RNASeqGUI

User Manual*

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Contents

1 Introduction

1.1 Overview of RNASeqGUI R package

This manual describes *RNASeqGUI R package* that is a graphical user interface for the identification of differentially expressed genes from RNA-Seq experiments.
R (`http://cran.r-project.org/`) is an open source object oriented language for statistical computing and graphics. RNASeqGUI package includes several well known RNA-Seq tools, available as command line in `www.bioconductor.org`.
RNASeqGUI main interface is divided into five sections. Each section is dedicated to a particular step of the data analysis process. The first section covers the exploration of the `bam` files. The second concerns the counting process of the mapped reads against a gene annotation file (GTF). The third focuses on the exploration of count-data and on data preprocessing, including the normalization procedures. The fourth is about the identification of the differentially expressed genes that can be performed by several methods, such as: DESeq, DESeq2, EdgeR, NOISeq, BaySeq. Finally, the fifth section regards the inspection of the results produced by these methods and the quantitative comparison among them.

1.2 Other GUIs for RNASeq data analysis

This package was implemented following and expanding the idea presented in [Villa-Vialaneix *et al.*, 2013] and in `http://tuxette.nathalievilla.org/?p=866&lang=en`.
The idea of RNASeqGUI is similar to that one presented in [Wettenhall *et al.*, 2004, Sanges *et al.*, 2007, Lohse *et al.*, 2012, Pramana *et al.*, 2013, Wettenhall *et al.*, 2006, Angelini *et al.*, 2008] with specific attention on RNA-Seq data analysis. Moreover, RNASeqGUI is designed to facilitate RNA-seq work-flow analysis (via its organization in several different sections and interfaces and via the inclusions of numerous concise and clear vignettes) and also to facilitate the extensibility of the GUI (via its software development organization that facilitate the task of expanding and redesign its interfaces). In fact, it is extremely easy to add new buttons that calls new functionalities. Therefore, a user can customize RNASeqGUI interfaces for his own purposes and benefits by adding the methods he needs mostly (for more details see **Section 7 How to customize RNASeqGUI: Adding a new button in just three steps**).
Hence, we think that RNASeqGUI represents a useful and valid alternative to other existing GUIs.

1.3 Scope and availability

RNASeqGUI is an R package designed for the identification of differentially expressed genes across multiple biological conditions. This software is not just a collection of some known methods and functions, but it is designed to guide the user during the entire analysis process. Moreover, the GUI is also helpful for those who are expert R-users since it speeds up the usage of the included RNA-Seq methods drastically. Current implementation allows to handle the simple experimental design where the interest is on the experimental condition, future work will cover complex designs.

RNASeqGUI is available at `www.bioconductor.org`

2 RGTK2 installation guide

RNASeqGUI package requires the RGTK2 graphical library [Lawrence *et al.*, 2010] to run. The installation process consists in two steps. The first depends on the operating system (devoted to installation the GTK+ 2.0, an open-source GUI tool written in C). The second regards the required R packages.

2.1 For Linux users

We tested RNASeqGUI on Ubuntu 12.04 (precise) 64-bit, Kernel Linux 3.2.0-37-generic, GNOME 3.4.2.

1 - Open a terminal and type:

```
sudo apt-get update

sudo apt-get install libgtk2.0-dev
```

2 - Type:

```
sudo apt-get install libcurl4-gnutls-dev
```

3 - Type:

```
sudo apt-get install libxml2-dev
```

4 - Then, go to Section **3**.

2.2 For Mac OS users

1 - Install `Xcode` developer tools (at least version 5.0.1) from Apple Store (it is free).

2 - Install `XQuartz-2.7.5.dmg` from `http://xquartz.macosforge.org/landing/`

3 - Install `GTK_2.24.17_X11.pkg` from `http://r.research.att.com` .

4 - Then, go to Section **3**.

2.3 For Windows users

1 - download `gtk+-bundle_2.22.1-20101229_win64.zip` from
`http://ftp.gnome.org/pub/gnome/binaries/win64/gtk+/2.22/` .

2 - This is a bundle containing the GTK+ stack and its dependencies for Windows. To use it, create some empty folder like $C:\backslash opt\backslash gtk$.

3 - Unzip this bundle.

4 - Now, you have to add the bin folder to your `PATH` variable. Make sure you have no other versions of `GTK+` in `PATH` variable. To do this, execute the following instructions: Open `Control Panel`, click on `System and Security`, click on `System`, click on `Advanced System Settings`, click on `Environment Variables`. In the `Environment Variables` window you will notice two columns `User variables` for a user name and `System variables`. Change the `PATH` variable in the `System variables` to be $C:\backslash opt\backslash gtk\backslash bin$.

5 - Then, go to Section 3.

3 RNASeqGUI installation

1 - Install R version 3.1.0 (2014-04-10) "Spring Dance" from `http://cran.r-project.org/` according to your operating system.

1 - Open `R`.

2 - Type

```
source("http://bioconductor.org/biocLite.R")
biocLite("RNASeqGUI")
```

4 Quick start

If you have successfully gone through the installation you are ready to use RNASeqGUI, as follows.

1 - Open `R`.

2 - Type

```
library(RNASeqGUI)
```

in the R environment. Wait for the package to be loaded.

3 - Finally, type

```
RNASeqGUI()
```

After that, a dialog window, as that one shown in Figure 1, will appear and you can start interacting with the program.

5 Structure of RNASeqGUI main interface

The RNASeqGUI main interface is divided into five *Sections*, as shown in Figure 1. Each section corresponds to a particular step of the RNA-Seq data analysis work-flow. Each section contains one or more *Graphical Interfaces* that can be called by clinking the corresponding button.
Inside each interface, there is a `How to use this interface` button that displays a vignette to help the user to use the interface and there are several available *functionalities* (also called *functions* or *methods* in the rest of the manual). Each function takes specific inputs that can be numeric ones, strings or both and generate an output that can be a plot, a text file or both.
The sections of RNASeqGUI will be described one by one in the next sections of this manual.

5.1 How to create a new project or select an existing one

To start using RNASeqGUI, you must either create a new project by choosing a name for it (suppose you choose as name `MyProject`) and then clicking on the `Create a New Project` button or select an existing project by typing the name

Figure 1: Sections of RNASeqGUI main interface

and then clicking on the `Select this Project!` button. The two cases are explained below.

1. In the first case, if you are using RNASeqGUI for the first time a directory called **RNASeqGUI_Projects** is created in your current working directory (type `getwd()` in the R environment to know where you are). Inside **RNASeqGUI_Projects** directory, a project folder is created with the name chosen by you (in this case with the name `MyProject`).

   At any moment, you can see or change your working directory with the following R commands, respectively.

   ```
   getwd()
   ```

   ```
   setwd("path/you/want/to/set")
   ```

   The creation of **RNASeqGUI_Projects** directory will only occur the first time you start using RNASeqGUI. Subsequently, when you click the `Create a New Project` button, RNASeqGUI checks whether the **RNASeqGUI_Projects** folder already exists in your working directory. If this folder, was already created then RNASeqGUI does not create a copy of it and all the projects you will create will be stored in it.

   Now, inside **RNASeqGUI_Projects**, you find **MyProjects** directory. Inside this directory, three folders are automatically created, such as: **Logs**,

Figure 2: An example of the file `report.txt` automatically created in **Logs** directory at the creation of MyProject project. Note that the session information is included.

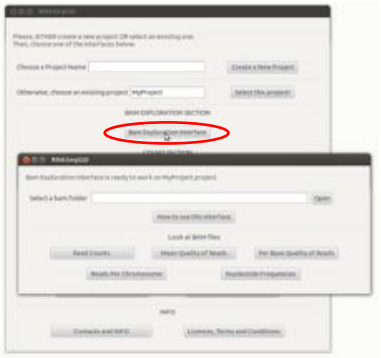

Figure 3: By clicking the **Bam Exploration Interface** button (in the red cycle), the interface to explore bam files will be displayed.

Results, **Plots**.
In the **Logs** folder, a `report.txt` file is created to report all the actions you perform and which parameters you use by performing those actions. A session information that summaries all the versions of the used packages is automatically written in the `report.txt` file (see Figure 2) at the creation of the project and each time you star this project again.

2. In the second case, an existing project is selected, see Figure **??**. RNASeqGUI checks whether the selected name already exists in the **RNASeqGUI _Projects** folder. If no project with the chosen name is found, a message warns the user that the selected project does not exist.
When an existing project is restarted, RNASeqGUI continues to write in the same `report.txt` file created previously.

5.2 Bam Exploration Section

In the first section of the GUI, we find the *Bam Exploration Interface* (see Figure 3) that can be easily called by clicking the corresponding button. In this interface we find five different methods to explore the bam files: **Read Counts, Mean Quality of the Reads, Per Base Quality of Reads, Reads Per Chromosome, Nucleotide Frequencies**. Each of these functions takes a folder name as input. This input folder must contain all the bam files that the user wants to explore. To select the entire bam folder, select just one bam file inside the bam folder you want to use. The entire folder will be loaded. To use this interface you can also click on `How to use this Interface` button and a vignette window will appear on the screen describing the interface usage briefly.

- The **Read Counts** makes use of `barplot` function of the `graphics` package. This function returns an histogram (as the one shown in Figure 26) showing the number of mapped reads in each bam file (stored in the input folder) and a txt (tab-delimited) file summarizing the counts.
- The **Mean Quality of the Reads** makes use of `plotQuality` function of the `EDASeq` package [Risso *et al.*, 2011]. This function returns a plot showing the quality of each base of the reads averaged across all bam files.
- The **Per Base Quality of Reads** makes use of `plotQuality` function of the `EDASeq` package [Risso *et al.*, 2011]. This function returns as many box-plots as the number of bam files stored in the provided input folder. Each box-plot shows the quality of the reads per each base. This function makes use of `bplapply` function of the `BiocParallel` package [Morgan *et al.*, 2014] to parallelize the code in order to reduce the execution time.
- The **Reads Per Chromosome** makes use of `barplot` function of the `graphics` package. This function returns as many histograms as the number of bam files stored in the provided input folder. Each histogram shows the number of reads are present in each chromosome. This function makes use of `bplapply` function of the `BiocParallel` package [Morgan *et al.*, 2014] to parallelize the code in order to reduce the execution time.
- The **Nucleotide Frequencies** makes use of `plotNtFrequency` function of `EDASeq` package [Risso *et al.*, 2011]. This function returns a plot

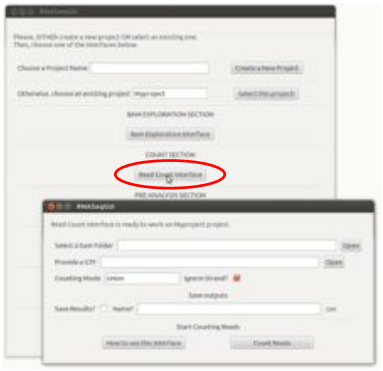

Figure 4: Read Count Interface

showing the percentage of each nucleotide at each position of the reads.

Figures will be stored in folder **Plots**, tables in folder **Results**.

5.3 Count Section

In the second section of the GUI, you find the **Count Reads** functionality that takes four inputs (see Figure 4). The first input must be the name of the folder containing the bam files we want to process. The second input must be an annotation file in *GTF* format (General Transfer Format). The third input specifies the count mode that can be one of the following: `Union`, `IntersectionStrict` and `IntersectionNotEmpty`. The fourth input is `Ignore Strand?` check-box that allows to perform a strand specific counting task or not. The `Count Reads` button calls the function `summarizeOverlaps` from the package GenomicRanges [Lawrence *et al.*, 2013] to obtain gene counts and returns a data-frame, as the one shown in Figure 5. The first column of this data-frame represents the `Gene Id`, while the other columns correspond to the names of the loaded bam files. The other entries report the number of reads that have hit a particular gene for each sample (see `www.bioconductor.org/packages /release/bioc/vignettes/GenomicRanges/inst/doc/summarizeOverlaps.pdf` for more information about the counting modes).

Read counting can be a very computational demanding task, especially for large experiments with several samples and big alignment files. The R environment is not optimized from this point of view. Therefore, the counting task can be problematic on standard PC with limited clock speed and memory space. In this case, it could be beneficial either to process samples independently or to import count tables (in the format specified in

Gene Id	control_1	control_2	treated_1	treated_2
ENSG00000000003	455	463	583	598
ENSG00000000005	0	0	0	1
ENSG00000000419	1174	1210	1545	1533
ENSG00000000457	260	256	305	349
ENSG00000000460	550	607	709	741
.....	.....	.....	.....	.....
.....	.....	.....	.....	.....

Figure 5: An example of a count file with 20062 genes. The row names are given by the Gene Id in the annotation file (gtf), the column names are given by the alignment file names (the bam files)

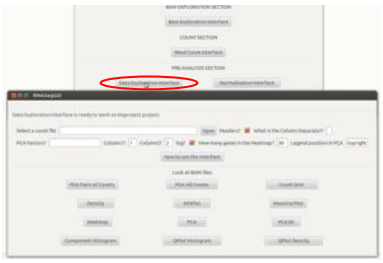

Figure 6: Data Exploration Interface

Figure 5) in RNASeqGUI obtained from other tools, such as HTSeq-count (`www-huber.embl.de/users/anders/HTSeq/`). Therefore, this function makes use of `bplapply` function of the `BiocParallel` package [Morgan *et al.*, 2014] to parallelize the code in order to reduce the execution time.

5.4 Pre-Analysis Section

The third section of the GUI contains two interfaces: *Data Exploration Interface* (see Figure 6) and *Normalization Interface* (see Figure 7). Both interfaces take an input count file that must be tab-delimited and must have the structure shown in Figure 5. The rows represent genes ids and the columns represent the samples.

5.4.1 Data Exploration Interface

In *Data Exploration Interface* there are twelve methods: **Plot Pairs of Counts, Plot all Counts, Count Distr, Density, MDPlot, Mean-VarPlot, Heatmap, PCA, PCA3D, Component Histogram, Qplot Histogram, Qplot Density**.

- The **Plot Pairs of Counts** makes use of `plot` function of the `graphics` package. This function takes a count file as input (in *txt* or *cvs* format) where the rows correspond to the gene ids and the columns correspond to the samples. This function also takes two integers, one specifying `Column1` and the other specifying `Column2` of the count file (see Figure 6) and plots the counts of sample in `Column1` against the counts of sample in `Column2`. Moreover, for this function it is possible to plot either the raw counts or the log of the counts (we add 1 to each number in the count file to avoid the problem of $log(0)$).

- The **Plot all Counts** makes use of `plot` function of the `graphics` package. This function takes a count file as input and produces all possible plots that can be generated by each column in the file against all the other columns. If the input text file has n columns then $n(n-1)$ plots will be produced. An example of this plot is shown in Figure 33. For this function, the `log` check box does not change anything.

- The **Count Distr** makes use of `boxplot` function of the `graphics` package. This function takes a count file as input and generates a box plot showing the distribution of the counts for each column in the file. An example of this plot is shown in Figure 31. Moreover, for this function it is possible to generate the box plot either of the raw counts or the log of the counts (we add 1 to each number in the count file to avoid the problem of $log(0)$).

- The **Density** makes use of `density` function of the `stats` package. This function takes a count file, and a sample specified by an integer in `Column1` as input and produces a curve representing the density function of the counts for the selected sample. The method is available in two modes. By default the log of the counts (we add 1 to each number in the count file to avoid the problem of $log(0)$) will be used to generate the density function. It is possible to uncheck this mode by clicking in the `log?` check-box (see Figure 6).

- The **MDPlot** makes use of `MDplot` function of the `EDASeq` package [Risso *et al.*, 2011]. This function takes a count file and two integers `Column1` and `Column2` and returns a plot showing the mean of the two selected columns against their difference gene by gene. For this function, the `log` check box does not change anything.

- The **MeanVarPlot** makes use of `meanVarPlot` function of the `EDASeq` package [Risso *et al.*, 2011]. This function takes a count file and returns

a plot showing the mean of all columns found in the file against the variance gene by gene. For this function, the `log` check box does not change anything.

- The **Heatmap** makes use of `heatmap` function of the `stats` package. This function takes a count file and an integer `N` in the `How many genes in the Heatmap?` field. The function returns an heat-map of the $\texttt{N}^{th}$ most expressed genes (on average). The columns of the heatmap are the samples, while the rows in the heat-map represent the gene ids of the most expressed ones. An example of heat-map is shown in Figure 35. Moreover, for this function it is possible to generate the heatmap either of the raw counts or the log of the counts (we add 1 to each number in the count file to avoid the problem of $log(0)$).

- The **PCA** makes use of `prcomp` function of the `stats` package. This function takes a count file, a comma separated sequence of strings (e.g.: `a,b,c,d`) indicating what are the labels for the legend, to be specified in the field `Factors` (see Figure 6) and `Legend position in PCA` that can be: topright, bottomright, topleft, bottomleft. The **PCA** function returns the principal component analysis plot between the first two components. An example of PCA plot is shown in Figure 34. For this function, the `log` check box does not change anything.

- The **PCA3D** makes use of `scatterplot3d` function of the `scatterplot3d` package. This function takes the same inputs of the **PCA** function and returns the 3D PCA plot between the first, the second and the third principal component. For this function, the `log` check box does not change anything.

- The **Component Histogram** makes use of `screeplot` function of the `stats` package. This function takes a count file and returns an histogram showing the variance level of each component. For this function, the `log` check box does not change anything.

- The **Qplot Histogram** makes use of `qplot` function of the `ggplot2` package. This function takes a count file and and returns an histogram showing the count level of each column in the count file. Moreover, for this function it is possible to generate the histogram either of the raw counts or the log of the counts (we add 1 to each number in the count file to avoid the problem of $log(0)$).

- The **Qplot Density** makes use of `qplot` function of the `ggplot2` package. This function takes a count file and and returns a plot showing

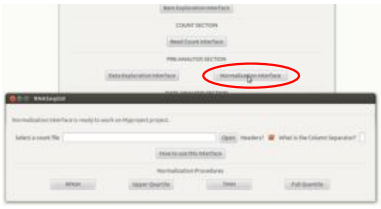

Figure 7: Normalization Interface

the density function of each column in the count file. Moreover, for this function it is possible to generate the density either of the raw counts or the log of the counts (we add 1 to each number in the count file to avoid the problem of $log(0)$).

5.4.2 Normalization Interface

The *Normalization Interface* (see Figure 7) includes four normalization procedures: **RPKM, Upper Quartile, TMM, Full Quantile**.

- **RPKM** makes use of `rpkm` function of the `NOISeq` package [Tarazona *et al.*, 2011]. This function takes a count file as specified in Figure 5 and returns a count file with normalized numbers. This function performs the RPKM [Mortazavi *et al.*, 2008] normalization.
- **Upper Quartile** makes use of `uqua` function of the `NOISeq` package [Tarazona *et al.*, 2011]. This function takes a count file as specified in Figure 5 and returns a count file with normalized numbers. This function performs the Upper Quartile [Bullard *et al.*, 2010] normalization.
- **TMM** makes use of `tmm` function of the `NOISeq` package [Tarazona *et al.*, 2011]. This function takes a count file as specified in Figure 5 and returns a count file with normalized numbers. This function performs the TMM [Robinson *et al.*, 2010] normalization.
- **Full Quantile** makes use of `normalize.quantiles` function of the `preprocessCore` package. This function takes a count file as specified in Figure 5 and returns a count file with normalized numbers. This function performs the Full Quantile [Bolstad *et al.*, 2003, Smyth *et al.*, 2005] normalization.

5.5 Data Analysis Section

This section contains the Data Analysis Interface shown in Figure 8 and represents the core of RNASeqGUI. This interface includes five different sta-

Figure 8: Data Analysis Interface

Figure 9: EdgeR interface

tistical methods to detect differentially gene expression such as: **EdgeR, DESeq, DESeq2, NoiSeq, BaySeq**.

5.5.1 EdgeR

- The **EdgeR** method [Robinson *et al.*, 2007, Robinson *et al.*, 2008, Robinson *et al.*, 2010, McCarthy *et al.*, 2012] (see Figure 9) takes an input count file (as the one shown in Figure 5) via the `Open` button and returns two text files and two plots.

  The first text file shows the overall result obtained by edgeR (see Figure 10), while the second text file extracts the subset of differentially expressed genes only (see Figure 11).

  The output count file is saved with the name specified by the user in the `Name?` field (see Figure 9).
  If no name is specified by the user, then the first output count file is named with the name of the input file plus "`_results_EdgeR.txt`" suffix. The second file is named with the name of the input file plus "`_fdr=0.05_DE_genes_EdgeR.txt`" suffix, where 0.05 is the chosen FDR. Both text files are saved in the **Results** folder.

  The first plot shows the Biological Coefficient of Variation for a given CPM (Count Per Million) and is named with the name of the input file plus "`_Dispersion_EdgeR.pdf`" suffix. The second plot shows the relative similarities of the samples and is named with the name of the

id	logFC	logCPM	PValue	FDR
ENSG..003	0.023	9.181	0.736	1
ENSG..005	2.357	1.058	1	1
ENSG..419	0.072	10.003	0.178	0.571
ENSG..457	-0.043	8.418	0.612	0.966
ENSG..460	-0.0006	9.164	1	1
ENSG..938	2.5e-15	0.888	1	1
ENSG..971	0.078	1.472	1	1
.....	.....	.....	.....	.....
.....	.....	.....	.....	.....

Figure 10: The first text file produced by the EdgeR method. The first column reports the gene ids, `logFC` reports the log of the fold-changes, `logCPM` reports the the log of the counts per million, `PValue` reports the p-values and `FDR` reports the false discovery rates calculated by the Benjamini and Hochberg's algorithm.

id	logFC	logCPM	PValue	FDR
ENSG..3756	-0.151	10.652	0.001	0.035
ENSG..4777	-0.523	8.455	2.6e-10	4.3e-08
ENSG..5961	-0.506	6.340	0.002	0.049
ENSG..6025	-0.577	8.699	2.8e-14	7.1e-12
ENSG..6047	-0.627	6.027	0.001	0.027
ENSG..6118	-0.152	10.456	0.001	0.039
ENSG..6282	-0.418	9.966	1.0e-14	3.3e-12
.....	.....	.....	.....	.....
.....	.....	.....	.....	.....

Figure 11: The EdgeR second text file showing the differentially expressed genes only. Columns are the same as in Figure 10.

Figure 12: DESeq interface

input file plus "_MDS_EdgeR.pdf" suffix. Both plots are saved in the **Plots** folder.

5.5.2 DESeq

- The **DESeq** method [Anders *et al.*, 2010] (see Figure 12) takes an input count file (as the one shown in Figure 5) via the `Open` button and returns two text files and a plot.

  The first text file shows the results of this method (see Figure 13), while the second text file shows the differentially expressed genes only.

  The output count file is saved with the name specified by the user in the `Name?` field (see Figure 12).

  If no name is specified by the user, then the first output count file is named with the name of the input file plus "_results_DESeq.txt" suffix.

  The second file is named with the name of the input file plus "_padj=0.05_DE_genes_DESeq.txt" suffix, where 0.05 is the chosen p-value adjusted.

  Both text files are saved in the **Results** folder. The generated plot shows the dispersion value for a given mean of normalized counts.

  This plot is named with the name of the input file plus "_Dispersion_DESeq.pdf" suffix and it is saved in the **Plots** folder.

5.5.3 DESeq2

- The **DESeq2** method [Anders *et al.*, 2010] (see Figure 14) takes an input count file (as the one shown in Figure 5) via the `Open` button and returns two text files and three plots.

id	baseMean	baseMeanA	baseMeanB	foldChange	log2FoldChange	pval	padj
ENSG...0003	625.025	630.902	619.147	0.981	-0.027	0.774	1
ENSG...0005	0.264	0.528	0	0	-Inf	0.985	1
ENSG...0419	1106.882	1136.118	1077.646	0.948	-0.076	0.297	0.935
ENSG...0457	367.367	362.361	372.374	1.027	0.039	0.744	1
ENSG...0460	617.493	618.055	616.931	0.998	-0.002	0.982	1
....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	...
....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	...

Figure 13: DESeq output. The first column reports the gene ids, `baseMean` reports the mean normalised counts, averaged over all samples from both conditions, `baseMeanA` reports the mean normalised counts from condition A, `baseMeanB` mean normalised counts from condition B, `foldChange` reports the fold changes from condition A to B, `log2FoldChange` reports the logarithm (to basis 2) of the fold changes, `pval` reports the p values for the statistical significance and `padj` reports the p values adjusted for multiple testing calculated by the Benjamini-Hochberg algorithm.

Figure 14: DESeq2 interface

id	baseMean	log2FoldChange	lfcSE	stat	pvalue	padj
ENSG00000000003	625.025	-0.025	0.079	-0.318	0.750	0.954
ENSG00000000005	0.264	-0.014	0.020	-0.675	0.499	0.911
ENSG00000000419	1106.882	-0.072	0.062	-1.174	0.240	0.768
ENSG00000000457	367.367	0.035	0.095	0.365	0.714	0.937
ENSG00000000460	617.493	-0.002	0.079	-0.033	0.973	0.994
.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	....
.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	....

Figure 15: DESeq2 output. The first column reports the gene ids, `baseMean` reports the base mean over all rows, `log2FoldChange` reports the logarithm (to basis 2) of the fold changes, `lfcSE` reports the standard errors, `stat` reports the Wald statistic, `pval` reports the p values for the statistical significance and `padj` reports the p values adjusted for multiple testing calculated by the Benjamini-Hochberg algorithm.

The first text file shows the results of this method (see Figure 13), while the second text file shows the differentially expressed genes only.

The output count file is saved with the name specified by the user in the `Name?` field (see Figure 14).

If no name is specified by the user, then the first file is named with the name of the input file plus "`_results_DESeq2.txt`" suffix. Both text files are saved in the **Results** folder.

The second file is named with the name of the input file plus "`_padj=0.05_DE_genes_DESeq2.txt`" suffix, where 0.05 is the chosen adjusted p-value for rejection.

The first plot shows the dispersion value for a given mean of normalized counts and it is named with the name of the input file plus the "`_Dispersion_DESeq2.pdf`" suffix.

The second plot shows the dispersion mean value for a given mean of normalized counts and it is named with the name of the input file plus the "`_Dispersion_Mean_DESeq2.pdf`" suffix.

The third plot shows the dispersion local value for a given mean of normalized counts and it is named with the name of the input file plus the `_Dispersion_Local_DESeq2.pdf` suffix.

All plots are saved in the **Plots** folder.

Figure 16: NoiSeq Interface

5.5.4 NoiSeq

- The **NoiSeq** [Tarazona *et al.*, 2011] method (see Figure 16) takes an input count file (as the one shown in Figure 5) via the `Open` button and returns two text files.

  The first text file shows the results of this method (see Figure 17), where M is the log2 ratio of the two conditions. The second text file shows the differentially expressed genes only.

  The first file is named with the name of the input file plus "`_results_Noiseq.txt`" suffix.

  The output count file is saved with the name specified by the user in the `Name?` field (see Figure 16).

  If no name is specified by the user, then the second file is named with the name of the input file plus "`_prob=0.8_DE_genes_Noiseq.txt`" suffix, where 0.8 is the chosen posterior probability for rejection.

  Both text files are saved in the **Results** folder.

  Both plots are saved in the **Plots** folder.

5.5.5 BaySeq

- The **BaySeq** [Hardcastle *et al.*, 2010] method (see Figure 18) takes an input count file (as the one shown in Figure 5) via the `Open` button, a list of factors (e.g. `treated,treated`, `control,control`) in the `Factors?` field, a `NDE` list (e.g. `1,1,1,1`), a `DE` list (e.g. `1,1,2,2`), an Estimation Type? (e.g. `quantile`), the `SampleSize` (e.g. `1000`), an `FDR` level, `SampleA` (e.g. `treated`) and `SampleB` (e.g. `control`).

  The **BaySeq** function returns two text files and two plots.

id	control_mean	treated_mean	M	D	prob	ranking
ENSG00000000003	575.05	582.71	-0.019	7.659	0.104	-7.659
ENSG00000000005	0.22	0.47	-1.083	0.251	0.037	-1.112
ENSG00000000419	1000.84	1049.17	-0.068	48.333	0.405	-48.333
ENSG00000000457	345.75	334.47	0.047	11.275	0.164	11.275
ENSG00000000460	572.81	570.80	0.005	2.004	0.028	2.004
.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	....	....
.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	....	....

Figure 17: NoiSeq result file. The first column reports the gene ids, `control_mean` is the mean across the control samples, `treated_mean` is the mean across the treated samples, `M` is the log2-ratio of the means of the two conditions) and `D` is the difference between the two conditions means, `prob` is the probability of differential expression, the `ranking` is a summary statistic of M and D values (equal to $-sign(M) \times \sqrt{M^2 + D^2}$).

Figure 18: BaySeq Interface

id	rowID	control_1	control_2	treated_1	treated_2	Likelihood	FDR.DE
ENSG..971	row_7	1	1	1	1	0.261	0.738
ENSG..419	row_3	1132	1070	1088	1138	0.217	0.760
ENSG..457	row_4	354	348	392	377	0.111	0.803
ENSG..003	row_1	633	590	618	661	0.074	0.833
ENSG..460	row_5	618	580	653	621	0.067	0.853
ENSG..005	row_2	0	1	0	0	0.051	0.869
.....	...	...	...	...	...	....	....
.....	...	...	...	...	...	...	....

Figure 19: BaySeq result file. Bayseq reports the input counts and the number of the row (`rowID`) in the first columns and the `Likelihood` and the false discovery rate (`FDR.DE`) in the remaining columns.

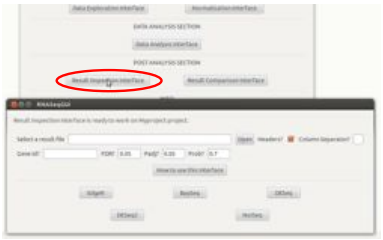

Figure 20: Result Inspection Interface

The first text file shows the results of this method (see Figure 19), while the second text file shows the differentially expressed genes only.

The output count file is saved with the name specified by the user in the `Name?` field (see Figure 18).

If no name is specified by the user, then the first file is named with the name of the input file plus "`_results_BaySeq.txt`" suffix. Both text files are saved in the **Results** folder.

The second file is named with the name of the input file plus "`_fdr=0.05_DE_genes_BaySeq.txt`" suffix, where 0.05 is the chosen FDR for rejection..

The first plot shows the log ratios of the counts against the mean average of the counts and it is named with the name of the input file plus the `_PlotMA_BaySeqNB.pdf` suffix.

The second plot shows the posterior likelihood. This plot is named with the name of the input file plus the `_Posteriors_BaySeqNB.pdf` suffix.

This method is very time consuming.

5.6 Post Analysis Section

In the fifth section of the GUI, called Post Analysis Interface, there are two interfaces: **Result Inspection Interface** (see Figure 20) and **Result Comparison Interface** (see Figure 22). The first interface includes the possibility to generate several plots for each methods. The second allows to compare the outcomes obtained from several methods.

Figure 21: Result Inspection Interface after clicking all the five buttons at the top.

5.6.1 Result Inspection Interface

To explore the results of a specific method, we have to click on the used method in **Data Analysis Section** (say EdgeR) and the interface in Figure 20 will display the functions available for the selected method (for EdgeR **Plot FC**, **FDR Hist**, **P-value Hist** functions are available). If we click all buttons in Figure 20, the interface will grow and we get the interface shown in Figure 21.

Therefore, for each method, we have **Plot FC**, **FDR Hist** (or **P-value Hist**) and **Volcano Plot** functions, except for the BaySeq method since this method already provides an *MAplot* and a *PosteriorPlot* during the analysis process that can be run in the **BaySeq Analysis Interface**.
For each function (e.g.: **FDR Hist**, **P-value Hist**, **Likelihood Hist**) of each method, we just need to provide a "full result" file placed in the **Results** folder. For **Volcano Plot** and **Plot FC** functions, we must provide a path to a "full result" file (as the one shown in Figure 10) and a `FDR`, `P-value` or `Prob` value (it depends on the chosen method) to point out the differentially expressed genes (shown in red). In this case, it is also possible to provide a gene id, provided into the `Gene Id` field, to point out that particular gene in the Volcano or FC plot (that gene will be displayed in green).
All generated plots are saved in pdf format in the **Plots** folder.

5.6.2 Result Comparison Interface

The second interface includes the possibility to generate Venn diagrams of either two or three result text files (See Figure 22).
The user must provide two or three text files reporting the results of the used methods and the corresponding labels to recognize these files in the generated diagrams.

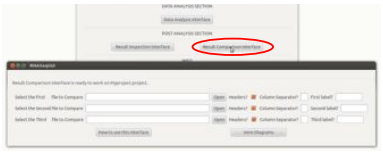

Figure 22: Result Comparison Interface

A Venn diagram is generated and saved in the **Plots** folder. Moreover, a text file (showing the gene ids belonging to the intersection of the selected methods) is created and saved in the **Results** folder.

5.7 The summary report

All the functionalities used by the user are automatically saved in a report file (as the one shown in Figure 2) inside the **Logs** directory of the user project. This report reports the session information that describes all used package versions by RNASeqGUI at the time of the project creation, along side with the name of the project, time, date and the parameters (fdr, padj, etc.) the user selected during the usage of the GUI.

6 Usage Example

We can start using RNASeqGUI by downloading the example data at `http://bioinfo.na.iac.cnr.it/RNASeqGUI/Example`.

We download the folder called **example_RNASeqGUI.tar.gz**, we extract this bundle and open it. Inside this, we find a folder called **demo**, a gtf file called `2L_Drosophila_ melanogaster.BDGP5.70.gtf` and a text file called `README.txt` file.

6.1 Data Preparation

In this usage example, we start the analysis of the RNA-Seq data from bam files and we compare the results of EdgeR, DESeq and NOISeq against each other.
We downloaded the dataset published by [Brooks *et al.*, 2011]. This dataset has already been used in [Anders *et al.*, 2013] as a real data working example. We downloaded the data from `http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/sra?term=SRP001537` by following the instructions described in [Anders *et al.*, 2013] at the page 1771. The entire experiment is available at `http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/geo/query/acc.cgi?acc=GSE18508`.

The dataset consists of seven samples. Three samples represent the response to a treatment and four samples are controls. Each sample is a cell culture of *Drosophila melanogaster* (For more details about this experiment see [Brooks *et al.*, 2011]).

We downloaded and aligned the *fastq* files by running `tophat2` [Kim *et al.*, 2013] as described in [Anders *et al.*, 2013] at page 1774. Once the bam files were obtained (we called them CG8144_RNA-1, CG8144_RNA-3, CG8144_RNA-4, Untreated-1, Untreated-3, Untreated-4, Untreated-6 as in in [Anders *et al.*, 2013]), it is possible to perform the analysis with RNASeqGUI.

For illustrative purpose and for keeping the computational cost of the demonstrative example under control, we limit our attention to chromosome `2L`. Alignment data (bam files) are contained in the folder called `demo` inside the **Bam** folder, with the following names: `2L_1.bam`, `2L_3.bam`, `2L_4.bam`, `2L_U1.bam`, `2L_U3.bam`, `2L_U4.bam`, `2L_U6.bam` (see Figure 23).

BamFileName	NameOfTheReducedBam	LibraryType	LibraryLayout
CG8144_RNA-1	2L_1	treated	single
CG8144_RNA-3	2L_3	treated	paired
CG8144_RNA-4	2L_4	treated	paired
Untreated-1	2L_U1	untreated	single
Untreated-3	2L_U3	untreated	paired
Untreated-4	2L_U4	untreated	paired
Untreated-6	2L_U6	untreated	single

Figure 23: Experimental design

6.2 Usage of RNASeqGUI

We open `R`, then we type

```
library(RNASeqGUI)
```

and we type

```
RNASeqGUI()
```

Once the main RNASeqGUI interface (see Figure 1) has appeared on the screen, we create a new project (for instance, we can call it `demoProject`) and then we click on `Bam Exploration Interface` button. We select the **demo** folder with the `Open` button. After that, we start the analysis by using the `Read Counts` button in the *Bam Exploration Interface*. This action creates the plot shown in Figure 26. The bam files in the **demo** folder are loaded in alphabetically order and their name are displayed at x axis in Figure 26 alphabetically. This plot is automatically saved in pdf format in the **Plots** folder of the project you selected.

A text file is also generated and saved in the **Results** folder with the `demo_Read Count.txt` name, as shown in Figure 27. This file shows the number of reads for each bam file.

Critical: We cannot use the **Mean Quality of Reads** or **Per Base Quality of Reads** function for this dataset, since the `2L_1.bam` file was generated by pulling *fastq* files containing reads of different length (This file correspond to `CG8144_RNAi-1` at page 1774 of [Anders *et al.*, 2013]). To use these functions, we need bam files containing reads of the same length. Otherwise, we get the following error:

```
Error in as.vector(x, "character"):  cannot coerce type 'environment' to vector of type 'character'.
```

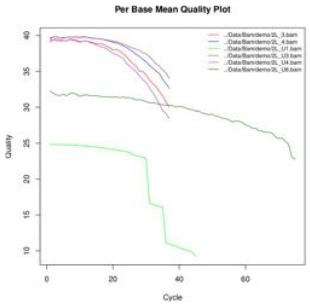

Figure 24: **Mean Quality of Reads** of the bam files stored in the folder **demo** without the `2L_1.bam` file.

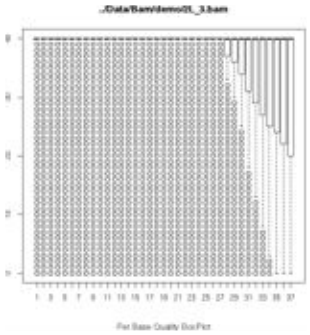

Figure 25: **Per Base Quality of Reads** of the bam files stored in the folder **demo** without the `2L_1.bam` file.

If the user wants to use these functions, in this case the `2L_1.bam` file must be temporary removed from the **demo** folder before using them. In this case, if we use those functions without the `2L_1.bam` file, we get the plots in Figure 24 and in Figure 25, respectively.

Subsequently, we click on *Read Count Interface* and select the bam folder **demo** and the `2L_Drosophila_melanogaster.BDGP5.70.gtf` annotation file. We select `Union` as `Counting Mode` and check the `Ignore Strand` box, as shown in Figure 28. Hence, we click on `Count Reads` button. As result of this action, a text file named `2L_counts.csv` (see Figure 29) is generated and saved in the **Results** folder. A file named `counts.txt` is also generated in case the user forgets to use the `Save Results?` check-box at the bottom of the interface. The column names in Figure 28 follow the alphabetical order of the bam files placed in the **demo** folder.

Now, we can explore the obtained count file, shown in Figure 29.

We click on *Data Exploration Interface* button. Once this interface has ap-

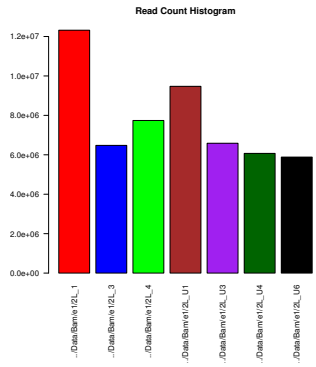

Figure 26: Read Count Histogram of the bam files stored in the folder **demo**.

fileName	NumberOfReads
../Data/Bam/demo/2L_1	12320205
../Data/Bam/demo/2L_3	6477978
../Data/Bam/demo/2L_4	7741241
../Data/Bam/demo/2L_U1	9473462
../Data/Bam/demo/2L_U3	6586330
../Data/Bam/demo/2L_U4	6071744
../Data/Bam/demo/2L_U6	5883666

Figure 27: The `demo_ReadCount.txt` file saved in the **Results** folder.

Figure 28: Read Count Interface.

id	2L_1	2L_3	2L_4	2L_U1	2L_U3	2L_U4	2L_U6
FBgn0000018	528	485	546	613	441	501	485
FBgn0000052	2300	2968	3555	2921	3097	3244	2626
FBgn0000053	2361	2982	3790	2307	2352	2542	1856
FBgn0000055	1	0	0	0	0	0	0
FBgn0000056	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
FBgn0000061	4	2	2	1	1	5	0
FBgn0000075	2	2	1	4	4	3	1
FBgn0000097	3849	3727	4546	4656	4227	3448	2569
....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....
....	....	....	....	....	....	....	....

Figure 29: The `2L_counts.csv` file created by **Count Reads** function and saved in the **Results** folder.

peared on the screen (see Figure 30), we select the `2L_counts.csv` file.

First, we use the **BoxPlot** and the **Plot All Counts** functions by clicking the corresponding buttons (see Figure 30). The generated plots are shown in Figure 31 and Figure 33, respectively. From Figure 31, we can see that all the count means (the black lines in the box plot) and all the count distributions are almost aligned. Therefore, we decide not to normalize the counts since a normalization procedure does not seem to be necessary.
To better understand whether a normalization procedure is needed, we can also use the **MDPlot** by plotting each sample counts (by selecting `Column1` and `Column2` fields) against all the other sample counts.
Anyway, if we use the full quantile normalization procedure by clicking the **Full Quantile** button in the *Normalization Interface*, we get the plot show in Figure 32 and a text file of normalized counts saved in **Results** folder.

Subsequently, we use the **PCA** function by typing the `1,3,4,U1,U3,U4,U6` sequence in the `PCA Factors?` field (see Figure 30) to specify the labels that will be displayed in the legend at the top-right of the plot generated by this function (shown in Figure 34).

Finally, we can use the **HeatMap** function to see what are the first (say thirty) most expressed genes. Therefore, we typed the number 30 in the `How many genes in the Heatmap?` field (see Figure 35). From the heatmap, we can notice that the the most expressed gene is the one called FBgn0000559 (look at the bottom of the Figure 35).

Figure 30: Data Exploration Interface

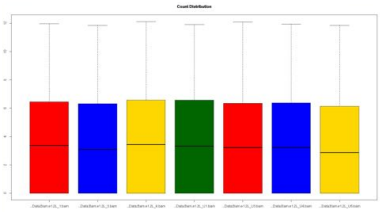

Figure 31: Box plot generated by the **BoxPlot** function.

Now, we can start with the analysis. We decide to use EdgeR, DESeq and NOISeq and compare the results among them.

We click on *Data Analysis Interface* button.

We start the EdgeR analysis by clicking on the **EdgeR** button. In the *EdgeR Analysis Interface*, we select the `2L_counts.csv` count file.
We type the `T,T,T,U,U,U,U` sequence in the `Factors?` field to specify which are the treated samples (called `T`) and which are the untreated ones (called `U`) as reported in Figure 23. We choose a 0.05 value as the `FDR`. Finally, we

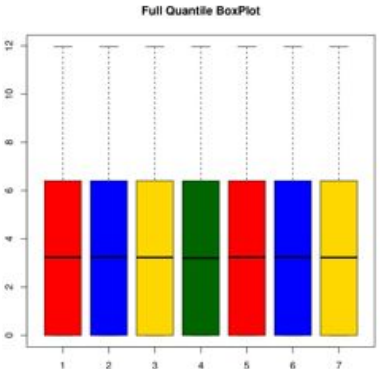

Figure 32: Boxplot of the counts shown in Figure 31 after the full quantile normalization.

Figure 33: Count plots generated by the **Plot All Counts** function.

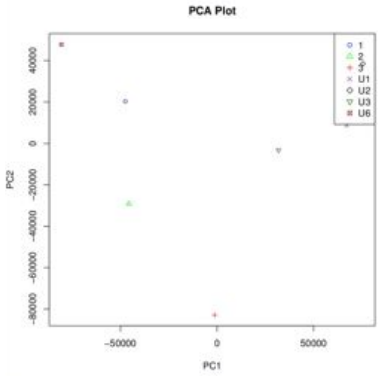

Figure 34: PCA plot generated by the **PCA** function.

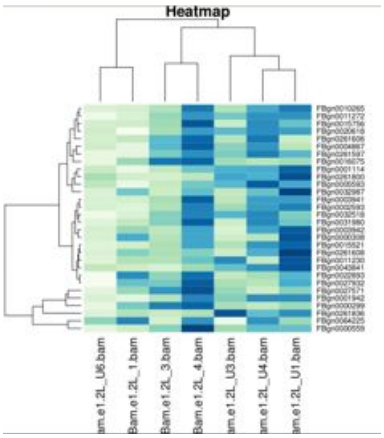

Figure 35: Heatmap

click on **Run EdgeR** button. The EdgeR analysis is performed and two result text files are created and saved in the **Results** folder.

We click on **DESeq** button. In the *DESeq Analysis Interface*, we select the `2L_counts.csv` count file. We type the `T,T,T,U,U,U,U` sequence in the `Factors?` field to specify the treated and untreated samples as in EdgeR analysis. We type `single-end,paired-end,paired-end,single-end,paired-end,paired-end,single-end` in the `LibTypes` field to specify the library layout as reported in Figure 23. We choose a 0.05 value as the `Padj`. Finally, we click on **Run DESeq** button. The DESeq analysis is performed and two result text files are created and saved in the **Results** folder.

We click on **NOISeq** button. In the *NOISeq Analysis Interface*, we select the `2L_counts.csv` count file. We type the `T,T,T,U,U,U,U` sequence in the `Factors?` field. We type `T1,T3,T4,U1,U3,U4,U6` in the `TissueRun` field to specify the library layout as specified in Figure 23. We select `biological` in the `Replicate?` field. We choose a 0.6 value as the `prob`. Finally, we click on **Run NOISeq** button. The NOISeq analysis is performed and two result text files are created and saved in the **Results** folder.

Once all the results have been obtained, we can start inspecting them by clicking on *Result Inspection Interface*. We click on **EdgeR**, **DESEq** and **NOISeq** buttons at the same time. At each click we can see the *Result Inspection Interface* growing (see the top-right of the Figure 36).

For each method, we select the corresponding result file (by giving the all path to the file in the `Select File` field) and we click on **Plot FC** on **FDR Hist** and on **Volcano Plot** of each method. We also provide a gene id to display a specific gene (in this case we type `FBgn0000559` in the `Gene Id field`, as shown in Figure 36, that is the most expressed gene found in the heatmap in Figure 35).

Finally, we compare the results by clicking on *Result Comparison Interface*.

We fill all the fields as shown in Figure 37. We click on **VennDiagrams3setsDE** button. This action creates two files. The first file is the pdf shown in Figure 38 and saved in **Plots** folder. The second file is a text file, called `NOISEQ_DESEQ_EDGER_genes_in_intersection.txt` and saved in the **Results** folder. This text file reports the 86 gene-ids that fall in the intersection of all the three methods (see in Figure 38).

All the functionalities we have used are automatically saved in a report

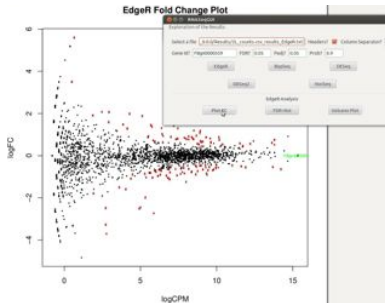

Figure 36: Fold Change Plot generated by using the function PlotFC of EdgeR

Figure 37: Result Comparison Interface

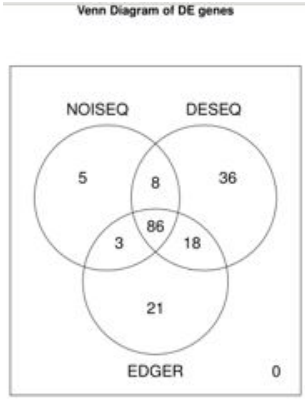

Figure 38: Venn Diagram

file inside the **Logs** directory.

7 How to customize RNASeqGUI

It is extremely easy to add new buttons that calls new functions. Hence, a user can customize RNASeqGUI interfaces for his purposes and benefits by adding the methods he needs mostly.

7.1 Adding a new button in just three steps

For the sake of example, suppose you have written a function that generates a heat-map as the one written below.

```
MyHeatmap <- function(x,geneNum){
  require(RColorBrewer)
  n <- as.numeric(geneNum)
  x <- as.matrix(x)
  means=rowMeans(x)
  select = order(means, decreasing=TRUE)[1:n]   # show first n genes
  hmcol = colorRampPalette(brewer.pal(7,"Greens"))(100)
  heatmap(x[select,],col=hmcol,margins=c(5,8),main="MyHeatMap")
}
```

If you want to add `MyHeatmap` function to RNASeqGUI, follow these tree simple steps.

1 - Place `MyHeatmap` function in a file (for instance, called MyHeatmap.R) in the **R** folder inside the **RNASeqGUI** directory.

2 - Open calculateGUI1.R file (This is the file that generates the *Data Exploration Interface*) and copy the following 3 lines and paste them at the bottom of this file before "}" parenthesis.

```
#Here you create the button, called "MY OWN FUNCTION"
MYOWNBUTTON <- gtkButtonNewWithMnemonic("MY OWN FUNCTION", show = TRUE)
#Associate the button to MyHeatmapConn that calls MyHeatmap function
gSignalConnect(MYOWNBUTTON , "clicked", MyHeatmapConn)
the.buttons$packStart(MYOWNBUTTON,fill=F)
```

3 - Finally, Copy the following code

```
MyHeatmapConn<- function(button, user.data) {
  res <- NULL
  # Get the information about data and the file
  the.file <- filename$getText()
  the.sep <- sepEntry$getText()
  the.headers <- headersEntry$active
  the.geneNum <- geneNum$getText()
  d <- read.table(the.file,sep=the.sep,header=the.headers,row.names=1)
  # Select numerical variables
  numVar <- sapply(1:ncol(d),function(x){is.numeric(d[,x])})
  if (sum(numVar)==0) { error <- "ERROR: No numerical variables in the data!"
  }else{res=MyHeatmap(d,the.geneNum)} #HERE YOU CALL THE FUNCTION YOU DEFINED!
}
```

Figure 39: A new button called `MY OWN FUNCTION` is created

and paste it before the two following lines below that are written inside the calculateGUI1.R file.

```
# Create window
window <- gtkWindow()
```

At this point, `MY OWN FUNCTION` button is created and the result is the one shown in Figure 39. By clicking this button, we call `MyHeatmapConn` function that calls `MyHeatmap` function defined before.

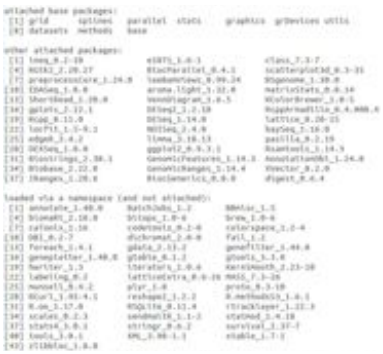

Figure 40: Session Info

8 Technical Details

To see the versions of the used methods, we type

```
sessionInfo()
```

and we get the list shown in Figure 40.

Acknowledgement

We want to thank M. Franzese, V. Costa and R. Esposito for suggestions and discussions, D. Granata for technical support.
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