

The Node: a place to discuss, debate and deliberate developmental biology

Development is excited to announce the launch of a new community website for all biologists interested in developmental biology, called the Node: a place where the developmental biology community can discuss, debate and deliberate issues relevant to developmental biology and to other research fields that this community's work informs and touches upon.

In 2009, to assist with the recruitment of our new Editor in Chief, Olivier Pourquié, *Development* asked many of you in the developmental biology community for your feedback on the journal and whether there was anything about it you would change.

Your response?

Amongst other things, you told us that we needed to improve our website. And we did. In January 2010, we launched *Development's* new-look website at dev.biologists.org, featuring a new design, new navigation tools and functionality, and new online-only features. But there was also a consensus amongst the community that you wanted your community journal, *Development*, to be just that: an online place where you could interact, gossip, write about what was going on in your world and share news about jobs, research advances and events; somewhere that would be a community-based, one-stop shop for developmental biologists.

Our answer? The Node

The Node (thenode.biologists.com) is a new not-for-profit community website for developmental biologists, which is being launched by *Development*. At its helm is Eva Amsen, *Development's* Online Editor and the Node's Community Manager, who is an active science blogger and writer with a track record in community building, and at its heart is a blog that will be open to the community. All that community members need to do to participate on the Node is to register, be approved by Eva and you are then free to post your news on the site. In addition, anyone can leave comments on any of the posts. We will be posting too: news about top research published in *Development* and in other community journals; deadlines and updates for conferences and funding programmes; reports from conferences we are attending; interviews with our Editors and authors; as well as other posts of general relevance and interest to the community. Sometimes we will invite specific people to contribute something on a particular topic, but we do want everyone in the community to feel free to sign up and contribute something spontaneously. Nobody knows better what is going on in the world of developmental biology than the people actively doing the research, so we're happy to give you a

chance to address your colleagues directly by signing up for the Node and posting your news and events.

So will you participate?

This is the million-dollar question because the Node will only flourish and grow if you, the community, participate. The Node is entirely funded by *Development's* not-for-profit publisher, The Company of Biologists, as a service to the community, but we're inviting all of you to contribute content. There are already many interesting posts on the Node, which we encourage you to go and browse. This is because some of the community have been kindly helping us to road test and develop the site over the past few months and have also written some great posts for the site's launch. For example, you can find tips for blogging from conferences, learn about some useful online science communication tools, read updates of some hot new papers in the field, catch up on presentations at the British Society for Developmental Biology conference and find out about how two of *Development's* travelling fellowship recipients are faring in their host labs in Germany and India.

To keep up with what's new on the Node, you can bookmark the site, subscribe to the RSS feed, follow us on Twitter (http://www.twitter.com/the_Node) or look at the regularly updated highlights from the Node featured on *Development's* homepage.

We hope and believe that you will grow to like the Node. You can think of the Node as a coffee break, and use it to catch up with other scientists, to find out what's new in the field. When you're done, you can get right back to work by using the links in the Node's sidebars to navigate to recent papers, your favourite databases and community journals, or find out more about upcoming conferences. We've already received some great feedback on the Node: when we demonstrated it to the community at the recent British Society for Developmental Biology conference in March, the community's response was overwhelmingly positive, with several of you asking 'why hasn't this been done before?!', which we took to be a good sign.

The Node is your community website, not ours, so please sign up, join in and enjoy. And if you like it, tell your colleagues and collaborators. And most of all, share your thoughts and feedback with us at the Node.

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