My name is Jip de Kok, I have graduated from Maastricht University, the faculty of Science and Engineering resulting in a degree of Bachelor of Science in Liberal Arts and Sciences from the Maastricht Science Programme. During my academic career I have studied scientific programming, where I have mainly applied my programming knowledge in a biological context. One example is automated data extrapolation, processing and visualisation using HTML and JavaScript with the Openphacts API. In this application, biological data about a specific disease and a predefined disease-specific drug is extrapolated from various databases. These targets are then compared to identify overlapping targets between a disease and its drug. Finally, these targets are then visualised as a force-directed graph using the D3.js library. All in all, my main focus has been on software development and molecular biology.

Biology has always interested me, the high complexity and interconnectivity of the countless molecular pathways composing our body and keeping it in balance is fascinating to study and a great challenge to mathematically reproduce. During my study at the Maastricht Science Programme I have taken multiple courses regarding cell- and molecular biology. Additionally, I have applied this knowledge in practice in the labs of the Brightlands campus at Chemelot. As I had laid my foundation of biological knowledge, I saw the opportunity to combine my interest in biology with my passion of computer science. Hence, I started taking programming and maths courses in which I could frequently apply my biological knowledge.

Already at elementary school I was interested in computers, and then I don’t just mean video games. I was always trying to tweak my slow bulky laptop into a somewhat-less-slow laptop with a gorgeous third-party user interface. Indubitably, I usually ended up bricking my system, forcing me to completely wipe and reinstall my windows partition. However, I think this where my passion and knowledge about computers originated from. After, exploring many Linux distro’s and upgrading my laptop’s RAM I soon realised I had pushed my laptop to its absolute limits and I started saving up for a high-end pc. With this increase in performance, new hobbies arose. I started programming and modelling 3D objects. These hobbies have persisted until today and I have used and improved these skillsets during my academic career. 3D modelling came in handy for various visualisations that I have made during my academic career and programming allowed me to do a variety of complex data analysis tasks and also for visualisations of complex data as I always find it satisfying to have a visual end product. Currently, I have a wide variety of computer skillsets and would like to start specifying in a more specific field in which I can excel.

That’s enough about my academic background, here I’ll briefly talk about myself personally. Besides my passion for computers I love to go outside hiking, skiing, mountain-biking or any other sport really, as long as it’s not ice skating. From my 16th I have been a boy scout leader, where I lead a group of boys in the age range of 7-11. Moreover, I play Spanish guitar which comes in handy to play some campfire songs during summer camp, although I prefer to play some more classical music when not around the campfire. <p class=”sarcasticUndertone”> Last but not least, I like to go out with friends in my pursuit of happiness. </p>