

## **Génomique Québec Goes Digital and Recruits a Recognized Expert in Bioinformatics and Genomics from Toronto**

**Montréal, January 12, 2017** – Daniel Coderre, President and CEO of Génomique Québec, is pleased to announce the appointment of B.F. Francis Ouellette as Vice President of Scientific Affairs – a decision unanimously endorsed by the organization’s board of directors. Mr. Ouellette will be taking up his duties on February 27, 2017.



Over the last 20 years, Mr. Ouellette has gained extensive experience in bioinformatics both in Canada and the United States. He worked for the Ontario Institute for Cancer Research (OICR) in Toronto for 10 years and has now returned to Québec, where he will be leveraging his expertise, innovative vision and outstanding leadership in bioinformatics and genomics for the benefit of Génomique Québec.

As Associate Director of the Informatics and Biocomputing platform and lead investigator at the OICR, Francis Ouellette focused on the biocuration and management of genomic data on cancer and on bioinformatics training. Before his arrival in Toronto in 2007, he had served as Associate Professor in the department of Medical Genetics at the University of British Columbia (UBC) and Director of the UBC Bioinformatics Centre (UBiC) at the Michael Smith Laboratories. He was trained at McGill University, the University of Calgary and Simon Fraser University.

He was also employed by the National Institutes of Health (NIH), where he coordinated GenBank, the world’s largest open DNA sequence database. Since that time, he has been dedicated to ensuring open access to science, the data it generates and the publications that report on them. His commitment goes beyond the scope of his work. As such, he sits on various advisory boards and editorial boards, including as Education Editor for *PLOS Computational Biology* and Associate Editor for *DATABASE* journal (an Oxford University Press open access publication). He also participates in a number of NIH-funded open source and open data resource projects as a member of its scientific advisory committee (Saccharomyces Genome Database, Galaxy Project, GenomeSpace, H3ABionet – a pan-African bioinformatics network funded by the NIH and Wellcome Trust – and the Human Microbiome Project). In addition, Francis Ouellette sits on the scientific advisory board of Elixir-Europe. He currently works as Associate Professor, adjunct in the department of Cell and Systems Biology at the University of Toronto.

As Vice President of Scientific Affairs, Francis will be leading efforts to define Génomique Québec’s vision and develop its scientific strategy. Given the breadth of this expertise, he will be advising Génomique Québec on ways to boost Québec’s competitiveness in genomics and big data management.

“The sheer volume of data generated by genomics has unprecedented value and potential for our areas of activity, which include precision medicine, agrifood, the environment and forestry. With Francis on board, we will have a valuable ally in meeting the tremendous challenge of storing, interpreting and using all this data. His in-depth knowledge of genomics and of the stakes involved in going digital, along with his vast network of contacts, represents a major asset for Génomique Québec in terms of fulfilling the full potential of genomics research and its applications for users,” explains Daniel Coderre.

“It’s a great privilege for me to come back to Québec at such an exciting time. Genomics is now at a crossroads and it’s crucial to make the most of the new knowledge generated by its various areas of research. I’m honoured to have been chosen to take part in this revolution, particularly here in Québec, where the potential is vast and the infrastructures, exceptional. I am thrilled to be working alongside the Québec, Canadian and international scientific community on positioning Québec as a key leader in genomics innovation,” said B.F. Francis Ouellette.

## **About Génome Québec**

Génome Québec is an economic development organization that contributes to strengthening the competitiveness of the genomics innovation system in order to maximize its socioeconomic impact in Québec. It does so by funding major genomic research initiatives and putting in place the tools necessary for scientific and strategic development in the field.

The funds invested by Génome Québec are provided by the ministère de l'Économie, de la Science et de l'Innovation du Québec (MESI), the Government of Canada, through Genome Canada, and private partners.

For more information, visit [www.genomequebec.com](http://www.genomequebec.com).

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