

Annual Report 2026

CONNECT. ENGAGE. GROW.



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About

ISBER is the only global organization that addresses the harmonization of scientific, technical, legal, and ethical issues relevant to repositories of biological and environmental specimens.

ISBER fosters collaboration; creates education and training opportunities; provides a forum for the dissemination of state-of-the-art policies, processes, and research findings; and provides an international showcase for innovative technologies, products, and services. Together, these activities promote best practices that cut across the broad range of repositories that ISBER serves.

ISBER is a global organization which creates opportunities for sharing ideas and innovations in biobanking and harmonizes approaches to evolving challenges for biological and environmental repositories.



To be the leading network in the global biobanking and biorepository community.



ISBER advances the expertise and quality of biorepositories and biobanking science worldwide.



- Enhance ISBER's financial performance
- Increase value for members
- Heighten awareness of biobanking
- Build the biobanking global community
- Offer education options for all career stages

Message from the President

I am pleased to present the ISBER 2026 Annual Report, which highlights our Society's accomplishments over the past 12 months.

Our achievements this year would not have been possible without the dedication and commitment of our many volunteers. I extend my sincere gratitude to our Board of Directors, members serving in our Communities of Practice (CoPs), Committees, Task Forces, Working Groups, and Special Interest Groups, as well as the many members who answered the Society's call to serve. Each of you has made meaningful contributions toward advancing ISBER's mission and vision. We are equally grateful to our sponsors, exhibitors, and strategic partners whose continued support has been instrumental to our growth and long-term sustainability.

This year, we also recognize and thank our outgoing Board members, Dr. Dayong Gao and Rebecca Pugh, for their outstanding service and dedication to ISBER. At the same time, we warmly welcome our President-Elect, Dr. Billy Schleif, and our new Board members, Dr. Dianne Chadwick and Dr. Anna Michalska-Falkowska. We look forward to their leadership and the expertise they bring to the Society.

Throughout 2026, our efforts were focused on implementing the priorities outlined in ISBER's Strategic Plan: Member Tools & Engagement, Learning & Education, Events & Networking, Awareness, and Organizational Excellence. I am proud to say that we made significant progress across each of these strategic pillars.

A defining achievement of the year was the tremendous success of the 2026 ISBER Global Biobanking Congress, held in Shenzhen, China, from April 21–23, 2026. The meeting was conducted in partnership with the Biobank Branch of the China

Medical Biotech Association (BBCMBA) and hosted by BGI, one of the world's leading life science and genomics organizations. The exceptional leadership of the Co-Chairs, Debra Garcia and Jason Chen, the guidance and support of Dr. Hengjun Gao, and the dedication of the entire planning team, resulted in one of the most successful scientific meetings in ISBER's history. This collaboration demonstrated the value of strategic partnerships in expanding our global reach, enhancing member value, and improving organizational efficiency. As envisioned in our Strategic Plan, this model of collaborative partnerships will continue to be an important component of ISBER's future meeting strategy.

Increasing awareness of biobanking and communicating its value to the broader scientific and public communities remained another major priority. Under the leadership of Co-Chairs Debra Garcia and Dr. Cassandra Griffin, the Global Biobanking Awareness Task Force made remarkable progress toward this goal. Their accomplishments include the development of a global awareness video, a dedicated website where biobank professionals from around the world can share their stories, and a publication supporting their outreach efforts. Planning is also well underway for an international Biobank Awareness Week. We are especially grateful to our Past President, Dr. Gregory Grossman, whose continued guidance and support have been invaluable to this important initiative.

Member engagement and professional development also advanced considerably during the year. Building on the successful launch of the ISBER Hub, we are pleased to announce the introduction of the ISBER Mentoring Program, another valuable member resource hosted within the Hub. This short-term mentoring initiative complements ISBER's existing

educational offerings by connecting members for knowledge exchange and professional growth. Mentoring activities are now actively underway. This achievement reflects the dedication of Marianne Henderson, Co-Chair of the Education and Training Community of Practice, together with the mentoring Task Force members - Shonali Paul, Lori Campbell, Dr. Judith Giri. We are working to ensure that the efforts of all the Community of Practice activities remain closely aligned with the Society's strategic priorities.

To further strengthen the organization, the Board established two new Task Forces during the year: the Grant Task Force and the Membership Growth Task Force. The Grant Task Force will pursue external funding opportunities to support educational initiatives and other strategic programs while strengthening ISBER's long-term financial resilience. The Membership Growth Task Force will develop targeted strategies to expand and diversify our global membership. These efforts will be complemented by the introduction of a new Corporate Membership Program designed to provide greater value for our industry partners while increasing engagement across the biobanking community.

ISBER remains firmly committed to its mission of leading and advancing biobanking expertise while promoting quality through education, training, collaboration, and networking. We encourage all members to take full advantage of the Society's growing portfolio of educational resources, including both live and on-demand learning opportunities. As we continue to expand our global community, we remain dedicated to delivering programs and initiatives that strengthen biobanking worldwide. The Korean, Spanish, and Persian translations of the ISBER Best Practices, completed within this past year, is another achievement that truly reflects our global commitment to biobanking education and training. We extend our gratitude to the dedicated translation teams for making this possible.

Looking ahead, we are excited about the ISBER International Biospecimen Summit, which will be held in partnership with the University Health Network (UHN) in Toronto, Canada, October 28–30, 2026, under the leadership of Planning Co-Chairs Heidi Wagner and Dianne Chadwick. We anticipate another outstanding scientific meeting and hope to welcome many of you there.

We also look forward to welcoming our global community to the 2027 ISBER Global Biobanking Congress in San Diego, California, USA, May 4–6, 2027.

Thank you to every volunteer, member, partner, sponsor, and supporter who has contributed their time, expertise, and passion to ISBER. Together, we continue to strengthen our Society, advance the science and practice of biobanking, and build a vibrant global community that will shape the future of biomedical research.

With warm regards,

Stella Somiari, PhD, MBA
President, ISBER

Listing of Organization Leadership and Staff

BOARD OF DIRECTORS		
Stella Somiari, PhD, MBA PRESIDENT-OF-THE-BOARD May 2026 - May 2027 Windber Research Institute Pennsylvania, United States	William Schleif, PhD PRESIDENT-ELECT-OF-THE-BOARD May 2026 - May 2027 Johns Hopkins All Children's Pediatric Biorepository Florida, United States	Gregory Grossman, PhD, CCRP, BCMAS, CEBT PAST PRESIDENT-OF-THE-BOARD May 2026 - May 2027 Advancing Sight Network/Precision Ocular Biobank Alabama, United States
Anusha Hettiaratchi, PhD TREASURER May 2025 - May 2028 University of New South Wales Sydney, Australia	Anna Michalska-Falkowska, PhD SECRETARY May 2026 - May 2029 Medical University of Bialystok Bialystok, Poland	Dianne Chadwick, PhD DIRECTOR-AT-LARGE - Americas May 2026 - May 2029 Ontario Institute for Cancer Research Toronto, Canada
Jason Chen, BS DIRECTOR-AT-LARGE - China May 2024 - May 2027 China National GeneBank Guangdong, China	Engela Conradie, PhD, Pr.Sci.Nat DIRECTOR-AT-LARGE - Europe, Middle East, Africa May 2022 - May 2028 Centre for Human Metabolics Potchefstroom, South Africa	Wayne Ng, PhD, GAICD DIRECTOR-AT-LARGE - Indo-Pacific Rim May 2023 - May 2029 Victorian Cancer Biobank Melbourne, Australia

COMMUNITIES OF PRACTICE (COP) CHAIRS		
Education and Training CoP Chair	Science Policy CoP Chair	Standards CoP Chair
Marianne Henderson, MS, CPC PMP National Cancer Institute Maryland, United States	Rita Lawlor, PhD, CIPP/E, CIPM ARC-NET Centre for Applied Research on Cancer Verona, Italy	Samantha Higgins, MSc, BSc Victoria Cancer Biobank Melbourne, Australia

2026 ANNUAL PROGRAM PLANNING TASK FORCE CO-CHAIRS	
Jason Chen, BS China National GeneBank Guangdong, China	Debra Leiolani Garcia, BS, MPA Independent Consultant USA

WORKING GROUP AND SPECIAL INTEREST GROUP CHAIRS

Automated Repositories Special Interest Group Chairs	Biospecimen Science Working Group Chairs	Cryopreservation Science Special Interest Group
Andy Zaayenga, Jeffery Meyer	Lalita Wadhwa	Dayong Gao, Jason Acker, Zhiquan Andy Shu
Enviro-Bio Working Group Chair	Pediatric Special Interest Group Chair	Pharma Working Group Chairs
Piper Mullins	Rania Labib	Wohaib Hasan

ISBER HEAD OFFICE

Executive Director	Senior Project Manager	Project Manager
Dana Cooper, MBA, CAE	Elizabeth Sun, MM, BSc, PMP	Alizé Couzigou, BBA, PMP
Association Administrator	Meetings Director	Events Coordinator
Alison McDonald, BMus	Paul Fogerty, BA	Eva-Marie Sweet, BSc
Database Director		
Paul Kool, BSc, AIT		

ISBER 2026 Membership Mid-Year Report

DATA SUMMARY

The membership query was performed on July 13, 2026.

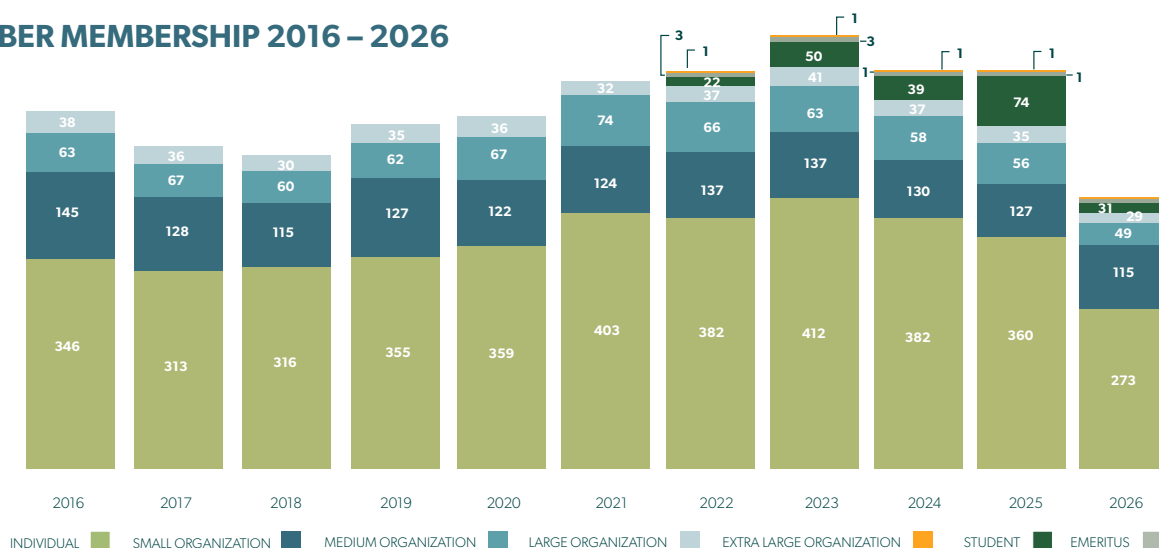
In 2026, there are 815 memberships to date. This number includes Individual Memberships, Organizational Sub-Accounts, Student/Technician Memberships, and Emeritus Memberships. Organizational Memberships have Sub-Accounts which are allocated with the following specifications:

- Small Organizations: 2 Sub-Accounts.
- Medium Organizations: 4 Sub-Accounts.
- Large Organizations: 8 Sub-Accounts.
- X-Large Organizations: 25 Sub-Accounts.

TOTAL ISBER MEMBERSHIP (INCLUDES 815 TOTAL MEMBERS)

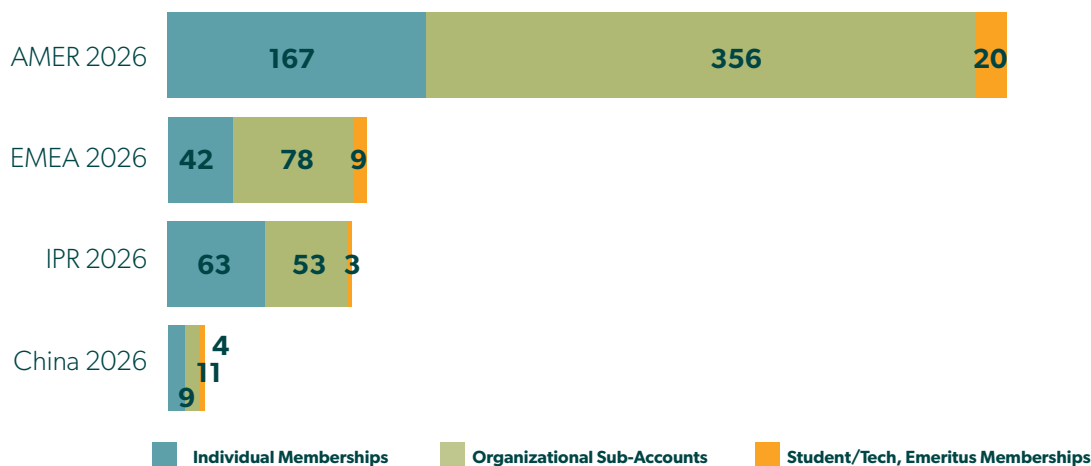


ISBER MEMBERSHIP 2016 – 2026



2026 MEMBERSHIP BY REGION

(Individuals accounts, organizational sub-accounts, & student/tech/emeritus accounts)



2026 DISTRIBUTION BY COUNTRY

(Individuals & small/med/large/x-large organizations)

In 2026, ISBER's global membership spans 61 countries! The following countries are new for 2026: Argentina, Bangladesh, Chile, and Sudan.

Country	Individual	Small	Medium	Large	X-Large	2026 Total
Argentina	4	5	0	0	0	9
Australia	29	8	1	2	0	40
Austria	1	1			0	2
Bangladesh		1			0	1
Belgium	2	1			0	3
Brazil	2	1		1	0	4
Canada	22	8	5	1	0	36
Chile		1			0	1
China	13	4	1		0	18
Colombia				1	0	1
Costa Rica	2				0	2
Cote d'Ivoire	1				0	1
Czech Republic			1		0	1
Denmark	1	1			0	2
Democratic Republic of the Congo				1	0	1
Egypt	2				0	2
France	6	3			0	9
Gambia				1	0	1

Country	Individual	Small	Medium	Large	X-Large	2026 Total
Germany	1	3	1		0	5
Ghana		1			0	1
Greece		1			0	1
India	7	5	1		0	13
Indonesia	1	2	1		0	4
Ireland	2	1			0	3
Israel		1			0	1
Italy	1	2			0	3
Japan	8	2			0	10
Luxembourg			1		0	1
Malaysia	2	1			0	3
New Zealand	1				0	1
Nigeria	3	1			0	4
Norway		2			0	2
Pakistan	1	2			0	3
Peru		1			0	1
Philippines	3				0	3
Poland	1				0	1
Portugal		2			0	2
Russia		1			0	1
Saudi Arabia	1				0	1
Singapore	2	1	1		0	4
South Africa	9	2		1	0	12
South Korea	1	2	1		0	4
Spain	3	5			0	8
Sudan	1					1
Switzerland	2	1			0	3
Thailand		1			0	1
Uganda	1			1	0	2
United Arab Emirates	1	1	1		0	3
United Kingdom	10	1		1	0	12
United States	157	40	34	20	1	252
Vietnam	1				0	1

Activity Report

2026 WORLD BIOBANKING CONGRESS



ISBER, in partnership with the Biobank Branch of the China Medicinal Biotech Association (BBCMBA) and BGI, successfully hosted the inaugural World Biobanking Congress from April 21-25, 2026, in Shenzhen, China. The World Biobanking Congress combined two major international meetings. The 2026 ISBER Global Biobanking Congress: Global Collaboration for Advanced Technology and Innovation was held April 21-23 at the BGI Center, followed by the 18th BBCMBA China Holistic Integrate Biobankology Conference and the 13th Hospital Dean's Summit on Biobank, held April 23-25 at the InterContinental Shenzhen Dameisha Resort.

The ISBER Program Planning Task Force, co-chaired by Deb Leiolani Garcia and Jason Chen, developed a scientific program that emphasized global partnerships, emerging technologies, innovation, and operational excellence across the biobanking community. For the first time, the program was organized into five thematic tracks, providing attendees with a streamlined way to navigate sessions and tailor their Congress experience according to their interests. The tracks included: Bench to Biobank to One Health; Biospecimen Research – The Science Behind the Sample; People, Policy & Biobanking; Smart Biobank: AI, Automation, Digitalization; and Innovative Technology in Biobanking.

Each day of the Congress began with a keynote lecture delivered by a globally recognized expert. Reflecting ISBER's continued commitment to showcasing emerging research, much of the scientific program was driven by abstract submissions, with the majority of sessions featuring contributed papers. This approach provided researchers and biobanking professionals from around the world with the opportunity to present their work, share new findings, and engage with an international audience.

In addition to the abstract-driven scientific program, the Program Planning Task Force introduced two Flash Talk sessions featuring poster presenters who delivered fast-paced four-minute presentations highlighting their research. These sessions provided an additional platform for presenters to share their work with a broader audience and increase visibility for the poster program.

The shared program on April 23 served as a cornerstone of the collaboration, bringing together delegates from both organizations for a full day of keynote presentations, scientific sessions, panel discussions, and networking. The joint program featured presenters from ISBER and BBCMBA who

shared expertise through three collaborative scientific sessions: Organoids: Pivoting the Living Biobanks; AI-Driven Biobanking: Enhancing Data Integration, Discovery, and Precision Medicine; and Data-Driven Biobanking: From Biospecimen Storage to Digital Capability, Data Products, and Compliant Circulation. Interactive panel discussions encouraged dialogue between international and Chinese experts. This collaboration reinforced ISBER's growing presence in China while strengthening relationships with leading Chinese biobanking professionals, creating new opportunities for future partnerships, scientific exchange, and continued global collaboration.

The BGI Center provided a unique and memorable setting for the Congress, offering attendees an opportunity to experience a world-class scientific and technological environment. The exhibit hall was strategically positioned between the plenary rooms, creating increased visibility and opportunities for interaction between exhibitors and delegates throughout the meeting. Attendees also enjoyed daily lunch buffets featuring a wide variety of seafood, meats, vegetables, and traditional Chinese dishes, offering another opportunity to experience local culture.

In addition to the scientific program, delegates participated in several networking and cultural activities designed to foster new professional connections and celebrate the host city.

On the pre-conference day, attendees were offered complimentary guided tours of BGI's facilities.

Building on the success of previous years, ISBER hosted its fourth annual Speed Networking event, facilitated by Program Planning Task Force members Jelani Clarke, Henry Hong, and Wayne Wang, on the morning of the second day of the Congress.

In place of the traditional 5K Fun Run/Walk, ISBER offered commemorative athletic T-shirts featuring the Society's signature dancing letters with exclusive

Shenzhen-themed artwork, giving attendees a unique keepsake to remember the Congress.

To conclude the ISBER Global Biobanking Congress, ISBER Head Office and the Program Planning Co-Chairs organized an optional cultural dinner celebrating the heritage of Shenzhen and China. The Tang Dynasty-themed evening featured traditional music and dance performances, a reenactment of a Tang Dynasty wedding ceremony, and an imperial-inspired Chinese banquet, providing attendees with a memorable opportunity to experience local culture.

The inaugural World Biobanking Congress marked an important milestone in ISBER's international engagement strategy. Through its successful collaboration with BBCMBA and BGI, the meeting strengthened global partnerships, facilitated scientific exchange across continents, and demonstrated the value of bringing together diverse perspectives to advance the future of biobanking.

2026 World Global Biobanking Congress Program.



UPCOMING INTERNATIONAL BIOSPECIMEN SUMMIT

In partnership with the University Health Network (UHN), ISBER is pleased to host the International Biospecimen Summit, taking place October 28-30, 2026 in Toronto, Canada. Hosted at the Hockey Hall of Fame and the University of Toronto Convention

Center, this biospecimen-focused meeting will bring together professionals from across North America and beyond to explore the future of biobanking, biospecimen science, and translational research.

The summit's program will feature discussions and case studies focused on:

- Sustainability & Operational Resilience
- Digital Transformation & FAIR Data Ecosystems
- AI-Enabled Translational Innovation

For more information, please visit: www.isber.org/2026BiospecimenSummit



ISBER BEST PRACTICES FOR REPOSITORIES, 5TH EDITION (BP5) TRANSLATIONS

The ISBER Best Practices is a comprehensive resource for new and experienced repository professionals, providing practical recommendations on managing and supporting repositories. ISBER is committed to making the Best Practices accessible to professionals worldwide. The BP5 is now available in Korean, Spanish, Chinese, Japanese, and Persian. These translations are available for download at www.isber.org/BPR, thanks to the efforts of dedicated colleagues and translation teams.



QUALIFICATION IN BIOREPOSITORY SCIENCE (QBRs)

In partnership with the American Society for Clinical Pathology Board of Certification (ASCP BOC), ISBER has developed and provides the Qualification in Biorepository Science (QBRs) online examination for biobanking professionals. The importance of quality parameters in biobanking of biological materials, such as human tissues, has been proven and is an important value for and objective of ISBER as an organization. The QBRs exam addresses the question of quality performance by biobanking professionals and provides a unique measure to help enable the future for reproducible and sustainable quality biobanking. Highly trained and skilled staff are essential to ensure high quality biospecimens for reproducible results in precision medicine, biomarker development and biomedical research as a whole. ISBER has worked diligently to communicate the value of QBRs certification to the biobanking field worldwide including roundtable discussions at the ISBER Annual Meetings.

As of June 30, 2026, 116 individuals have attained the QBRs qualification. While most of these biobankers reside in the United States (83), the qualification has also been achieved by biobanking professionals in 19 countries including Australia (3), Canada (2), Egypt, France, China (4), Madagascar, Nigeria (2), Pakistan (3), Poland, Puerto Rico, Saudi Arabia (2), Singapore, South Africa, United Arab Emirates(2), Uganda (3), United Kingdom (3) and Ukraine.

The ISBER bursary program for potential QBRs candidates from LMIC/UMIC countries (World Bank definition) has in the last four years awarded 19 bursaries with 10 of the awardees achieving the QBRs qualification. There are 5 awardees that are still in process. The bursary program is important because it includes biobankers in Asia and Africa who, with growing biobanking expertise in their countries, will increase our understanding of the diversity of the human genome and how it is controlled and regulated, leading to the potential development of new and effective approaches to disease management.

ISBER has adopted the CTRNet Essentials of Biobanking course review (ISBER, <https://www.isber.org/page/EssentialsBiobanking>) as a valuable adjunct to prepare biobanking professionals for their roles as biobankers. It has been updated to be congruent with ISBER Best Practices Ed. 5 and is now available as an important study guide for the QBRs exam.

Questions about the QBRs can be directed to info@isber.org. For information on requirements, topic outline, reading list, the application process and more visit www.isber.org/qualification

Brent Schacter, *MD FRCPC FCAHS*
Chair, QBRs Steering Committee

ISBER MENTORING PROGRAM

One of ISBER's most significant educational initiatives in 2026 was the official launch of the **ISBER Mentoring Program**, following a successful two-year pilot. Developed by the ISBER Mentoring Task Force, the program was introduced in June 2026 as a semi-automated feature within the ISBER Hub, providing members with a new avenue for personalized learning and professional development.

The Mentoring Program complements ISBER's existing

educational portfolio by connecting experienced biobanking professionals with members seeking practical guidance on specific biobanking challenges. Rather than serving as a long-term consulting service, the program facilitates focused, short-term mentoring relationships that enable participants to exchange knowledge, discuss real-world solutions, and apply ISBER Best Practices and other educational resources within their own institutional settings.

The launch represents an important expansion of ISBER's Education & Training offerings, strengthening access to expertise across a wide range of biobanking disciplines, including quality management, biospecimen processing, informatics, sustainability, accreditation preparation, regulatory compliance, freezer management, career development, and several other areas.

The program also advances ISBER's mission by fostering global collaboration among professionals from academic institutions, healthcare systems, government agencies, environmental repositories, veterinary biobanks, and industry. By providing members with direct access to experienced mentors, the program supports capacity building, encourages international knowledge exchange, and helps organizations implement effective biobanking practices while avoiding common operational challenges. At the same time, it expands ISBER's global reach for member recruitment, strengthening its strategic goal.

Integrated within the ISBER Hub, the Mentoring Program offers an intuitive workflow for both mentors and mentees. Participants create mentor or mentee profiles or even both, submit focused mentoring requests, connect directly to arrange meetings, and complete post-session evaluations. Feedback collected through the platform will lead to program enhancements while helping identify emerging educational needs within the global biobanking community.

Beyond supporting individual professional development, the Mentoring Program strengthens member engagement by creating meaningful volunteer opportunities for experienced professionals to share their expertise and support the next generation of biobankers. It also serves as a gateway to ISBER's broader educational resources, including Best Practices, the Essentials of Biobanking course, the Biobank Assessment Tool, Qualification in Biorepository Science (QBRS), and proficiency testing programs. Additionally, it paves the way for creation of additional resources when gaps are identified in the current one.

The successful launch of the ISBER Mentoring Program marks an important milestone in ISBER's ongoing commitment to advancing biobanking worldwide through education, collaboration, and the sharing of expertise. By connecting members across disciplines and regions, the program reinforces ISBER's position as the global leader in biobanking education and professional development.

Mentoring Program Task Force

Marianne Henderson, Shonali Paul, Judith Giri, and Lori Campbell



BIOBANKING 101

This year's Biobanking 101 virtual workshop held on February 3rd and 5th entitled: "Planning and

Operational Setup: Planning and Managing Storage Environments" was presented in 2 parts. The main topic presented by Caroline Larson, Preston Lehman and Dr. Stella Somiari of the Chan Soon-Shiong Institute of Molecular Medicine at Windber, USA highlighted how the ISBER Best Practices for Repositories can be operationalized to plan for storage (cryo and Room Temperature) and storage environments at your biobank.

Key points included considerations for space requirements, monitoring storage equipment, optimizing storage space and backup systems. There was also an added special focus on Low and Middle-Income Country (LMIC) considerations provided by Dr. Jajah Fachiroh, ISBER Indo-Pacific Rim Regional Ambassador to Indonesia, specifically on storage planning and back up plans for storage, electricity and security.

The opening session showcased the ISBER Regional Ambassador (RA) program. Introduced by three of the ISBER Regional Directors-At-Large (DAL), this session defined the roles of our RAs underscoring their efforts in disseminating biobanking information through local networking and educational opportunities within their regions. If you've ever wondered how to get more involved with ISBER, this session provided information on reaching your local Regional Ambassadors.

To view the video of this presentation, and past **101/201 workshops please visit:** <https://www.isber.org/Biobanking101201>.

To reach your local Regional Ambassadors: <https://www.isber.org/MeetTheAmbassadors>

Source: E&T 5th Newsletter

ISBER COMMUNITY OF PRACTICE (COP) INITIATIVES

EDUCATION AND TRAINING (E&T) COP INITIATIVES

2026 E&T CoP Highlights

- 7 active Task Forces supporting education, mentoring, biobank awareness, and professional development initiatives
- ISBER Mentoring Program launched on the ISBER Hub, connecting members worldwide
- Best Practices Webinar Series – completed 5 webinars, followed by expansion of the Educational Webinar Series
- Biobanking 101 evolved into a regional education model to better support global member needs
- Global Biobank Awareness initiative expanded to increase public understanding of biobanking worldwide
- Travel Grant impact research advanced toward publication, evaluating long-term professional outcomes

The mission of the ISBER Education & Training (E&T) Community of Practice (CoP) is to ensure that ISBER members have access to the knowledge, educational resources, and practical tools needed to operate biorepositories in accordance with ISBER Best Practices. Through a broad portfolio of educational programming, mentoring, workshops, webinars, research, and member engagement initiatives, the CoP continues to strengthen global biobanking capacity while fostering collaboration across regions and disciplines. Throughout 2026, the E&T CoP remained highly active, overseeing multiple task forces dedicated to webinar planning, workshop review, Biobanking 101/201 development, the Rising Stars program, Global Biobank Awareness (GBA), the Travel Awardee Program, and the ISBER Mentoring Program.

A major focus during the year was the successful delivery and continual expansion of ISBER's educational programming. The CoP completed the oversight of a five-part ISBER Best Practices 5 webinar series and established an expanded Educational Webinar Series that broadened the range of topics available to members free of charge. Webinar planning throughout the year included scientific presentations, accreditation, incident management, and upcoming topics including Organoids, Transforming Biobanking in Africa, Culling and sustainability and preparations for a dedicated Rising Stars webinar that can provide a platform for emerging investigators who were unable to present during the annual congress. Several webinar concepts also emerged directly from presentations delivered during the ISBER Global Biobanking Congress, demonstrating the CoP's commitment to extending the educational value of the annual meeting throughout the year.

The Biobanking 101 program continued to mature as one of ISBER's flagship educational offerings. During 2026, the CoP successfully delivered the Operational Planning and Setup workshop with strong participation from Directors-at-Large and Regional Ambassadors, who introduced the Regional Ambassador program and helped moderate sessions. Participant engagement remained high, and post-course evaluations were incorporated into future planning. Throughout the year, considerable effort was devoted to refining workshop descriptions, presentation scripts, marketing materials, and speaker preparation to improve attendance and participant experience. Importantly, discussions during and after the Shenzhen Congress led to a strategic shift toward developing regional versions of Biobanking 101 delivered in collaboration with Regional Ambassadors, allowing educational content to better address local needs while expanding ISBER's global reach. Planning also began for a refreshed Biobanking 201 workshop to be held in early 2027, including adapting highly rated presentations from the Shenzhen meeting into future educational offerings.

Educational quality remained a central priority through continued refinement of workshop review processes. The Workshop Review Task Force evaluated workshop proposals for the 2026 Global Biobanking Congress and subsequently reviewed presentation slides before delivery to ensure consistency, scientific quality, and alignment with approved proposals. During the year, the CoP recognized the need to strengthen workshop governance by updating the Workshop Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) to clarify expectations regarding reviewer feedback, presenter substitutions, slide content, and approval processes. These revisions are expected to improve consistency and transparency for future Congress educational programming.

The 2026 ISBER Global Biobanking Congress in Shenzhen represented a major focus of CoP activity. Beyond reviewing educational workshops, members actively contributed to program development, session moderation, educational posters, and post-congress evaluation. Feedback indicated that the revised scientific program structure, which emphasized abstract presentations and flash talks, was well received by attendees. CoP members also identified several Congress presentations suitable for future webinars, helping extend the educational impact of the meeting beyond the live event.

Member communication continued to expand through publication of the biannual Education & Training Newsletter. Throughout the year, volunteers developed articles highlighting educational initiatives, member achievements, travel grant recipients, regional activities, ISBER tools, and updates from the annual meeting. The newsletter also served as an important engagement tool, with distribution through dedicated member eblasts, the ISBER Hub, affiliate channels, and social media. Survey responses demonstrated exceptionally strong interest in future educational roundtable discussions, prompting the CoP to propose this concept to the ISBER Board as

an additional mechanism for engaging members and affiliates. The newsletter also became an increasingly valuable platform for promoting webinars, mentoring opportunities, educational resources, and regional activities.

One of the most significant accomplishments of 2026 was the successful launch of the new ISBER Mentoring Program on the ISBERHub. Following a successful pilot phase, the automated mentoring platform officially launched in June, allowing members worldwide to register as mentors, mentees, or both. The program provides short-term mentoring focused on practical biobanking questions while complementing ISBER's existing educational resources. Surveys built into the platform will allow continuous assessment of mentoring outcomes while helping identify future educational needs. The Mentoring Program represents an important new member benefit that strengthens professional development, supports capacity building, and facilitates knowledge sharing across the international biobanking community.

Research activities also advanced during the year through continued evaluation of the ISBER Travel Grant Program. Quantitative analyses were completed, qualitative interviews progressed, and manuscript preparation entered its final stages. The study aims to evaluate the long-term impact of travel grants on career development and professional engagement, with submission anticipated in Fall 2026. In parallel, the CoP explored providing complimentary registration for educational workshops to travel grant recipients as an additional mechanism for supporting continued professional development beyond the annual meeting.

Another major initiative during 2026 was the integration of the Global Biobank Awareness (GBA) initiative into the Education & Training CoP. Following successful promotion during the Shenzhen Congress, planning expanded to include development of

an independent multilingual website, educational webinars, promotional videos, and collaboration with international partners. The initiative seeks to increase public awareness of the value of biobanking while highlighting its contributions to research, biodiversity, environmental science, animal biobanking, organoids, and global health. The CoP supported development of governance documents, educational content, marketing strategies, and planning for the Fall 2026 Global Biobank Awareness campaign.

Throughout the year, the CoP also strengthened its internal organization by recruiting new members, engaging Regional Ambassadors, expanding affiliate participation through the ISBER Hub, and beginning development of a centralized educational resource library that will organize existing webinars, workshops, and educational materials into structured learning pathways. Discussions also began on initiation of a new Task Force to develop modular certificate-style educational content using ISBER's existing resources rather than creating entirely new programs. These efforts align closely with ISBER's broader strategic planning initiatives and will help maximize the value of the Society's educational portfolio.

Looking ahead, the Education & Training Community of Practice will continue expanding free educational programming for ISBER members while strengthening mentoring, webinars, and member engagement opportunities. Priorities for the coming year include publishing the Travel Grant impact study, further developing regional Biobanking 101 programming, launching additional Biobanking 201 workshops, implementing educational roundtables, completing refinement of workshop standard operating procedures, expanding the educational resource library, supporting educational programming for the 2027 ISBER Global Biobanking Congress, and continuing to advance the Global Biobank Awareness initiative. Collectively, these activities position the E&T CoP to remain a central driver of professional

education, global collaboration, and excellence in biobanking throughout the ISBER community.

SCIENCE POLICY COP (SCIPOL) INITIATIVES

2026 SciPol CoP Highlights

- 3 Task Forces focusing on strengthening data governance, enhancing community engagement, and guiding ethical AI adoption.
- Global collaboration and ethical leadership: Expanded education and outreach through international meetings and publication of the Seattle Principles, providing a set of commonly accepted ethical principles for the use of biospecimens in research and help shape regulatory and policy making across national governments.

The purpose of the ISBER Science Policy Community of Practice is to serve as a voice for the perspectives of the ISBER membership and the Society to help shape regulatory and policy issues globally related to biological and environmental repositories.

SciPol Initiatives

The SciPol CoP reviews and evaluates changes to the regulatory and policy landscape on the global stage and responds where changes may affect biobanking and the ISBER vision.

SciPol Task Forces

The SciPol CoP created task forces to address specific themes. In the past 12 months, SciPol has had 3 specific task forces to address specific issues: the GDPR task force to follow data protection regulations in Europe which affect access and sharing of data for research with global effect on which SciPol comments; the Community Engagement for Biobanking Taskforce which explores effective approaches for community engagement for which a publication has been prepared; and the Artificial Intelligence (AI) Taskforce which explores Artificial Intelligence (AI) and

Machine Learning (ML) in terms of ethical guardrails in biobanking and biospecimen research and has published a special issue in Biopreservation and Biobanking (BIO) focused on Advanced Technologies in Biobanking.

SciPol Collaborations

The SciPol CoP continued to provide educational opportunities on the ethical, legal and societal

issues associated with biobanking and human specimen research including participation at:

- the Public Responsibility in Medicine and Research (PRIM&R) 2025 Annual Meeting to educate the research ethics community about biobanking issues in sessions regarding Data Sharing for Research with a dedicated ISBER booth;
- the Multi-Regional Clinical Trials Center of Brigham and Women's Hospital and Harvard annual meeting related to establishing practical ethical standards for the collection, retention, and research uses of biospecimens for Secondary Research;

One of the major initiatives of the SciPol CoP, in collaboration with the R3 forum, the Research, Development, and Regulatory Roundtable, a cooperative endeavor coordinated by the MRCT Center and Ropes & Gray LLP, has been the development of the "Seattle Principles", a set of commonly accepted ethical principles for the use of biospecimens in research and help shape regulatory and policy making across national governments. The ultimate goal to achieve greater consistency in regulations and policies related to biobanking and facilitate biospecimen and data sharing globally due to global regulatory heterogeneity on sample and data sharing for research. The "Seattle principles" fruit of several workshops, in particular, from ISBER members at workshops and roundtables at annual meetings, which attracted many participants and increased interest in ethics and science policy practices has been recently published.

SciPol Engagement

Moving forward, the SciPol CoP, in addition to dedicating its efforts on changing ethical and regulatory landscape and taskforce issues of community engagement and AI, will engage through an affiliate member hub. It will continue to collaborate with the ISBER E&T and Standards CoPs on collaborative topics.

STANDARDS COP INITIATIVES

STANDARDS

The ISBER Standards Community of Practice serves as a conduit between ISBER and the biobanking standardization community and its stakeholders. The CoP provides biobanking expertise on behalf of ISBER to establish consistent biobanking standards and brings groups with different knowledge perspectives together to harness collective intelligence regarding biobanking standards. The CoP also develops tools and resources in this field.

From 2025 to 2026, standards CoP has worked on the following projects:

- **ISBER Best Practices, 5th Edition**

With global adoption underway, the focus for ISBER Best Practices has turned to dissemination, awareness and implementation support. Standards CoP supported development and alignment of the ISBER BP5 webinar series – creating an on-demand resource for practical implementation support for new biobanks or those transitioning from previous BP editions. The ISBER BP5 have been translated in Spanish, Chinese, Japanese, Persian, and Korean.

- **ISO TC276 – Biotechnology – WG2 Biobanking**

A liaison facilitates the input from ISBER into the development of international standards related to biobanking, such as ISO20387:2018 Biobanking – General requirements for biobanks, which is

currently in the final stages of review. Planning is underway to support the ISBER community understand changes to the Standard anticipated for release in the coming year.

- **Internal Audit Tool (IAT)**

The Internal Audit Tool will help biobanks set up an internal audit program aligned to relevant biobanking standards and common operational practices. It is currently under development.

- **Qualification in Biorepository Science (QBRs)**

This qualification program continues to support an international group of biobankers to officially demonstrate their competence as biobank technicians, including a renewal program to maintain the credential. A grant program continued this year supporting selected biobankers from LMIC countries to take the exam. Through internal evaluation and targeted survey of select QBRs participants, the Standards CoP confirmed the Essentials of Biobanking (EoB) Course is a helpful study resource to assist individuals in preparing for the Qualification in BioRepository Science (QBRs) certification exam. Feedback gathered during this evaluation will be provided to EoB to support future iterations of the EoB program. The ISBER bursary program for potential QBRs candidates from LMIC/UMIC countries continued, resulting in 4 recipients this year.

- **Biobank Assessment Tool (BAT)**

The Biobank Assessment Tool is a questionnaire to self-evaluate the implementation of the Best Practices. Following realignment and expansion to the fifth edition of the Best Practices, the BAT is under final review prior to re-launch, expected in the coming year.

- **New Initiatives and Innovations**

To evolve and ensure tools and resource offerings provide strong support and impact to our global ISBER community, Standards CoP, in collaboration with the ISBER BoD, are in the initial stages of reviewing new tools and resource development pathways, in support of the new ISBER Strategic Plan. This includes through a potential upcoming Product Development Taskforce and ISBER global certification program.

- **ISBER Members Engagement and Communication**

Standards CoP Steering Committee continues to seek ways to engage the broader CoP and ISBER community. If you are interested in staying updated, giving feedback, have new ideas, or being involved in this CoP including to support resource/tool development, please join as an affiliate member here: <https://www.isber.org/COPAaffiliate>

Regional Report

AMERICAS REGION



MESSAGE FROM THE AMERICAS DAL

It was an exciting year for the Americas region as we advanced biobanking with new partners, new leaders, and new events. The ISBER Regional Ambassador (RA) program continues to grow, and we welcomed new Americas RAs Gonzalo Sequeira (Argentina) and Evelyn Santana (United States) earlier this year. Continuing in their RA roles are Antonio Hugo Campos (Brazil), Sara Bowen (United States), Azra Hasan (United States), Cari Lichtman (United States), Gouri Mahajan (United States), and Purnima Singh (United States). Congratulations to outgoing RA Dianne Chadwick (Canada) on her election into the Director-at-Large, Americas position (2026-2029)!

RECENT REGIONAL EVENTS

Argentina

ISBER 2025 Regional Meeting, Buenos Aires

Brazil

Biobank Brasil Summit 2025, São Paulo

Canada

Ontario Biobank Workshop on Biobank Utilization and Sustainability 2026, Toronto

UPCOMING EVENTS

Brazil

Biobank Brazil Summit 2026 (September), São Paulo

Canada

ISBER 2026 International Biospecimen Summit (October), Toronto

United States

2027 ISBER Global Biobanking Congress (May), San Diego

DIRECTOR-AT-LARGE - AMERICAS

Dianne Chadwick

REGIONAL AMBASSADORS

ARGENTINA

Gonzalo Sequeira

BRAZIL

Antonio Hugo Campos

CANADA

Azra Hasan

UNITED STATES

Sara Bowen

Cari Lichtman

Gouri Mahajan

Evelyn Santana

Purnima Singh

The Official Journal of ISBER, *Biopreservation and Biobanking*, also released a special edition entitled “Biobanks and Biorepositories in Latin American: Challenges and Opportunities.” Led by guest editors Antonio Hugo José Fróes Marques Campos and María Teresa García de Davila, the issue featured an impressive number of contributed manuscripts describing the critical biobanking efforts occurring in Latin America.



AMERICAS, REGIONAL AWARD RECOGNITION

- ISBER Award for Outstanding Achievement in Biobanking: Dr. Maria Teresa Garcia de Davila (Argentina)
- ISBER Leadership Award: Clare Allocca (USA)
- ISBER Special Service Awards: Dr. Antonio Hugo Campos (Brazil), Dr. Dianne Chadwick (Canada), Dr. Ruidong Ma (USA), Dr. Gouri Mahajan (USA), & Dr. Billy Schleif (USA)
- 2026 Best Paper Award to UCSF team (USA): Dean Shehu, Dr. Mi-Ok Kim, John Rosendo, Dr. Nevan Krogan, Dr. David Morgan, and Dr. B. Joseph Guglielmo
- 2026 New Innovation Product Award to Specie Bio (USA)

MEMBER SPOTLIGHT, WEBINAR LEADERS:

Amy Armstrong (USA), Marianna Bledsoe (USA), Dr. Lori Campbell (USA), Dr. Nilay Chakraborty (USA), Michael Denton (USA), Dr. Judith Giri (USA), Christina Greever-Wilson (USA), Marianne Henderson (USA), Dr. Paulo Holanda (Brazil), Joe LaPorte (USA), Caroline Larson (USA), Preston Lehman (USA), Wilfredo Marin (USA), Shonali Paul (USA), Dr. Ian Pope (USA), Dr. Billy Schleif (USA), Dr. Purnima Singh (USA), Dr. Stella Somiari (USA), Luke Stewart (USA), Molly Walling (USA)

CHINA REGION

MESSAGE FROM THE CHINA DAL

In the past year, Chinese ISBER members actively participated in the ISBER 2026 Global Biobanking Congress, and contributed to the Panel Discussion Session. Most importantly, several Regional Ambassadors and key members contributed heavily to the Program Planning Task Force to make the 2026 ISBER Global Biobanking Congress a successful event. Taking on the responsibility as the Director At Large of China Region, I have also worked closely with Program Planning co-chair, Debra Leiolani Garcia, to make sure we have a successful annual meeting. I look forward to another impactful year of sharing knowledge, strengthening collaboration, and raising public awareness with the efforts the ISBER China team and the local biobankers.

Activities carried out within the region over the past year include:

- The 2025 Annual Academic Conference of the Professional Committee on the Conservation and Utilization of Human Genetic Resources of the China Association for the Promotion of Human Health Science and Technology was successfully held from November 6 - 9. The conference, with the theme "Focusing on Quality and Control Services to Promote the Rational Utilization of Biological Samples", brought together leading experts and enterprise representatives from domestic biobanks, human genetic resource management, and the medical and health fields to discuss cutting-edge topics in the conservation and utilization of biological sample resources.
- From November 21 - 24, 2025, the "2025 International Symposium on Cryobiology and Biobanking" was held in Changsha, Hunan Province. Experts, scholars, industry representatives, and student representatives from eight countries around the world in the fields of cryobiology and biobanking participated in the symposium and conducted academic exchanges. The symposium was hosted by Central South University and co-organized by the Hunan Provincial Digital Medicine Society, Xiangya



DIRECTOR-AT-LARGE - CHINA

Jason Chen

REGIONAL AMBASSADORS

Xiaoyang Chen
 Io Hong Cheong
 Henry Hong
 Xiu Qiu
 Yuansheng Tan
 Wayne Wang
 Tsz Hung (Daisy) Wong
 Ying Yan Yu
 Jun Mei Zhou

School of Medicine of Central South University, and Xiangya School of Basic Medical Sciences of Central South University, with the Furong Laboratory, the National Clinical Research Center for Geriatric Diseases, the National Clinical Research Center for Metabolic Diseases, the National Clinical Research Center for Mental Health Diseases, and the National Engineering Research Center for Personalized Diagnosis and Treatment Technology as co-organizers.

- The joint collaboration between the Beijing Genome Institute (BGI), Biobank Branch, China Medicinal Biotech Association (BBCMBA), and ISBER to host the first World Biobanking Congress held in Shenzhen on 21-25 April 2026. The World Biobanking Congress 2026 hosted two prominent international events. The *2026 ISBER Global Biobanking Congress: Global Collaboration for Advanced Technology and Innovation* held at the BGI Center, followed by the *BBCMBA 18th China Holistic Integrate Biobankology Conference and the 13th Hospital Dean's Summit on Biobank* held at the InterContinental Shenzhen Dameisha Resort. The Congress brought together global leaders and experts in biobanking to focus on international partnerships, technological advancement, and innovative practices within the field.

A key highlight of the Congress was the collaborative day on April 23. The joint session with BBCMBA served as a central platform for fostering international partnership, promoting shared learning, and driving innovation within the global biobanking community. This partnership provided additional opportunities for networking, knowledge sharing, and collaboration, emphasizing the integration of biobankology and the strategic role of biobanks in healthcare and research.

- The 18th China Integrative Bioscopy Conference and the 13th China Biobank Directors Forum, was held in Shenzhen, China from April 23 - 25, 2026. Nearly 1500 attendees participated. It was jointly hosted by the China Pharmaceutical



Biotechnology Association and the National Technical Committee for Standardization of Biosamples, and co-organized by the Biobank Branch of the China Pharmaceutical Biotechnology Association, the Shanghai National Engineering Research Center for Biochips, the Shenzhen Academy of Medical Sciences, the Shenzhen Center for Disease Control and Prevention, and Shanghai Xinchao Biotechnology Co., Ltd., with the support of the Industry-University-Research Transformation Professional Committee of the Chinese Anti-Cancer Association, the Clinical Transformation CBDTM Professional Committee of the Shanghai Research Hospital Association, the Biomedical Transformation Branch of the Shanghai Medical Association, the Major Disease Data Industry Innovation Center of the Shanghai Data Exchange, and the Shanghai Biobank.

Over the past year, other biobanking news include:

- The Greater Bay Area International Clinical Trials Institute Biobank (GBAICTI Biobank), owned by the Health Bureau and jointly managed by the Hospital Authority and The Chinese University of Hong Kong, has been established in the Hong Kong Park of the Hetao Shenzhen-Hong Kong Science and Technology Innovation Co-operation Zone (HTCZ). Since becoming operational last year, the biobank has been collecting clinical samples in Hong Kong to support biobanking activities and future clinical research initiatives throughout the Greater Bay Area.

EUROPE/MIDDLE EAST/AFRICA (EMEA) REGION

MESSAGE FROM THE EMEA DAL

The 2025/2026 year was a remarkable year in the EMEA region. One of the major milestones was the successful co-hosting of the 2025 Joint Biobanking Conference in Cape Town, South Africa, in collaboration with GGBN, the South African National Biodiversity Institute (SANBI) and the Medical Biorepositories of South Africa (MBirSA). The conference showcased the growing role of the global biobanking community and created valuable opportunities for knowledge exchange and partnership development. These achievements would not have been possible without the continued dedication of the regional ambassadors and every biobanker in the region, aiming to make a difference and to enhance the awareness of the value of biobanking in research applications.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Congratulations to Anna Michalska-Falkowska who has been elected as Secretary for ISBER (2026-2028). Good luck with your new role, we believe in you!

EDUCATION & TRAINING IN THE REGION

Aside from the Joint Biobanking Conference in Cape Town, another major regional event was **Europe Biobank Week 2026**, which was held in **Prague, Czech Republic**, and jointly organized by **BBMRI-ERIC** and **ESBB**. This event remains the biggest biobanking event in Europe, which brought together researchers, clinicians, biobank professionals, industry representatives, policymakers, and patient advocates. Several **ISBER** members actively participated in **Europe Biobank Week 2026** in Prague, contributing to the scientific program through presentations and discussions. Their participation strengthened the visibility of ISBER within the European biobanking community and emphasized the Society's leading role in global cooperation in biobanking. Europe Biobank Week also provided an excellent opportunity to promote



DIRECTOR-AT-LARGE - EMEA

Engela Conradie

REGIONAL AMBASSADORS

CZECH REPUBLIC

Judita Kinkorová

EGYPT

Ahmed Abdelhafiz

FRANCE

Sandra Nanyonga

IVORY COAST

Kouamé Ambroise Kintossou

NIGERIA

Jumi Popoola

POLAND

Anna Michalska-Falkowska

SENEGAL

Kossi Kabo

SPAIN

Rocio Aguilar Quesada

SOUTH AFRICA

Mantombi Maseme

UGANDA

Phillis Babirye

ISBER activities, engage with current and prospective members, and foster new international partnerships.

Regional biobanking activities continue to expand across Europe and Africa, with strong alignment to ISBER's education and training priorities. In Europe, organisations such as BBMRI-ERIC, EATRIS, ECRIN, and ESBB remain some of the largest stakeholders in delivering programmes covering ISO 20387 implementation, FAIR data, translational research, and quality management. Regional Ambassadors are actively promoting ISBER Best Practices, QBRs certification, and training opportunities, while supporting collaborations (e.g., IARC/WHO engagement in Nigeria) and outreach via webinars and LinkedIn.

REGIONAL UPDATES

Our regional ambassadors have been active at the conferences, as well as ISO 20387 initiatives arranged by local authorities. Africa CDC as well as the Medical Biorepositories of South Africa (MBirSA) has been working on ISO 20387 adaption on the continent and conducting audit training workshops. Regional biobanking activities continue to expand across Europe and Africa, with strong alignment to ISBER's education and training priorities. In Europe, organisations such as BBMRI-ERIC, EATRIS, ECRIN, and ESBB remain some of the largest stakeholders in delivering programmes

Thank You!

Our heartfelt thanks to all Regional Ambassadors and ISBER members in EMEA for your energy, ideas, and dedication. Here's to a dynamic and collaborative year ahead!



INDO-PACIFIC RIM REGION

MESSAGE FROM THE INDO-PACIFIC RIM DAL

The Indo-Pacific Rim (IPR) Regional Ambassador network continued to strengthen and expand during 2025–2026 under the leadership of Director-at-Large Wayne Ng, who was re-elected to the ISBER Board of Directors for a further term. The region also welcomed three new Regional Ambassadors: Dr Elora Sharmin (Bangladesh), Dr Hans Sathasivam (Malaysia), and Dr Poonam Gera (India), further enhancing regional representation, expertise and engagement across the Indo-Pacific biobanking community. Through collaboration, education and advocacy, the IPR network continued to support ISBER’s mission and foster connections among biobanking professionals throughout the region.

Throughout the year, Regional Ambassadors actively promoted ISBER through conferences, workshops, educational webinars, mentoring activities and participation in national biobanking initiatives. Members contributed to major regional events including BBIF (India), ABNA (Australia and New Zealand), pathology conferences in Pakistan (e.g. PAP2025, ICON2026 and HEAMCON26), and the Malaysian Genomics and Precision Health Conference, where biobanking featured prominently in discussions relating to precision medicine, governance, data integration and future national research infrastructure. These activities helped strengthen awareness of biobanking’s critical role within emerging genomics and translational research ecosystems across the region.

A significant achievement during the year was the strengthening of biobanking capacity and collaboration in Pakistan. Through dedicated **biobanking dialogue sessions**, workshops and engagement through the Pakistan pathology community, regional leaders fostered collaboration among researchers, pathologists and biobankers, ultimately contributing to the establishment of the Pakistan Biobank Network. This initiative provides an important platform for national coordination, education and knowledge sharing and has strengthened the visibility of biobanking within the broader pathology community.



DIRECTOR-AT-LARGE - INDO-PACIFIC RIM

Wayne Ng

REGIONAL AMBASSADORS

AUSTRALIA

Natalie Calatayud & Ussha Powell

BANGLADESH

Elora Sharmin

INDIA

Poonam Gera & Birendra Yadav

INDONESIA

Jajah Fachiroh

JAPAN

Tatsuaki Tsuruyama

MALAYSIA

Hans Prakash Sathasivam

PAKISTAN

Nida Jawaaid

VIETNAM

Hanh Vu

The region was also proud to see two IPR-associated leaders recognised with ISBER 2026 Special Service Awards: Dr Javeria Aijaz (Pakistan) and Professor Jennifer Byrne (Australia). These awards acknowledge their outstanding service to ISBER and significant contributions to advancing biobanking and research infrastructure within the region and internationally.

Together, these activities demonstrate the continued growth, influence and collaborative spirit of the Indo-Pacific Rim community, while advancing ISBER's mission of promoting excellence in biobanking through education, engagement, capacity building and international collaboration.



MISSION: ISBER advances the expertise and quality of biorepositories and biobanking science worldwide.

VISION: To be the leading network in the global biobanking and biorepository community.

ENGAGE AND GROW MEMBERSHIP

- Expand accessibility of ISBER tools & resources
- Engage & grow members
- Launch improved 'ISBER Hub' (Forum) as the central engagement point
- Monetize appropriate products/services to enhance sustainability



LEARNING & EDUCATION

- Create a 'Guide to Biobanking Proficiency'
- Align current educational offerings
- Create an ISBER biobank certification program
- Expand ISBER webinar program

EVENTS & NETWORKING

- Host one 'ISBER Global Congress' per year
- Foster organic partnerships with local biobanking associations
- Offer regional meetings in collaboration with partners
- Reduce costs of ISBER meetings





AWARENESS

- Enhance awareness of the value of biobanking
- Create a 'Global Biobanking Week'

ORGANIZATIONAL EXCELLENCE

- Review organizational structure to align with strategic objectives
- Develop tailored value propositions for distinct member segments



GOALS

- Enhance ISBER's financial performance
- Increase value for members
- Heighten awareness of biobanking
- Build the biobanking global community
- Offer education options for all career stages

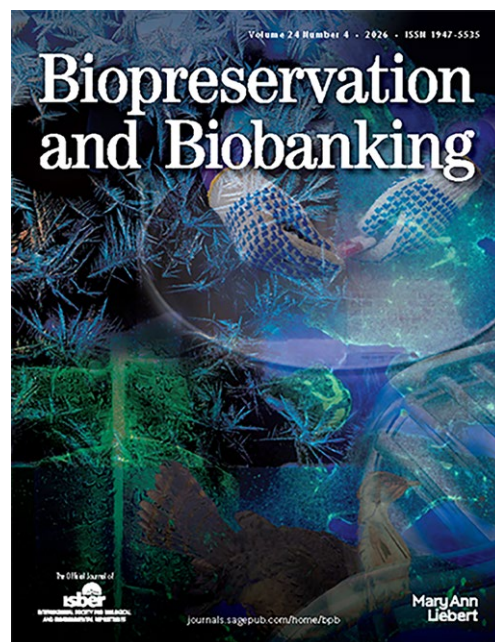
Biopreservation and Biobanking (BIO)

Biopreservation and Biobanking (BIO), the official journal of ISBER, covers a broad range of issues related to biospecimen collection, preservation, biobanking, distribution, and use. Articles published in the journal explore emerging issues and challenges in the field, including advances in biopreservation, emerging technologies, and methods development to improve the quality of biospecimens utilized in research and medicine. The journal covers the latest developments in biobanking operations, standardization and best practices, as well as ideas and practical solutions related to biobank sustainability, evaluation and biospecimen utilization. In addition, it explores the wide range of ethical, legal, and societal implications of biobanking and biospecimen research.

The journal publishes a wide variety of different article types. These include: Original Research Articles, Review Articles, and Brief Reports. Features published in the journal include Editorials/Guest Editorials, Commentaries, Best Practices Guidelines, Experts Speak Forum articles, ISBER Corner articles, and Letters to the Editor. Abstracts from ISBER meetings are also published online in the journal. A new feature article type launched in 2026 is a Science Policy Forum article. These manuscripts are by invitation only from the Editorial team. They provide analysis and discussion of recent policy developments or emerging ethical issues related to biopreservation and biobanking and their scientific and societal impact.

New journal metrics were recently released. The Impact Factor for BIO for 2025 is 1.7, an increase from 1.4 in 2024. The Impact Factor (IF) is based on manuscripts published in 2023 and 2024 and cited in 2025. This increase continues an upward trend from previous years. We are continuing to employ strategies to strengthen the IF; for example, by

analyzing citation rates of papers based on keywords, encouraging the submission of papers in highly cited areas, focused marketing efforts, and promotion of manuscripts by social media and press releases. Our current acceptance rate for 2026 YTD is 26%. A target range of 20%–30% is optimal for a healthy journal.



We are continuing to explore and implement ways to streamline the submission, review, and publication process and optimize the author, reviewer, and reader experience. Our median times to first and Final decision for 2026 YTD continue to be below the average journal wait times for Sage and Mary Ann Liebert journals. Our Time to First Decision is 43 days (50 days is average) and Time to Final Decision is 103 days (115 days is average).

We have had an exciting year with regard to special issues of the journal. A special issue entitled "Biobanking in the Age of Advanced Technologies:

Operations, Governance, Ethics, and Community Engagement” was published in the June 2026 issue, which included papers on the exciting topic of AI in biobanking. A special issue on Modern Approaches to Cancer Biobanking is being planned for publication in December 2026 with Guest Editors Karine Sargsyan, Anna Michalska-Falkowska, and Denis Marino. In addition, our Associate Editor, Junmei Zhou, is organizing a special issue on the exciting topic of Living Biobanks and New Approach Methodologies (“NAMS”). Stay tuned for more information.

While BIO publishes many manuscripts on biopreservation and biobanking of human samples, the scope of the journal is much broader. It includes biopreservation and biobanking of other specimen types, such as those from animals/wildlife, plants, fungi, bacteria, etc. To encourage submissions in the area of botanical biobanking, Anurag Dhyani, Simon Kallow, and Morgan Gostel are organizing a special issue on Botanical Biobanking for Research and Conservation. The special issue will showcase the essential role that plant biobanks play in safeguarding global biodiversity. Manuscripts are requested that will address advances and challenges in the establishment, maintenance, and use of plant collections, including long-term sustainability. Additional information is available at <https://journals.sagepub.com/page/bpb/botanicalbiobankingforresearchandconservation>.

The deadline for submissions is March 31, 2027.

We want to thank our outstanding members of the Editorial Board for BIO. Editorial Board members play an integral role in the success of the journal by helping to promote the journal, serving as reviewers, providing suggestions for improving operations and the quality of manuscripts, and identifying topics for special issues. Thanks also to our Editorial Team: Dayong Gao, Ziquan (Andy) Shu, Amanda Rush,

William Mathieson, Junmei Zhou, Emeritus Editor Jim Vaught, Founding Editor John G. Baus, Isaac Hirsch, Associate Publishing Editor, and Jamie Grainger, the BIO Journal Administrator. Their efforts are essential to the journal’s success.

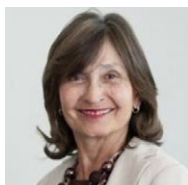
We strongly encourage ISBER members to contribute articles and volunteer as peer reviewers for the journal. We’re also always open to proposals for special issues and sections, feature articles, and guest editorials on timely topics relevant to our readership. If you have ideas to share, please reach out to Marianna Bledsoe, Editor-in-Chief, at biopreservbiobankeic@gmail.com.

As a reminder, the benefits of publishing in BIO are many, including:

- The primary journal focused on the latest advancements in collection, storage, preservation, and biospecimen use/biobanking
- Official journal of ISBER
- Global Editorial Board
- No submission fees
- Zero-embargo Green Open Access policy
- High visibility and discoverability through wide indexing
- Free 30-day access to share your published research with your networks and colleagues
- Focused marketing promotion
- Author support beyond publication
- Global visibility in more than 170 countries

2026 Award Recipients

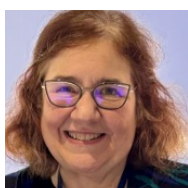
ISBER 2026 OUTSTANDING ACHIEVEMENT IN BIOBANKING



Dr. María Teresa García de Dávila

Argentina, Garrahan Foundation; Hospital Británico

ISBER 2026 LEADERSHIP AWARD



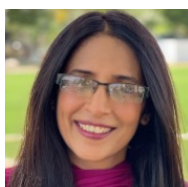
Ms. Clare Allocca

United States of America, Retired; Previously National Institute of Standards and Technology (NIST)



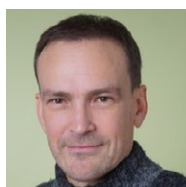
Award sponsored by
MVE Biological Solutions

ISBER 2026 SPECIAL SERVICE AWARDS



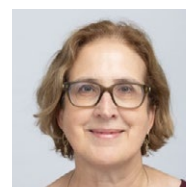
Dr. Javeria Aijaz

Pakistan



Dr. Jonas Astrin

Germany



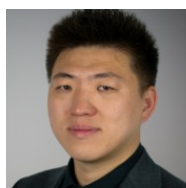
Dr. Jennifer Byrne

Australia



Jason Chen

China



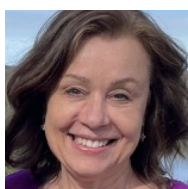
Dr. Ruidong Ma

USA



Dr. Antonio Hugo Campos

Brazil



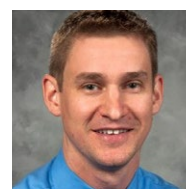
Dr. Dianne Chadwick

Canada



Dr. Gouri Mahajan

USA



Dr. William Schleif

USA

ISBER 2026 NEW INNOVATION PRODUCT AWARDS

Company: Servare Biotechnology (Ningbo) Co. China

Product: The Automatic Perfusion Master



Product Type: Automated perfusion and vitrification preservation system

The Automatic Perfusion Master is a fully automated, end-to-end perfusion system designed for living biological samples and cryopreservation applications. It supports standardized vitrification and bioactive preservation for high-value biological samples, including tissues, embryos, organoids, and organs.

Company: Specie Bio., USA

Product: AI Chat and Matching Engine



Product Type: AI-powered biospecimen search and matching platform

Specie Bio's AI Chat and Matching Engine is an AI-powered platform that connects life science researchers with global biobanking provider partners. It helps researchers define biospecimen requests using natural language and matches those requests with relevant provider inventories to improve biospecimen access and collaboration.

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