



Welcome to the ICSCN update for March 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
- Stem Cell Research Forum of India
- UK National Stem Cell Network

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Welcome to 2008

After several months' hiatus, this is the first ICSCN newsletter for 2008.

During the break, the ICSCN Secretariat Group has been working together to organise the ICSCN Meeting and other activities for 2008. After much discussion the 2008 ICSCN meeting and an ICSCN dinner has been arranged to coincide with the 6th ISSCR Annual Meeting in Philadelphia. The proposed dates are: **ICSCN Dinner, Tuesday June 10, 7pm** (location to be confirmed, suggestions welcome) and ICSCN Meeting, **Wednesday June 11, 8am to 11am** (location to be confirmed also). The dinner is being generously sponsored by the [Stem Cell Network North Rhine Westphalia](http://www.stemcellconsortium.org).

We have tried to accommodate the wishes of all parties but understand that some may be able to attend only dinner or the meeting or (preferably) both. The Secretariat Group welcome feedback on this matter.

The ICSCN Secretariat has also been conducting an update of member's details and issues that members would like addressed in 2008. If your network has not yet completed this activity please fill out this form and email to the secretariat members. Remember, the website (www.stemcellconsortium.org) is constantly updated so feel free to send updates, news items and other information anytime.

We also have two new members to welcome this month, the New South Wales Stem Cell Network and the Israel Stem Cell Society. Next month will feature these new members in detail.

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

www.stemcellconsortium.org

ICSCN Planning Meeting

The ICSCN Secretariat are meeting up during the UKNSCN Meeting in Edinburgh on **Thursday 10 April** during the lunch break to discuss plans for the upcoming meeting in June and activities for the year. All ICSCN members are invited to attend.

ICSCN Members' Upcoming Conferences and Events

UKNSCN 1st Annual Science Conference



9-11 April, 2008
Edinburgh, UK

This conference will be a celebration of the best and latest in stem cell research from across the United Kingdom. The [program](#) is now available and [registration](#) is open so be quick as places are filling fast.

www.uknscn.org

Israel Stem Cell Society

The International Stem Cell Meeting: Stem Cells and their Regulatory Microenvironment
The Second International Stem Cell Meeting: The Potency of Stem Cells is to be held from **May 27-29, 2008** in Tel-Aviv in conjunction with the ILSI-Biomed Israel 2008 Conference. The Meeting will cover a multitude of topics with keynote international speakers. More information can be found on the conference [website](#).

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.

ISSCR News



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

Abstract submission has now closed.

Notifications of abstract standing will be e-mailed by March 31.

Register now.

The early bird registration discount closes on 17 April 2007.

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

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 Stem Cell Act is currently under revision. In Germany research with human embryonic stem cells is prohibited in general and import of established cell lines (before Jan 1, 2002) from abroad is allowed by exception (cut-off date regulation). As a consequence international collaborations with foreign partner laboratories working on newer cell lines is also illegal under this Act, which is enforced by harsh punishments (up to three years custody). Naturally, such a regulation leads to massive impairment of collaboration with international institutions working on newer cell lines. The German research foundation (DFG) has recommended an amendment of the law in 2006 and the German parliament is currently discussing a revision of the Stem Cell Act. An outcome is anticipated for around 10 April 2008. Thanks to all ICSCN members that have written letters of support.

UK Legislation

UK approves human-animal hybrid embryos for research

The HFEA Licence Committee has granted two licences to Kings College London and Newcastle University, to carry out research using human-animal cytoplasmic hybrid embryos. The HFEA Licence Committee determined that the two applications satisfied all the requirements of the law and has now offered one-year research licences to the two applicants, subject to a series of detailed conditions in each case.

In addition, the [Human Fertilisation and Embryology Bill](#) debate continues. 108 UK academic professors (including scientists, lawyers, philosophers and theologians) have written to the Times newspaper calling for the

Prime minister Gordon Brown to allow Members of Parliament (MPs) a free vote in the House of Commons on the Human Fertilisation and Embryology Bill.

International Stem Cell Forum

ISCF 2008 Meeting Roundup

The ISCF held its annual meeting in San Francisco on the 27th March and its annual Ethics Working Party Meeting on 26th March. Nineteen countries, plus California and the JDRF attended the meeting whilst the ISSCR and ICSCN were in attendance as observers. The group of research funders was founded in January 2003 through the UK’s Medical Research Council.

The major project of the EWP is the [StemGen Policy Database](#) which

StemGen

includes an interactive world map to find policies on stem cells.



The other key projects of the ISCF are the [International Stem Cell Initiative \(ISCI\)](#) and the [International Stem Cell Banking Initiative](#).

The forum also released a [media release](#) following the meeting. The next meeting is to be held in China in 2009.

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

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

California Stem Cell Report:
<http://californiastemcellreport.blogspot.com/>

The Niche at Nature:
<http://blogs.nature.com/reports/theniche/>

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.

EuroStemCell Regulations in European Union member states, found on [EuroStemCell website](#).

Detailed [regulations](#) in EU members states also found on EU 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 '[Hinxtion 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.

EuroStemCell has added a [Frequently Asked Questions](#) page to its website. The page contains information for patients on various diseases and links to clinical trial information as well as resources for students and general stem cell information.

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](#).

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 out end of April.

Please email content and articles to [Rebecca Skinner](#) by 18 April 2008.