

Supplementary Section 4. Creating a BIA workflow and adding it to a local instance

The procedure to package a workflow and add it to a BIAFLOWS instance is described in details in this section. Users willing to get help can contact biaflows@neubias.org.

Sample workflows running in FIJI, ICY, CellProfiler, ilastik, Vaa3D, Python and Jupyter notebooks can be found in this GitHub repository: <https://github.com/neubias-wg5>.

Requirements

All image analysis workflows in BIAFLOWS must:

- Run headless from command line
- Take an input folder holding TIFF (or OME-TIFF) images (2D) or single file OME-TIFF images (C,Z,T). Note: currently the viewer is limited to 8-bit images
- Expose functional parameters and parse them from the command line call
- Export results to an output folder (path parsed from command line call), the format of the results depends on problem class (see section 5)

The workflow and its software execution environment are fully defined from a set of 4 files (hosted in a BIAFLOWS instance authorized GitHub repository):

- A Docker recipe (Dockerfile) configuring the software execution environment (required OS / libraries / software). All necessary software dependencies must be specified (plugins, libraries to install, etc.)
- The workflow executable or, more commonly, a script running on a BIA platform callable from command line. So far these scripts were tested: ImageJ macros, ICY protocols, CellProfiler pipelines, ilastik pipelines, Vaa3D plugins, Python 2.X or 3.X code
- A Python wrapper script (wrapper.py), this is the Docker entry point and it sequences all operations. The steps performed by a typical BIAFLOWS wrapper are described in figure S4.1
- A JSON descriptor (descriptor.json) specifying the workflow functional parameters. This file also holds the URL and credentials to communicate with a specific BIAFLOWS instance. Commonly only the parameters should be adapted to a new workflow but a complete reference for this descriptor can be found [online](#).

Note: Since they are automatically parsed, workflow repositories can be identified by name starting by a fixed prefix which is chosen by the trusted source owner (e.g. **W_** for the online instance of BIAFLOWS). See section 3 for details. To seamlessly integrate new workflows, the name of the software in the trusted source repository (without the prefix) should be the same than the name of the software in the JSON descriptor.

Phase	Actions	Notes
Initialization*	Connect to BIAFLOWS Retrieve Problem Class Retrieve job parameters	
Prepare_data*	Create empty in_folder, out_folder, gt_folder, tmp_folder Download all images without _lbl suffix to in_folder Download all images with _lbl suffix to gt_folder Download all image file attachments to gt_folder	Folders are created in user home folder (gt = ground truth). File names: annotation files must have the same name as input images + <i>_attached</i>
Workflow call	Call workflow from command line and passing in_folder, out_folder and parameters	The images from in_folder are sequentially processed, the results are stored in out_folder
Upload_data*	Parse images from out_folder (typically binary masks) and for each image/slice create annotations (polygon or point) and export them to BIAFLOWS	(1) Plain objects: extract connected particles (2D/3D) from mask, create polygon contours (slice by slice) and set contour ID (color LUT) to mask object ID (2) Points: Find non null pixels/voxels. Create point annotation at this position (3) Skeletons: Project mask (fully or by block), dilate, find contour around skeleton
Upload_metrics*	For each input file: call ComputeMetrics passing pairs of out_file(s) / gt_file(s), problem class (string) and optional metric parameters. Export metrics keys/values to benchmark database	gt_file: same name as out_file If an attached file is expected (e.g. division text file), it is assumed at the same location as out_file / gt_file and with the same name as the image + <i>_attached</i>

Note: *can be skipped (depends on the flags passed to workflow container). For instance, for the local processing (no BIAFLOWS server) all steps are skipped while for a local BIAFLOWS instance upload_metrics may be skipped if the images to be processed are not annotated.

Figure S4.1. Typical steps of a BIAFLOWS wrapper script

Installing software required for development (only once)

As workflows run inside a Docker container and interact with a BIAFLOWS instance, it is required to install Docker and Python 3 on your local machine. Cytomine Python client is also required for some development operations.

Docker installation instructions can be found here:

For Linux:

<https://www.digitalocean.com/community/tutorials/how-to-install-and-use-docker-on-ubuntu-18-04>

For Windows:

<https://docs.docker.com/docker-for-windows/install/#install-docker-for-windows-desktop-app>

Python 3 and Cytomine Python client instructions can be found here:

See <https://doc.uliege.cytomine.org/display/ALGODOC/Data+access+using+Python+client>

Development Guide

In the following steps, we will use the workflow “NucleiSegmentation-ImageJ” as example:

https://github.com/Neubias-WG5/W_NucleiSegmentation-ImageJ

Step 1. Uploading a new workflow descriptor to BIAFLOWS

Workflows have first to be described through a JSON descriptor, e.g.:

https://github.com/Neubias-WG5/W_NucleiSegmentation-ImageJ/blob/master/descriptor.json

Currently, some sections have to be customized manually, and some conventions must be respected to allow automatic parsing by BIAFLOWS. We recommend using https://github.com/Neubias-WG5/W_Template/blob/master/descriptor.json as template for your JSON descriptor.

Note: Choose a workflow name without space.

The description field (supporting restricted HTML) should be filled to document the workflow and it will be displayed from BIAFLOWS UI.

As inputs (workflow parameters), the five parameters (cytomine_host, cytomine_public_key, cytomine_private_key, cytomine_id_project, cytomine_id_software) are mandatory.

The workflow parameters should also be described:

- id: the parameter name (e.g : “ij_radius”)
- value-key: a reference for the parameter in the command line. Keep “@ID”, which is a shorthand meaning “replace by the parameter id, in uppercase”. In our example, it will be replaced at parsing time by “IJ_RADIUS”

- command-line-flag: At execution time, the value-key in the command line will be replaced by the command-line-flag followed by the parameter value. Keep "--@id". In our example, it will be replaced in the command line by "--ij_radius".
- name: a human name displayed in BIAFLOWS
- type: Number, String, Boolean
- optional: set to true only if the workflow execution is not influenced by the presence or the absence of the parameter (e.g a "verbose" parameter). Workflow parameters having an influence on the results **should never be optional**.
- default-value: the default value of the parameter (in BIAFLOWS interface).

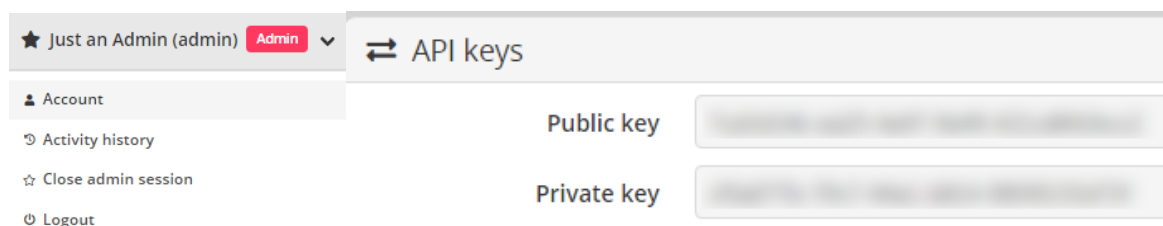
Do not forget to update the command line, with the parameter value keys. For instance, for workflow parameters ij_radius and ij_threshold:

```
python wrapper.py CYTOMINE_HOST CYTOMINE_PUBLIC_KEY CYTOMINE_PRIVATE_KEY
CYTOMINE_ID_PROJECT CYTOMINE_ID_SOFTWARE IJ_RADIUS IJ_THRESHOLD
```

To make a workflow available from a BIAFLOWS instance, it is currently required to publish its descriptor using Cytomine Python client. This can be performed by running the following Python code inside the folder holding the JSON descriptor you have created:

```
from cytomine import Cytomine
from cytomine.utilities.descriptor_reader import read_descriptor
with Cytomine(host, public_key, private_key) as c:
    read_descriptor("descriptor.json")
```

host is the url of your BIAFLOWS server, e.g. <https://biaflows.neubias.org>
public_key and *private_key* can be found from user Account page (section API KEYS)



Step 2. Linking a new workflow to a BIAFLOWS project

- From *Problems*, select the problem to which you want to add the workflow
- Go to *Problems > Configuration > Workflows* and enable the workflow

For now, as it has been added manually, it will be referenced as **Not runnable** and will not provide version information from the UI.

General

Members

Custom UI

Workflows

Im

NucleiSegmentation

x

Name

Version

Runnable

Status

NucleiSegmentation-ilastik (v1.2.0)

Last release

✓ Yes

Enabled

NucleiSegmentation-MaskRCNN (v1.4.1)

Last release

✓ Yes

Enabled

NucleiSegmentation-ImageJ (v1.12.0)

Last release

✓ Yes

Enabled

Next, Go to *Projects > Configuration* and make sure that Jobs tab is activated (green)

Step 3. Creating the Dockerfile

Docker files specify the execution environment. They typically start by creating (FROM) a layer from an existing Docker image with basic operating system. Then they execute commands (RUN) to install specific software and libraries, and copy (ADD) files (e.g. the Python wrapper script and workflow script) into the execution environment the workflow will be called from. Finally, the ENTRYPOINT is set to the wrapper script.

A sample DockerFile can be found here:

https://github.com/Neubias-WG5/W_NucleiSegmentation-ImageJ/blob/master/Dockerfile

If you do not know how to configure the Dockerfile, it is recommended to adapt the Dockerfile from an existing BIAFLOWS workflow using the same target software (e.g. an ImageJ macro).

Note: If you create a Dockerfile from scratch, always use the most accurate tag when referring to an existing Docker image (e.g. prefer python:3.6.9-stretch over python:3.6). If the tag is not accurate, the underlying docker image could change over time, heavily impairing reproducibility!

Step 4. Creating the wrapper script

It is recommended to adapt a wrapper script: 1) from same problem class, 2) processing image of same dimensionality (e.g. 3D), and 3) matching the software you are planning to use (e.g. ImageJ macro). In this case, only the workflow call (command line) needs to be adapted. A sample wrapper script is available here:

https://github.com/Neubias-WG5/W_NucleiSegmentation-ImageJ/blob/master/wrapper.py

Step 5. Building the workflow image, running it in a local container and debugging

A new workflow can be directly pushed to GitHub and be built in DockerHub, but it is preferable to test it locally beforehand. For this, it is required to build and run the Docker image locally:

Building the container (you need at least around 5GB disk space for this operation)

From a directory where you gathered the 4 files required to describe the workflow:

```
cd ~/Documents/Code/NEUBIAS/W_NucleiSegmentation-ImageJ$  
sudo docker build -t seg2d .
```

Here `seg2d` is the name of the Docker image to build locally.

Running the container

```
sudo docker run -it seg2d --host host --public_key public_key --  
private_key private_key --software_id software_id --project_id project_id  
--ij_threshold 15 --ij_radius 4
```

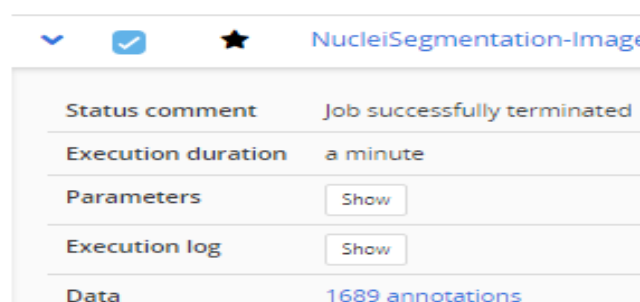
The list of command-line parameters should exactly match the parameters defined in the JSON descriptor file. BIAFLOWS instance URL and credentials should also be filled, as well as valid **workflow_id** (using **--software_id**) and **problem_id** (using **--project_id**).

These IDs can be retrieved from the URL bar while respectively clicking on a problem (from BIAFLOWS **Problems** tab) and on a workflow (from BIAFLOWS **Workflows** tab):


The image shows two browser address bars. The first one contains the URL `biaflows.neubias.org//#/project/5955/images` and the second one contains `biaflows.neubias.org//#/software/23771763`.

In this example, `workflow_id=23771763` and `problem_id=5955`.

If a workflow fails at execution this is reported in **Workflow runs** section. Some **Execution log** can be downloaded by expanding a workflow run from the blue arrow:



▼ ✓ ★ NucleiSegmentation-ImageJ	
Status comment	Job successfully terminated
Execution duration	a minute
Parameters	Show
Execution log	Show
Data	1689 annotations

In that case, no associated benchmark metric is associated to this run. There is hence no risk that this would be left unnoticed by the user. For debugging, Docker can be run with an interactive session:

```
sudo docker run --entrypoint bash -it seg2d
```

If needed, it is also possible to launch the Docker with X enabled, e.g. to debug imageJ macro more easily:

```
xhost + sudo docker run --entrypoint bash -v  
/home/yourusername/tmp/test:/data -e DISPLAY=$DISPLAY -v /tmp/.X11-  
unix:/tmp/.X11-unix -it seg2d
```

If you want to access local images without having to download them each time from BIAFLOWS, you can also attach a local folder to a folder inside the Docker container (-v option), for instance:

```
sudo docker run --entrypoint bash -v /home/yourusername/tmp/test:/data -  
it seg2d
```

Some other useful Docker commands

Check if an image is running:	<code>ps -a</code>
Kill a running container:	<code>sudo docker rm 65e88b2015df</code>
Kill all running containers:	<code>sudo docker rm \$(sudo docker ps -a -q)</code>
Download a specific container	<code>sudo docker pull neubiaswg5/fiji-base:latest</code>

Note: To download a recently updated workflow image, it is necessary to first remove older versions manually.

Step 6. Publishing a workflow with version control

Once your workflow is running properly, you can officially publish it with version control.

To allow automatic import to BIAFLOWS, the set of files previously described should be stored in a GitHub repository (linked to DockerHub) from an account trusted by the target BIAFLOWS instance.

The Github repository name **must be given by:**

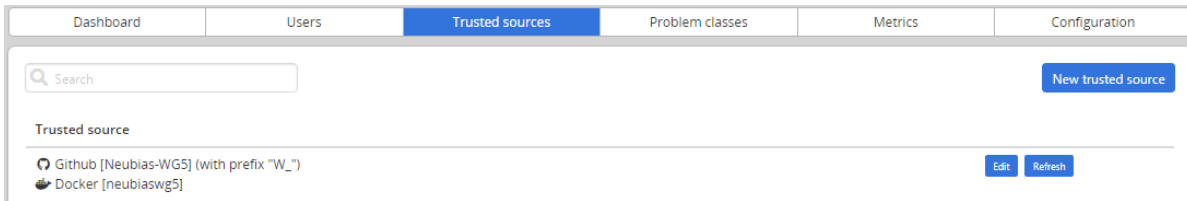
Github repo name = {prefix}{workflow_name}

where

- {prefix} is an optional prefix for the trusted source (see Section 3)
- {workflow_name} is the name of the workflow as given in the “name” field in the JSON descriptor (see Step 1).

For instance, for a trusted source with a prefix **W_**: **W_NucleiSegmentation-ImageJ**.

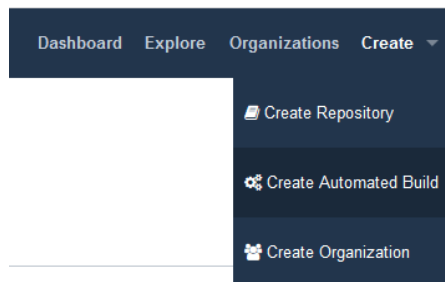
Adding/editing trusted sources is performed from Admin / Trusted sources (see Supplementary Section 3):



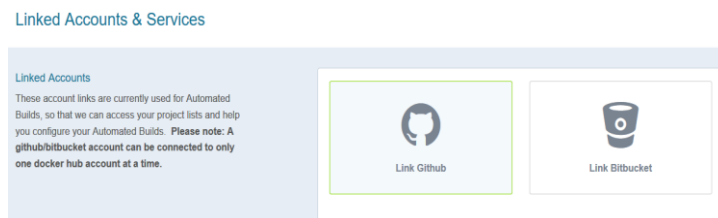
Step 7. Linking a GitHub repository to DockerHub (only once)

We assume that you created a trusted GitHub organization (e.g. **neubias-wg5**) and a workflow repository holding the 4 workflows files. It is now required to link DockerHub to GitHub. Fortunately, this operation has to be performed only once for a given GitHub organization:

1. Create an account on DockerHub : <https://hub.docker.com/> and login
2. Create an automatic build by linking Docker account to GitHub organization account
3. In DockerHub website, click on Create > Create Automated Build



4. In **Linked Accounts**, click on **Link Github**



5. Click **Select**
6. Ensure that Organization access (e.g. **Neubias-WG5**) is selected (green check mark) and click on **Authorize docker**
7. Enter your GitHub password to enable access

Step 8. Associating a new workflow repository to DockerHub

Once your Github organization account and DockerHub are linked, it is possible to create an automated build procedure for each workflow. This procedure will build a workflow Docker image each time a new release is triggered from a GitHub workflow repository. This image is automatically downloaded by the BIAFLOWS instance and the new workflow version will be available for the target problem.

To do so, from DockerHub:

1. Click on Create > Create Repository+
2. In build settings click on GitHub icon
3. Select organization (e.g. **neubiaswg5**) and workflow Github repository (e.g. **W_NucleiSegmentation-ImageJ**) at the bottom of the page
4. Choose the Docker registry repository name. In practice, keep the same as Github repository (DockerHub will convert uppercase letters into lowercase).
5. Enter a short description (less than 100 characters) and click **Create**
6. Click on *Click here to customize the build settings* and configure as in figure below
7. Click on Save



The DockerHub repository name must be reflected in the JSON descriptor:

```
image = {dockerhub_organization}/{github_repo_name.toLowerCase()}
```

For example, in the JSON descriptor:

```
container-image:
{
    image: "neubiaswg5/w_nucleisegmentation-imagej",
    type: "singularity"
},
```

Step 9. Creating a versioned release on GitHub

To create versioned releases of the workflow, go to GitHub and draft a new release (see <https://goo.gl/bFz66N>). This will add a new tag to the last commit. As we configured automatic build in previous step, a new Docker image will be built and published with the same tag. BIAFLOWS instances trusting this Github/Docker Hub repository will automatically retrieve and make this new version available from the UI (possibly after up to 15 minutes).