

Getting help in statistics

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Getting expertise

A guide for the lonely bioinformatician

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This may be a uniquely UK centric blog post but I suspect not. Let me start with a brief story. Sat with a coffee in our canteen a few weeks ago, I overheard a conversation between a few PIs about a grant application. “Don’t worry”, the lead PI said, “we’ve put money on the application to fund a bioinformatician”. Good planning I hear you say, and I agree; however, note that none of the PIs in that discussion were themselves bioinformaticians; none of them can code; put them in front of a Linux terminal and they wouldn’t know what to do.

Yes – we were witnessing the birth of yet another “**pet bioinformatician**”. What I mean by this term is a single bioinformatician employed within laboratory based group. These guys are becoming more and more common in UK academic groups, and it concerns me because it is possible they will become isolated and pick up bad practices as they don’t have a senior bioinformatician to guide them. It also concerns me that their career and professional development might suffer.

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Collaboration

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