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## Pathogenomics of Innate Immunity (Pi<sup>2</sup>)

### Integrated GE<sup>3</sup>LS Research

Moving Science out of the Laboratory: Why are Some Scientists More Translational than Others?

### GE<sup>3</sup>LS Project Leaders

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### Summary

Most large-scale scientific projects are expected to translate research results into clinical practice or commercial profit. Many academic researchers, however, are reluctant to exploit their discoveries. They feel uncomfortable moving beyond basic research into market-based or clinical applications.

Dr. Janet Atkinson-Grosjean, Senior Research Associate in the W. Maurice Young Centre for Applied Ethics (UBC), will examine the social, cultural and political factors that affect scientists' willingness to translate discoveries into practice and/or profit. For market-based translation ('merchant science') in particular, researchers must develop skills in non-traditional activities such as intellectual property protection and product promotion. But the market also demands traditional 'reputational capital' in the form of advanced scientific publications, grants, and awards. Successful merchant scientists and translational researchers are able to switch with ease between scientific and entrepreneurial skill-sets. These scientists often depict their work in moral terms, suggesting it will increase overall prosperity by creating jobs or advancing therapies.

By examining the intersection of science, public policy and entrepreneurship in PI2, this project will try to frame the ethical dimensions of translational research and merchant science. The overall goal is to develop an evidence-base for informed policy and debate. <http://www.genomebc.ca/ethics/research/activities/pi2.htm>