

**Genome Canada's New GE<sup>3</sup>LS Researchers Survey (2009)  
Recommendations and Actions**

Recommendation	Action
<p><b>Recommendation 1.</b> <i>“Promote greater involvement of new researchers in existing small group workshops and symposiums, ensuring that these events are designed to have interactive components and involve the relevant range of cross-disciplinary and cross-sector stakeholders. These workshops are a primary way in which new researchers network at all levels with other GE<sup>3</sup>LS and science researchers. There is considerable support for this in the pre-survey consultation, as well as both the quantitative and qualitative findings of the survey. When possible, create a process whereby researchers may apply for partial funds to host such workshops on specific areas of their expertise.”</i></p>	<p>This is an excellent suggestion, thank you. In fact, as an example, Genome Canada and its partners recently launched a new Ottawa GE<sup>3</sup>LS Series, called <b>“GPS: Where Genomics, Public Policy and Society Meet”</b>. The objective of this new series is to broker 2-way dialogue between researchers and senior federal policy-makers at small invitation-only events dedicated to specific themes. At the first event, held November 27, 2009, on “Consent, Privacy and Research Biobanks”, almost 20% of the researchers in attendance were new GE<sup>3</sup>LS researchers studying and/or working on this topic. This was a great precedent which we intend to continue at future events.</p>
<p><b>Recommendation 2.</b> <i>“Provide additional funding for new GE<sup>3</sup>LS researchers to attend national and international events; allocate specific funding to graduate and undergraduate students, but also to new researchers who do not fit these categories and who may opt to further their education and/or training in GE<sup>3</sup>LS areas in the future. An excellent example of such allocation of funding was exemplified at the 5<sup>th</sup> International DNA Sampling Conference, for which Genome Canada contributed funds to cover registration and accommodation costs for (new) researchers whose work was accepted for poster or concurrent session presentations.”</i></p>	<p>Another excellent suggestion, thank you. As a demonstrable commitment to supporting the next generation of Canadian GE<sup>3</sup>LS leaders and increasing their visibility on the national/international stage, Genome Canada provided dedicated sponsorship to the 5<sup>th</sup> International DNA Sampling Conference in Banff (September 2009) and the HUGO ELSI Conference in Geneva (November 2009) specifically for this purpose, i.e. to help pay the cost of travel for new GE<sup>3</sup>LS researchers to be able to attend the events. This was greatly appreciated by both the trainees and their mentors, and we will try to continue this approach in the future, as possible and appropriate.</p>

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<p><b>Recommendation 3.</b> <i>“Genome Centers should provide more opportunities for face-to-face networking, including social networking for their researchers, both within the regional GE<sup>3</sup>LS and science communities. Social networking events, e.g. lunch seminars, picnics, retreats or other local events should make explicit attempts to bring together local new researchers working in both the GE<sup>3</sup>LS and science areas. Other examples include public engagement events that involve new researchers in both the regional science and GE<sup>3</sup>LS communities. These interactions early on in researchers’ careers can break down disciplinary barriers and sow the seeds for collaboration in the future.”</i></p>	<p>The regional Genome Centers already undertake many such local initiatives, to facilitate networking within and between their genomics and GE<sup>3</sup>LS communities, and to engage the public at large. Your specific recommendation and suggestions on how one might increase the involvement of new GE<sup>3</sup>LS researchers, in particular, have been forwarded on for further consideration.</p>
<p><b>Recommendation 4.</b> <i>“Continue to encourage interdisciplinary teams, as well as cross-sector collaboration on Genome Canada- and Genome Centre-funded grants. Create/ maintain the emphasis on the involvement of new researchers, and where possible and appropriate, provide new researchers (e.g. post-docs) the opportunity to act as co-investigators on grants. Such collaboration is a practical way of facilitating networking as well as training for developing new investigators.”</i></p>	<p>As part of Genome Canada’s current evaluation criteria, research applications are rated against, among other things, the quality and appropriateness of the proposed training program and training milieu. At present, Genome Canada does not have restrictions on who can be a co-investigator on projects. In fact, post-doctoral fellows can (and have been) co-investigators on applications where they have demonstrated the appropriate level of contribution and expertise. Suggestions on how to create even more opportunities and encourage greater involvement of trainees -- specifically GE<sup>3</sup>LS trainees -- may be considered for future competition processes.</p>
<p><b>Recommendation 5.</b> <i>“Create a position for a national networking coordinator, whose job it will be to maintain an up-to-date compendium of career and other related networking resources on the national GE<sup>3</sup>LS website, and who will liaison with the Genome Centres to gather and disseminate information on career, training and networking opportunities. This dedicated</i></p>	<p>The possibility of hiring a national networking coordinator specifically for this purpose is not feasible in the near future. However, this proposed role is already incorporated to a certain extent within existing resources. As examples, regular information-sharing goes on between Genome Canada and the regional Genome Centers in order to maximize dissemination of GE<sup>3</sup>LS-</p>

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<p><i>role will also ensure continuity in oversight and flexibility of any ongoing networking or communication initiatives that are undertaken, e.g. a blog on the Genome Canada website, a moderated Facebook page, etc.”</i></p>	<p>related news and messages. A GE<sup>3</sup>LS message board has been created on Genome Canada’s new GE<sup>3</sup>LS webpage to post announcements of job openings, training opportunities, etc. Genome Canada’s new electronic newsletter, <b>Impact</b>, and our new <b>CANADAGE<sup>3</sup>LS</b> research database, are additional tools to support virtual communication and networking within the GE<sup>3</sup>LS community and between GE<sup>3</sup>LS and genomics researchers. Further virtual tools and mechanisms are being considered for Phase II development of Genome Canada’s GE<sup>3</sup>LS website, particularly aimed at the new generation of internet users.</p>
<p><b>Recommendation 6.</b> <i>“Create a volunteer advisory committee of new GE<sup>3</sup>LS researcher from across Canada whose role it will be to provide advice and feedback on existing and potential future networking and communication initiatives. Provide the means for this committee to meet via teleconference at regular intervals throughout the year or as deemed necessary. Provide for a Genome Canada representative (e.g. a networking coordinator or other individual) to attend these teleconferences in order to report back to the Chief GE<sup>3</sup>LS officer. This will not only promote networking among committee members but will act as a mechanism by which to solicit feedback on the shifting needs of this relatively new community of GE<sup>3</sup>LS researchers. It is also an excellent way in which to actively involve new researchers in leadership roles in the GE<sup>3</sup>LS community.”</i></p>	<p>This is another excellent recommendation, thank you. There could be various low-cost ways of facilitating such teleconferences as a forum for actively engaging new GE<sup>3</sup>LS researchers across various sectors and regions, encouraging open dialogue between them and soliciting their feedback and advice. We plan to explore this idea further with some of the new GE<sup>3</sup>LS researchers involved in this survey and the pre-survey consultation.</p>