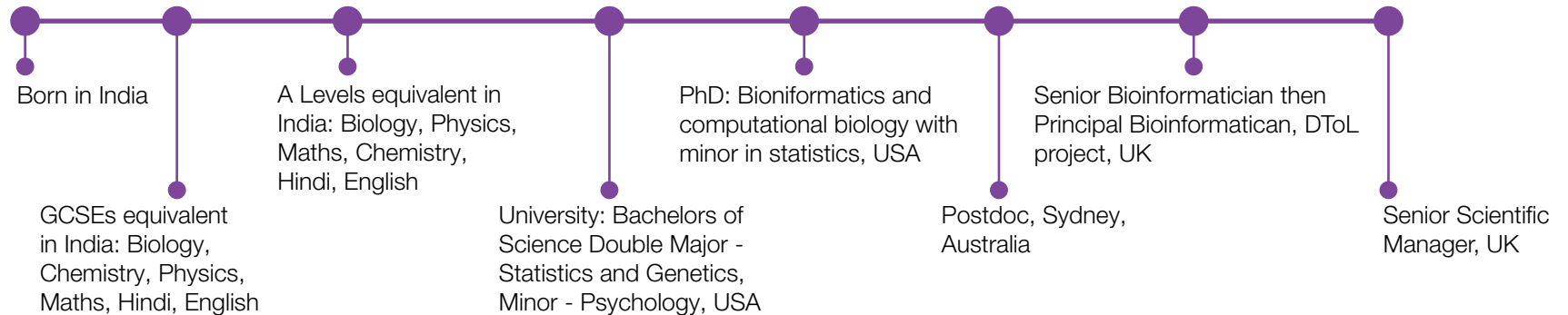# Career profile
Priyanka

Name:
Priyanka Surana

Job title:
Senior Scientific Manager

What do I do:
A senior scientific manager is someone who leads large projects. I lead the BioDev network to bring in new skills and perspectives into the organisation, build our technology communities and mentorship programmes in Asia, Africa and South America, as well as horizon scanning emerging technologies such as AI.

My career highlights

Born in India

GCSEs equivalent in India: Biology, Chemistry, Physics, Maths, Hindi, English

A Levels equivalent in India: Biology, Physics, Maths, Chemistry, Hindi, English

University: Bachelors of Science Double Major - Statistics and Genetics, Minor - Psychology, USA

PhD: Bioniformatics and computational biology with minor in statistics, USA

Postdoc, Sydney, Australia

Senior Bioinformatician then Principal Bioinformatican, DToL project, UK

Senior Scientific Manager, UK

What do I enjoy most about my job?
The reason I picked this job is that it gets me closer to making impacts. I get to design projects for those in their early careers and when you get an email saying that I helped them to learn a new skill or improved their CV which helped them to get a job or PhD position, it's just so fulfilling. It's the impact you can make on the lives of other people which is the great thing about the job.

What parts of my job are challenging?
When you are a computational biologist or bioinformatician you spend most of your day alone with your laptop, solving problems, coding, you're not a social butterfly unlike some other jobs. In my current job, communication is a key skill, I spend a lot of time in meetings and I have to adapt to the different personalities in every room, every project and that is something I am still learning.

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Skills I use in my job :

Communication
I communicate regularly with external partners and internal staff, providing clear updates and guidance on programme activities as well as representing the network at conferences.

Teamwork
I collaborate with external partners and internal experts to leverage different perspectives and specialised knowledge. I encourage a spirit of cooperation amongst all involved parties.

Problem solving
I address challenges such as budget constraints, evolving research priorities, or competing demands on time and resources keeping the programme on track.

Organisation
I manage meetings, workshops, and training sessions, ensuring that each event runs smoothly and meets the objectives set.

My top tips for students wanting a career in genomics:

- Try as many things as you can! Don't just figure out what you do like but also what you don't like. This was the advice one of my mentors at university told me and I think it's some of the best advice I've had.

- For those looking at computational careers, start learning code. Pick the most popular language at the moment and you can't go wrong. Find as many projects that are out there, it doesn't matter where you start but this will really help with your CV and future university or job applications.

What hobbies do I have?
I read a lot and I love walking in nature, I can just get lost for 3 or 4 hours and lose track of time. I also really like listening to music from different cultures. I'd say I also spend a lot of the time thinking about food, thinking of ways to try all the different cuisines!

For more information on careers in genomics, email: engage@wellcomeconnectingscience.org