

FURTHER INVESTMENT FOR GENOMICS ANNOUNCED

The Economic and Social Research Council (ESRC) today announces continued funding, from 2007 to 2012, for its three research centres, CESAGen, EGENIS and INNOGEN, that, along with the ESRC Genomics Policy and Research Forum, make up the ESRC Genomics Network.

As part of the 2000 and 2002 Spending Review, the ESRC received £10 million to fund initiatives looking at the social and economic context of genomics

The Centre for Economic and Social Aspects of Genomics (CESAGen), which will receive around £8 million of funding over five years, is a Cardiff-Lancaster collaboration led by Professor Ruth Chadwick, in which researchers from the social sciences and the humanities work closely with those in the natural and medical sciences to address the social, economic and policy aspects of development in genomics. Key challenges in the next few years will include addressing the social dimensions of the applications of genomics in health service delivery, with reference to both common and rare diseases; and in areas such as food and nutrition, behaviour and criminal responsibility, and human enhancement.

EGENIS, the ESRC Centre for Genomics in Society, based at Exeter will receive almost £4 million over the five years. EGENIS, headed by Professor John Dupré, is an interdisciplinary research centre looking at the social implications of contemporary genetic science especially in areas such as nutrigenomics, systems biology and gene therapy which have the potential to become highly contentious in society.

Innogen, a collaboration between Edinburgh University and the Open University, is the ESRC Centre for Social and Economic Research on Innovation in Genomics and will receive further funding of around £5 million over five years. Innogen's research programme brings together social, medical and natural scientists to work on evolution of the new life science economy and the governance of innovation in the life sciences, in partnership with industry and private interest groups; policy makers and regulators; citizens and public interest groups, in genomics innovation. Taking over from Professor



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Joyce Tait, Innogen will also welcome a new Centre Director, Professor David Wield, from October 2007.

Commenting on the announcements, Adrian Alsop, Director for Research, Training and Development for the ESRC, said, "We are delighted to announce this second phase of funding for our genomics research centres. The unique ESRC Genomics Network allows us to work in collaboration with medical and natural scientists in order to build understanding in this area. The Network has quickly established a world leading presence for the UK in this important area. Insights from social science explain how genomic technologies can benefit our health service and realise the potential benefits that they bring to developing countries."

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION, CONTACT:

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NOTES FOR EDITORS

1. The ESRC is the UK's largest funding agency for research and postgraduate training relating to social and economic issues. It supports independent, high quality research that is relevant to business, the public sector and Government. The ESRC total expenditure in 2005/6 was £135million. At any one time the ESRC supports over 4,000 researchers and postgraduate students in academic institutions and research policy institutes. More at <http://www.esrcsocietytoday.ac.uk>
2. ESRC Society Today offers free access to a broad range of social science research and presents it in a way that makes it easy to navigate and saves users valuable time. As well as bringing together all ESRC-funded research (formerly accessible via the Regard website) and key online resources such as the Social Science Information Gateway and the UK Data Archive, non-ESRC resources are included, for example the Office for National Statistics. The portal provides access to early findings and research summaries, as well as full texts and original datasets through integrated search facilities. More at <http://www.esrcsocietytoday.ac.uk>

3. **CESAGen** works with natural scientists while conducting multidisciplinary research into the economic and social factors that shape genomic science, as applied not only to humans but also to plants and animals. In the light of considerable national and international attention to these issues, and increased public debate, CESAGen aims to undertake a programme of public engagement as well as feeding its research into policy circles. For more information visit: <http://www.cesagen.lancs.ac.uk/>
4. **Egenis** is the ESRC Centre for Genomics in Society charged with researching the impact of genetic technologies in society. Egenis is part of the University of Exeter. For more information visit: www.ex.ac.uk/egenis
5. **Innogen** is the ESRC Centre for Social and Economic Research on Innovation in Genomics. Formed in October 2002, it is part of the ESRC Genomics Network and studies the evolution of genomics and life sciences and their far-reaching social and economic implications.

Innogen's research provides a sound base for decision-making in science, industry, policy and public arenas and improves our understanding of each of these groups and their interactions. Innogen is based at the University of Edinburgh in collaboration with The Open University. Staff working at Innogen include interdisciplinary researchers, social scientists, economists, and lawyers. Innogen also engages with a wide range of stakeholders, nationally and internationally. For more information visit: www.innogen.ac.uk