
Media Release



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

GENOME: UNLOCKING LIFE'S CODE **Opens May 15 at the Saint Louis Science Center**

St. Louis, MO – It is in every living thing on Earth. It is the complete set of instructions that is needed for every living thing to grow and function. It can help you unlock the secrets of your past and reveal the path to your future. It is the genome.

The first state-of-the-art exhibition about genomic science, *Genome: Unlocking Life's Code* opens May 15, 2015 at the Saint Louis Science Center. The exhibition is the result of a unique partnership of the Smithsonian Institution and the National Institutes of Health.

The exhibition examines the complexities of the genome — the complete set of genetic or hereditary material of a living organism — and chronicles the remarkable breakthroughs that have taken place since the completion of the Human Genome Project more than a decade ago. With cutting-edge interactives, 3D models, custom animations and engaging videos of real-life stories, the exhibition examines both the benefits and the challenges that genomics presents to modern society.

From the moment you enter the exhibition, you will find yourself immersed in an interactive, futuristic environment that communicates the revolutionary nature of genomics. The exhibition gives you a window into genomes that provides new ways of looking at yourself as an individual, as a member of a family and a species, and as part of the diversity of life on Earth.

“We are very pleased to host *Genome: Unlocking Life's Code* at the Saint Louis Science Center. It will give us an opportunity to engage the public on the topics of genetics and personal medicine on a personal level, through many hands-on activities that we have developed that are both enjoyable and educational,” said Cindy Encarnación, Ph.D., Senior Director of STEM (science, technology, engineering and mathematics) Content. “We are particularly excited to highlight the important contributions in genomics research that researchers in St. Louis have made.

Through partnering with scientists representing the various research institutions in the region, we will feature visiting scientists to talk to the public about their work and their career paths. We're hoping to interest young people to consider careers in science and to look to our visiting scientists for guidance and inspiration."

Genome: Unlocking Life's Code is organized around three galleries where you can immerse yourself in personalized and interactive experiences that explore what a genome is, how it relates to medicine and health, and how it connects humans to all life on the planet. Within each alcove, numerous topics are explored through the latest imagery on genomics, hands-on and media interactives, videos and other engaging content. Through examples of how genome science can affect your life in ordinary and extraordinary ways, you will also come to learn how genomics can affect perspectives about health, identity, and the place of humans in the natural world.

"This exhibition reflects a remarkably productive collaboration between components of two scientific icons of the U.S. government — the Smithsonian Institution and the National Institutes of Health," said Eric D. Green, M.D., Ph.D., director of NHGRI, one of the 27 institutes and centers that make up NIH.

The exhibition was made possible through the generous support of the Life Technologies Foundation (now part of Thermo Fisher Scientific) and other sponsors, including but not limited to Johnson & Johnson, Ancestry.com and The Brin Wojcicki Foundation.

Genome: Unlocking Life's Code will be shown at the Saint Louis Science Center from May 15 through September 7, 2015. The exhibition is free.

###

Trademarks

Thank you for your interest in the Saint Louis Science Center. We ask that you include the full names of our institution: Saint Louis Science Center, OMNIMAX[®] Theater, Boeing Hall and James S. McDonnell Planetarium when writing your story.

Saint Louis Science Center

The mission of the Saint Louis Science Center is to ignite and sustain lifelong science and technology learning. It is one of the top 15 science centers worldwide and was named one of the "Top 10 Science Centers for Families" by Parents magazine. The Saint Louis Science Center complex includes a four-story OMNIMAX[®] Theater, Boeing Hall and the James S. McDonnell Planetarium. For more information about the Saint Louis Science Center, please visit slsc.org

About NHGRI

National Human Genome Research Institute is one of the 27 institutes and centers at the National Institutes of Health. NHGRI supports the development of resources and technology that will accelerate genome research and its application to human health. A critical part of the NHGRI mission continues to be the study of the ethical, legal and social implications (ELSI) of genome research. NHGRI also supports the training of investigators and the dissemination of genome information to the public and to health professionals. Additional information about NHGRI can be found at its website, www.genome.gov.

About NIH

The National Institutes of Health, the nation's medical research agency, includes 27 Institutes and Centers and is a component of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. NIH is the primary federal agency conducting and supporting basic, clinical, and translational medical research, and is investigating the causes, treatments, and cures for both common and rare diseases. For more information about NIH and its programs, visit www.nih.gov.

About the Smithsonian's National Museum of Natural History

The National Museum of Natural History is part of the Smithsonian Institution, the world's preeminent museum and research complex. The museum is dedicated to inspiring curiosity, discovery, and learning about the natural world through its unparalleled research, collections, exhibitions, education outreach programs and digital resources. NMNH is the largest natural history museum in the world with more than 127 million science specimens and cultural artifacts. As one of the world's great repositories of scientific and cultural heritage it is a source of tremendous pride for all Americans. For more information, visit www.mnh.si.edu.

About The Life Technologies Foundation

The Life Technologies Foundation, now part of Thermo Fisher Scientific, is dedicated to advancing science education and changing perspectives on how the application of biology can address societal needs. In particular, the Foundation supports programs that accelerate the adoption and understanding of genomics in healthcare; Global Exhibitions and Science Festivals, and projects that advance life science education among today's educators and tomorrow's scientists through their groundbreaking K-12 hands-on science program, InnovatioNation™.