

Australia targets the pancreas

Pancreatic cancer our target in international cancer genome consortium

Kate McDonald (Australian Life Scientist) 26/03/2009 12:47:00

Australia has committed \$27.5 million towards sequencing the genome of pancreatic cancer as part of our contribution to the International Cancer Genome Consortium.

The consortium was established last year by research organisations throughout the world to co-ordinate [cancer genome mapping](#). Each country is committed to at least one specific type or sub-type of cancer.

In addition to cancer of the pancreas, Australia will work on ovarian cancer.

The work will be led by Associate Professor Sean Grimmond of the University of Queensland, one of Australia's leading genome sequencing experts, and by Professor Andrew Biankin, who heads a pancreatic cancer research group at Sydney's Garvan Institute.

Other groups involved include researchers from WEHI, Johns Hopkins University and the University of California San Francisco in the US, and the Ontario Institute for Cancer Research, headquarters of the ICGC.

It will be funded through the National Health & Medical Research Council. The grant is the largest ever awarded by the NH&MRC, and will be supplemented by support from the Cancer Council NSW, the Queensland Government, the Garvan and UQ.

Technology company Applied Biosystems, which manufactures gene expression arrays and sequencers, and high throughput computing specialist SGI, will also contribute.

Researchers from the Peter MacCallum Cancer Centre and the Australian Genome Research Facility will also be involved.

Other genomes being sequenced by the ICGC include alcohol-related liver cancer and HER2-positive breast cancer, led by France; oral cavity cancer, led by India; leukaemia, led by Spain; virus-related liver cancer, led by Japan; several sub-types of breast cancer, led by the UK; and stomach cancer, led by China.

The consortium is a complement to The Cancer Genome Atlas, run by the US, which is looking at sequencing the genomes of glioblastoma multiforme (brain cancer), squamous carcinoma (lung) and serous adenocarcinoma (ovary).

The idea is to generate high-quality genomic data on up to 50 types of cancer. Each project will involve about 500 specimens and cost about US\$20 million each.

More about [University of Queensland](#), [University of Queensland](#), [SGI](#), [Queensland Government](#), [Peter MacCallum Cancer Centre](#), [National Health & Medical Research Council](#)



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