



Press Release

## OFFICIAL LAUNCH OF THE NEW IPAC RESOURCE

### **IPAC, the new international resource for policy interoperability and data sharing to accelerate genomic medicine**

**Montréal, September 12, 2013** – Since the sequence map of the human genome, the cost of sequencing the genome of an individual has fallen rapidly. This has resulted in a tremendous increase in the amount of human genomic data available to the international research community for the advancement of biomedical research. Yet, there is an absence of international mechanisms to support researchers in ensuring ethical and legal interoperability. In addition, the multiplicity and diversity of laws, standards and policies on sharing and accessing genetic and medical data represent major hurdles to international collaboration.

To address this gap, the Public Population Project in Genomics and Society (P<sup>3</sup>G), in partnership with the Centre of Genomics and Policy (CGP) at the McGill University and Génome Québec Innovation Centre, is proud to announce the launch of the IPAC, (International Policy interoperability and data Access Clearinghouse), a new resource to both promote the interoperability of international norms and to facilitate the sharing of clinical and research data.

Building on the expertise of P<sup>3</sup>G and the CGP, the IPAC will offer a “one-stop” service for national and international collaborative research projects. It will provide normative tools and frameworks that respect the laws and regulations of each country while facilitating access.

“As a policy interoperability tool provider and a data access broker, the IPAC will harmonize projects to ensure successful ethics, privacy and access review, thereby reducing unnecessary bureaucracy and delays,” said Professor Bartha Maria Knoppers, co-founder of P<sup>3</sup>G, Canada Research Chair in Law and Medicine and Director of the Centre of Genomics and Policy.

“We applaud the development of new resources that serve to advance research in Québec. IPAC is a great example of how concerted, forward-looking action can help to meet current and future challenges in genomic research and enhance the capacity for action and influence of Québec research on the international scene,” explained Jean-François Lisée, Minister of International Relations, La Francophonie and External Trade.

Located in Montréal at the McGill University and Génome Québec Innovation Centre, the IPAC will provide the international scientific community with the expertise and ethical frameworks needed to create an information clearinghouse and support structure.

“Génome Québec has always encouraged international collaborations, since they are critical to the advancement of genomic research. This confirms just how important it is to support projects like P<sup>3</sup>G, the driving force behind the IPAC resource. We are pleased to be able to leverage its activities of recent years in support of the scientific community,” said Marc LePage, President and CEO of Génome Québec.

“McGill University is proud to be a founding partner of IPAC, and we thank P<sup>3</sup>G, CGP, and Professor Knoppers for their leadership on this important initiative,” said Dr. Rose Goldstein, McGill’s Vice-Principal (Research and International Relations). “International partnerships and interdisciplinary research are fundamental to McGill’s research enterprise. We believe that by helping world-class researchers to work more collaboratively, regardless of discipline or country, we ensure that the strongest ideas will be applied to the transformative field of genomics.”

## **IPAC, a P<sup>3</sup>G initiative**

Created in 2007 and funded by Genome Canada, Génome Québec and the Canadian Institutes of Health Research, P<sup>3</sup>G is an international not-for-profit organization based in Montréal. It works with experts from more than 50 countries, providing them with the support they need to conduct high-quality, large-scale research projects.

From 2007 to 2012, the goal of P<sup>3</sup>G was to help build large population cohorts. But as Professor Bartha Maria Knoppers explains: “In its Phase II (2013-2018), the focus of P<sup>3</sup>G is to ensure access and use of both genomic research and clinical databases, so as to move towards genomic medicine. The launch of the IPAC is an important part of this phase. In addition, P<sup>3</sup>G is built on a world-class team with unique expertise, making IPAC a logical extension of this international consortium.”

P<sup>3</sup>G is a partner organization in the development of the global alliance to enable the responsible sharing of genomic and clinical data. It is committed to fostering and facilitating global data sharing through international interoperability mechanisms.

### **About the Centre of Genomics and Policy (CGP)**

Located within the McGill University and Génome Québec Innovation Centre, the Centre of Genomics and Policy (CGP) is at the crossroads of the legal, medical and public policy fields. The CGP promotes prospective structuring and guidance for both research in genomic health sciences and its applications. Within a multidisciplinary perspective and in collaboration with national and international partners, the CGP analyzes the socio-ethical and legal norms influencing multiple aspects of the promotion, prevention and protection of human health.

To learn more: <http://www.genomicsandpolicy.org/en>

### **About the McGill University and Génome Québec Innovation Centre**

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### **About Génome Québec**

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### **About McGill University**

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### **About Public Population Project in Genomics and Society (P<sup>3</sup>G)**

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