

## **Increased Global Participation Expected at 2011 International Human Microbiome Congress**

**BETHESDA, MD** (February 2, 2011) – The Foundation for the National Institutes of Health (FNIH) announced today a significant increase in international participation for the 2011 International Human Microbiome Congress to be held in Vancouver, British Columbia, Canada from March 9-11, 2011.

Partnered with The International Human Microbiome Consortium, The NIH Common Fund, and supported by a number of leading-edge sponsors and high-profile keynote speakers, FNIH is expecting record international participation and registration for the 2011 congress. Increased global interest in the human microbiome has created an opportunity to bring together a diverse community of distinguished international leaders and researchers from the medical, microbial and computational fields to discuss the complex relationships of the microbiome with human health and disease.

A number of notable international speakers and sponsors have been secured for the highly anticipated three-day 2011 congress. Speakers at the event include Dr. S. Dusko Ehrlich from the National Institute of Agronomic Research (INRA) in France, Dr. George Weinstock from The Genome Center at Washington University and Liping Zhao from Zhejiang University. Sponsors of the congress include BGI, Danone Research, General Mills, Genome British Columbia, MO BIO, OpGen, P&G and PhyloTech.

“We are strongly committed to the advancement of gastrointestinal microbiota research and are pleased to support the International Human Microbiome Congress, where we will participate in dialogue around topics critical to Danone’s innovation strategy,” said Dr. Sven Thormahlen, Executive Vice President, Research and Development at Danone. “The congress offers a unique forum that facilitates interaction with leading scientists, academics and companies driving this field.”

The 2011 congress will include general, concurrent and poster sessions, as well as a series of bioinformatics tutorial sessions. Serving as a milestone for the 2011 congress, new unpublished data sets from the NIH Human Microbiome Project (HMP) large scale study of the normal human microbiome will be presented. Also to be presented are important new results from a large scale study performed by the European Commission sponsored MetaHit group that aims to understand the microbiome’s association with obesity and inflammatory bowel diseases. Additional topics at the congress will focus on the human microbiome in human health and disease, animal microbiomes, environmental metagenomics, quantitative metagenomics, ethical, legal and social implications of human microbiome studies, new technologies and computational tools for the study of the human microbiome and other metagenomic research areas.

For registration and information please visit: [www.fnih.org](http://www.fnih.org)

### **About the Foundation for NIH**

Established by the United States Congress to support the mission of the NIH—improving health through scientific discovery in the search for cures—the Foundation for NIH is a leader in identifying and addressing complex scientific and health issues. The foundation is a non-profit, 501(c)(3)

charitable organization that raises private-sector funds for a broad portfolio of unique programs that complement and enhance NIH priorities and activities. For additional information about the Foundation for NIH, please visit [www.fnih.org](http://www.fnih.org)

**About the International Human Microbiome Consortium (IHMC)**

The goal of the IMHC is to work under a common set of principles and policies to study and understand the role of the human microbiome in the maintenance of health and causation of disease and to use that knowledge to improve the ability to prevent and treat disease. The Consortium's efforts are focused on generating a shared comprehensive data resource that will enable investigators to characterize the relationship between the composition of the human microbiome (or of parts of the human microbiome) and human health and disease. For additional information about the IHMC, please visit [www.human-microbiome.org](http://www.human-microbiome.org).

**About the NIH Common Fund**

The NIH Common Fund encourages collaboration and supports a series of exceptionally high impact, trans-NIH programs. These new programs are funded through the Common Fund, and managed by the NIH Office of the Director in partnership with the various NIH Institutes, Centers and Offices. Common Fund programs are designed to pursue major opportunities and gaps in biomedical research that no single NIH Institute could tackle alone, but that the agency as a whole can address to make the biggest impact possible on the progress of medical research. Additional information about the NIH Common Fund can be found at <http://commonfund.nih.gov>.