



Welcome to the ICSCN update for November 2008.

This newsletter is a source of information and an opportunity to promote network activities for all ICSCN members and their associated organisations, scientists and students. All members are encouraged to distribute this newsletter to their wider groups, place a link on their websites and contribute news and updates for future newsletters and the website.

Contents for November 2008

ICSCN Members

Australian Stem Cell Centre

Bereshith – Israeli Consortium for Cell and Stem Cell Therapy

East of England Stem Cell Network

International Society for Stem Cell Research

International Stem Cell Forum

Israel Stem Cell Society

New South Wales Stem Cell Network

New York Stem Cell Foundation

North East England Stem Cell Institute

Norwegian Centre for Stem Cell Research

Regenerative Medicine Initiative Germany - RMIG

California Institute for Regenerative Medicine

RIKEN Centre for Developmental Biology

Scottish Stem Cell Network

Spanish Stem Cell Bank

Stem Cell Network Asia Pacific

Stem Cell Network North Rhine Westphalia

Stem Cell Network, Canada

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ICSCN Meeting 2008

The 2008 ICSCN meeting was held in Philadelphia on 10-11 June 2008 ahead of the ISSCR Annual Meeting. The minutes from the meeting are now available on the ICSCN [website](#).

In 2009 the ICSCN will focus on some key activities as well as implementing a new governance structure following the departure of Co-chair Stephen Livesey from the Australian Stem Cell Centre (Prof Michael Rudnicki remains as the current Chair of the ICSCN).

The key topics discussed at the meeting were:

- Planning Future Workshops
- Making the most out of our training opportunities
- Public Education and Outreach
- Industry and Commercial
- ICSCN Administration, Funding and Communications

The ICSCN was keen to build on the success of the GMP workshop held in 2007 and the topics discussed at the meeting centred around other translational themes such clinical trials, a follow on GMP meeting and scale up and enabling technologies such as bioinformatics.

The Stem Cell Network Canada has already continued with maximising the benefits from its training opportunities with its [2008 Stem Cell Network International Travel Awards](#), which provided eight international trainees with the opportunity to attend the Network’s Annual General Meeting in Vancouver on Nov 5-7, 2008 and to visit stem cell labs across Canada.

The ICSCN’s administration operates on an in-kind basis with members contributing time and expertise. If any other members would like to get more involved in the daily administration of the Consortium then please contact any of the Secretariat: [Rebecca Skinner](#), [Drew Lyall](#), [Marilyn Robertson](#) and [Ira Hermann](#)

The next ICSCN meeting is to be held in Barcelona in 2009.

Member News

5th International Meeting in North-Rhine Westphalia, Germany

The 5th International Meeting of the Stem Cell Network NRW will take place on 24 – 25 March 2009 at the Eurogress, situated in the historic city centre of Aachen, Germany. We are expecting more than 600 delegates from Germany and abroad for our two-day congress.

Collaborative work with researchers from the Priority Program of the German Research Foundation has inspired the organizers to focus the 2009 congress on "Reprogramming". Further topics will be "Differentiation", "Cancer Stem Cells" and "Therapeutic Devices". Among confirmed speakers are: Markus Grompe, John Gurdon, Maarten van Lohuizen, Alexander Meissner, Christine Mummery, Huck-Hui Ng, Andreas Trumpp and Miodrag Stojkovic. Further details and registration at:

www.congress.stemcells.nrw.de

UK National Stem Cell Network

2009 UKNSCN Annual Science Meeting Registration Now Open

On-line registration is now open for UKNSCN's second annual science meeting taking place on 6-8 April 2009 at the University of Oxford Examination Schools. Please follow the hyperlink below to the UKNSCN website for further information. Approximately 500 delegate places are available, and registration is open to delegates from overseas:

<http://www.uknscn.org/meetings/meetings09.html>.

The registration site includes separate information pages for delegates, exhibitors, poster presenters, sponsors and speakers. You are advised to read these before proceeding to registration. The speaker programme for the conference is nearing completion and will be available for downloading from the registration site shortly. In the meantime, prospective delegates may wish to note that the programme will again feature some of the latest and best research in UK stem cell science, together with world class keynote speakers from overseas on each of the three days as follows:

Day 1: **Dame Anne McLaren Memorial Lecture**
- Prof Janet Rossant, Sick Children's Hospital, Toronto, Canada

Day 2: Keynote 2 - Prof Robert Nerem, Georgia Institute of Technology, Atlanta, USA
(also **Conference Dinner** - eminent after-dinner speaker to be confirmed)

Day 3: Keynote 3 - Prof Joseph Vacanti, Harvard Medical School, USA

In addition, and backed by popular demand from delegates at the inaugural conference in Edinburgh, the programme includes six parallel workshops spread over days 2 and 3 to which you can sign up during the registration process. These are:

- A: Immunology
- B: Embryonic StemCells (incorporating the UK hESC Forum)
- C: Mesenchymal Stem Cells
- D: Translation and Commercialisation
- E: Haematopoietic Stem Cells
- F: Cardiac and Pulmonary Regeneration

UKNSCN On-line Discussion Forum Launched

The pilot phase for the UKNSCN's new On-Line Discussion Forum is now complete and a number of UKNSCN members have registered to contribute. The on-line software has now been relaunched with three new fora aimed at helping the stem cell research community to share expertise and materials, discuss the UKNSCN 2009 annual science meeting and arrange meetings, and continue to offer suggestions for future UKNSCN activities. As a stakeholder in some aspect of stem cell research and its translation, you are warmly invited to join the Discussion Forum and expand this new on-line community dedicated to UK stem cell science. New fora can be suggested to the UKNSCN Coordinator (Forum Moderator) at any time, the idea being that you the community shape the Forum into something which you find useful and which has an extensive membership.

You can register to use the Forum at the link below. Please read the Forum Rules before registering and happy posting!

<http://www.uknscn.org/discussion/index.html>

Stem Cell Network, Canada

2008 Stem Cell Network International Travel Award

For the second consecutive year, Canada's Stem Cell Network was delighted to sponsor eight International trainees to attend the Network's Annual General Meeting in Vancouver on Nov 5-7, 2008 and to visit stem cell labs across Canada. This International travel award is a great opportunity for International trainees to learn about the stem cell research being undertaken in Canada, exchange ideas and expertise, and build an International network of colleagues.

The eight candidates selected for the 2008 International trainee award were (from left to right):



Christoph Patsch from Institute of Reconstructive Neurobiology Germany, Parinya Noisa from Imperial College London, Olivia Anne Alder from Imperial College London, Pollyana Tat from Monash Institute of Medical Research, Keisuke Kaji from Institute for Stem Cell Research Scotland, Sharon Louise Mason from the University of Liverpool, Marcin Jurga from Newcastle University, Naomi Pode –Shakked from the Institute of Pediatric stem cell research institute Israel. For more information click [here](#).

The International Regulome Consortium

The IRC is an international research effort that brings together over 60 investigators from 34 institutions in 12 countries to develop and apply the latest genetic, genomic, proteomic and GE3LS approaches to map the stem cell regulome. By working together, we will have analysed over 50 transcription factors in this first year of our coordinated efforts. Professor Michael Rudnicki, Chair of the ICSCN is the IRC CEO and Scientific Director. The latest IRC newsletter is available [here](#) or on the website at www.internationalregulomeconsortium.ca



International News

The Fast Moving World of Stem Cells - Robert-Koch Prize acknowledge stem cell research

Exactly ten years ago James Thomson published in Science the stable establishment of human embryonic stem cells. Although embryonic stem cells are still considered as the gold standard the focus now is the establishment of models to study diseases and test possible agents with iPS cells. During the last five months this technique has experienced major proceedings: From reduction of the genetic factors needed to induce pluripotency in mice from 2 to 4 (Schoeler, June 2008), the establishment of the first patient

specific iPS cells for Amyotrophic Lateral Sclerosis (Eggan, July 2008) to the abandonment of viral vectors in this process in mice (Yamanaka, October 2008) and in Human (Skutella, October 2008).

On Nov 14th the famous prize for groundbreaking science, the German Robert-Koch Prize, was given to three stem cell researchers to acknowledge their work. Irving Weissman was honored for the isolation and description of stem cells in the hematopoietic system which allowed amongst others the establishment of purification, today's standard with stem cell transplants. Shinya Yamanaka received the prize for his groundbreaking research about the induction and function of pluripotent stem cells from somatic cells and Hans Schoeler was considered because of his analysis of pluripotency and the discovery of the transcription factor Oct4 which is an important indication for pluripotency. The Robert-Koch prize is endowed with 100.000 Euros and is given every year.

US Elects a New President – influence on stem cell research awaited

Stem cell researchers are eagerly awaiting the moment next year when Barack Obama rescinds the directive that prohibits federal funding for human embryonic stem cell research. As the Washington Post reports Obama plans to reverse this quickly after his assumption of office. But not only researchers are looking forward to this, also biotech companies specialized on stem cell technology like Geron Corp. and Advanced Cell Technology show their alleviation. They are hoping for a positive signal in the finance market showing trust in their technologies and therewith into future therapies.

Human Fertilisation and Embryology Bill Receives Royal Assent into Law

On November 13, the UK's Human Fertilisation and Embryology Bill received Royal Assent and now becomes law. Twelve months after the bill was introduced into the Parliament it provides revised and updated legislation on assisted reproduction and for changes to the regulation and licensing of embryo use in research and therapy. The regulation and oversight of the use of embryos in stem cell research remains largely unchanged including the creation of human-animal hybrid embryos through somatic cell nuclear transfer.

The UK National Stem Cell Network said "The UKNSCN is delighted that many of the provisions in the Bill relating to stem cell research have been passed by MPs, and equally delighted that the

UK has the requisite ethical regulatory framework to uphold the law and ensure that unnecessary or inappropriate research is not conducted. In this respect, the UK is in the vanguard of regulation and offers a model which many other countries seek to emulate”.

The Human Fertilisation and Embryology Authority regulates the creation, storage and use of embryos in research throughout the UK. Current Research Projects licensed by the HFEA can be found on their [website](#).

World Stem Cell Summit

On September 22nd and 23rd the World Stem Cell Summit held in Madison, Wisconsin, united nearly 900 stem cell stakeholders from 27 states and 18 countries representing researchers, industry leaders, policy makers, regulators, advocates, legal experts, investors and philanthropists to illuminate the critical issues and together chart the future of regenerative medicine.

The website down contains downloads of the World Stem Cell Report and webcasts of all the sessions including discussion of International Collaboration Opportunities featuring **Dr Marilyn Robertson of the Scottish Stem Cell Network** speaking about the international networks and the ICSCN. The webcast can be viewed [here](#) or go to www.worldstemcellsummit.com

ISSCR News

ISSCR 7th Annual Meeting

July 8-11, 2009

**Centre Convencions Internacional
Barcelona, Spain**

Co-sponsored by the Centre for Genomic Regulation (CRG) and the Center of Regenerative Medicine in Barcelona (CMRB)



[View the list of invited speakers.](#)

[View the Program Committee.](#)

Abstract Submission Opened: November 6, 2008
www.isscr.org

ISSCR Releases Annual Report

The ISSCR's Annual Report for July 2007- June 2008 can be found in the August issue of Cell Stem Cell. Read the report [here](#).

ICSCN Administration News

ICSCN Website

The ICSCN Joint Secretariat launched a new website late in 2007:

www.stemcellconsortium.org. The website, which uses blog technology, provides useful information relating to the consortium's Networks, and is intended to be the primary go-to place for members around the globe to access this information.

If members would like to share resources, information or news, or advertise lab positions, training awards or other opportunities on the ICSCN website, please send the details to one of the members of the Joint Secretariat ([Rebecca Skinner](#), [Drew Lyall](#), [Ira Herrmann](#), [Marilyn Robertson](#)).

Statutes and Membership Guidelines

The ICSCN statutes and membership guidelines have been updated to reflect the outcomes of the Cairns meeting. To view, please visit the [ICSCN website](#) and provide any comments or feedback to the [Secretariat](#).

ICSCN Logo and Brand

All ICSCN members are encouraged to use the ICSCN logo and brand events ICSCN events where appropriate. If you require a copy of the logo please email the [Secretariat](#). Members are also encouraged to put the logo on their own websites and place links to the ICSCN site and to the newsletters.

Articles and Links of Interest

Blogs and Commentary

The Niche at Nature:

<http://blogs.nature.com/reports/theniche/>

The Stem Cell: <http://thestemcellblog.com>

California Stem Cell Report:

<http://californiastemcellreport.blogspot.com/>

Legislation and Regulation

Global Regulation of Human Embryonic Stem Cell Research and Oocyte Donation

The ICSCN has compiled for its members a table of global regulations, policies and organisations regarding human embryonic stem cell research. All members are free to use this table for their own purposes: [Global Regulation of HESC](#)

[Research and Oocyte Donation](#). This document is updated regularly.

What Color is Your State? Published periodically by thestemcellblog.com is a color-coded ranking of American states and their legislative positions on embryonic stem cell research.

Detailed [regulations](#) in EU member's states can be found on the EU's European Group on Ethics recommendations for hESC research.

ISSCR International Legislation on Human Embryonic Stem Cell Research, at:
<http://www.isscr.org/public/regions/index.cfm>

StemGen World Map of laws, policies, regulations or guidelines, at:
<http://www.stemgen.org/mapworld.cfm>

Stem Cells World Map, at:
<http://www.mbbnet.umn.edu/scmap.html>

Policy and Ethics

Genetics Policy Institute, a *non-profit organization dedicated to establishing a positive legal framework to advance stem cell research*, at
www.genpol.org

Stem Cells in India: emerging economics and the politics of globalisation.
http://www.ioh.uea.ac.uk/biopolitics/wp_16/wp16.pdf

[ISSCR Guidelines](#) for the Conduct of Human Embryonic Stem Cell Research.

Consensus Statement of the '[Hinxtan Group](#)': An International Consortium on Stem Cells, Ethics and Law.

Public Outreach Tools

[Stem Cell Resources](#) is a website dedicated to public education. It is a fantastic resource for teachers, students and the interested public.

The **RIKEN CDB** has created a brief animation to highlight some of the basic biological properties of stem cells, explain the different types of stem cell found in the embryonic body and the adult and illustrate the roles of these "master cells" in development and regeneration. View online on the [RIKEN](#) website.

ENGAGE: Stem Cells is a high school teaching resource on stem cell research developed through the Ontario Genomics Institute (OGI) by Genome Canada, and the Joint Centre for Bioethics (JCB) at the University of Toronto and available to [download](#) from the Stem Cell Network, Canada website. The resource was developed in collaboration with teachers and students and has been distributed at no charge to high schools across Canada.

The Australian Stem Cell Centre has developed a new website, www.stemcellchannel.com.au which includes footage and animation on topics including SCNT, ethics, legislation, careers in stem cell research and patient information.

Websites of Interest

Nature Reports Stem Cells:
<http://www.nature.com/stemcells/index.html>

www.stemcellscience.org

www.stemcells.net

www.stemcellnews.com

Next Newsletter

The next newsletter is due mid January. Please email content and articles to the Secretariat by 15 January 2009.