

NEWS

Second International Summit on Human Genome Editing

Co-hosted by The Academy of Sciences of Hong Kong | The Royal Society
U.S. National Academy of Sciences | U.S. National Academy of Medicine

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Program Committee Named for the Second International Summit on Human Genome Editing

HONG KONG – An international, multidisciplinary program committee has been appointed to plan the Second International Summit on Human Genome Editing, which will take place Nov. 27-29 in Hong Kong. The three-day summit will be co-hosted by the Academy of Sciences of Hong Kong, the Royal Society of London, the U.S. National Academy of Sciences, and the U.S. National Academy of Medicine. The summit will be held in the Lee Shau Kee Lecture Centre at the University of Hong Kong.

The program committee, which includes representatives from eight nations, will develop the agenda for the second international summit. The committee is being chaired by Nobel laureate David Baltimore, president emeritus and Robert Andrews Millikan Professor of Biology, California Institute of Technology, Pasadena. A full committee roster appears below.

The science of human genome editing has advanced rapidly since the [first international summit](#) was held in 2015 in Washington, D.C. An explosion of new research is employing CRISPR/Cas9 and other powerful, precise editing tools, and clinical trials are planned for applications to treat diseases. However, many questions remain unanswered concerning the science, application, ethics, and governance of human genome editing. Of particular concern is the possibility of genome editing that might lead to heritable alterations, and applications for purposes other than to treat diseases or disabilities.

“Research on human genome editing is moving apace, but there are still many topics that require deeper exploration, including the potential benefits and risks inherent in this research and in possible clinical applications,” said The Academy of Sciences of Hong Kong President Lap-Chee Tsui. “We are pleased to host this second summit in Hong Kong, and we look forward to welcoming participants from around the world to continue this critical international discussion.”

“Human genome editing offers much promise for treating or curing devastating genetic diseases, but we have an important responsibility to continue to examine the ethical and societal implications, especially with potential clinical applications just on the horizon,” said The Royal Society President Venki Ramakrishnan. “As a co-host of both international summits, we are committed to providing a global forum for consideration of these issues.”

“We are honored to join our international counterparts in fulfilling our pledge to continue this essential societal dialogue,” said U.S. National Academy of Sciences President Marcia McNutt and U.S. National Academy of Medicine President Victor J. Dzau in a joint statement. “Given the profound societal implications from the application of these widely-available gene-editing tools, diverse stakeholders need to draft ethical guidelines to ensure positive outcomes.”

The Second International Summit on Human Genome Editing will bring together a broad range of stakeholders – including researchers, ethicists, policy makers, clinicians, patient and disability groups, and representatives from science and medical academies and organizations worldwide-- to examine issues including:

- scientific advances that have been made since the 2015 summit;
- progress in the study of non-heritable genome editing to treat diseases;
- the state of the science for genome editing in germline cells and the potential for clinical applications;
- efforts to address technical challenges identified at the 2015 summit;
- prospects for developing international regulatory frameworks;
- ethical and societal issues surrounding the pursuit of human genome-editing applications; and

- efforts to engage the public.

For more information or to sign up to receive updates on the summit, please visit the summit [web page](#). Those unable to attend in person will be able to view the summit via live video webcast. Follow the conversation on Twitter using #GeneEditSummit.

Journalists who would like more information should contact:

Terence Chan
Secretary General
The Academy of Sciences of Hong Kong
terencechan@ashk.org.hk
+852 3543 5915

Bronwyn Friedlander
Press Office
The Royal Society
press@royalsociety.org
+44 (0)207 451 2514

Molly Galvin
Office of News and Public Information
U.S. National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine
news@nas.edu
+1 202-334-2138

Program Committee for the Second International Summit on Human Genome Editing

David Baltimore^{1,2} (*committee chair*)
President Emeritus and Robert Andrews Millikan Professor of Biology
California Institute of Technology
United States

Alta Charo²
Warren P. Knowles Professor of Law and Bioethics
University of Wisconsin, Madison
United States

George Q. Daley²
Dean of the Faculty of Medicine and Caroline Shields Walker Professor of Medicine
Harvard Medical School
United States

Jennifer A. Doudna^{1,2}
Investigator, Howard Hughes Medical Institute; and
Professor, Department of Molecular and Cell Biology and Department of Chemistry
University of California, Berkeley
United States

Kazuto Kato
Professor of Biomedical Ethics and Public Policy
Graduate School of Medicine
Osaka University
Japan

Jin-Soo Kim
Director of Center for Genome Engineering
Institute for Basic Science

Seoul National University
South Korea

Robin Lovell-Badge³

Senior Group Leader
The Francis Crick Institute; and
Special Visiting Professor
University of Hong Kong
United Kingdom

Jennifer Merchant

Professor of Legal and Political Institutions
Université de Paris II (Panthéon-Assas)
France

Indira Nath

Visiting Professor, Former Senior Professor, and Head, Bio-Support Unit
Department of Biotechnology
All India Institute of Medical Sciences (AIIMS)
India

Duanqing Pei

Professor and Director General
Guangzhou Institutes of Biomedicine and Health
Chinese Academy of Sciences
China

Matthew Porteus

Associate Professor of Pediatrics
Division of Stem Cell Transplantation and Regenerative Medicine
Stanford University
United States

John Skehel³

Vice-President and Biological Secretary
The Royal Society
Emeritus Scientist
The Francis Crick Institute
United Kingdom

Patrick Tam³

Deputy Director and Head, Embryology Research Unit
Children's Medical Research Institute;
Senior Principal Research Fellow
National Health and Medical Research Council (NHMRC) of Australia;
Professor, School of Medical Sciences, Faculty of Medicine and Health
The University of Sydney; and
Mok Hing-Yiu Distinguished Visiting Professor
School of Biomedical Sciences
University of Hong Kong
Australia

Xiaomei Zhai

Professor and Executive Director, Centre for Bioethics
Chinese Academy of Medical Sciences and Peking Union Medical College
China

¹Member, U.S. National Academy of Sciences

²Member, U.S. National Academy of Medicine

³Fellow, The Royal Society