

Biobank Brief

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THE BIOSPECIMEN VIEWER IS NOW AVAILABLE



From left: Michael Schwarz (VCB Data Manager), Dr Anne Thompson, Melvin Luong (VPAC Software Engineer), Andrew Underwood and Yassar Hameed (VCB Data Manager)

The Victorian Cancer Biobank and the Victorian Partnership for Advanced Computing (VPAC) are pleased to announce the launch of the Biobank's specimen search engine, [Biospecimen Viewer](#).

This collaborative effort has resulted in a search engine which is housed on the VCB website and linked directly to the Biobank's own biospecimen database, allowing researchers to perform their own search to gauge availability and quantity stored of a particular sample, based on tumour type, histopathology, stage, grade and biospecimen type.

"In the past researchers would contact our applications manager, who in turn would contact the sites to find out what was available. This exciting step forward will enable researchers to go online and instantly see what is available in the inventory." Dr Anne Thompson, CEO - VCB

As with most new projects, the search engine will continue to be refined and updated to accurately service the needs of users; therefore potential users are encouraged to visit the website to test the Biospecimen Viewer's ability and to provide the Biobank with feedback on results.

"The competitive nature of research demands immediate availability of information and data. The Biospecimen Viewer provides a means for researchers to immediately access information on specimen availability and quantities hosted in the Biobank's database. The project will improve the productivity of translational researchers, and could not have succeeded without the innovative vision of CEO Dr Anne Thompson. VPAC looks forward to working with the Biobank Consortium over the coming months to further refine the application." Andrew

The Biobank would like to thank VPAC for their invaluable assistance with this project, which has been made all the more difficult by the complexity of the backend structure of the database. We'd also like to acknowledge former VPAC staff members, David Morrison and Leonardi Sutedja as well as Biobank data manager, Charlotte Crill (maternity leave) and former Biobank staff member, Joanne Edgar who each played a major role in the project.

We envisage that the search engine will provide assistance to researchers preparing grants and/or seeking ethics approval for cancer research projects and look forward to receiving any feedback which might improve the functionality of the Biospecimen Viewer.

Please forward your feedback to our [Data Manager](#).

INTERIM BIOBANK MANAGER APPOINTED

Further to the recent email sent to you from the Biobank's Consortium Committee, we wish to announce the appointment of Interim Manager, Carmel Murone.

Carmel will balance the responsibility of overseeing the operations of VCB with her current research project based at the Austin. Her key priority in the role of Interim Biobank Manager will be to ensure continuing support for researchers in Victoria through tissue collection and distribution. This position will supersede the current Chief Executive Officer role and the Operations Manager.

For the full message from the Committee, please go to the [VCB website](#).