

New beginnings for training in data intensive research applications for health

BIRTH Biological Informatics Research Training for Health

In July 2014 a group of researchers and support staff at UCT established the Biological Informatics Research Training for Health (BIRTH) computing laboratory in the Faculty of Health Sciences. The partners in this initiative includes researchers from the [Department of Medicine, Computational Biology](#) (CBIO), the [Clinical Infectious Diseases Research Initiative](#) (CIDRI), the [UCT Clinical Research Centre](#) (CRC), and staff from the [UCT eResearch Centre](#).

The aim of the venue is to provide dedicated space and equipment to facilitate training of researchers engaging with data intensive applications in Health Sciences. The laboratory is equipped with dual boot Windows/Linux desktop computers with the aim to extend the offering to high-end laptops in the near future.

We are proud to announce the first courses to run in 2014:

- Preparing for Next Generation Sequencing Data Analysis 101 (Start: Sept. 15)
- Introduction to OpenClinica (Start: Sept. 3)
- Introduction to advanced data manipulation with R (Start: Nov. 10).

The scientific computing laboratory is situated in the Old Main Building, Groote Schuur Hospital and forms part of the newly refurbished UCT Clinical Research Centre. Through creative solutions and generous donations from ICTS (in the form of networking infrastructure) and Properties and Services (in the form of repurposed furniture) and the Faculty Research Committee, the partners have established and equipped the laboratory with minimal funding.

Researchers are encouraged to book the lab for high-level scientific computing training purposes by applying to the steering committee. The 2014/2015 steering committee consists of Dr Maia Lesosky, Prof Nicola Mulder, Ms Lesley Workman, Dr Armin Deffur, and Anelda van der Walt.

For more information visit the BIRTH website at www.cbio.uct.ac.za/birth.