

# BCNetter

Issue No. 11, February 2020



*A group photo of the presenters and some of the attendees at the International Conference on Risk Assessment of Environmental Genotoxins and the 24<sup>th</sup> Alexander Hollaender Course (December 2019). Dr Kozlakidis represented IARC/WHO and BCNet, and provided both a presentation and a workshop on Biobanking, leading to a lively panel discussion on ethics.*

Dear BCNet Members,

The last few months have seen a number of unique and severe global natural and clinical emergencies some of which are still ongoing. These often highlight the need for taking wider, collective action so that the impact of any efforts can be multiplied effectively. It is the existence of strong networks that provides the cornerstone for such collective activities, as well as the opportunity to share experiences and expertise. The ability to share information across our network gives us strength and a purpose of continued empowerment.

In this BCNetter you will read the excellent initiatives that are taking place, from the launch of the DELTAS Africa to the BGICC conference by our Egyptian colleagues, to the continued success of the IARC online learning resource for biobanking, the upcoming ISBER conference and many others. A special note of thanks goes to Dr Marianne Henderson and Prof Olusegun Alatise who gave excellent presentations on biobanking during the AORTIC meeting in Maputo, Mozambique (Nov 2019).

We are grateful for all of our members' contributions and keen to highlight much needed success stories where possible.

There is also some fantastic news for all of our members. The negotiations with ISBER have now concluded and all of our BCNet members are eligible for free registration with ISBER, providing continued access to educational resources on biobanking. A separate email will be sent to all.

There is change in the office roles in Lyon as well, with Ms Sally Moldan moving to a different group after many years of exemplary service for which she very much thanked. The new manager for the BCNet at IARC/WHO is Ms Charlotte Volatier, who has taken the role as of the beginning of January 2020.

These are indeed exciting times for BCNet, with many activities in progress and many others to be held throughout 2020. We look forward to the continued cooperation of the members and even more successful initiatives in the coming weeks and months.

Zisis Kozlakidis

**BCNet Coordinator**

# Call for proposals from the African Academy of Sciences (AAS)



The African Academy of Sciences (AAS) is announcing a second round of calls for a multi-million-dollar research programme led and implemented by African scientists, working collaboratively to address challenges faced by people in African countries.



\$72M has been invested into the second phase of the Developing Excellence in Leadership, Training and Science in Africa (DELTA Africa) programme, a flagship programme of the AAS. AAS is announcing a second call with support from Wellcome with additional funding to be announced in the future. This second phase will run from 2021 to 2025. While there is no predetermined cap, as a guideline most awards would be expected to be in the range of US\$ 3-6 million over five years.

DELTA Africa funds collaborative networks/consortia led by Africa-based scientists to support the Africa-led development of world-class research and scientific leaders on the continent, while helping to strengthen African institutions. The second phase of DELTA Africa will continue efforts to reap the population dividend by fostering intra-Africa collaboration, improving research environments and training researchers to conduct relevant, locally contextualized studies that advance knowledge on key research and development priority gaps including: discovery, translational, implementation and operational sciences for:

- Infectious diseases, such as malaria, HIV and tuberculosis
- Neglected tropical diseases and ONE Health
- Non-communicable diseases
- Mental health and neurosciences
- Multidisciplinary nexus of health and climate
- Social sciences and humanities

The second phase of DELTA Africa is an open and equal opportunity call to existing and new DELTA Africa networks. It also seeks to balance research excellence and equity by encouraging collaborative networks with regions and countries that are traditionally considered less research intensive. Further, all applicants are encouraged to leverage co-funding, complementary or in-kind support from their institution, host country or global partners for their proposed DELTA Africa networks.

DELTA Africa networks must consist of a minimum of three African budget-receiving partners and a recommended maximum of eight partner institutions with unlimited numbers of collaborating institutions.

- **Deadline for preliminary applications: 28 February 2020 at 17:00 EAT**
- **More information [here](#).**

## What's On?



### March:

[Education Course - Sample & Data Banking: regulations, organization and scientific aspects](#)  
Bologna / Italy, 17-18 March 2020

[Africa-Europe Symposium on Research Infrastructures](#)

Cape Town / South Africa, 23-24 March 2020

### May:

[Graz Biomedical Research Workshop](#)  
Graz / Austria, 11-15 May 2020

# Why do we need more well-trained biobankers?



Dr Élodie Caboux, the laboratory services and biobank manager in the Laboratory Services and Biobank Group at the International Agency for Research on Cancer (IARC), gave a presentation at the Breast-Gynecological & Immunooncology International Cancer Conference 2020, which took place in Cairo, Egypt, on 9–10 January 2020.

The conference was well attended by public health officials, clinical professionals and laboratory staff, and provided the opportunity for extensive networking and ongoing discussions with the BCNet many Egyptian colleagues, further strengthening ties and expertise.

While at the conference, Dr Caboux gave an interview to *ecancer* about the expansion of biobanking, current challenges faced by those in the biobanking field, and why biobanking is important for cancer research. She explained why training of professional biobankers is essential for the sustainability and continuity of biobanking activities.

Watch the interview:



## More publications



[WHO 2019 Guide for establishing a pathology laboratory in the context of cancer control](#)

[Advancing good governance in data sharing and biobanking - international aspects](#)

[The Ministry of Health and Sanitation, Sierra Leone – Public Health England \(MOHS-PHE\) Ebola Biobank](#)

[Role of a regulatory and governance framework in human biological materials and data sharing in National Biobanks: Case studies from Biobank Integrating Platform, Taiwan and the National Biorepository, Uganda](#)

[Careful governance of African biobanks](#)

[Cancer in sub-Saharan Africa \(mentioning H3Africa\)](#)

[Centralization of the IARC Biobank: Combining Multiple Sample Collections into a Common Platform](#)

[The ISBER Best Practices for Biorepositories \(4th ed.\) now translated in Spanish](#)

## Who Are We?

BCNet is the Low- and Middle-Income Countries (LMIC) Biobank and Cohort Building Network, which was established in 2013 to provide a platform for collaboration between its members, partners, IARC, and the international community. BCNet aims to support biobanking and cohort-building activities and to develop sustainable infrastructures for the management of high-quality biological samples and data for research, using best practice principles and guidelines.



**Since its official launch in February 2019, the IARC Biobank Learning platform has attracted over 20,000 visitors.**

Since its pilot-test at the end of September 2018, the platform attracted 21,281 visitors, generating 89,542 hits (IP addresses of visitors are from 147 countries), as of November 2019.

The top five LMIC countries, from which the visitors were, are Indonesia, Thailand, China, Ukraine, and Brazil. 56% of the visitors consulted 1 resource during their visit, 20% consulted 2 resources, and 24% consulted 3 or more resources. The platform now counts 101 registered users (not including IARC staff).

The most popular resources are:

- Lecture: "Introduction to Biobanking"
- Templates: Data Transfer Agreement and Material Transfer Agreement
- Video Tutorial: "Using your Baobab LIMS"
- Video Tutorial: "Setting-up your Baobab LIMS"

Want to know more? Access the Learning Platform [here](#)

## Clinical microbiology in resource-limited settings



The clinical microbiological expertise is particularly restricted in resource-limited settings affecting the generation, sharing, analysis and dissemination of data.

As a first step towards highlighting some of the unique features of practicing clinical microbiology in resource-limited settings, a special issue was created for the journal *Frontiers Medicine*, edited by Dr Kozlakidis, Stelling and Vandenberg in the section Surveillance, Prevention and Treatment. The special issue included articles submitted from Benin, West Bank-Palestine, Indonesia and Tanzania amongst others. A selection of those featured articles is provided using the links below, while BCNet members will be informed of any planned such activity of developing further special issues focusing on resource-limited settings in the future.

[Best Practices of Blood Cultures in Low- and Middle-Income Countries](#)

[Diagnostic Bacteriology in District Hospitals in Sub-Saharan Africa: At the Forefront of the Containment of Antimicrobial Resistance](#)

[Mortality patterns of toxoplasmosis and its comorbidities in Tanzania: a 10-year retrospective hospital-based survey](#)



## ISBER Announces the Keynote Speakers and Preliminary Program for the 2020 Annual Meeting and Exhibits

Early-Bird Registration Deadline: February 21, 2020.

In April 2020, global leaders and disruptors from the broad spectrum of scientific community will converge at ISBER 2020 to address the impact of biobanks on science and how the related discoveries are establishing a roadmap to extend our knowledge network. From engaging with vulnerable populations to advances in artificial intelligence, experts at ISBER 2020 will highlight critical advances in biobanking and, for the first time, host a town hall to discuss trust in biospecimen banking and research with research participants, advocates, and other stakeholders. The preliminary program for the meeting is now available at [www.meetings.isber.org/2020](http://www.meetings.isber.org/2020)

ISBER is excited to announce the keynote speakers:



### **"The Transformative Power of Lifestyle Medicine"**

Dean Ornish, MD, Preventive Medicine Research Institute

Dean Ornish is the founder and president of the nonprofit Preventive Medicine Research Institute, clinical professor of medicine at the University of California, San Francisco, and the author of six books, all national bestsellers. He has received numerous honors, including the Outstanding Young Alumnus Award from the University of Texas, Austin, and the National Public Health Hero Award from the University of California, Berkeley. Dr. Ornish was recognized as a "TIME 100 Innovator;" by Life



magazine as "one of the 50 most influential members of his generation".

### **"From Human Tumor Biobanking to Human Tumor 3D-Bioprinting: Innovating for Personalized Medicine in Oncology"**

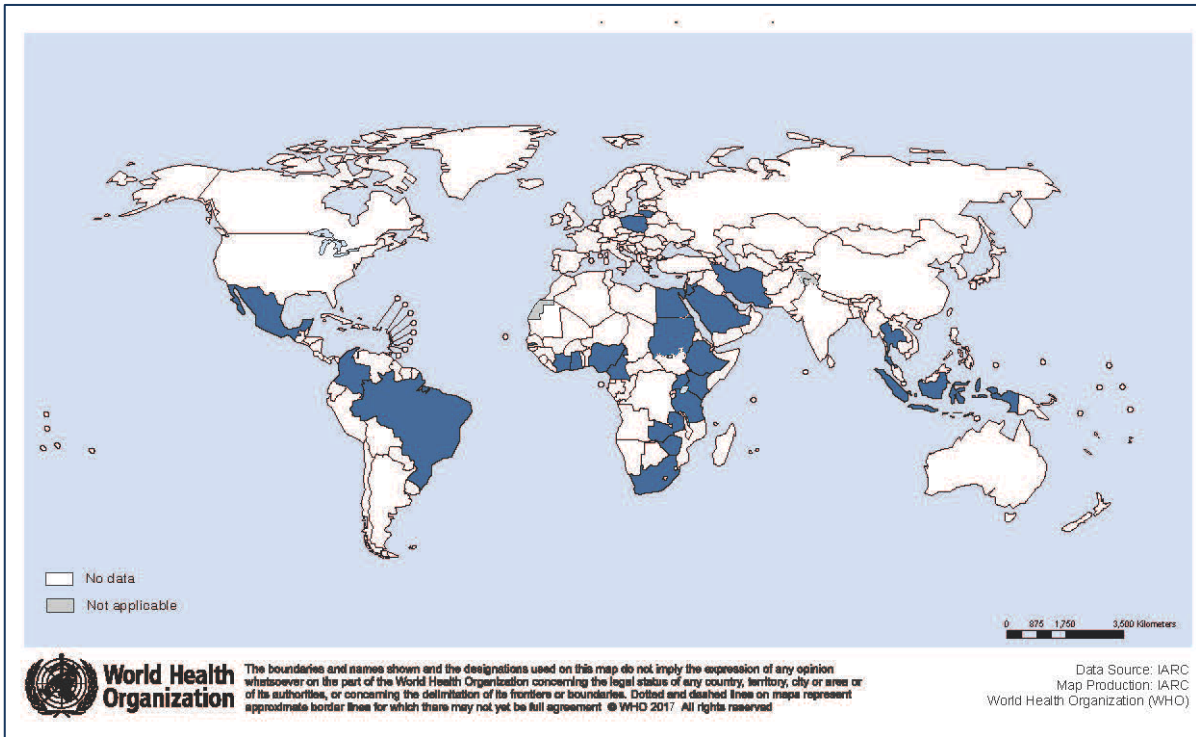
Nicolas Forraz, PhD, CTIBiotech, France

Nicolas Forraz completed his PhD in 2003 at Kingston University and St George's Hospital Medical School, University of London, UK on multi-tissue differentiation potential of umbilical cord blood stem cell populations with applications to haematology, oncology, tissue engineering and regenerative medicine. After a career in oncology and regenerative medicine in academia he co-founded CTIBiotech, a biotechnology company producing predictive models of human tissues and cells for biomedical, pharmaceutical and dermatocosmetic applications.

Our ability to transform health and research depends on the voices of all individuals willing to contribute and challenge the roadmap that biobanks are paving. Join the global biobanking community in Anaheim to be part of the solution! Register now at [meetings.isber.org/2020](http://meetings.isber.org/2020) – the early bird registration deadline is February 21.

More information [here](#).

# BCNet Members



**BRAZIL:** Barretos Cancer Hospital; **CAMEROON:** Faculty of Medicine and Biomedical Sciences, Université de Yaoundé; Université des Montagnes; **COLOMBIA:** Clinica de la Costa Ltda; **CÔTE D’IVOIRE:** Institut Pasteur de Côte d’Ivoire; **EGYPT:** Children’s Cancer Hospital Egypt – 57357, Faculty of Medicine Cairo University, Medical Research Institute Ain Shams University, Medical Research Institute Alexandria University, National Cancer Institute, National Liver Institute, South Egypt Cancer Institute Assiut University; **ETHIOPIA:** Jigjiga University; **GHANA:** Breast Care International, University of Health and Allied Sciences; **INDONESIA:** Faculty of Medicine Universitas Gadjah Mada; **IRAN:** Golestan Cancer Biobank; **JORDAN:** King Hussein Cancer Center Biobank; **KENYA:** Ampath Reference Laboratory; **LITHUANIA:** National Cancer Institute; **MEXICO:** Instituto Nacional de Cancerología; **NIGERIA:** College of Medicine University of Ibadan, Obafemi Awolowo University Teaching Hospitals Complex; **POLAND:** Biobank Lab Department of Molecular Biophysics University of Lodz, Wrocław Research Centre EIT+ Biobank; **SOUTH AFRICA:** National Health Laboratory Service (NHLS), NHLS/Stellenbosch University Biobank; **SUDAN:** Radio-Isotope Centre Khartoum; **THAILAND:** National Cancer Institute; **THE GAMBIA:** Medical Research Council (MRC) The Gambia Unit, MRC International Nutrition Group; **UGANDA:** Makerere University College of Health Sciences; **UNITED REPUBLIC OF TANZANIA:** Kilimanjaro Clinical Research Institute; **ZAMBIA:** Centre for Infectious Disease Research in Zambia; **ZIMBABWE:** African Institute of Biomedical Science & Technology; University of Zimbabwe College of Health Sciences.

## BCNet Partners



## Contact

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