

ICSCN

International Consortium of Stem Cell Networks

Consortium Update – December 2006

1. Update from Charité - Universitätsmedizin Berlin - CellNet.Org

*Charité and Helmholtz Association Back Regenerative Therapies
New Center to receive around 45 million euros in funding*

Berlin is to receive a translational centre for regenerative medicine - the 'Berlin-Brandenburg Center for Regenerative Therapies' (BCRT). The German Federal Ministry of Education and Research (BMBF) has resolved to fund the new Berlin research institute with 15 million euros over an initial period of four years. The centre will be run jointly by the Charité Universitätsmedizin Berlin and the Helmholtz Association of German Research Centres, which intends to contribute a further 10 million euros to the alliance. Taken together with financing commitments made by the states of Berlin and Brandenburg, around 45 million euros will be available for setting up an internationally competitive centre by 2010.

Click [here](#) to read the full media release.

For more information please contact Anne Carney, Charité - Universitätsmedizin Berlin, CellNet.Org at anne.carney@charite.de

2. End of Year Questionnaire

REMINDER: Consortium Questionnaire, please fill out and return by 12 January 2006

All ICSCN members are encouraged to fill out the short questionnaire below and email to the [Consortium Secretariat](#) by January 12, 2007. Results will be collated into a report for all ICSCN members and will help with planning the Consortium's activities for the next twelve months.

1. **2006 Highlights**
2. **2006 Challenges**
3. **2007 Goals**
4. **Web and Document Links (ie Website, Annual Report, Conferences, Major Research Projects, Policy Documents etc)**
5. **What would you like the Consortium to achieve in 2007?**

Thank you to all those members who have already responded to the questions.

3. Australian Stem Cell Legislation Review Update

Australian Parliament votes to lift ban on somatic cell nuclear transfer

Australia has ended its ban on research that involves somatic cell nuclear transfer — giving researchers there a chance to join the small number of groups engaged in the procedure worldwide.

The [Patterson Bill](#) (*Prohibition of Human Cloning for Reproduction and the Regulation of Human Embryo Research Amendment Bill 2006*) which amended the current acts governing stem cell

research and IVF was passed after the Prime Minister allowed a rare conscience vote on the topic. After a passionate three-day debate, the House of Representatives approved the legislation 82-62. The Senate had passed it 34-32 last month. The Bill passed despite being opposed by both Prime Minister John Howard and the leader of the opposition, Kevin Rudd.

The outcome of the legislation will be to add an important research tool to a very active and successful research initiative in stem cells in Australia. It will also enable our researchers to collaborate with their colleagues in other countries, such as Britain and the US, where the technology is permissible. Australia will remain an active, internationally recognised driver of stem cell research and not a bystander simply observing important developments occurring out of its reach.

The ASCC has worked very closely with many MP's helping them to gain a better understanding and there has been a significant effort on the part of parliamentarians to understand the science.

4. ICSCN Temporary Website

The ICSCN web address is now live; www.stemcellconsortium.org now links directly to the Consortium page on the ASCC website. If networks would like information added to this page then please email the [Secretariat](#) and it can be added immediately.

5. ICSCN Logo

A logo is currently being developed for the Consortium. Draft versions will be available in March 2007 for comment.

6. Post-Doctoral Fellowship Opportunities

Reminder, Applications due 12 January 2007



Stem Cell Network/Juvenile Diabetes Research Foundation

Postdoctoral Fellowships - Applications due January 12, 2007

The Stem Cell Network (SCN) and the Juvenile Diabetes Research Foundation (JDRF) are pleased to announce co-funding for up to 3 Canadian postdoctoral fellowships with the aim of increasing the number of scientists being trained in Canada in stem cell research with emphasis on diabetes.

The application deadline for SCN/JDRF Fellowships is **January 12, 2007** with the awards expected to run from April 1, 2007 to March 31, 2009.

The Application Guidelines and Application Form will be found on the website at: <http://www.stemcellnetwork.ca/training/partners/jdrf.php>.

Questions can be directed to Adrienne Wong, Scientific Program Manager of Islet Biology & Transplantation, JDRF at awong@jdrf.org, or to Tia Moffat, Acting Manager of Scientific Affairs and Training, SCN at tia@stemcellnetwork.ca.

Please distribute to your network members.

7. ISSCR 2007, Cairns Australia

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

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](#).

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.

The poster for the 5th ISSCR Annual Meeting features a green background with a faint circular pattern. It includes several images: a red fish, an aerial view of the Cairns Convention Centre, and a diver underwater. The text on the poster reads: "5th ISSCR Annual Meeting The world's premier stem cell research event", "June 17-20, 2007 Cairns Convention Centre Cairns, Queensland, Australia", and "Supported by the Australian Stem Cell Centre". The website "www.isscr.org" is also listed.

5th ISSCR Annual Meeting
The world's premier stem cell research event

June 17-20, 2007
Cairns Convention Centre
Cairns, Queensland,
Australia

Australian Stem Cell Centre
Supported by
the Australian
Stem Cell Centre

www.isscr.org

8. 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!

9. International Events

Conferences

January 2007

Stem Cells & Regenerative Medicine-2007-San Francisco Meeting'

"Molecular Embryology to Tissue Engineering & Therapeutics"

Radisson Hotel, San Francisco Airport, California

January 22 - 24, 2007

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

Stem Cell Research Forum of India First Annual Meeting and Conference

29th January to 1st February, 2007, Bangalore, India

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](#).

February 2007

World Stem Cell Congress

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

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

2nd Annual Stem Cell Summit, San Diego, CA, USA

12 - 13 February, San Diego, California

<http://www.stemcellsummit.com/>

March 2007

Stem Cell Interactions with their Microenvironmental Niche, Keystone, CO, USA

2-7 March 2007, Keystone Resort, Keystone, Colorado

This meeting will examine select stem cell niches to explore unifying principles and identify opportunities for application in tissue regeneration and cancer therapy.

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

Stem Cells and Cancer, Keystone, CO, USA

2-7 March 2007, Keystone Resort, Keystone, Colorado

The goals of this meeting are to understand and present the most current research into the cellular and molecular biology of cancer stem cells.

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

May 2007

European Stem Cells and Regenerative Medicine Congress 2007

1-3 May 2007, The Landmark London Hotel, London, UK

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

June 2007

5th ISSCR Annual Meeting

17-20 June 2007, Cairns Convention Centre - Cairns, Queensland, Australia

Please visit the ISSCR [Conference website](#) for full details.

October 2007

EuroStemCell - Advances in Stem Cell Research

12-14 October 2007 - Stockholm, Sweden

Website not yet available, please visit [EuroStemCell](#) home page.

10. Articles and Links of Interest

Policy and Ethics

Science magazine on 1 December, 2006 has published a story on careers in embryonic stem cell research in Europe. The article [Navigating the Stem-Cell Research Maze](#) the political and regulatory frameworks in different European countries along with training and funding opportunities.

Stem Cell Research - Status, Prospects, Prerequisites.

EMBO has published a [summary document](#) providing an introduction to the field of stem cell biology and its terminology for non-specialists, and presenting current stem cell research and development in a variety of areas. The document outlines action needed at policy level to enable stem cell research to fulfil its potential in Europe, and contains contributions from a group of leading scientists in stem cell research, application and patient advocacy, who met under the auspices of EMBO in April 2006.

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

www.stemcellscience.org

www.stemcells.net

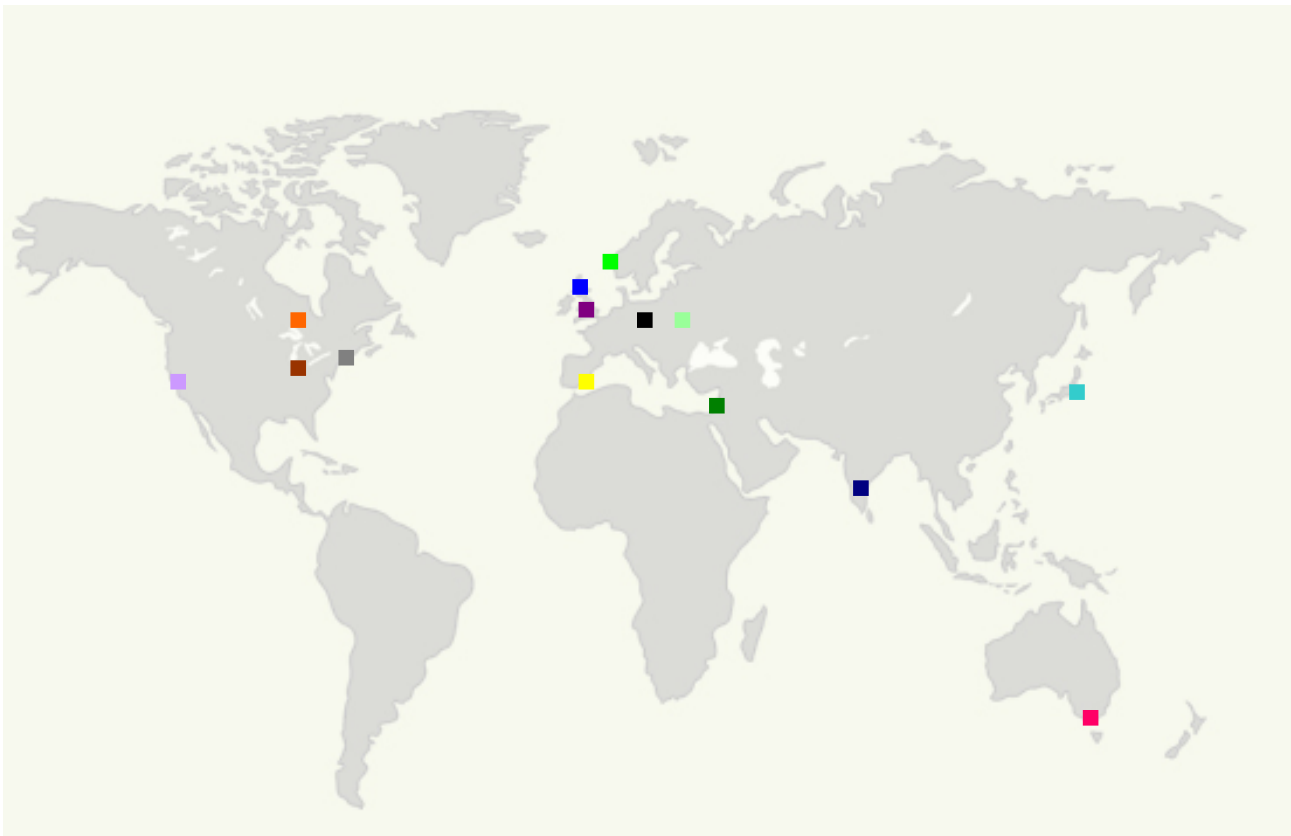
www.stemcellnews.com

11. Next Month

Please send articles, activities, conferences, recruitment opportunities and other items of interest for next month's newsletter by February 9, 2007.

12. Map – International Consortium of Stem Cell Networks Members

The ICSCN is now made up of fifteen members from across the world.



- Australian Stem Cell Centre
- Bereshith (Israel)
- California Institute for Regenerative Medicine
- International Society for Stem Cell Research
- RIKEN Centre for Developmental Biology, Japan
- Scottish Stem Cell Network
- Spanish Stem Cell Network
- Stem Cell Network North Rhine Westphalia
- Stem Cell Network, Canada
- North East England Stem Cell Institute
- Network in Regenerative Medicine Berlin
- National Institutes of Health
- Norwegian Centre for Stem Cell Research
- Stem Cell Research Forum of India
- New York Stem Cell Foundation

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Charité and Helmholtz Association Back Regenerative Therapies

New Center to receive around 45 million euros in funding

Berlin, 14 November 2006. Berlin is to receive a translational center for regenerative medicine - the 'Berlin-Brandenburg Center for Regenerative Therapies' (BCRT). The German Federal Ministry of Education and Research (BMBF) has resolved to fund the new Berlin research institute with 15 million euros over an initial period of four years. The centre will be run jointly by the Charité Universitätsmedizin Berlin and the Helmholtz Association of German Research Centres, which intends to contribute a further 10 million euros to the alliance. Taken together with financing commitments made by the states of Berlin and Brandenburg, around 45 million euros will be available for setting up an internationally competitive centre by 2010.

Regenerative medicine is a comparatively new biomedical research area which aims to stimulate the body's own regenerative capabilities. It encompasses therapy with tissue and cell cultures, e.g. with immune system cells, as well as stem cell and biomaterials research. Regenerative medicine is gaining increasing importance in the fight against serious and hitherto incurable illnesses. Cell therapies are already being employed successfully to repair major cartilage damage as well as for serious viral diseases and cancer. Future fields of application include cardiac insufficiency, liver failure and stroke, and also bone defects and immune system disorders.

The Berlin-Brandenburg Center for Regenerative Therapies is a joint initiative of the Charité and the Helmholtz Association: housed in the former dental clinic on the Charité's Virchow Clinic campus, researchers from both institutions together with 23 new research groups will explore the opportunities afforded by regenerative medicine and put applications to the test. "We want to use findings from basic research and bio-engineering to develop clinical applications and products", explained BCRT spokesman, Professor Hans-Dieter Volk of the Charité's Medical Institute for Immunology, "and that is only possible on an interdisciplinary and cross-institutional basis." The President of the Helmholtz Association, Professor Jürgen Mlynek, sees the BCRT as "an excellent example of the way in which areas of future importance can be addressed quickly and with the critical mass necessary. The new centre will give research in Berlin, a city of healthcare, an important impetus to further develop as a national and international location for regenerative medicine. I am very pleased that two Helmholtz centres, the MDC and the GKSS, are participating in this project."

The network of partners spans the whole region. Partners include: DHZB (German Heart Institute Berlin), DRFZ (German Research Centre for Rheumatic Diseases), the universities TU Berlin and FU Berlin, Potsdam University, two Helmholtz centres (GKSS, MDC), two Max Planck institutes, Schering AG, BBraun-Aesculap and numerous biotechnology companies.

The funding of the Berlin-Brandenburg Center underlines Germany's commitment to the field of regenerative medicine. In 2006 the Federal Government and the German Research Foundation (DFG) have provided funding to set up three new centers dedicated to the field - Dresden, Leipzig, and Berlin – each of which will have a specific focus. While the Dresden center will concentrate its efforts on basic research, Leipzig will address technology development and the Berlin centre, located within Europe's largest university hospital, will place its focus on clinical translation. In cooperation with the recently funded Excellence Cluster on Regenerative Medicine in Hannover, all four centers will come together to develop a national strategy to raise Germany's profile in the field of regenerative medicine.