

# COMMITTEES

## LABORATORY STEERING COMMITTEE (LSC)

Laboratory research is essential to support the various epidemiological projects conducted at IARC on the causes and mechanisms of cancer. It involves six Groups at IARC (BMA, EGE, GCS, ICB, LSB, and MMB). The IARC Laboratory Steering Committee (LSC) oversees the IARC core laboratory facilities and advises the Director on their most efficient use.

Significant tasks of the LSC over the biennium, conducted in close

collaboration with LSB, have concerned the coordination of the acquisition of new items of equipment (one robot for DNA extraction, one system for high-throughput nucleic acid quality control, one automated immunohistochemistry system, and software for metabolomic analyses), the overall maintenance of laboratory equipment, the design of laboratories in the Nouveau Centre, new safety procedures, the archiving of laboratory notebooks, the transformation of some laboratories to match changing

needs, the organization of seminars on new laboratory technologies, and the update of the Laboratory Services website on the intranet. An inventory of all maintenance contracts for laboratory equipment was carried out, and priorities were established for the corresponding costs under the LSB budget.

## BIOBANK STEERING COMMITTEE (BSC)

The role of the IARC Biobank Steering Committee (BSC) is to support biobanking activities at the Agency and advise the Director regarding the strategic development of the Biobank, both internally and with external collaborators and projects.

The BSC welcomed the new head of LSB. During the biennium, the committee advised on the future biobank facilities in the Nouveau Centre, a new fast-track Material Transfer Agreement process, a revised price structure for the biobank services, the upgrade of storage capacity

through the purchase of new freezers, and a new automated liquid nitrogen tank. The committee also discussed the review, management, or disposal of old sample collections in preparation for the move to the Nouveau Centre.

The IARC Computational Biology, Bioinformatics, and Biostatistics (C3B) Steering Committee has continued to oversee the Agency's activities in these areas. Three working groups – Bioinformatics (headed by Dr Matthieu Foll [GCS] and Dr Magali Olivier [MMB]), Biostatistics (headed by Dr Pietro Ferrari and Dr Vivian Viallon [NMB]), and Information Technology (headed by Mr Christopher Jack [ITS] and Dr Matthieu

Foll [GCS]) – have overseen activities in these areas, reporting to the C3B twice a year.

The key activity has been the expansion of IARC's scientific computing capacity, resulting in a 3-fold increase in computational power and a 6-fold increase in storage capacity; the system now has 70 users across the Agency. The C3B also coordinated

seminar series (30 seminars attended by about 30 individuals) to discuss areas of bioinformatics, statistics, and computational biology, and the continued application of these areas in the Agency's research programme. Technical discussions, blogs, and training sessions have also been developed in collaboration with the Education and Training Group (ETR).

### ETHICS COMMITTEE (IEC)

The IARC Ethics Committee (IEC) ensures that research conducted or supported by IARC conforms to international ethical standards for research involving humans. The IEC ethical review is complementary to local and/or national ethical approval. Over the biennium, the IEC was composed of 10 senior individuals from diverse backgrounds and nationalities. The IEC is chaired by Professor Samar Al-Homoud, supported by Dr Angeliki Kerasidou as vice-chair and assisted by Dr Chiara Scocianti as secretary. An external

Ethics Advisory Group (EAG) provides guidance on an ad hoc basis on areas where specialist expertise is required.

During the 2018–2019 biennium (up to June 2019), the IEC evaluated 69 new projects and 55 resubmissions of projects previously reviewed by the IEC. IEC templates and procedures were further updated on the basis of feedback from IARC staff, disclosure requirements set by the IARC/WHO Policy on Clinical Trials Registration and Public Disclosure of Results, and the minimum criteria

for data protection set by the General Data Protection Regulation. A course on biomedical research ethics for IARC Early Career Scientists was delivered. The EAG was consulted on the potential ethical implications of study design and methods, ethical issues related to data collected on religion, ethnicity, and language, and the IEC position on the Asbest study (Occupational exposure to chrysotile in workers in mines and processing facilities in Asbest, Russian Federation).

### OCCUPATIONAL HEALTH AND SAFETY COMMITTEE (OHSC)

The mission of the Occupational Health and Safety Committee (OHSC) is to ensure, in close collaboration with the Staff Physician, the IARC administration, and LSB, that optimal working conditions are provided for all IARC personnel.

The activities of the OHSC during 2018–2019 include (i) a critical review of the IARC safety manual; (ii) participation in the development of new procedures

to improve working conditions and mitigate associated risks, such as the transport of biological materials; and (iii) a new procedure for hosting scientific visitors working in IARC laboratories for a short duration. The committee also contributed to the organization of regular and specific training, such as courses on chemical hazards and biological risks, and an ergonomics training course for laboratory workers.

After the success of the first IARC pedometer challenge, organized in 2017 to fight sedentary behaviour at work, the OHSC launched a second challenge, which attracted high participation rates. Finally, the committee was involved in the setting of technical parameters for the new IARC building.