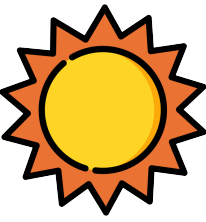


- **Always say “yes”**
 - ... to new ideas
 - ... to changing existing ideas



- **Autonomy & independence**
 - Give volunteers **freedom to create** their vision
 - The choice of **how when** and **how often**

Volunteer support



- **Practical & administrative support**
 - booking rooms
 - sending e-mails
 - coordinating event registration
 - ... (and all the other boring things)



- **The Bio-IT network**
 - If they can't help, they know who can



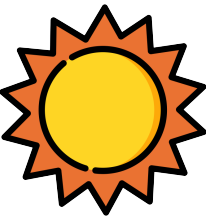
Linux Course Documentation



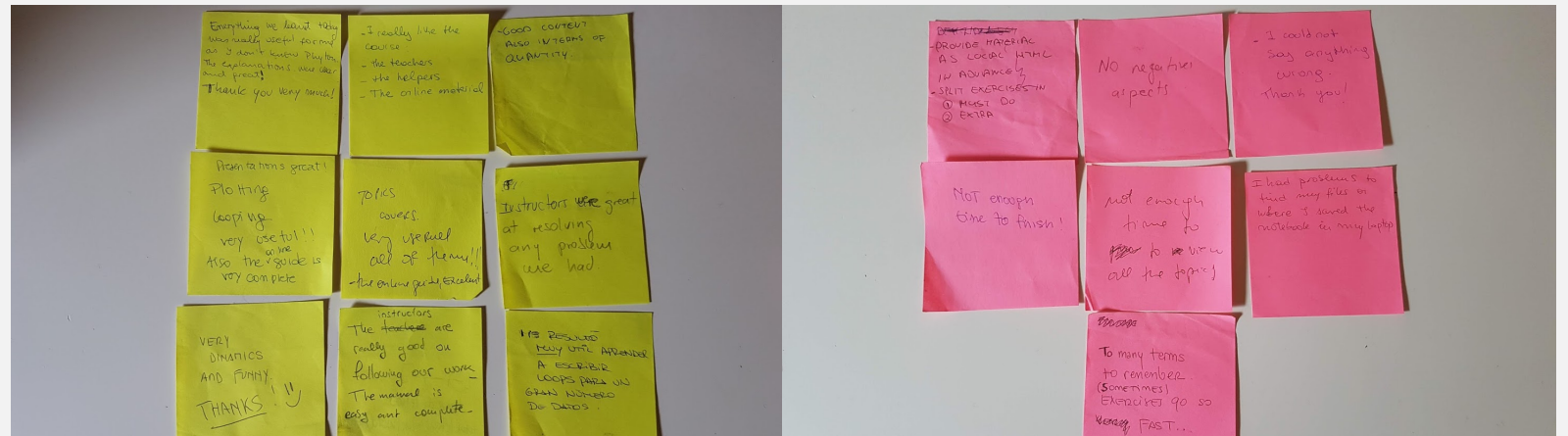
Introduction to Python Programming

- **Re-usable material**
 - Course material

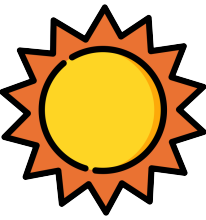
Volunteer feedback & recognition



- **Course feedback**
 - Post-course surveys
 - “sticky-note” feedback



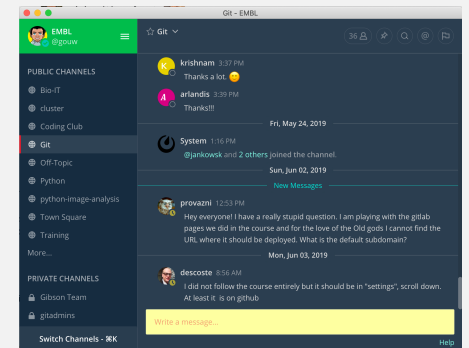
A community



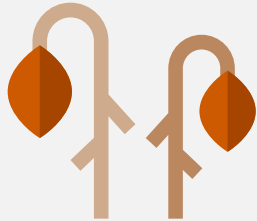
- **“Branding”**
 - Cool logo (with laptop stickers!)
 - Central portal for all **Bio-IT** info: bio-it.embl.de
- **Social events**
 - Bio-IT lunch (bi-monthly)
 - Bio-IT beer hour (bi-monthly)
 - Bio-IT BBQ (annual)



- **Bio-IT chat**

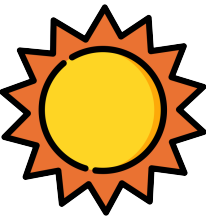


Its not always good weather

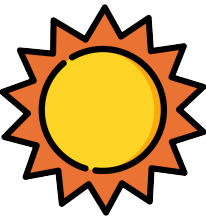


- **Challenges**
 - when demand exceeds capacity
 - when volunteers leave
 - long term-commitments

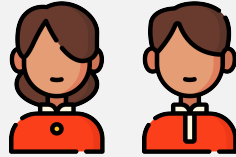
... some real sunshine ...



... some real sunshine ...



Acknowledgments



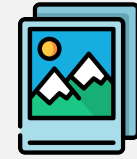
People

Toby Hodges
Malvika Sharan
Georg Zeller
Toby Gibson
Bio-IT community



Organizations

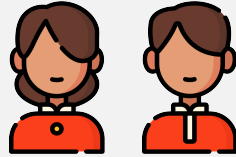
EMBL
de.NBI



Images & icons

freepik.com
flaticon.com

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