

## **MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING**

**between**

**the Italian National Research Council – CNR  
Piazzale Aldo Moro 7 - 00185 Roma - Italy**

**and**

**Genome Canada**

**150 Metcalfe Street, Suite 2100, Ottawa, Canada K2P 1P1**

### **WHEREAS**

Canada and Italy already have a certain level of scientific cooperation. At the government level, Canadian scientists from federal research laboratories have been increasing their level of interaction with Italian scientists following agreements signed in 2005.

The Italian National Research Council (hereinafter referred to as CNR) and Genome Canada wish to strengthen their relationship and explore the potential for beneficial cooperation desiring to further strengthen the scientific and technology cooperation between Italy and Canada in the field of Genomics and Proteomics research;

### **THEREFORE**

CNR and Canada (hereinafter referred to as the “Parties”) have agreed to establish this Memorandum of Understanding (hereinafter referred to as “MOU” or “Agreement”) to expand these linkages to new levels of collaboration and to launch initiatives aiming to establish a framework for cooperation between departments/institutes, scientists, biopharmaceutical and venture capital firms for the identification of scientific problems of common interest as outlined in the following articles.

### **Article 1**

#### **Framework of cooperation**

##### **1.1) Background**

Genomics and Proteomics offer enormous potential both to increase our understanding of the basic mechanisms of life and to improve health by developing new approaches to diagnosing illness, improving treatment and, ultimately, by developing better strategies for preventing disease. Furthermore, the potential benefits of Genomics and Proteomics extend to a wide range of fields, such as agriculture and environment.

Canada and Italy share a common interest in the development of Genomics and Proteomics research and both have taken major initiatives to build their domestic research capability.

From the industrial sector, both Canadian and Italian biotechnology companies, together with their venture capital investors, have focused primarily on developing their firms on a national basis and on establishing themselves in major markets. Today, the biopharmaceutical industry, in both countries, is maturing and taking a broader international perspective. This Agreement will help to both facilitate and accelerate that effort through joint ventures and new investments.

##### **1.2) CNR and Genome Canada**

Genome Canada is a not-for-profit corporation created in February 2000, with its head office in Ottawa, Ontario. It is the primary funding and information resource relating to genomics and proteomics research in Canada. Genome Canada’s mandate is to develop and implement a national strategy in genomics and

proteomics research for the benefit of all Canadians. It is committed to increasing Canada's position among world leaders in genomics and proteomics research in key selected areas such as health, agriculture, environment, forestry, fisheries and new technology development. It is also committed to a leadership role on the ethical, environmental, economic, legal and social (GE<sup>3</sup>LS) issues and potential implications associated with genomics and proteomics research, and to communicating with Canadians on these and other issues. To date, Genome Canada has committed more than \$700 million to genomics and proteomics research. When combined with funding commitments from other partners, the investment totals over \$1.5 billion in 115 innovative, large-scale research projects and science and technology platforms.

CNR is Italy's major governmental organization for research and development, employing more than 8,000 people across Italy with an annual budget of about one Billion Euros. Its mandate is to carry out and promote research activities through partnerships and networking with other entities, for the scientific, technological, economic and social development of the Country. CNR integrates its activities through an interdisciplinary structure made up of 11 National Departments - networks of Institutes and researchers brought together to focus on important scientific problems - which include centres and programs active in Genomic Research.

### **1.3) Areas of cooperation**

The Agreement will focus its efforts on promoting cooperation in the broad field of genomics, to include activities related to proteomics, bioinformatics, functional genomics, technology development and research in ethical, environmental, economic, legal and social issues related to the application of genomics and proteomics research.

Large-scale applied genomics and proteomics research themes related to Human Health have been identified as having a particular potential for mutual development in a first stage, these are:

- Predisposition to Disease;
- Diagnostics;
- Optimization of Therapies and Drug Optimization;
- Disease Mechanisms;
- Ethical, environmental, economic, legal and social issues GE<sup>3</sup>LS;
- Policy and Knowledge Transfer;
- New Technology Development.

International Consortium Initiatives (ICI) can be considered as potential collaborations in areas such as:

- Structural Genomics Consortium (SGC);
- Public Population Projects in Genomics (P3G);
- International Regulome Consortium (IRC);
- International DNA Barcoding Consortium;
- Cancer Stem Cells (CSC).

### **1.4) Participants**

This Agreement will seek to promote exchanges between scientists as well as between biopharmaceutical and venture capital firms.

Genome Canada and CNR will seek to coordinate researchers and biopharmaceutical companies in Canada and Italy that are involved in their funded research programs as well as all others who may have a contribution to make to Canada/Italy cooperation.

Other Parties may be included in the Agreement with the consent of both Genome Canada and CNR.

## **Article 2**

### **Types of cooperation**

Programs and activities that will be encouraged will include:

- a minimum of one scientific mission to Canada within two years of the effective date of the Agreement;

- a minimum of one scientific mission to Italy within two years of the effective date of the Agreement;
- individual targeted visits, meetings, and participation in workshops, by Canadians to Italy and by Italians to Canada;
- promotion of collaboration between Genome Canada Centres and Italian Genome Research Centres;
- promotion of doctoral and postdoctoral exchanges;
- promotion of symposia and scientific conferences by genome researchers;
- exchange of information on scientific strategies, objectives and new ideas for program development;
- set up of mutual system for international benchmarking;
- trade and investment missions focused on biotechnology and venture capital.
- both Parties will support efforts to join forces to secure additional research and funding opportunities from national and international sources.

### **Article 3 Roles of the Parties**

The two Parties should perform the following roles:

- To identify priority areas for cooperation, in addition to those listed in Article 1, in consultation with each other, and taking into account both academic and financial feasibility
- To establish the framework for cooperation for each selected area (key institutions, key persons, forms of cooperation, financing, etc.)
- To review on-going programmes and consult each other about the continuation
- To maintain close mutual exchange of information
- To ensure that the cooperation will bring real socio-economic benefits to both countries

### **Article 4 Financial regulations**

Specific initiatives will be funded on a case-by-case basis. Both Parties will seek to use their own resources and will join forces to secure new national and international support where appropriate.

This MOU is not intended to create binding, legal obligations between the Parties.

### **Article 5 Supervision of the programme**

A steering committee of six interested and committed individuals will be delegated by Genome Canada and by CNR (equal representation) to oversee the development of initiatives, to report on their progress and to make recommendations for new initiatives.

The steering committee will meet at least twice a year in-person, alternating between Canada and Italy.

### **Article 6 Additional activities**

Both Parties agree to undertake sustained efforts to publicize their activities and progress made in achieving the long-term goals of the Agreement.

Annual reports will be provided to interested stakeholders, including the respective governments, the respective Embassies and others.

All efforts will be made to ensure coverage of activities through usual communications vehicles such as annual reports, web sites, press releases, etc.

**Article 6**  
**Validity of the Memorandum**

The Agreement will be valid for three (3) years from September 2007 until September 2010 or until either Party decides to rescind by giving written notices at least three (3) months in advance.

This Agreement may be amended or extended at any time by mutual consent of both Parties.

Signed in duplicate, in English.

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Dr. Martin Godbout  
President & CEO  
for  
Genome Canada

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Prof. Federico Rossi  
President a.i.  
for  
Consiglio Nazionale delle Ricerche

Date

Date