

Stem cell research boosted

In Australia, key centres of stem cell research will collaborate through the new National Centre for Advanced Cell Engineering (NCACE). NCACE has been awarded Commonwealth funding of US\$5.5 million over five years under the Major National Research Facilities Programme. The centre will be based at the Monash Institute of Reproduction, which has a major collaboration with BresaGen/Luminis Cell Therapy Programme at Adelaide University.

NCACE will focus on utilizing human and adult embryonic stem cell technology to develop biomaterials and artificial organs for the ultimate purpose of transplantation. It will supply both national as well as international academic and commercial research centres with human stem cells for use in research on applications such as assay systems for assessment of gene function, drug screening and toxicology production. NCACE will create a multi-disciplinary team to develop new nanotechnologies, cell culture systems, bioprocesses, growth factors and integrated cell systems in polymer scaffolds that function as primitive organs and tissues for potential transplantation. *Contact: Prof. Alan Trounson, Australia. Tel: +61 (3) 9594 7100.* (Australasian Biotechnology, October-November 2001)