



Welcome to the ICSCN update for May 2008.

This newsletter is intended as 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, link to on their websites and contribute news and updates for future newsletters and the website.

www.stemcellconsortium.org

ICSCN Members

Australian Stem Cell Centre

Bereshith – Israeli Consortium for Cell and Stem Cell Therapy

Regenerative Medicine Initiative Germany - RMIG

California Institute for Regenerative Medicine

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

RIKEN Centre for Developmental Biology

Scottish Stem Cell Network

Spanish Stem Cell Bank

Stem Cell Network North Rhine Westphalia

Stem Cell Network, Canada

UK National Stem Cell Network

Stem Cell Network Asia Pacific

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ICSCN Meeting 2008

The ICSCN will be meeting in Philadelphia in 2008 ahead of the ISSCR Annual Meeting. This year the meeting is split over two sessions with an informal dinner being held on Tuesday 10 June directly following the ISSCR Public Symposium, and a meeting on Wednesday 11 June from 8am to 12noon. Please view the draft [agenda](#) and provide any comments, feedback and additional agenda items.

This years meeting has been structured quite differently to those in previous years in that we are not having an overview from each network due to time constraints (new members, we will introduce you at the dinner). Instead a booklet made of the Member Update Forms is going to be compiled and distributed before the meeting. If you have not yet provided your updated form please do so ASAP.

Please note that it is understood that not all members will be able to attend both events but we are more than pleased to have you attend either, if both are not possible.

Please RSVP the names of attendees to both the dinner and the meeting and provide the completed Member Update Form to [Rebecca Skinner](#) by **no later than Friday 30 May 2008**.

The ICSCN Secretariat Group: [Rebecca Skinner](#), [Drew Lyall](#), [Marilyn Robertson](#) and [Ira Hermann](#)

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Stem Cell Network Canada

International Travel Awards

The SCN International Travel Award will provide financial support for trainees in ICSCN member countries to present their research at the SCN Annual Conference. This scientific meeting is Canada's premier stem cell conference, and typically attracts 350-400 participants over three days from academia, industry and government. Featuring over 120 posters, it is notable for its almost equal balance of Principal Investigator and trainee talks. Participation in the SCN Annual Conference will provide ICSCN trainees the opportunity to network with the Canadian stem cell research community. In addition, the SCN International Travel Award will provide financial support for lab visits and seminars. These exchanges will enable the building of meaningful relations with Canadian researchers to facilitate the initiation of collaborative stem cell projects and the exchange of knowledge.

The application deadline is **July 31, 2008** with the awards to be held in November of 2008. The award includes attendance to the SCN Annual Conference in Vancouver from November 5 to 7, 2008. A maximum of 15 awards are available per annum.

For more information and the application form please visit the [SCN website](#). Otherwise contact [Sophie](#) at the SCN.

Human Embryonic Stem Cell Culture Training Course

August 11 - 14, 2008

Application deadline: May 30, 2008

The Stem Cell Network is holding one spot for students of ICSCN members to attend the Human Embryonic Stem Cell Culture Training Workshop in Toronto on August 11-14, 2008. Note that there will be no charge for the course, and the Stem Cell Network has generously offered to cover the costs of accommodation and meals; but all other costs will be the responsibility of the participant.

This training course will combine theoretical presentations with hands-on bench work to build a deeper understanding of proper human embryonic stem cell (hESC) handling and an introduction to iPS cells. Training course topics will build from a basic knowledge of culture techniques to more complex applications. It is anticipated that trainees registering for this training course will either be at an advanced stage of their training, or will be applying the techniques to their own research project.

One of the goals of the SCN is to promote networking between stem cell scientists across Canada, and to this end, the course will also include a social dinner and outing.

Further workshop information and registration details can be found at

<http://www.stemcellnetwork.ca/site/pages/237> .

Welcome New Member

Stem Cell Network Asia Pacific



The ICSCN would like to welcome its newest member, the Stem Cell Network Asia Pacific.

Currently representing eight members, SNAP is an organisation established in September 2007 to promote the development of a research community in the region through increased communications, collaboration and exchange. SNAP seeks to provide a forum for the discussion of scientific advances in stem cell research, as well as developments in the regulatory, policy, ethics, and public domains.

To learn more about SNAP visit the newly launched website at:

www.asiapacificstemcells.org

International Stem Cell Forum

International Stem Cell Banking Initiative

The ISCF Stem Cell Banking Initiative (ISCBi) is co-ordinated by the UK Stem Cell Bank. It aims to create a global network of stem cell banks through support for existing banks and by encouraging the development of new banks in member countries. It will help stem cell banks to share knowledge about ethical and regulatory issues in member countries and assist in the development of an agreed set of international minimum standards for banking, characterisation and testing, thereby creating a solid ethical framework for international stem cell banking and research. ISCBi met in April 2008 in Beijing and is scheduled to meet again in October 2008.

Find out more at www.stemcellforum.org

ISSCR News

6th ISSCR Annual Meeting in Philadelphia, June 11-14, 2008



Evening Public Symposium

June 10, 2008, 6:00 p.m. – 7:30 p.m.
Marriott Philadelphia Downtown
Main Tower: Grand Ballroom
Salons A-F, 5th Floor
The Evening Public Symposium is for anyone interested in stem cells, public policy and biomedical research. Scientific and advocacy leaders will comment on the ethical debates and concerns associated with the latest stem cell research. The evening will feature the following panelists:

John Gearhart, PhD, *Director, Institute for Cell Engineering, Johns Hopkins University School of Medicine*

Steve Emerson, MD, PhD, *President, Haverford College*

Jonathan D. Moreno, PhD, *Professor, Medical Ethics and History and Sociology of Science, University of Pennsylvania*

Marie McCullough, *Medical Reporter, The Philadelphia Inquirer*

Amy Comstock Rick, *President, Coalition for the Advancement of Medical Research, CEO, Parkinson's Action Network*

Industry Wednesday Symposia, Philadelphia, June 11, 2008.

In 2008, the 6th ISSCR Annual Meeting will be directly preceded by industry symposia on stem cell research hosted by leading industry representatives. All ISSCR meeting attendees are invited to attend. The symposia will offer a range of industry-directed programs and highlight important issues and directions in the stem cell field from an industry perspective. For more information on participating, visit the ISSCR Web site or contact Ryan Detwiler, rdetwiler@isscr.org.

For more information on the meeting and registration visit the ISSCR website at www.isscr.org

ICSCN Members' Upcoming Conferences and Events

Centre for Stem Cell Biology, University of Sheffield, UK, Events for 2008

2008 Summer Workshop, Practical Training Course on Working with Stem Cell Lines

Tuesday 8th - Thursday 10th July 2008
Centre for Stem Cell Biology, University of Sheffield, UK

CSCB 7th Annual International Symposium - Progress Towards Cell Therapies

Friday July 11th 2008 Centre for Stem Cell Biology, University of Sheffield, UK.

The CSCB's brand new GMP workshop: Clinical Stem Cells: How do we progress?

Thursday July 17th 2008 Centre for Stem Cell Biology, University of Sheffield, UK.

Regional News

Canada – International Regulome Consortium

The Canadian team of the International Regulome Consortium (IRC) announced that Genome Canada has awarded the first year funding of \$1.6M commencing January 1, 2008, and further approved a \$20M envelop for the 5 year project.

The IRC is an ambitious Canadian led effort aimed at tackling this next crucial phase of genomic research. It is focused on characterizing transcription factors and their target genes in a wide range of cell types, from embryonic stem cells all the way to terminally differentiated neuronal cells. The IRC was launched in 2004 (Science 304:942, 2004) and incorporated as a not-for-profit in 2006. The Canadian research component will focus on 400 transcription factors and will include the development of sophisticated computational models, a commercialization strategy and an ethical, legal and social research program.

"We've brought together 58 top investigators from 34 institutions in 12 countries to tackle this problem in a coordinated, systematic way," said IRC Director Dr. Michael Rudnicki, who also leads the Sprott Centre for Stem Cell Research at the Ottawa Health Research Institute and the Canadian Stem Cell Network. "The new knowledge of how genetic factors specify a stem cell's identity and regulate its commitment towards specific differentiation pathways will set the stage for a new era of medicine centred on

the regeneration of diseased or dysfunctional tissues.”

<http://www.internationalregulomeconsortium.ca/>

German Legislation

The German parliament passed an amendment to the Stem Cell Act on 11th April 2008.

The result can be interpreted as a confirmation of the compromise made in 2002: the general ban on creating and working on human embryonic stem cell lines in Germany is upheld; however, it will still be possible to import cell lines that were harvested abroad prior to a cut-off date. By adopting the bill proposed by Member of Parliament René Röspel, the Bundestag has now decided to move this cut-off date from 1st January 2002 to 1st May 2007. Other proposals had called for maintaining the old cut-off date, for the replacement of the cut-off date regulation by an examination on a case-by-case basis, or even suggested a complete ban on the possibility of importation. By adopting the proposal with 346 out of 580 votes, the members of the Bundestag have also specified the scope of application of the Stem Cell Act: as it explicitly refers to the utilization of human embryonic stem cells in Germany, the work of German scientists abroad (e.g. in the context of international projects) will no longer constitute a criminal offence.

UK Legislation

Members of the UK parliament voted 336-176 on 20 May 08 to allow animal eggs to be combined with human DNA for research, particularly developing techniques and developing research-grade embryonic stem cells. The votes followed two debates in the committee stage of the [Human Fertilisation and Embryology Bill](#), aimed at updating laws from 1990 in line with scientific advances.

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

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 Month

The next newsletter is due mid July. Please email content and articles to [Rebecca Skinner](#) by 18 July 08.