

## **59<sup>th</sup> meeting of the GARNet Advisory Board**

**Date:** Thursday 23<sup>rd</sup> March 2017 1pm.

**Location:** The Royal Society, 6-9 Carlton House Terrace, London SW1Y 5AG

Lunch will be provided at the meeting.

### **Papers:**

- > Minutes of 58<sup>th</sup> AB Meeting
- > Feedback from NatVar16 meeting
- > CyVerseUK meeting programme
- > Schedule for GARNet session at Monogram17
- > Feedback from CyVerseUK meeting
- > Schedule for SEB Plant Satellite meeting
- > SEB/GARNet PTM Meeting Schedule

**Attendees:** Ruth Bastow (RB), Michael Ball (MB, BBSRC), Katherine Denby (KD), Daniel Gibbs (DG), Murray Grant (MG), Jill Harrison (JH), Ian Henderson (IH), Saskia Hogenhout (SH), Sean May (SM), Jim Murray (JM), Geraint Parry (GP), Steven Spoel (SS), Zoe Wilson (ZW),

### **1. Welcome**

- Meeting chaired by SS

### **2. Apologies**

- Sabina Leonelli (SL), Christine Raines (CR)

### **3. Matters arising from minutes of previous meetings**

- There were no comments from the minutes of the 58<sup>th</sup> committee meeting.
- Update on output from 2016 GARNet/Egenis Meeting.

RB confirmed that SL had resubmitted a manuscript to Nature Plants. A decision is expected in the next few weeks. SS indicated that if it is accepted then it should be advertised in all the usual forums.

**ACTION: GP to advertise the publication when appropriate.**

- Feedback from GARNet NatVar16 Meeting: December 2016

IH and GP reported that meeting was a scientific success. The only problems surrounded the conference venue where the facilities were not completely appropriate for 105 delegates. There was limited space in the poster room and the audio in the conference room was poor. GARNet contribution was approximately £3000. The committee thought it was importance to make clear to future invited speakers that only economy travel would be supported for travel. IH confirmed that he is providing editorial input for the JXB special issue that is resulting from this meeting and that he will promote GARNets contribution at that time.

GP reported that co-organiser and former GARNet chairman David Salt wondered whether GARNet might be interested in supporting a similar meeting in the future. The committee suggest that although this is not within the remit of the current grant, GARNet would be happy to discuss helping with arrangements if appropriate.

- Feedback from CyVerseUK Workshop: March 2017

- KD provided the background for the meeting. GP explained that the workshop was a success, a great venue with useful sessions. The catering was a little lacking and some of the workshop sessions would have been better if presenters had prepared successful-use examples of the different software tools. GP thought the main benefit of the meeting was providing an introduction to the CyVerse environment, allowing delegates to then explore it in their own time. ZW suggested more could be charged for the meeting (this meeting was £35) as delegates would be happy to pay perhaps double this amount. GARNet contribution to the workshop is approximately £2800.

MG asked how the BBSRC might continue to support the continued use of these tools?

MB confirmed that there are limited funds available for this type of training although [STARS awards](#) might be the best opportunity. MG suggested that short workshops targeted at individual Universities or Institutes might be a good strategy to encourage new users. In addition the committee thought that given the constant turnover of PhD students and postdocs, an annual workshop of this type might be appropriate.

**ACTION: GP will look into the STARS awards and liaise with the GARNet committee and members of CyVerseUK to ascertain whether there is the appetite to put in an application. GP to plan a future CyVerse workshop in 2018.**

**30/3/17 ACTION RESPONSE: GP contacted BBSRC and the STARS program is currently on hold due to budget constraints.**

- Distribution of GARNet Slide for Committee Members to use.

- The committee thinks that it is important to advertise the work that GARNet does. SS encouraged committee members to link to the GARNet website from their home websites.

#### **4. Update from upcoming GARNet organised events**

- GARNet session at Monogram meeting in April 2017.

- GP provided the schedule for the [GARNet sponsored session](#). This includes contributions from IH, ZW and previous GARNet committee member John Doonan. GARNet are providing 8x £200 travel awards for early career researchers (from 12 applications). The GARNet contribution to this meeting is approximately £3500.

**ACTION: GP will engage with one of the travel award winners to have them submit a piece for the next GARNish newsletter.**

- SEB/GPC Satellite Meeting on 'New Breeding Technologies in the Plant Sciences: Applications and Implications'

- RB provided background to the meeting. GP confirmed the schedule is set. SEB are supporting accommodation for all speakers and travel for selected speakers. The advertising needs to be increased to encourage registrations. GP detailed some frustrations working with SEB and the lack of autonomy over the meeting although the arrangements are all now in hand. ZW suggested we include 'CRISPR-Cas9' in the meeting title, as that is the true focus of the meeting and might encourage interest.

**ACTION: GP to more widely advertise especially throughout Europe using EPSO and MASC contacts. GP to liaise with SEB about an alteration to the meeting title.**

**30/3/17 ACTION RESPONSE: Oliver Kingham at SEB reports that the meeting title change is possible but there will be a cost to alter the flyers. We decide to make minimal changes on the website.**

- SEB/GARNet Workshop on '*From Proteome to Phenotype: role of post-translational modifications*': December 2017

- GP confirmed that the schedule is set. In addition, 12 speakers have agreed to provide an article for a JXB special issue that SS and Cyril Zipfel will edit. The John McIntyre Centre has yet to be confirmed but SS expects that Edinburgh First and SEB will come to an arrangement in the coming week. GP confirmed the meeting is in good financial standing thanks to generous contributions from SEB and JXB. Early advertising for the meeting will commence once the venue is confirmed.

The details for the GARNet-sponsored workshop session on Day 3 have yet to be discussed. SS and GP will liaise with Alex Jones about this. SS confirmed there will be no extra charge for the workshop but that we might have to cap the numbers depending on an available venue at the University of Edinburgh. A favoured option might be to ask delegates to use laptops for the session so that more of them can be accommodated.

**ACTION: SS and GP to continue to liaise with SEB and Alex Jones to plan and advertise the meeting.**

- *Future Proposed Meetings*

- Workshop on CRISPR-Cas9: 2018
- GARNet2018?

The committee discussed whether it would be preferable that these proposed meetings be separate or run together as a single 4-day meeting. DG indicated that having a 'GARNet-style' UK-focused general plant science meeting was important for the community, especially in light of the uncertainty surrounding the UKPSF meeting (as confirmed by RB and MG). Committee members thought that a GARNet2018 meeting might be focused on how emerging technologies are being used in plant biology across multiple scales.

Overall the committee decided that it was important to pursue both these meetings as separate entities. JH suggested that the University of Bristol would likely be interested in hosting a workshop on CRISPR-Cas9 with possible support from the [Bristol Centre for Agricultural Innovation](#).

**ACTION: GP to liaise with JH about the organisation of a UK-faced workshop on CRISPR-Cas9 at the University of Bristol in March/April 2018. GP to begin planning for GARNet2018, focusing on subject area and venue. This is tentatively planned for September 2018.**

- Software Carpentry

GP wondered whether this is an area that GARNet would like to be again involved with? This was thought to be a good idea but no commitment was made regarding when it might be scheduled. The Earlham Institute are hosting an event later in the year so GP will liaise with Rob Davey to ascertain the focus on that workshop and therefore whether there is a call for a more 'plant-science' facing event. As these events are 'light-touch' for GARNet to organise this could be an option for late 2017 or early 2018. The committee discussed the type of training that is provided in use of the command-line by different DTPs. It seems that this is extremely variable, indicating that there might be a ready pool of students and postdocs who would be interested in this type of workshop.

**ACTION: GP to look into options for a Software carpentry workshop and report back in the next meeting.**

**30/3/17 ACTION RESPONSE: GP contacted Rob Davey about Earlham SC on [April 26<sup>th</sup>](#). Rob will send over the delegate list after their meeting so we can ascertain whether there is call for a GARNet-organised SC session in future.**

- Future Bioinformatics Workshops.

- GP reported that feedback from the recent CyVerseUK

meeting indicates that there was interest in a more focused workshop on one particular area of bioinformatics. GP suggested a workshop of this type might be held in December 2018 in order to interact with a new cohort of PhD students. This idea was supported by the committee.

**ACTION: GP to plan the potential focus of this workshop and report back to a later committee meeting.**

- Other ideas?

- SH flagged up that the MPMI meeting is taking place in [Glasgow in 2019](#). SH suggested that GARNet might be involved in a pre-workshop that is associated with this large meeting. SH suggested that topics might include '*Plant-Insect interactions*' or '*Non-coding RNAs, focusing on trans-kingdom effects*'. The committee broadly supported these ideas.

**ACTION: SH and KD to keep the committee informed about the planning of the MPMI meeting. There is potential for a GARNet committee member to take the scientific lead for a workshop that could have GARNet support.**

## 5. Funding Update.

- BBSRC update

- MB reported there will be BBR and TRDF calls later in 2017, which might have staggered submission times. MB reported on an upcoming joint Newton Fund call with the STFC that will focus on 'Reuse of data for Agriculture' in India. The details of this call will appear soon and expected submission date will be in late 2018. KD wondered whether there might be an opportunity for pump-priming awards from the STFC Food Network+ linking into the planning of this call.

**ACTION: KD and MB to discuss this possibility.**

- Future of CyVerseUK..

- KD reported Rob Davey at the Earlham Institute has submitted a grant to improve hardware. Concerns remain over future use of these resources and how that can be managed (see section 3 above on a possible STARS application).

- NASC Update

- SM reported the good news that NASC were successful in a BBR application and will be funded until October 2021. This funding will merge existing work packages that are currently supported by two distinct grants. The BBR will provide funding for 7 FTEs. The focus will be to consolidate existing resources and to continue to develop digital links with the other stock centres.

## 6. UKPSF Update:

- Update on progress toward UK Plant Science Roadmap.

- RB and MG report that there is a greater feeling of confidence that the Roadmap will be completed. MG was unaware the level of input into last edit but RSB has committed to reducing the document from 7 to 4 mini-roadmaps with the overall aim of removing repetition from the document. The next phase of the process is uncertain but MG thinks it will be returned to the community for future comment. JM indicated that it is critical at this time to obtain input from RCUK, especially from the BBSRC that MB confirmed have played no part in the process to date. MG and RB praised Jonathan Carruthers for his work on the document but were unaware on the amount of weekly time he has

allocated to the Roadmap. MG reported that RSB plan a launch event in September but that the nature of this is to be decided.

- RSB response to the [BEIS Consultation on Building our Industrial Strategy](#)

- The committee discussed whether GARNet should provide independent comments for this green paper that are distinct from the RSB submission. The consensus was that it would be useful for GARNet to highlight the sections of the document that pertained to all aspects of plant science. The call ends at 11.45am on Bank Holiday Monday April 17<sup>th</sup>.

**ACTION: GP to prepare a draft response that takes on board prior comments from JM. This will be then circulated to the committee before submission.**

## 7. AOB

- MG asked what GARNet's role might be to tackle the problems surrounding reductions in DEFRA funding for the maintenance of UK germplasm. RB suggested this issue is not singularly in GARNet's remit but that it is feasible that we could liaise with other organisations (such as Monogram, UKBRC or VeGIN) to highlight the long term impact of losing germplasm diversity in the UK. MG and KD suggested that this might be a project appropriate for a [PIPS](#) student. ZW cautioned that type of project would be most successful if the student was required to move away from their host institution, either to Cardiff or to another location. Importantly the committee felt that this type of project would need to clearly add value to the current GARNet grant.

**ACTION: Committee members are encouraged to submit a proposed PIPS topic that will be discussed at a future meeting. If acceptable to the committee then GP can begin the process of establishing GARNet as a destination for a possible PIPS student.**

## 8. Dates of Upcoming Committee Meetings:

- Tuesday June 13<sup>th</sup> 2017:
  - University of Birmingham hosted by DG
- Monday September 11<sup>th</sup> 2017:
  - Liverpool. Hosted by GP.
- Thursday December 14<sup>th</sup>:
  - University of Edinburgh hosted by SS.