

# ICSCN

## International Consortium of Stem Cell Networks

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### Consortium Update – November 2006

#### 1. Update from Israel

*Here is the latest news from the Israeli Consortium for Cell Therapy.*

- More than dozen human feeder layers to support growth of hESC were developed under GMP conditions and are suitable for derivation of clinical grade ESC.
- Three cell therapy and/or infrastructure companies have joined the consortium: Harlan Biotech Israel, Neuro-Vascular Regeneration Labs (NVR Labs) and CellCure.
- Harlan Biotech Israel is a CRO that does pre-clinical and toxicology studies using several animal models (from mice to mini pigs).
- NVR Labs is an Israeli biotech company that study neuronal regeneration in several indication, primarily on severe spinal cord injury. The source of stem cells is primarily from somatic stem cells.
- CellCure study neuronal regeneration in several indications that is based on hESC derived neuronal stem cells.
- Activity for the fourth year was approved by the Office of Chief Scientist in the Israeli Ministry of Industry, Commerce and Employment.

For more information please contact Arik Hasson, Head of Stem Cell Projects, Gamida Cell Ltd., Cell Therapy Technologies at [arik@gamida-cell.com](mailto:arik@gamida-cell.com)

#### 2. Welcome New Member

*The ICSCN welcomes the New York Stem Cell Foundation as its newest member.*

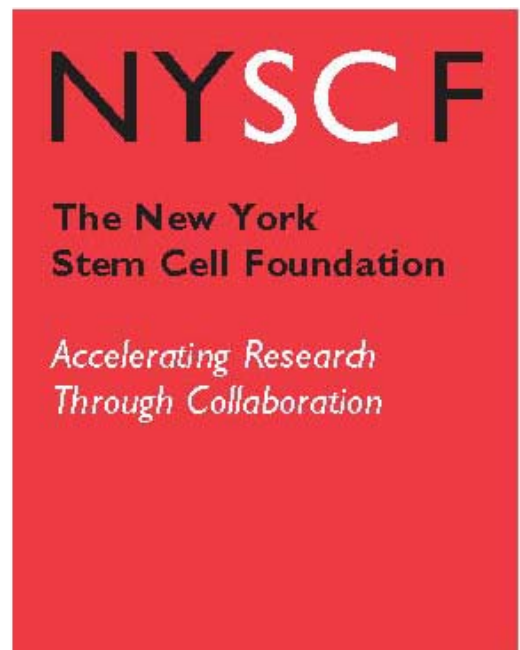
The New York Stem Cell Foundation (NYSCF) is a non-profit organization dedicated to furthering human embryonic stem cell research to advance the search for cures of the major diseases of our time. The mission of NYSCF is threefold:

- > To support scientists engaged in human embryonic stem cell research (hESC) and somatic cell nuclear transfer (SCNT) through grants, fellowships, and symposia;
- > To educate the public about the importance and potential benefits of human embryonic stem cell
- > To establish new collaborative, state-of-the-art research facilities supported entirely with private funds and directly focused on curing disease.

It is an ambitious plan: accelerating stem cell research to cure the major diseases of our time.

To find out more about the NYSCF please visit [www.nyscf.org](http://www.nyscf.org)

**The ICSCN now has fifteen member networks from around the world.**



### 3. Australian Stem Cell Legislation Review Update

#### *Legislation to expand stem cell research in Australia passes major hurdle.*

The review and amendment of the Australian legislation governing stem cell research has achieved an important milestone by passing the Australian Senate. The *Prohibition of Human Cloning for Reproduction and the Regulation of Human Embryo Research Amendment Bill 2006*, which amends the current acts governing assisted reproductive technologies and stem cell research, passed the Australian senate by the narrowest of margins – 34 to 32 votes.

Existing laws allow stem cells to be harvested from surplus IVF embryos under license but do not allow for somatic cell nuclear transfer or the creation of stem cell lines from embryos deemed unsuitable for implantation using pre-implantation genetic diagnosis. The Bill that has passed through the senate will allow for SCNT under licence and remove the barriers to creating PIGD cell lines from embryos unsuitable for implantation. The amendments also increase the penalties for participation in prohibited activities to a maximum 15 years imprisonment.

The Bill now moves into the House of Representatives (lower house) for debate and a rare conscience vote. Debate begins the week beginning 27 November, 2006. If the Bill passes the lower house without amendment it is passed into law, if amendments are made it must go back to the Senate for a new vote.

For more information visit the [Australian Parliament](http://www.australianparliament.gov.au) website or the [Lockhart Review Committee](http://www.lockhartreviewcommittee.gov.au) website.

### 4. ISSCR 2007, Cairns Australia

*Abstract Submission Deadline: Feb. 8, 2007, noon CST*

The poster for the 5th ISSCR Annual Meeting is set against a green background with a faint DNA helix pattern. It features three main images: a close-up of a red fish in the top left, an aerial view of the Cairns Convention Centre in the middle left, and a scuba diver underwater in the bottom left. The text on the poster includes: '5th ISSCR Annual Meeting' in large white letters, 'The world's premier stem cell research event' below it, 'June 17-20, 2007' in a bold font, 'Cairns Convention Centre, Cairns, Queensland, Australia' below that, the ISSCR logo (a stylized 'S' inside a circle), the Australian Stem Cell Centre logo (a blue circle with a white 'S'), and the text 'Supported by the Australian Stem Cell Centre'. The website 'www.isscr.org' is printed at the bottom.

The International Society for Stem Cell Research invites you to participate in the Society's 2007 Annual Meeting held in June 17-20 in Cairns Queensland. Support packages, exhibit space and marketing opportunities for the meeting are now available with full details on the [ISSCR website](http://www.isscr.org).

#### **Travel Grants**

The ISSCR is making an increased number of travel grants available for attendees of the 2007 annual meeting. In addition, the Australian government and the Australian Stem Cell Centre (ASCC) have pledged significant support

for Junior Investigators from Australia and New Zealand. Travel grant applications must be made as part of the abstract submission process. Applications for travel grants are made in conjunction with abstract submission.

### 5. ICSCN Meeting, Cairns 2007

It is anticipated that the ICSCN will meet again in conjunction with the ISSCR annual meeting. Due to popular demand, the ICSCN meeting will happen over the course of a whole day, with the intended date currently Saturday June 16. Mark this in your diaries now!

## 6. ICSCN Temporary Website

ICSCN information is currently located on the [ASCC website](#). Please email through any links or information you would like added to the website. The website also contains an ICSCN [promotional flyer](#) that all members are encouraged to distribute and use.

The Consortium URL ([www.stemcellconsortium.org](http://www.stemcellconsortium.org)) is currently not yet in use due to technical difficulties but this should be resolved shortly.

## 7. ICSCN Logo

A logo is currently being developed for the Consortium. Draft versions will be emailed around for comment shortly.

## 8. International Events

### *Conferences*

#### **Stem Cell Research Forum of India First Annual Meeting and Conference**

29<sup>th</sup> January to 1<sup>st</sup> February, 2007, Bangalore

Stem Cell Research Forum of India jointly with Department of Biotechnology Government of India is organizing first annual conference of this society. Leading stem cell scientists from India and abroad will participate in this four-day conference in order to develop a multi-disciplinary network. For more information visit the [SCRFI website](#).

#### **World Stem Cell Congress**

12 - 13 February, La Jolla, San Diego, CA

The full [conference program](#) is now available.

#### **European Stem Cells and Regenerative Medicine Congress 2007**

1-3 May 2007, London, UK

More information on the conference [website](#).

## 9. Articles and Links of Interest

### *Policy and Ethics*

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

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

### *Public Outreach Tools*

**A Stem Cell Story** - EuroStemCell public outreach film. An award winning, engaging, accessible and visually stunning introduction to the world of stem cell research. View online on the [EuroStemCell 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 is happy to provide free of charge to biology teachers and interested students an interactive CD, **basically STEM CELLS**, that addresses multiple senior biology concepts and exposes students to the exciting and controversial world of stem cell science. To obtain a CD, please [contact us](#).

**Websites of interest**

[www.isscr.org](http://www.isscr.org)

[www.stemcellscience.org](http://www.stemcellscience.org)

[www.stemcells.net](http://www.stemcells.net)

[www.stemcellnews.com](http://www.stemcellnews.com)

**10. Next Month**

Please send articles, activities, conferences, recruitment opportunities and other items of interest for next month's newsletter by December 13, 2006.

**Contact**

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