

# The Need for Biobanking: A Newcomers' Course

Petra STORY, Katharina PLATTNER, Tanja MACHEINER, Karine SARGSYAN,  
Berthold HUPPERTZ

**Biobank Graz**

*Medical University of Graz, Austria*

## Background

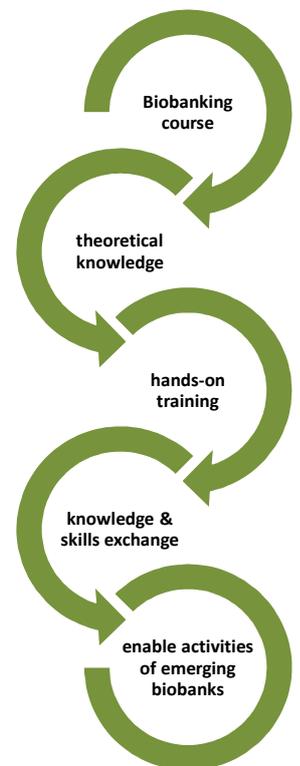
Building up a biobank is challenging since biobanking is a very interdisciplinary field and specific education is rare. Particularly the very first steps in development are fundamental for definition of focus and orientation of the biobank in future. Hence information, training and know-how transfer is needed from experienced biobanks to newcomers. At the same time, offers of biobanking courses on start up a biobank are limited.

## Methods

Biobank Graz has extensive experience in coaching and consulting of emerging biobanks and decided to provide a biobanking course to offer know-how transfer for biobanking newcomers in a structured frame. The course 'How to build a biobank – Learning by doing' was held at Biobank Graz in September 2015. This course delivered the theoretical, practical and hands-on comprehensive knowledge essential to enable the activities of emerging biobanks. It transferred basic best practice principles for all interested individuals working in biobanks. Furthermore, it encouraged principle-based exchange of knowledge and skills crosswise between different biobanking activities involved in biospecimen preservation, storage, handling and research.

Amongst others, the main topics were:

- governance types,
- services of a biobank,
- ethics,
- cost calculation,
- quality management,
- sample collection,
- processing,
- storage and retrieval,
- biobank data systems and
- biobank networking (e.g. BBMRI-ERIC, ESBB, ISBER).



## Results

This interactive 3 day course has generated great interest in the biobanking community and was fully booked within short time. 20 participants from 8 countries attended the first biobanking course at Biobank Graz.

To evaluate this course, the participants were asked to anonymously fill in a questionnaire. The feedback was very positive and was graded 1.19 on average (1= excellent, 4= insufficient). In detail, the theoretical part (trainers, lectures, structure of the lectures) was graded with 1.19 on average. The evaluation of the practical part (hands-on training, guided tour) averaged 1.22.

## Conclusion

The consistent positive feedback from course participants and the further demand for education – already numerous biobanking newcomers are on the waiting list – encouraged Biobank Graz to plan the next course, which will take place November 23<sup>rd</sup>-25<sup>th</sup>, 2016.