



ABNA EXCHANGE

OFFICIAL NEWSLETTER OF THE AUSTRALASIAN BIOSPECIMEN NETWORK ASSOCIATION

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Conference Delegate Checklist

The Conference Organising Committee are looking forward to welcoming you to the Stamford Grand, Glenelg Beach next month. They have 'helpfully' put together a simple checklist to ensure you are prepared:

- ✓ Completed conference registration
- ✓ Update your bio & profile pic in Currinda
- ✓ Select and register SIG meeting to attend
- ✓ Register for the Site Visit
- ✓ Confirm travel/accommodation
- ✓ Panic that you can't find your poster
- ✓ Realise the poster is at the printer
- ✓ Biobanker Speed Dating registration
- ✓ Gala Dinner registration
- ✓ Collect and pack poster
- ✓ Locate favourite vendor in Trade Hall
- ✓ Check out Glenelg
- ✓ Immerse yourself in each Session
- ✓ Enjoy conference, engage, learn lots
- ✓ Set aside time to visit Adelaide

The countdown is on!

Only 20 days to go until ABNA 2024 kicks off! There's still time to register, so don't miss out on this opportunity to join us. Get ready for amazing presentations, engaging workshops, and insightful panel discussions, all complemented by fantastic networking events. We're excited to announce that the conference program has been finalised, including the highly anticipated site visit. I won't spoil the surprise, so read on for more details in this edition of the ABNA Exchange. Be sure to book your spot as space is limited!

In this issue, we invite you to enjoy an enlightening conversation in "5 Minutes with a Biobanker" featuring Jelani Clarke, Chief Business Development Officer at AminoChain, one of our invited speakers.

Stay updated with the latest from the ABNA Special Interest Groups as they prepare for their first annual workshop during the conference. Don't forget to secure your spot in the SIG that interests you! The Quality and Improvement SIG also has a questionnaire, so please read on to complete it, along with some exciting teaser information about the launch of a new SIG at the 2024 conference.

Be sure to check out the articles highlighted in "Biobanking in the News," as well as further details on the ISBER 2025 conference, including travel grant applications to flag to your network in lower to middle income countries.

A quick reminder: applications for the Emerging Leader Scholarship must be submitted by 5 PM on Friday, September 27th, and nominations for the Management Committee close on Friday, October 4th, at 5 PM AEST.

Georget



ABNA 2024 Conference – Site Visit

We're delighted to announce that our much-anticipated mystery site visit for ABNA 2024 conference "Biobanking: Shaping the Future Together" will be at the Adelaide Zoo. Join us for a personalised 1.5-hour tour with Mark Smith, Conservation Manager for the Royal Zoological Society of South Australia, that takes an in-depth look at the zoo's essential conservation efforts.

Among the notable residents are the critically endangered Sumatran orangutans and tigers, white-cheeked gibbons, and the endangered komodo dragons and Tasmanian devils. You may even have the chance to meet the vulnerable giant pandas, Wang Wang and Fu Ni, before they return to China later this year after 15 wonderful years at the zoo. They are part of an international research, conservation, and breeding program dedicated to preserving their species.

The ABNA site visit on Friday, October 18th morning, will focus on the zoo's live breeding programs and biospecimen sample collection and storage, emphasising their importance in safeguarding endangered species. We will also be able to explore the animal health center to learn about the innovative techniques being employed to protect our planet's biodiversity.

To kick off this exciting event, we have a teaser presentation on Wednesday, October 16th by Mark Smith from Adelaide Zoo, who will share fascinating insights into a selection of the zoo's initiatives, with a focus on molecular biology.

ABNA has been able to secure 50 tickets. This means spaces are limited to the first 50 members. Interested?

You will need to log back into Currinda and select the Adelaide Zoo Site Visit as part of your registration

Be sure to book your spot now to not miss out on this incredible opportunity!

We can't wait to see you there!

About Adelaide Zoo

Adelaide Zoo is part of Zoos South Australia, an independent conservation charity that relies on community support to care for endangered animals, conduct research, and educate visitors. Remember, "Every visit and ticket helps save a species from extinction".



Adelaide Zoo is home to over 2,500 animals across 250 species of reptiles, birds, mammals, and fish. More than just a sanctuary for wildlife, the zoo plays a crucial role in conservation and education. It hosts critically endangered, endangered, vulnerable, and threatened species, with dedicated programs aimed at their protection. You can see a complete list of their conservation programs [HERE](#).

ABNA Special Interest Groups

A reminder to conference delegates to register for the SIG workshop you would like to attend; this needs to be done in Currinda

The Quality & Improvement SIG would like to hear from you!

Have a burning quality question? Or is there one operational area that is tricky above all others? Then now is your chance to Ask Us Anything!! for the upcoming interactive SIG session!

Use this 1-minute survey to submit your question(s) ahead of the ABNA Annual meeting (by Fri Oct 4th) - or if you are not attending, the Q&I SIG would still love ABNA member input into the topics and initiatives we work on into 2025:

Ask Us Anything [HERE](#)

Thank you, Q&I SIG Chairs



The banner features five purple rounded rectangles representing different SIGs. The first one is highlighted with a red starburst and a dashed border. Below the rectangles is the ABNA logo and a large red 'JOIN NOW' button.

SIG Name	SIG Chairs
NEW SIG Launching at the ABNA Annual Conference in October	
Clinical Trials & Population Cohort Biobanking	Ilka Priebe Jennie Hui Wayne Ng
Post-mortem Tissue Collection	Cassandra Griffin Louise Ludlow
Banking for Biodiversity	Emma Dalziell Rose Upton
Quality Management & Improvement	Samantha Higgins Beth Caruana

australasian biospecimen network association

ABNA SPECIAL INTEREST GROUPS

JOIN NOW

NEW Special Interest Group - COMING SOON

ABNA continues to actively work to expand its relevance and foster areas of expertise by providing opportunities for members operating similar programs of work to create networks. Expressions of interest to form a Special Interest Group can be submitted throughout the year.

New in 2024

Are you a biobanker/biospecimen scientist looking to ensure a collaborative and culturally safe path forward for an open dialogue with Indigenous persons leading to improved understandings for motivations and priorities on both sides of the conversation? Perhaps our new Special Interest Group is for you?? More details coming soon!

Join us at the ABNA Annual Meeting as we launch a new SIG with updates to follow in ABNA Exchange and mail-outs to our membership.

5 Minutes with a Biobanker

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



This month Dr Jelani Clarke, Chief Business Development Officer at [AminoChain](#) answers our questions.

Jelani is a neuroimmunologist with a degree from McGill University who has made the transition from the biotech industry to scientific consulting and communication.

Jelani will be presenting at ABNA's Annual Conference next month.

THE QUICK QUESTIONS

Chilli on food?

Yes

What is better the book or the movie?

Book

Is it football or soccer?

Football

Are you usually 5min early or 5min late?

5 minutes early - "If you're not 5 minutes early, then you are late" - my beloved grandfather

1. How long have you been working in biobanking?

3 years

2. What has shaped your views on biobanking?

The need for more diverse representation of human samples to drive more equitable innovation in impactful therapies.

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

Run a kilometer to get a valuable brain resection into stable cold storage.

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

Seeing the excitement from my peers regarding the innovative solutions AminoChain has built to help solve some of the foundational issues hampering biobanks.

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

Bio-Taiwan in Taiwan



Abstract, Workshop and Roundtable Submissions - NOW OPEN

ISBER is pleased to accept abstract and workshop proposal submissions for the 2025 Annual Meeting!

FOR ABSTRACTS: Share your research with the international biobanking community! Abstracts can be presented in-person and virtually, or virtually-only through the virtual meeting platform. Click the link below to learn more about abstract categories and submission guidelines.

FOR WORKSHOPS: ISBER invites individuals, organizations, and working groups to host educational and interactive workshops at its Annual Meetings. Workshop time slots are 60 or 90 minutes in length, and the content is fully planned by the workshop host. Hosting a workshop is a great opportunity to provide practical solutions to challenges in biobanking. Click the link below to learn more about workshop submission guidelines.

FOR ROUNDTABLE TOPICS: Roundtable discussions are an opportunity to get together with fellow delegates to discuss an important topic or challenge in biobanking in an informal setting. Submit a proposal to facilitate a discussion on this topic at the Annual Meeting! Click the link below to learn how to submit.

SUBMISSION DEADLINE: Nov. 13, 2024 at 11:59pm North America Eastern Time

Link to submit: <https://www.isber.org/page/2025ISBERAnnual>

Travel Grant Applications

One travel grant is available to an individual in a lower or middle income country, as classified by the World Bank. Only applicants who currently reside in a lower or middle income country are eligible for this grant.

The travel grant recipient will receive:

Economy class travel to Montreal, Canada

Hotel accommodation for the duration of the event

Daily per diem

Complimentary registration for the event

APPLICATION DEADLINE: Oct 28, 2024 at 11:59pm North America Eastern Time

Link to apply: <https://www.isber.org/page/2025TravelGrant>

Biobanking in the news

A Ranking Tool for “Category Killer” Microbial Biobanks

A recent paper in *Biopreservation and Biobanking* describes how microbial biobanks can cover a wide range of phylogenetic and metabolic diversity (“category killers”) or focus on specific taxonomic, thematic, or disease areas. The strategic decisions about strain selection for certain applications or for the biobank culling necessitate a method to support prioritisation and selection. The authors propose an unbiased scoring approach based on objective parameters to assess, categorize, and assign priorities among samples in stock in a microbial biobank.

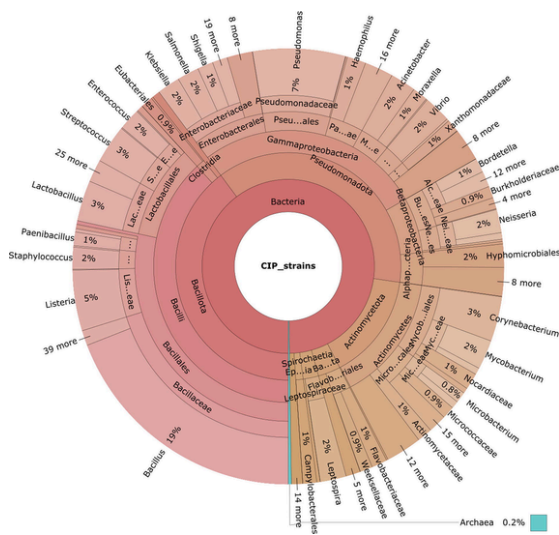
The authors conclude that their proposed methodology has broader applicability and can be extended to other microorganisms, biobanks, and for any ranking needs. By adapting and implementing this approach, microbial biobanks stand to enhance the management of their collections, with “culling” being a strategic measure toward sustainability.

Gearing up for the world’s biggest reef intervention, set for 2025

A fascinating in-depth news article featured recently in the *Good Weekend* magazine (17 August 2024), highlighted the bold efforts of Australian scientists in intervening to restore the Great Barrier Reef.

The wide-ranging article talks about the Reef Restoration and Adaption Program (RRAP) and the partner organisations that take part, and even the unlikely involvement of the McLaren Formula 1 racing team. Key to this ambitious intervention is the enormous National Sea Simulator in Queensland - here corals are bred in strictly controlled conditions, attempting to essentially ‘speed up’ their evolution, with the aim that they can better withstand the changing climactic conditions.

Alongside the RRAP initiatives, the article also discusses efforts to ‘rescue’ existing corals before they become extinct, including the work of The Forever Reef Project, the living coral biobank headed by friend of ABNA, Dr Dean Miller.

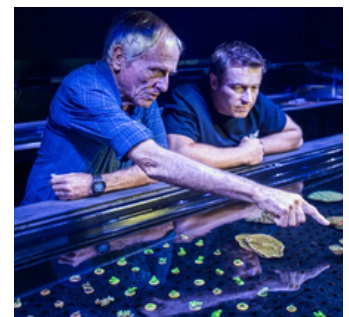


Taxonomic diversity of Collection of Institut Pasteur (CIP) strains used as an example in this publication. The CIP hosts about 25,000 strains, of which 99.8% are bacterial strains representing more than 1000 genera and 5000 species.

Please note a subscription may be required to access some of the articles mentioned here



TOP: The National Sea Simulator near Townsville (image source: Sydney Morning Herald, photographer Roslyn Budd)



RIGHT: Charlie Veron & Dean Miller at Cairns' Living Coral Biobank, where the hope is to collect all 415 of the reef's species (image source: Julia Sumerling / Great Barrier Reef Legacy)

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

Content deadline for October edition: 25.10.24



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