



ABNA EXCHANGE

OFFICIAL NEWSLETTER OF THE AUSTRALASIAN BIOSPECIMEN NETWORK ASSOCIATION

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Congratulations

We are excited to congratulate Professor Georgina Long and Professor Richard Scolyer, the pioneering co-medical directors of the Sydney-based Melanoma Institute Australia (MIA), who have been named Australians of the Year. See our November 2023 issue for a summary of their work at MIA and the role that biobanking continues to play in their research.

Congratulations to the winners and nominees across all the categories.



Image credit: Sydney Morning Herald

2023 Conference Slides

Selected slide decks from invited speaker presentations at ABNA's 2023 20th Annual Conference are now available for viewing on our website.

Access to these is through the Members Area; head to abna.org.au

Welcome to 2024!

Welcome to our first 2024 newsletter and a special introduction to the inaugural "ABNA Exchange"! We are thrilled to unveil our rebranded newsletter, aiming to deliver even more engaging updates, insightful stories, and foster a closer connection with our community.

In this edition, we bring back the beloved segment "5 Minutes with a Biobanker," featuring Brodie Quine from NATA answering new and exciting questions. As 2024 unfolds, mark your calendars for key biobanking conferences in Australia; ISBER in Melbourne on April 9-12th "Dreaming Beyond Barriers: The Future of Biobanking" (further details on page 3) and our very own ABNA 2024 Annual Meeting held in Adelaide from October 16-18th! Stay tuned for details on abstract submissions, early bird registration, and scholarship opportunities.

Exciting developments are in store this year, including our collaboration with the journal Biopreservation and Biobanking, the new Special Interest Groups (there is still time to join), the ABNA 2024 Seminar Series, and much more. Buckle up for another year of adventures and surprises. Watch this space for the latest from ABNA and let's make it a year to remember!

Georget



ABNA 2024 - GLENELG, ADELAIDE
BIOBANKING: SHAPING THE FUTURE TOGETHER
16 - 18 OCTOBER 2024

Clinical Trials & Population Cohort Biobanking

This SIG aims to bring together expertise to facilitate improvements and promote excellence in biobanking for clinical trials, cohort studies and related research across Australasia. It aims to provide a formal networking space for likeminded biobank teams within Australasia.

SIG Chairs

Ilka Priebe - Ilka.Priebe@csiro.au

Jennie Hui - Jennie.Hui@health.wa.gov.au

Wayne Ng - Wayne.Ng@cancervic.org.au

Post-mortem Tissue Collection

A collaborative task force to consolidate learnings and best practice in post-mortem biobanking, support new banks establishing protocols and lobby for infrastructure support in adult, paediatric and veterinary research.

SIG Chairs

Cassandra Griffin

Cassandra.Griffin@newcastle.edu.au

Louise Ludlow

louise.ludlow@mcri.edu.au



ABNA SPECIAL INTEREST GROUPS

JOIN NOW

Banking for Biodiversity

This SIG aims to understand, improve and promote the use and implementation of biobanking as a conservation action for the management of Australasia's biodiversity. Their aim is to share information between biobanks to improve program sustainability, collaboration and promote the value of biobanking to relevant stakeholders.

SIG Chairs

Emma Dalziell

emma.dalziell@uwa.edu.au

Rose Upton

rose.upton@newcastle.edu.au

Quality Management and Improvement

A community that identifies quality and improvement gaps and areas of interest and facilitates forums to tackle identified topics.

SIG Chairs

Samantha Higgins

samantha.higgins@cancervic.org.au

Beth Caruana

Beth.Caruana@health.nsw.gov.au

ISBER 2024 Annual Meeting Co-Chairs

ISBER is preparing to celebrate their 25th Anniversary and Annual Meeting back in the Indo-Pacific Rim region April 9-12, 2024 hosted in Melbourne, Australia! With the theme of “Dreaming Beyond Barriers: The Future of Biobanking”, this anniversary meeting will reflect and celebrate the impact of the biobanking community, its innovation and resilience in overcoming barriers, and its shared dreams for the future.

The ISBER 2024 Annual Conference is chaired by Cassandra Griffin, Dr. Gregory Grossman, and Amanda Moors



CASSANDRA GRIFFIN

Cassandra manages NSW Regional Biospecimen and Research Services at the University of Newcastle, Australia. With a background in oncology clinical trials and international medical communications, Cassandra has a keen interest in sustainability and biobanking partnerships. Cassandra is especially interested in post-mortem brain biobanking, particularly the psychosocial impact for donors and their loved ones. Cassandra is a Past President of the Australasian Biospecimen Network Association (ABNA) and an active member of ISBER, having previously served on the 2023 Annual Meeting Planning Committee. She is delighted to contribute to the 2024 meeting with such a wonderful team!

GREGORY GROSSMAN

Dr. Gregory Grossman has over 18 years of clinical and research experience and serves as the Chief Scientific Officer of Advancing Sight Network and the Executive Director of the Precision Ocular Biobank. He received his PhD from Kent State University and completed a fellowship in ophthalmology at the Cleveland Clinic and he holds board certifications in eye banking, clinical trials and medical affairs. He is a member of the ISBER Product Development and Webinar Planning Task Forces, a co-chair of the ISBER 2024 Annual Meeting and an Associate Editor of the 5th Edition of the ISBER Best Practices.

AMANDA MOORS

Amanda is the Program Coordinator for the US Dept. of Commerce National Institute of Standards and Technology's NIST Biorepository. She collaborates with federal, state, and non-profit organizations to implement standardized collection protocols and procedures for archiving diverse taxonomic samples for real-time and retrospective analysis. Additionally, Amanda has been active in ISBER for many years serving as a Co-Chair for the 2024 ISBER annual meeting, Co-Chair for the 2021 ISBER annual meeting (virtual), the ISBER Organizing Advisory Committee, ISBER Scientific Program Committee, contributor to the ISBER Best Practices 5th edition, and the ISBER Education and Training Committee.

5 Minutes with a Biobanker

We approach a different professional in the biobanking arena with the same five questions each month.



This month Brodie Quine, Lead Accreditation Specialist within the NATA Biobanking program, responds to our questions.

For more than 75 years NATA has been Australia's lead accreditation organisation offering accreditation for laboratory testing for pathology, life sciences, as well as biobanking, which includes accreditation to the requirements of ISO 20387.

Learn more here: [Biobanking \(ISO 20387\) Accreditation - NATA](#)

THE QUICK QUESTIONS

Chilli on food?

Yes

What is better the book or the movie?

Book - it's always the book

Is it football or soccer?

Football - my partner is English so my choices are limited here. I call it soccer when he isn't listening

Are you usually 5min early or 5min late?

5 minutes early - the thought of being late brings me too much anxiety

1. How long have you been working in biobanking?

I have been working within the Biobanking accreditation program at NATA for the past 18 months. I spent most of the decade prior within medical research, which has given me insight into the value of accreditation and the confidence it provides to its users.

2. What has shaped your views on biobanking?

Coming from my old field of medical research, my view of biobanking was somewhat limited to human biological materials. My current role within NATA focuses on the accreditation elements of the Biobanking Standard ISO 20387 which has meant that I have the opportunity to work across a varied pool of biobanks. This has exposed myself and the team to new and evolving forms of best practice within the industry. Over the past few years with NATA, I have been fortunate to meet many associates from a vast array of biobanks which has broadened my view and experience within the biobanking field.

3. What is the craziest thing you have done to save a sample/s?

These are some of the memories I wish I could erase from my days at a lab bench and incubator. I am sure we have all had our midnight moments of freezers crashing and frozen fingers as you race to transfer samples to a working one!

4. What has been your favourite moment (so far) in your biobanking career?

I am currently participating in the systematic review of ISO 20387 within the International Standards Committee. This has enabled me to meet and collaborate with likeminded biobankers from across the globe. I was also part of the team that helped NATA become the first Australian body to offer accreditation to ISO 20387;2018 General Requirements for Biobanking, in the process becoming only the [second Accreditation Body globally to be recognised for its biobanking accreditation program](#)

5. What was the last conference you attended and where was it?

I was lucky enough to attend the 20th annual ABNA conference at SeaWorld on the Gold Coast

Has your biobank facility been considering accreditation to ISO20387? Read NATA's story "Expanding your current accreditation into biobanking may pay dividends" [HERE](#)

Biopreservation and Biobanking

A Window into Australasian Biobanking – Showcasing Innovation, Highlighting Conservation and Embracing Diversity

Call for Papers

Guest Editors

Cassandra Griffin: NSW Regional Biospecimen Services, University of Newcastle, Newcastle, Australia/ABNA

Georget Reaiche-Miller: University of Adelaide Biobank, University of Adelaide, Adelaide, Australia/ABNA President 2024/2025

Alison Parry-Jones: Wales Cancer Biobank, Cardiff University/ISBER President-of-the-Board 2023/2024

Anusha Hettiaratchi: UNSW Biospecimen Services, University of NSW, Sydney, Australia/ABNA

Biobanking research and biospecimen science are rapidly expanding fields in Australasia, a region known for notable and sustained contributions to the global research community. Due to the geography, natural ecosystems, multicultural populations and the rich indigenous histories of the region, Australasian nations can provide unique perspectives on key issues relevant to the global biobanking community.

The Australasian Biospecimen Network Association (ABNA) has made a concerted effort to engage and support the growth of biobanking within Australasia, with particular emphasis on raising the profile of emerging biobanks in areas of growing priority. With a commitment to fostering growth and innovation, ABNA continues to inspire a culture of biobanking research and biospecimen science among early career biobankers. This approach ensures the longevity of crucial biobanking infrastructure for future generations.

As ISBER marks 10 years of affiliate collaboration with Australasian Biobankers and prepares to welcome ISBER delegates to Australian shores for the 2024 Annual Meeting, Biopreservation and Biobanking is planning a special issue intending to showcase the truly unique and innovative work within the region. Celebrating diversity and individuality, the issue will highlight novel approaches to challenges of relevance for regional stakeholders as well as the global research community. Areas of interest include, but are not limited to:

- Environmental and conservation biobanking including work on endangered and extinct species, responses to climate change and environmental destruction
- Projects emphasizing the protection of biodiversity in the Australasian landscape
- Exploring collaborations with indigenous populations and models of indigenous consent for sample collection
- Programs focusing on areas of social, ethical and legal priority such as those developed to repatriate or return indigenous samples collected without consent
- Research exploring inclusive strategies for engagement, addressing the heterogeneity of populations, or implementing biobanking protocols in marginalised or vulnerable groups that have been previously excluded from participation will also be highly regarded

Biobank profile papers that simply describe a biobank, it's holdings and/or distribution efforts and are not supported by in-depth research data or findings that are more broadly applicable to other biobanks are not generally deemed acceptable for publication in the journal and will be referred elsewhere.



Interested parties are encouraged to contact the guest editor [Cassandra Griffin](#) to discuss their plans further prior to submission.

**Click [HERE](#) to upload your paper
using the manuscript category
Special Issue: A Window Into Australasian Biobanking**

Benefits of publishing with Biopreservation and Biobanking include:

- No submission fees
- Expert peer review of your manuscript from leading specialists in your field
- Zero-embargo Green Open Access policy
- Immediate deposit of your work to PubMed and other indexing services upon publication
- Free 30-day access to share your published research with your networks and colleagues
- Global visibility in more than 170 countries

Aims & Scope

Biopreservation and Biobanking is the first journal to provide a unifying forum for the peer-reviewed communication of recent advances in the emerging and evolving field of biospecimen procurement, processing, preservation and banking, distribution, and use. The Journal publishes a range of original articles focusing on current challenges and problems in biopreservation, and advances in methods to address these issues related to the processing of macromolecules, cells, and tissues for research.

In a new section dedicated to Emerging Markets and Technologies, the Journal highlights the emergence of new markets and technologies that are either adopting or disrupting the biobank framework as they imprint on society. The solutions presented here are anticipated to help drive innovation within the biobank community.

Biopreservation and Biobanking also explores the ethical, legal, and societal considerations surrounding biobanking and biorepository operation. Ideas and practical solutions relevant to improved quality, efficiency, and sustainability of repositories, and relating to their management, operation and oversight are discussed as well.

Biopreservation and Biobanking coverage includes:

- Systems preservation
- Preservation states
- Cellular and molecular mechanisms
- Preservation engineering-bioprocessing
- Stem cell biobanking
- Optimisation protocols-biopackaging
- Biospecimen science
- Best practices for biobanking, including the collection, storage, distribution, and use of specimens and associated data
- Biobanking informatics systems
- Quality assurance and control/quality management for biobanking
- Governance, management, and oversight of biobanks/biorepository operations
- Biobank sustainability and biobank economics
- Natural systems models
- Biosafety
- Ethical/legal/regulatory considerations/societal issues

If you have any suggestions for a short article for ABNA Exchange, please contact: info@abna.org.au

Content deadline for February edition: 23.02.24



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