September 8, 2015

A Working Group of the NIH Advisory Committee to the Director is in its final stages of developing a report on the soon-to-be-launched U.S. Precision Medicine Initiative. That report is slated to be released on September 17, after which various implementation steps will begin. Expect to hear more about these exciting developments in future editions of The Genomics Landscape! Also, the National Advisory Council for Human Genome Research (NACHGR) will hold its fall meeting starting on Monday, September 21 at 10:00 AM. To watch my Director’s Report, as well as other portions of the NACHGR meeting, visit genome.gov/GenomeTVLive/.

In this month’s The Genomics Landscape, I highlight the new NHGRI Brochure. See various details below, along with other information items that I hope will be of interest to you.

Specifically, September’s The Genomics Landscape features stories about:

- The New NHGRI Brochure
- NHGRI Has Lost One of Our Own – Elizabeth Thomson
- NHGRI Has Lost A Good Friend and Colleague – Bill Gelbart
- NHGRI Summer Workshop in Genomics: The Short Course
- Public Comment Sought: Revised Federal Policy for the Protection of Human Subjects
- Electronic Medical Records and Genomics Network Phase 3 Grants Begin
- NHGRI Welcomes a New Chief of Communications

All the best,

[Signature]

Watch here for current and upcoming locations of the Smithsonian-NHGRI exhibition “Genome: Unlocking Life’s Code” as it tours North America!

~To manage your subscription to The Genomics Landscape, see: list.nih.gov/cgi-bin/wa.exe?A0=NHGRILANDSCAPE~
~To suggest future topics, send an e-mail to: NHGRILANDSCAPE@MAIL.NIH.GOV~
~To access past editions, see: genome.gov/27541196~
The New NHGRI Brochure

Throughout its history, NHGRI has been committed to sharing details of its organization and scientific programs with the scientific community and the general public. The Institute has typically communicated its scientific vision through more detailed ‘strategic plans’ – crafted in collaboration with the research community and published in the scientific literature. These strategic plans have been largely crafted for a scientific audience. To reach a broader audience, the Institute recently developed a new ‘eye-catching’ NHGRI Brochure. The brochure provides various information about NHGRI as an organization – our history, our core values, our compelling research portfolio, and our various other programs – in a format targeted for a broad audience.

Despite being ~25 years old, NHGRI has never had a ‘Institute-wide’ brochure. The new publication highlights NHGRI’s past, present, and future roles in the field of genomics. It opens with background information for readers – including a welcome message, genomics primer, a description of the benefits of genomics research, a history of the field, and an overview of the Institute’s organization.

The brochure outlines NHGRI’s core values that shape how we pursue our mission and formulate our priority research areas of Genome Structure and Function (understanding how the genome works); Genomics and Human Disease (establishing the role of genomic variants in health and disease); Genomic Medicine (using genomic information to advance medical care and human health); and Genomics and Society (addressing the societal impact of genomic advances). The greater part of the brochure describes in general terms these four priority areas, illustrating NHGRI activities in each area through ‘research spotlights’ that highlight specific programs and initiatives.

The brochure also features other important areas for NHGRI: Genomics and Data Science and Training in...
The brochure's final section – *Future Horizons* – focuses on NHGRI’s “fundamental and core belief that genomics offers great promise and hope for improving the human condition.”

The brochure also features some of the numerous collaborative activities in which NHGRI is involved. NHGRI remains committed to working with others in moving the field of genomics forward through interactions with the Smithsonian Institution, the Big Data to Knowledge (BD2K) initiative, the Precision Medicine Initiative, many NIH Common Fund programs, and other NIH Institutes/Centers.

It is my hope that this new brochure will help to share the excitement of genomics and NHGRI with a wide variety of groups. A PDF version of the brochure is available at [genome.gov/27561939](http://genome.gov/27561939). In addition, ‘just off the press’ printed copies are available – please contact nhgripubs@mail.nih.gov to request a copy(s).

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**Public Comment Sought: Revised Federal Policy for the Protection of Human Subjects**

The Notice of Proposed Rulemaking for the revised Federal Policy for the Protection of Human Subjects — or ‘Common Rule’ — is now [open for comment](https://federalregister.gov/articles/2015/09/08/2015-21756/federal-policy-for-the-protection-of-human-subjects). Medical advances would not be possible without the willingness of individuals to volunteer to participate in research. The current Common Rule, which protects individuals who participate in research, has been in place since 1991. It was developed at a time when research was predominantly conducted at universities, colleges, and medical institutions, with each study generally taking place at a single site. The expansion of research into new scientific disciplines (such as genomics), the increase in multisite studies, and the significant advances in technology highlight the need to modernize safeguards for participants and to reduce unnecessary administrative burdens. To review the proposed rule and participate in the comment process, see [federalregister.gov/articles/2015/09/08/2015-21756/federal-policy-for-the-protection-of-human-subjects](http://federalregister.gov/articles/2015/09/08/2015-21756/federal-policy-for-the-protection-of-human-subjects).

**Electronic Medical Records and Genomics Network Phase 3 Begins**

With the award of new grants to 9 research projects, 2 DNA sequencing and genotyping facilities, and 1 coordinating center, the 3rd phase of the Electronic Medical Records and Genomics (eMERGE) Network has begun. The eMERGE Network uses large biorepositories with electronic medical records to find the best ways to tailor medical care to individual patients based on their genomic differences. For more information, see [nih.gov/news/health/sep2015/nhgri-01.htm](http://nih.gov/news/health/sep2015/nhgri-01.htm).

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**NHGRI Welcomes a New Chief of Communications**

This month, John Ohab, Ph.D., joins NHGRI as the Chief of the Institute’s Communications and Public Liaison Branch within the Division of Policy, Communications, and Education. Prior to joining NHGRI, Dr. Ohab developed strategic communications programs for the Department of Defense and industry startups. Most recently, he served as Head of Communications and Social Media at the U.S. Naval Research Laboratory, where he led the development of a new comprehensive communications strategy, including a re-branding effort and an extensive social media plan. NHGRI is excited to have John take the reins of our important and well-respected communications program.
On September 17, the Precision Medicine Initiative working group of the NIH Advisory Committee to the Director will unveil its recommendations for the large cohort element of the Initiative. A public teleconference has been planned. See [here](https://nih.gov/precisionmedicine) for more details and to join the teleconference.

- The archived videocast of the PMI workshop on participant engagement and health equity is now available for viewing: [Day 1](#) and [Day 2](#).
- The archived videocast of the PMI workshop on mobile and personal technologies is now available for viewing: [Day 1](#) and [Day 2](#).
- New videos have been added to the NIH “Faces of the Precision Medicine Initiative” video series, and can be viewed [here](#).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Genomics Research</th>
<th>Funding Opportunities</th>
<th>NIH News of Interest</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Human Phenotyping on a Population Scale</td>
<td>Research Supplements to Promote Re-Entry into Biomedical and Behavioral Research Careers</td>
<td>Statement on NIH Efforts to Focus Research to End the AIDS Pandemic</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Research Reveals Unintended Consequences of Inappropriate Medical Food Use in Managing Patients with a Type of Metabolic Disorder</td>
<td>Research Supplements to Promote Diversity in Health-Related Research</td>
<td><a href="#">Genome: Unlocking Life’s Code Monthly Newsletter</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cellular Factors that Shape the 3D Landscape of the Genome Identified</td>
<td>Big Data to Knowledge Development of Software Tools and Methods for Biomedical Big Data in Targeted Areas of High Need</td>
<td><a href="#">NHGRI’s Dr. Carolyn Hutter Featured as a Sammie Award Finalist</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Flipping a Genetic Switch on Obesity?</td>
<td>New Application Package Required for &quot;Emerging Global Leader Award&quot;</td>
<td>Vote for Service to America Medals People’s Choice Award</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Genetic Landscape Can Impact Treatment for Children with Rare, Aggressive Cancer</td>
<td>Request for Information: Strategies for Simplifying NIHs Grant Application Instructions</td>
<td><a href="#">Human Heredity and Health in Africa Newsletter</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>ASSIST for Institutional Training and Career Development (Ts and K12), Other Training Grants (Ds), and Various Research Applications</td>
<td><a href="#">September is Newborn Screening Awareness Month</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>HHS Small Business Innovation Research (SBIR) Program Contract Solicitation</td>
<td><a href="#">News of Interest</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td><a href="#">ENCODE 2015: Research Applications and Users Meeting</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Genome Advance of the Month</td>
<td></td>
<td>LabTV: Curious About the Microbiome</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>基因治疗和生物治疗的听觉丧失</td>
<td></td>
<td>LabTV: Curious About Genetics of Deafness</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**New Genomics Videos**
- ENCODE 2015: Research Applications and Users Meeting
- LabTV: Curious About the Microbiome
- LabTV: Curious About Genetics of Deafness