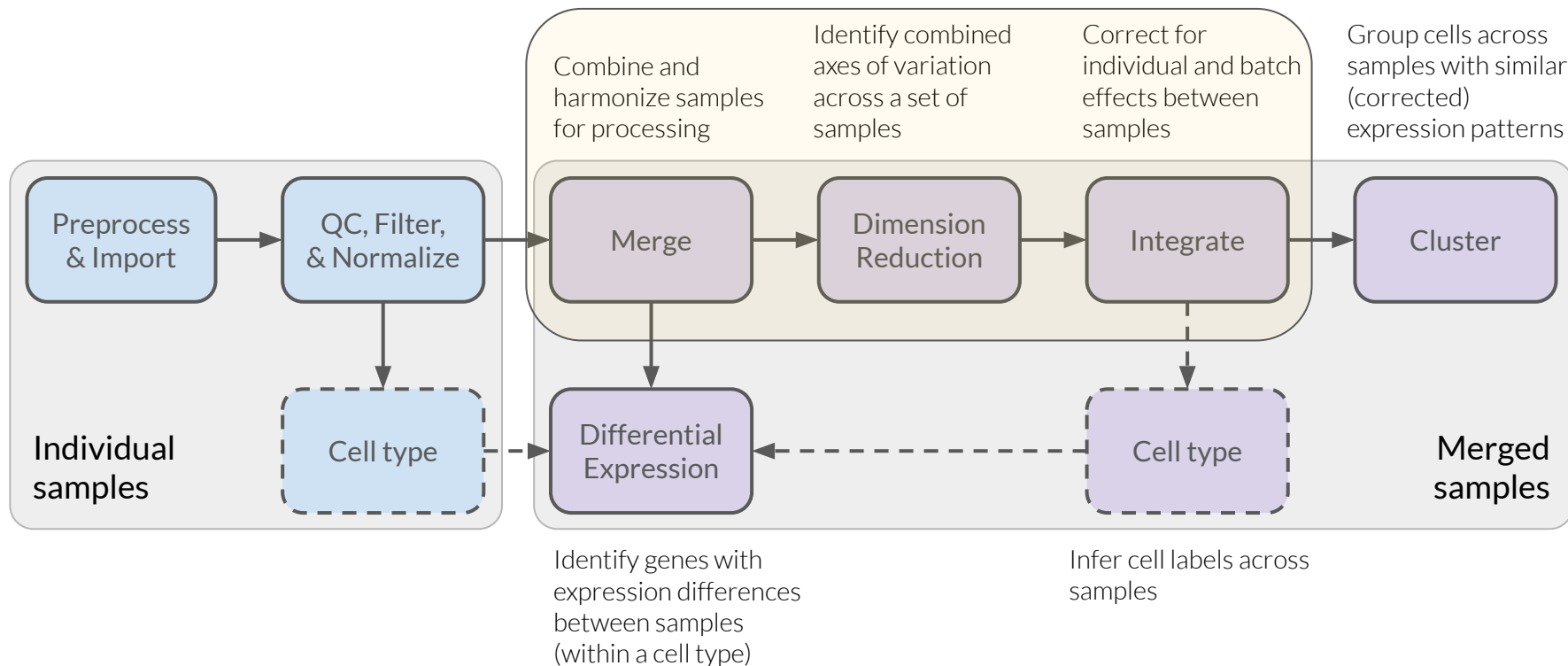




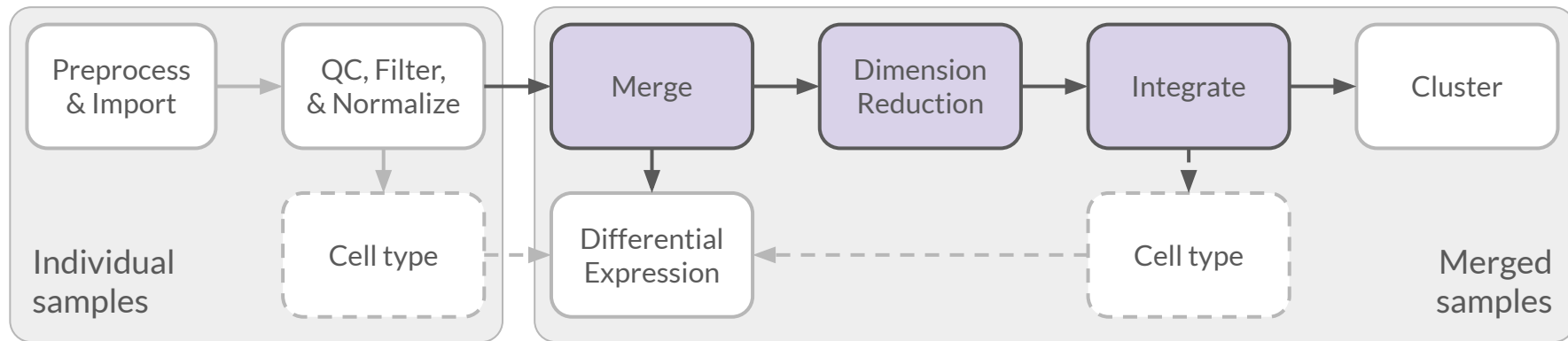
# Integrating Different Samples in Single-cell RNA-seq

The Data Lab

# Working with multiple samples in scRNA-seq



# Integration in scRNA-seq overview



# Why integrate samples?

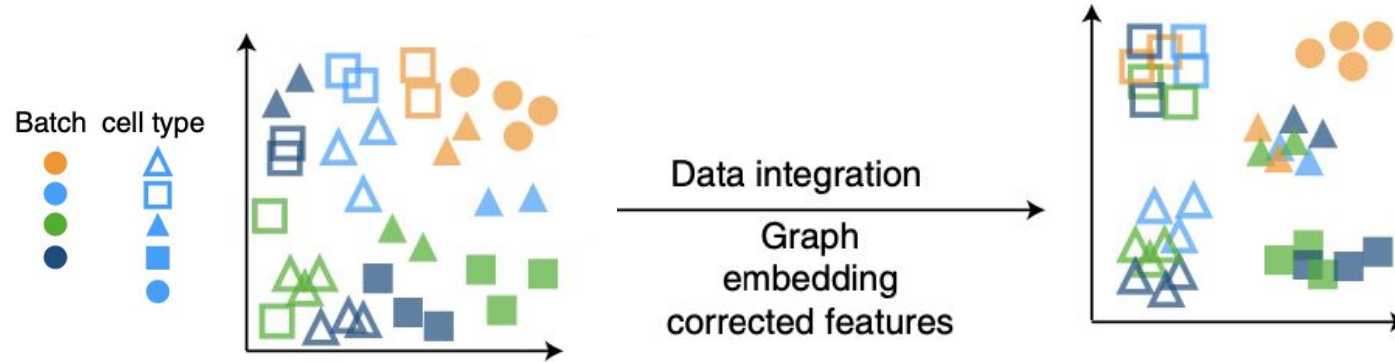
The goal of integration is to mitigate the *batch effects* caused by technical variation across samples, while still preserving biological information.

- Let's call each sample a "batch" of cells
- Cells in a given sample will share some technical variation
- This becomes a problem when we want to jointly consider several samples
  - Cells within a given sample appear more similar than they are, simply because they're from the same sample.
- To compare cells across samples, we need to remove this batch-level technical variation. Then, we can hopefully hone in on the more interesting biological variation 🕵️

# What can('t) integration do for you?

- Integration is performed on reduced dimension representations (often principal components)
  - Integration also *returns* reduced dimension representations for downstream use
  - Some integration methods will "back-calculate" corrected gene expression values, but these aren't as important as you think!
  - For example, we do *not* use these for differential expression (stay tuned for more!)
  - Recommended reading on when to use, and not to use, corrected expression values:  
<http://bioconductor.org/books/3.16/OSCA.multisample/using-corrected-values.html>
- Integration allows us to...
  - Jointly visualize **cells** from multiple datasets
  - Jointly cluster **cells** from multiple datasets
  - Annotate or identify similar **cell types** across datasets

# What does successful integration look like?



Before integration, the primary "clustering" is by batch

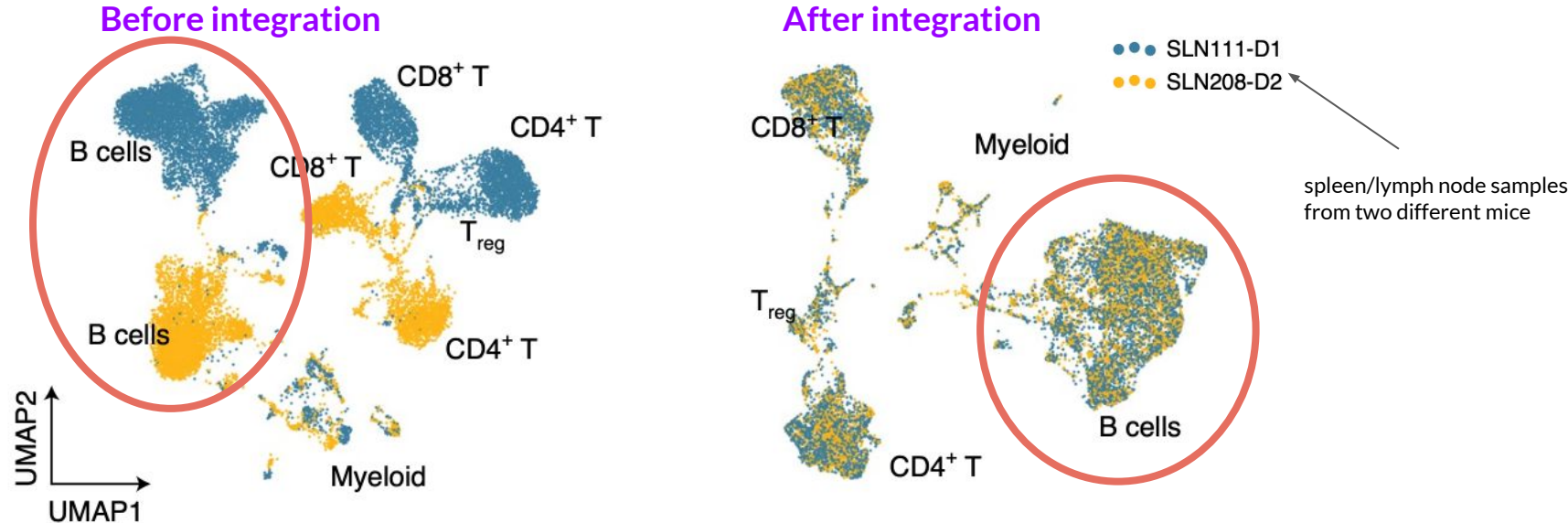
- Orange tends to group with orange, green with green, etc.

After successful integration:

- Batches show lots of mixing
- Cell types ("biology") cluster together, and do *not* show lots of mixing

Successful integration depends on *shared information* across batches.

# Example of (what looks like!) successful integration



# How to evaluate integration



- Compare before and after UMAP vibes
  - Before integration, batches (datasets) will mostly cluster together
  - After integration...
    - Batches should not group together but should be highly mixed across the UMAP
    - Biologically similar cells (tissue, cell type, disease vs healthy) should group together
  - Usually, when it fails, it fails.
- There are several metrics for evaluating batch correction
  - Luecken *et al.* (2022) is an excellent reference <https://doi.org/10.1038/s41592-019-0619-0>
  - Caution: Metrics do not measure "was integration successful," but other proxies which *sometimes can help us tell* if integration was successful (or at least not unsuccessful)

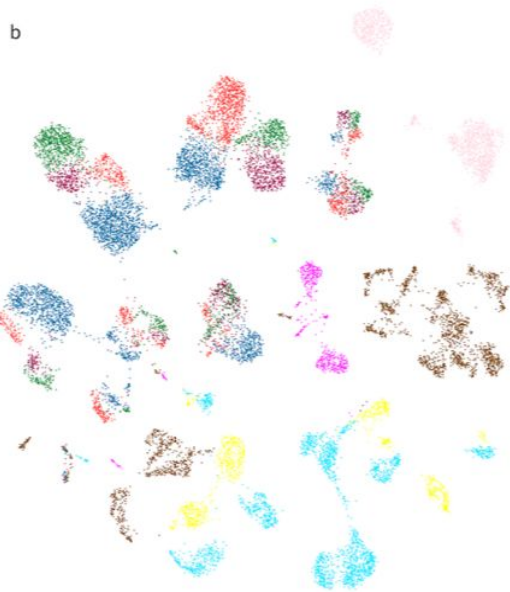


# How I stopped worrying and learned to love (the) UMAPs

- Some examples from Luecken et al. (2022)
  - Luecken, M.D., Büttner, M., Chaichoompu, K. et al. Benchmarking atlas-level data integration in single-cell genomics. (2022). <https://doi.org/10.1038/s41592-021-01336-8>
  - Panels from Figure S13 are shown on the next two slides
    - [https://static-content.springer.com/esm/art%3A10.1038%2Fs41592-021-01336-8/MediaObjects/41592\\_2021\\_1336\\_MOESM1\\_ESM.pdf](https://static-content.springer.com/esm/art%3A10.1038%2Fs41592-021-01336-8/MediaObjects/41592_2021_1336_MOESM1_ESM.pdf)

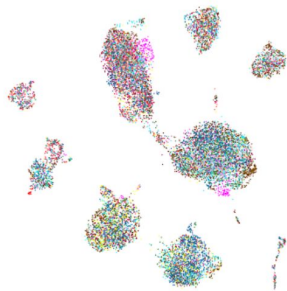
## Top 4 "best" integration methods

Batch



● celseq  
 ● celseq2  
 ● fluidigm1  
 ● inDrop1  
 ● inDrop2  
 ● inDrop3  
 ● inDrop4  
 ● smarter  
 ● smartseq2

Harmony (embed)  
unscaled/HVG



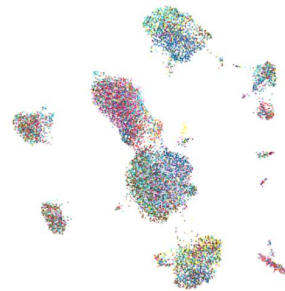
Seurat v3 RPCA (gene)  
scaled/HVG



Seurat v3 CCA (gene)  
scaled/HVG



fastMNN (embed)  
scaled/HVG



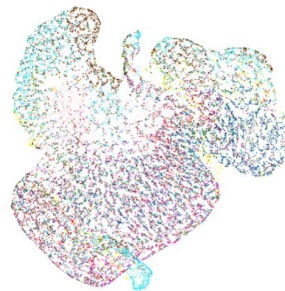
LIGER (embed)  
unscaled/FULL



scGen\* (gene)  
scaled/FULL



SAUCIE (embed)  
unscaled/FULL



SAUCIE (gene)  
unscaled/FULL

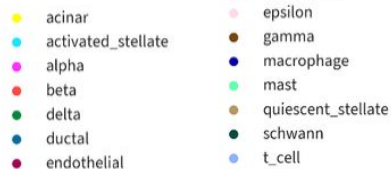
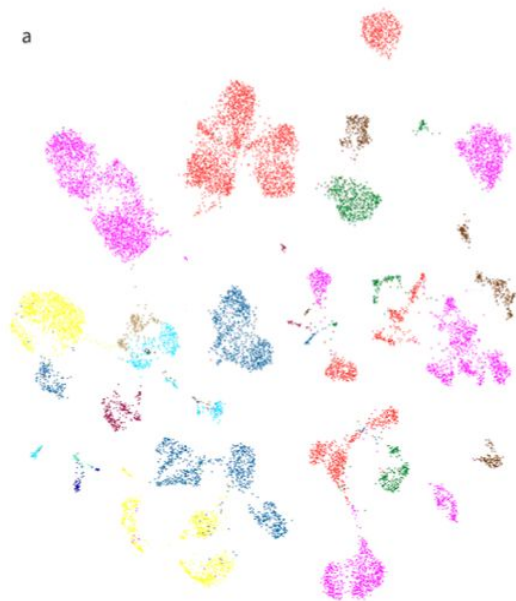


## Bottom 4 "worst" integration methods

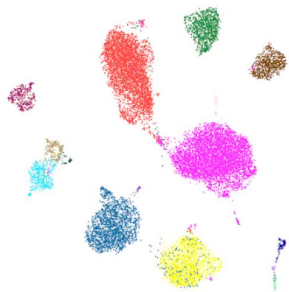
## Top 4 "best" integration methods

Cell Type

a



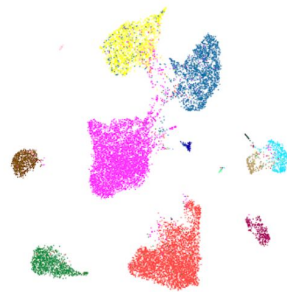
Harmony (embed)  
unscaled/HVG



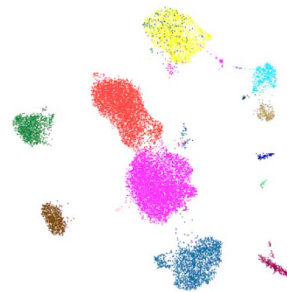
Seurat v3 RPCA (gene)  
scaled/HVG



Seurat v3 CCA (gene)  
scaled/HVG



fastMNN (embed)  
scaled/HVG



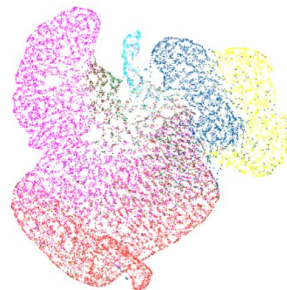
LIGER (embed)  
unscaled/FULL



scGen\* (gene)  
scaled/FULL



SAUCIE (embed)  
unscaled/FULL

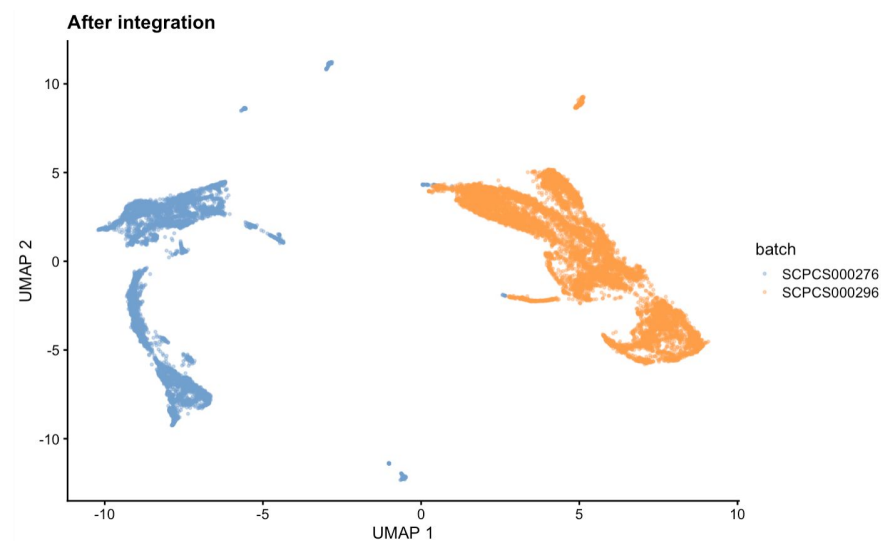
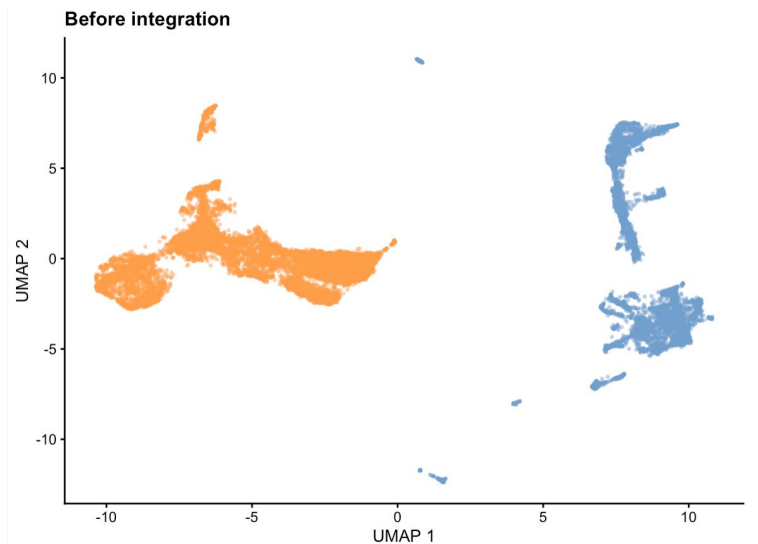


SAUCIE (gene)  
unscaled/FULL

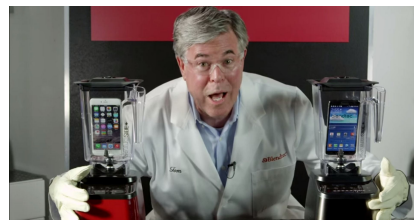


## Bottom 4 "worst" integration methods

# An example of failed integration

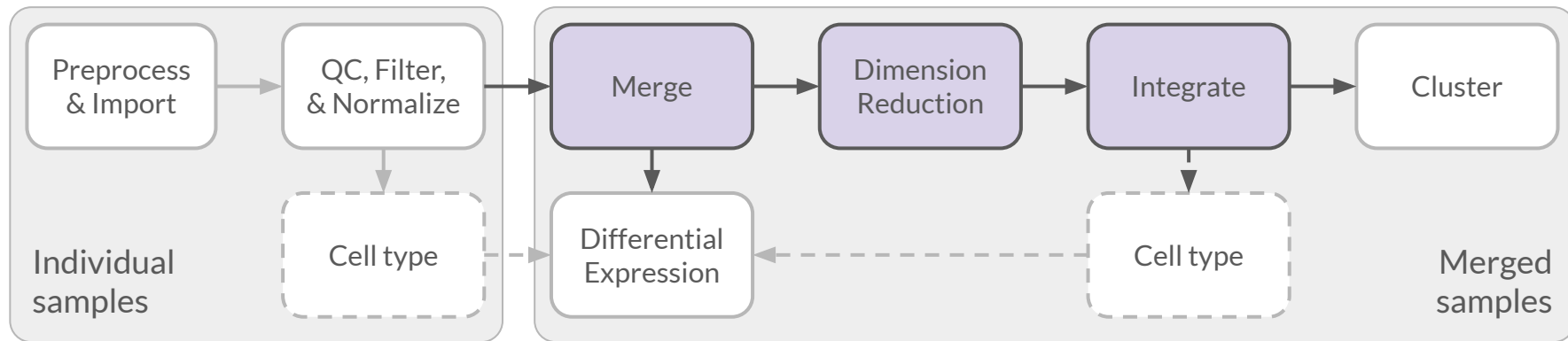


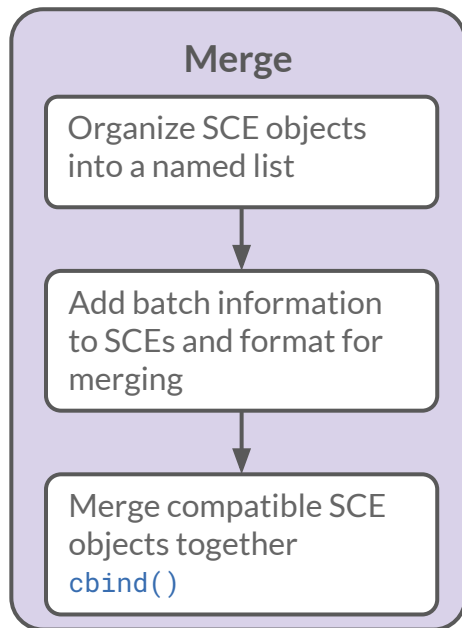
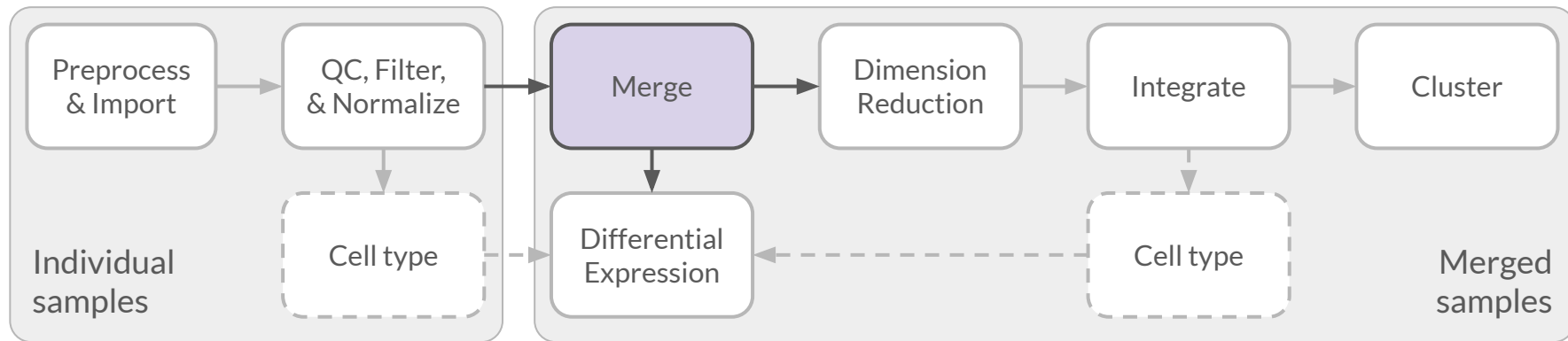
# Will it integrate?



- Datasets that don't have shared cell types or states will be hard to integrate
  - Patient and xenograft
  - Healthy and normal
  - Data from different tissue types
  - Data from different organisms
- The extent of "overlap" among datasets may also influence which integration method you should use, along with the results themselves

# Integration in scRNA-seq overview



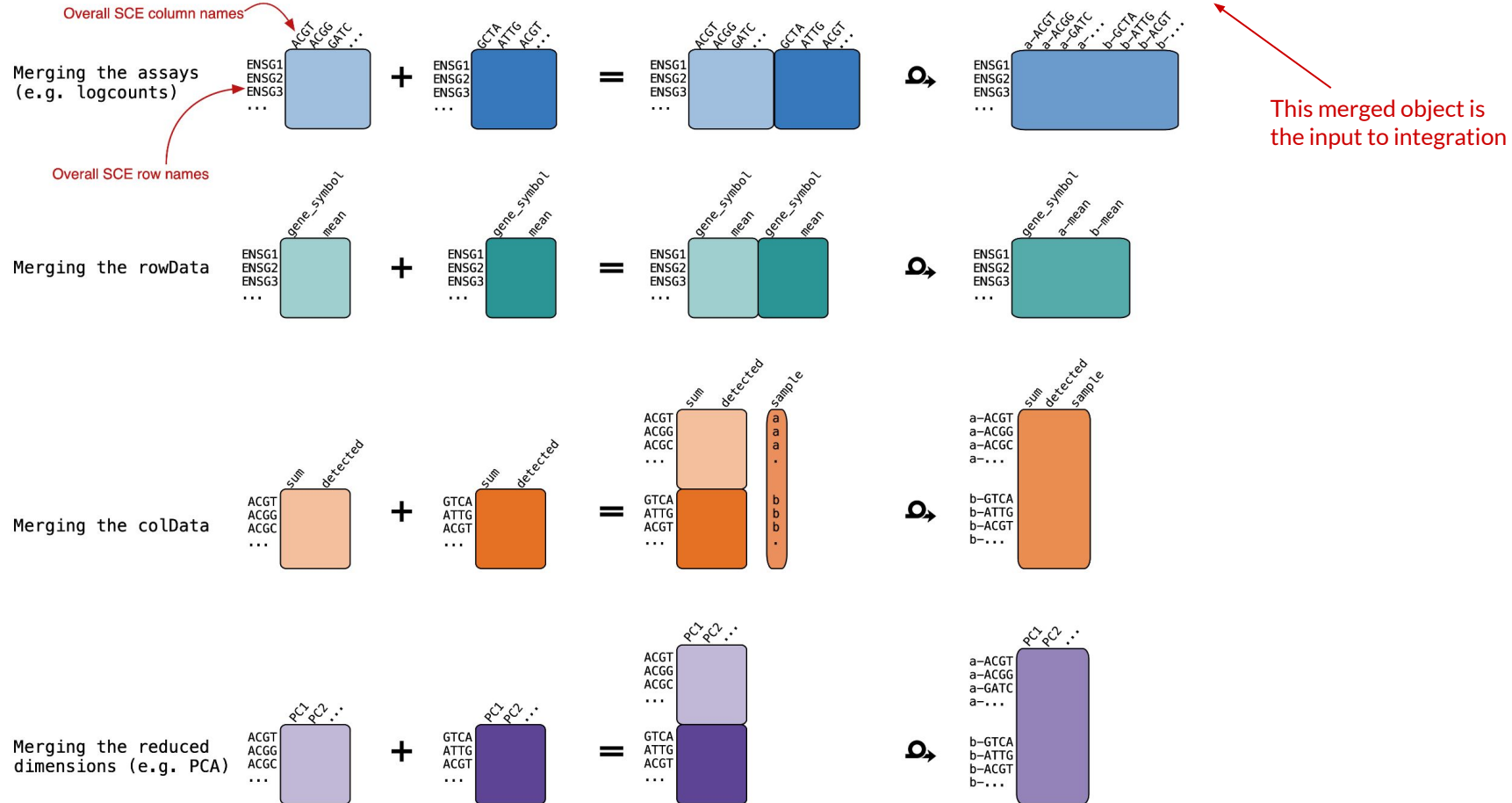


- It's useful to *merge SCEs together* for many downstream analyses, but this merging requires some bookkeeping:
  - After merging, how can we still tell which batch (sample) each cell came from?
    - We need to add this information into SCEs
  - Are SCEs formatted such that R will let us merge them?
    - They need to have compatible column and row names

SCE "a"

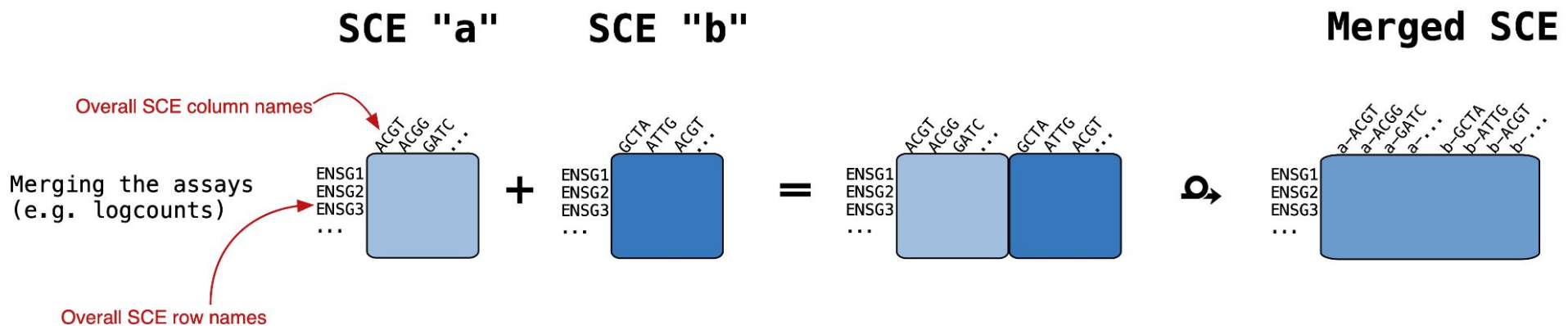
SCE "b"

Merged SCE



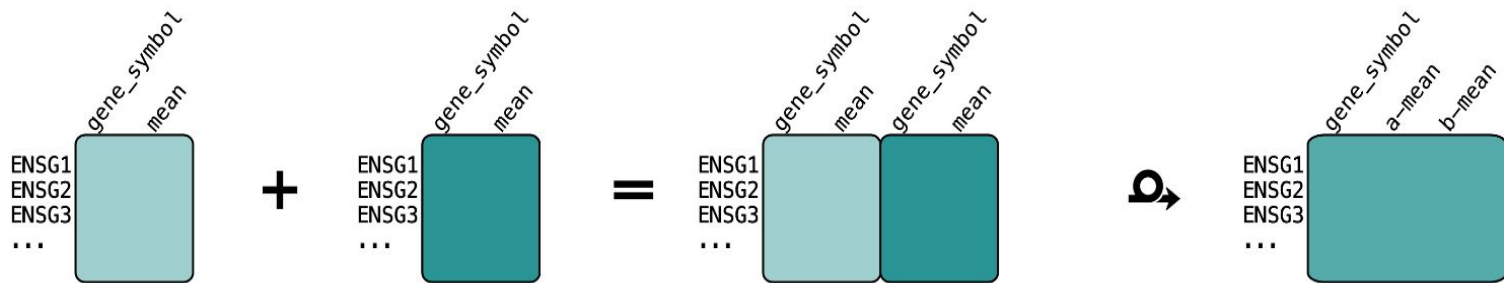


# Merging SCE assays



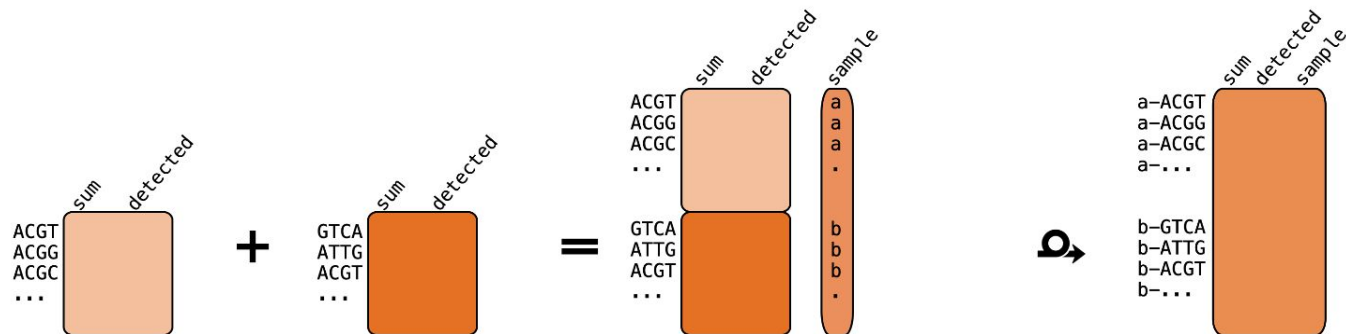
# Per-gene (feature) data: Each row is a gene

Merging the rowData

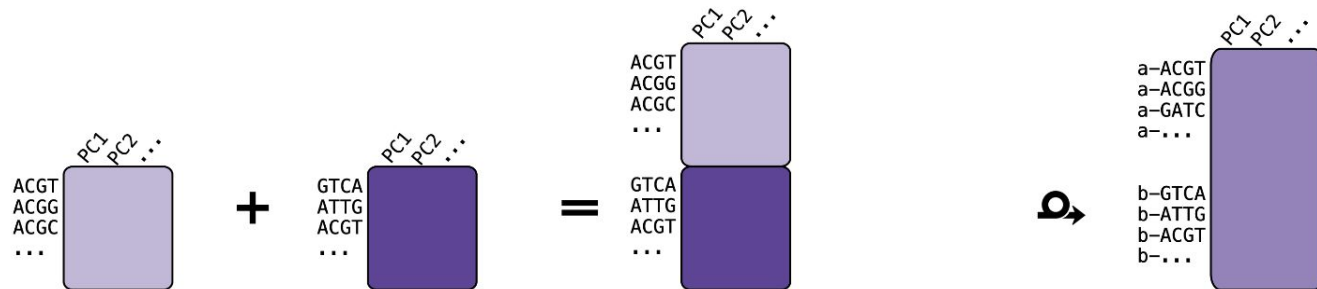


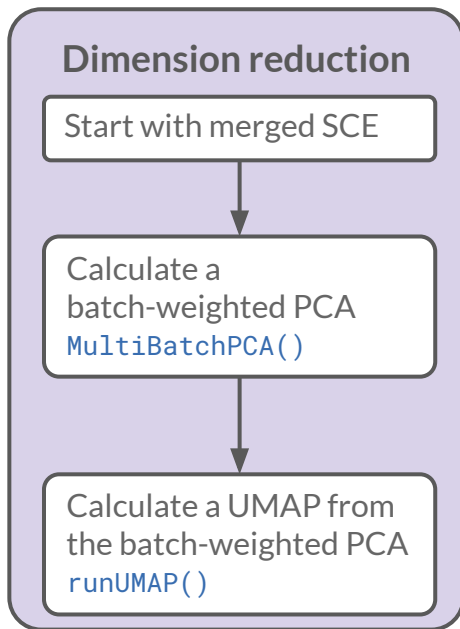
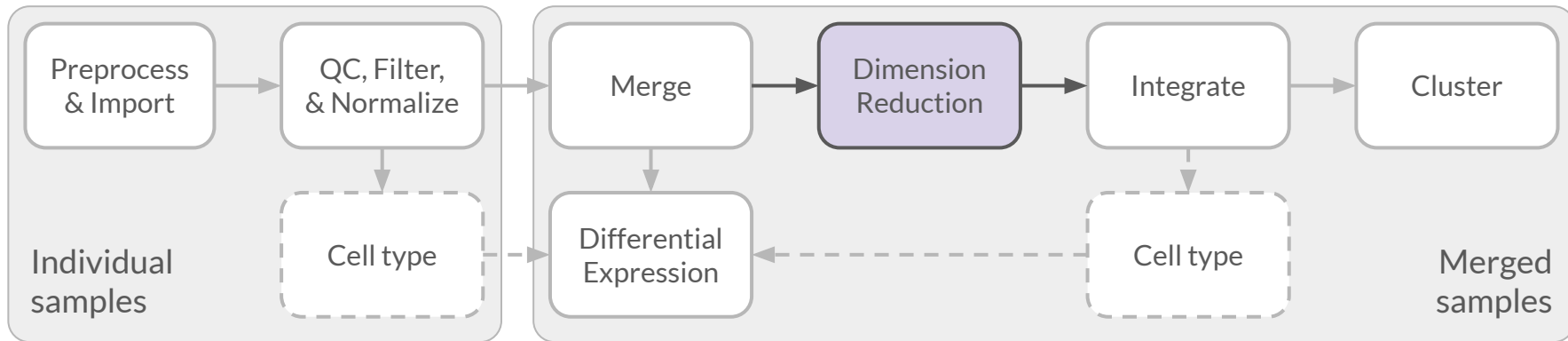
# Per-cell data: Each row is a cell

Merging the colData

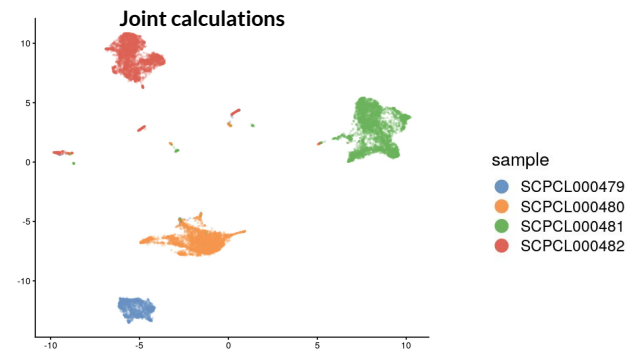
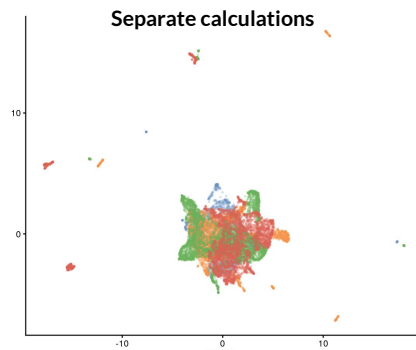


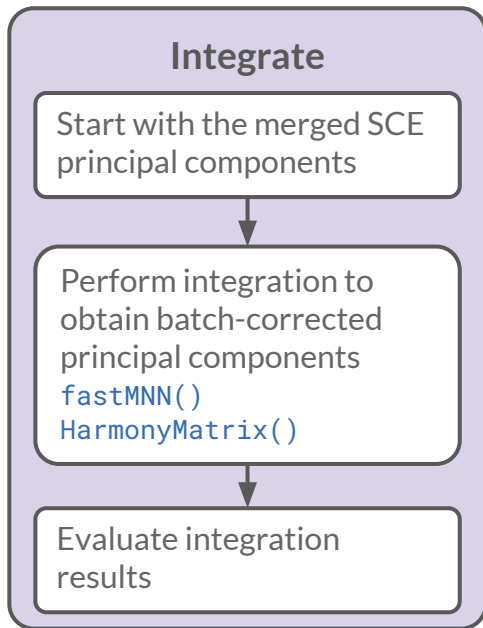
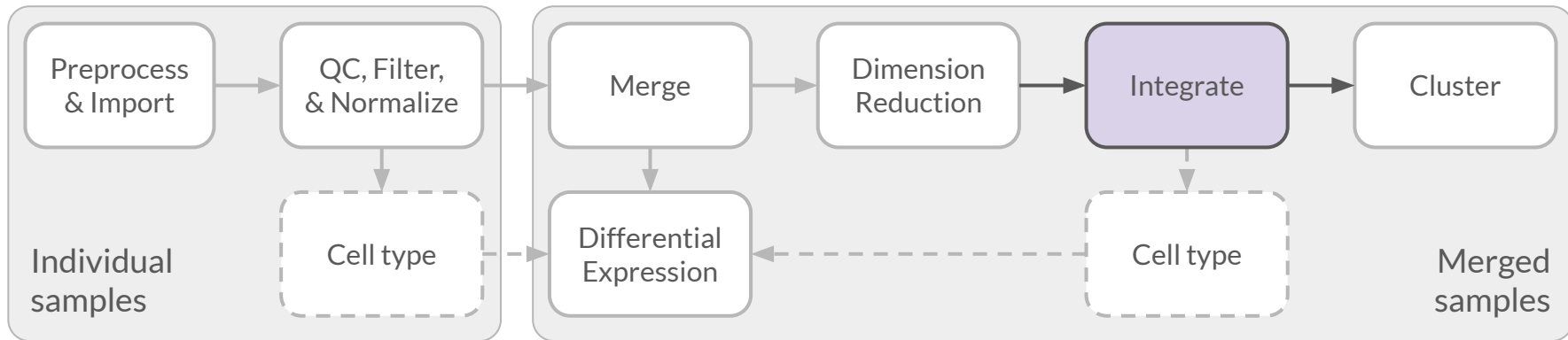
Merging the reduced dimensions (e.g. PCA)





- Dimension reduction techniques like PCA and UMAP start by scaling data to be centered at 0.
- Let's say we have four SCE objects. We could perform PCA/UMAP...
  - Separately on each SCE
  - Jointly on all SCEs





- We can evaluate results by...
  - Comparing before/after UMAPs
  - Calculating metrics that tell us how well cells and batches mix
- If integration is successful, we should see...
  - Batches are well-mixed across the UMAP
  - Cell types (or similar, if known) group together separately
  - Metrics show that batches are more mixed after integration, and/or cell types are less mixed after integration
  - Remember: Success depends on overlap among batches

# Let's have a closer look at methods we'll be using

- **MNN: Mutual nearest neighbors**

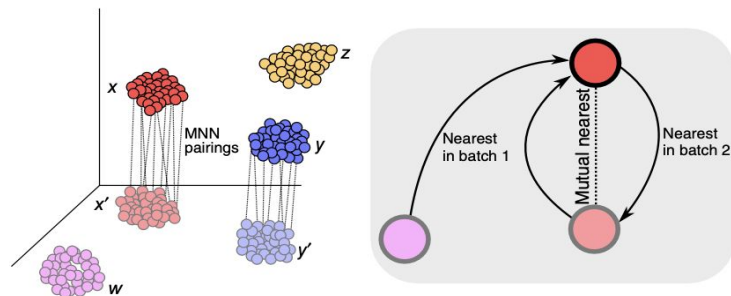
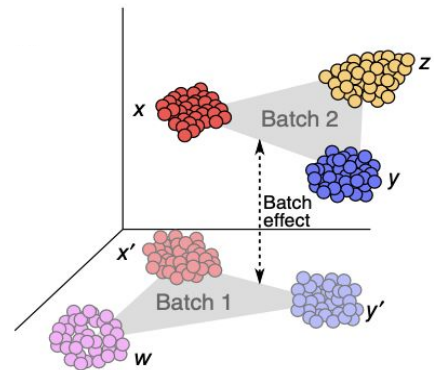
- Specifically, we'll use FastMNN 🚀
- Haghverdi, L, Lun, A, Morgan, M, et al. *Batch effects in single-cell RNA-sequencing data are corrected by matching mutual nearest neighbors.* (2018) <https://doi.org/10.1038/nbt.4091>

- **Harmony**

- Korsunsky, I, Millard, N, Fan, J, et al. *Fast, sensitive and accurate integration of single-cell data with Harmony.* (2019) <https://doi.org/10.1038/s41592-019-0619-0>

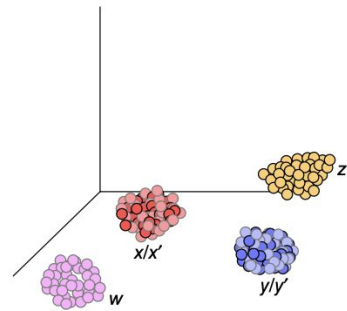
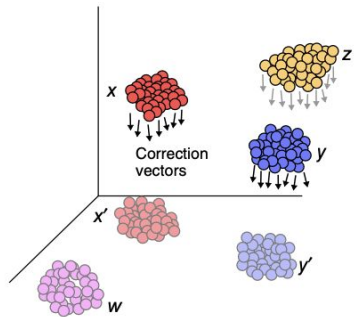
# Mutual nearest neighbors batch correction

- Imagine we have 2 batches, each with 3 cell types
  - Red and blue are shared but yellow and pink are not!
  - Before beginning integration, cosine distances are first calculated among pairs of cells *within each sample*
  - This enables expression profile comparisons and sets up the data for integration
- First, we identify pairs of cells with mutually similar expression profiles
  - These are our "mutual nearest neighbors"



# Mutual nearest neighbors batch correction

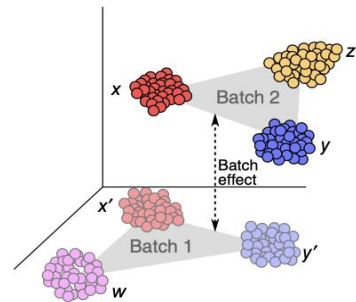
- Next, compute a batch correction vector for each MNN pair
- Finally, calculate the weighted average of these vectors to get cell-specific batch corrections to perform the final integration
  - Note that **w** and **z** don't "look" as "integrated"! Why?





# Some assumptions that MNN makes

- At least one cell population is present in both batches
- The batch effect is almost orthogonal to the biological effects
  - Roughly means, batches and biology are expected to have *separate variation*



- The batch-effect variation is much smaller than the biological-effect variation across cell types

# Harmony batch correction

- "Soft k-means clustering algorithm"

