

**From:** Ben Howden [<mailto:bhowden@unimelb.edu.au>]  
**Sent:** Thursday, 4 December 2014 1:51 PM  
**To:** Coombs, Geoffrey  
**Cc:** Timothy Paul Stinear  
**Subject:** Invitation to Partner in the Doherty Centre for Applied Microbial Genomics

Dear Geoff,

RE: Invitation for AGAR to become a partner in the Doherty Centre for Applied Microbial Genomics

The power of microbial genomics to transform clinical and public health microbiology is being realised globally, with microbial genome sequencing improving capacity for microbial characterisation, outbreak detection, understanding microbial evolution, and complex infection diagnosis. Australia has significant capacity in the application of genomics to microbial research, but has not yet significantly invested in directly applying this evolving technology to the clinical environment.

The University of Melbourne has recently announced 3 years funding to establish an applied microbial genomics centre located in the Microbiological Diagnostic Unit Public Health Laboratory (MDU PHL) within the Doherty Institute (The Doherty Centre for Applied Microbial Genomics). This Centre will be directed by A/Prof Tim Stinear (Scientific Director) and Prof Benjamin Howden (Medical Director), with the bioinformatics component of the centre led by Dr Torsten Seemann from the Victorian Life Sciences Computation Initiative (VLSCI).

Capacity and strengths of the Centre will include:

1. High throughput genome sequencing hardware (Illumina MiSeq, Illumina NextSeq, Robotic Library preparation), and long read sequencing technology (PacBio RSII) soon to be established
2. Established expertise in bacterial genomics and bioinformatics
3. Established links with relevant organisations locally, nationally and internationally
4. Funding for project officer and bioinformatician to manage the Centre

The objectives of the Centre are to:

1. Perform and facilitate research directly relevant to establishing microbial genomics as a tool for routine clinical and public health microbiology in Australia
2. Provide leadership, advice and policy development in the implementation of applied microbial genomics in Australia
3. Facilitate the application of microbial genomics to enhance disease diagnosis, microbial characterisation, outbreak detection, antimicrobial resistance mapping and response in clinical and public health microbiology in Australia
4. Provide high-level training to scientists, bioinformaticians and clinicians in applied microbial genomics
5. Provide support for undergraduate teaching initiatives in this domain

We would like to invite AGAR to become a partner in the Centre. We believe this will enhance collaboration with the Centre and improve outcomes in the area of applied microbial genomics. As a partner you will have the opportunity to contribute to the strategic direction of the centre, and have access to the resources of the Centre

(including the project officer, sequencing hardware and bioinformaticians). It is anticipated that the project officer will coordinate meetings with the Centre and partners, and assist with project development and management. Project proposals that are aligned with the strategic objectives of the Centre will be reviewed by a scientific advisory committee prior to a commitment from the Centre to facilitate the project.

Please let us know if you are interested in becoming part of this initiative, we will be happy to discuss further,

Regards,

Ben Howden and Tim Stinear

**Professor Benjamin Howden | Director**

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