



# From Potsdam to Gent



Esther-Kristin Lather

# Where am I ?



**Flanders Institute for Biotechnology**

→ research departments in cooperation with four Flemish universities



@



other (wetlab) research groups





# The group



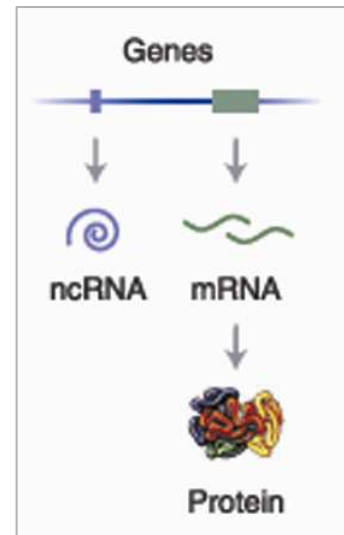
- 40 people (PostDocs, PhD students, technicians)
- 12 nationalities
- broad range of research topics
- regular group seminars and other activities



# What am I doing?

## Functional gene annotation

- develop and implement computational approach for prediction of function
- make it automatic for high throughput
- develop it as a tool to make the method accessible for others



sequenced  
genome sequence



predicted  
gene sequences



function  
of the proteins?



# How I got there

- individual search for traineeship
- contact through Bioinformatics Professor at University of Potsdam
- search for funding
  - AAA (International Relations Office)
  - “Erasmus student placements” fits
- retrieved information from [www.tu-cottbus.de/leonardo](http://www.tu-cottbus.de/leonardo)
- sent application to Leonardobüro Brandenburg
- waited... granted!
- some more forms to fill in
- signed the contract

## Problems:

- completing the company forms
- Erasmus vs. Leonardo → confusion!



# Internship at a university?

- nice working atmosphere
- young, dynamic, multicultural, open group
- up-to-date research, good address for **Bioinformatics in Europe**
  
- **Registered as exchange student at UGent**
  - support from exchange student advisor
  - voucher for Dutch class
  - university choir
  - use student facilities
  - meet people via Erasmus network
  - visit lectures



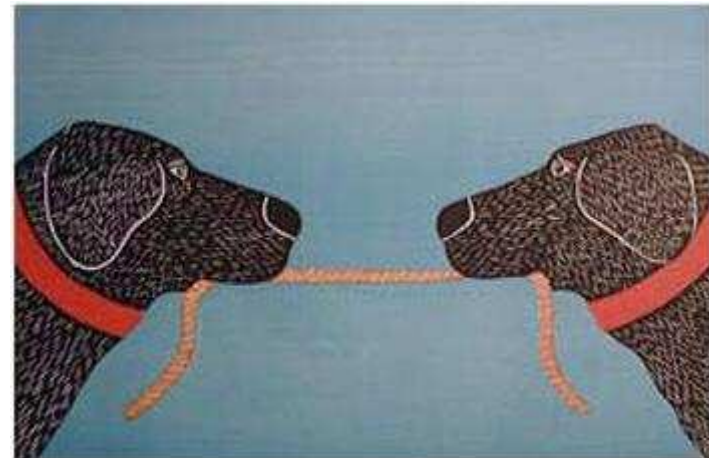
# Give and take

## What I get

- learning by doing → skills:
  - programming
  - Bioinformatics research methods
  - independent working
  - writing and presenting
- insight in the different aspects of Bioinformatics
- confirmation: This is it!
- a publication?
- networking
- languages: English and Dutch
- culture and identity in Gent, Flanders and other foreign countries
- friends

## What they get

- a motivated, quite independent worker
- they determined topic



# The “company” side

**Why do you accomodate  
student apprentices?**

- to help students that are interested in the research going on in my lab
- they might come back for a PhD/postdoc
- it's a collegian service



**Prof Yves Van de Peer  
Group Leader**

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**Which qualities should they fulfill?**

- willing to stay for at least several months (preferably > 6)
  - at least some training in bioinformatics (preferably know how to program)
  - a letter of recommendation of their supervisor
- good students who can make a contribution to the lab
- no waste of time for local supervisors to help/train

# Thanks!

