

European Intellectual Property Review

07 ENE. 2016

2016 Volume 38 Issue 1
ISSN: 0142-0461

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Reconciling IPRs and Openness in Biobanking 1

This opinion argues that carefully drafted IPR policies could be used to protect the substantial investments made by biobanks in the collection of HBM and data while still allowing scientists to share information and to seek IPRs on downstream inventions resulting from the use of such collections. At the same time it is recognised that the feasibility of IPR policies depends on the specific types, set-ups and goals of biobanks, and that some biobanks might have good reasons to refrain from being involved in IPRs. However, in many cases an appropriate balance of the IPR-user modalities will be crucial to enhance translational medicine.

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