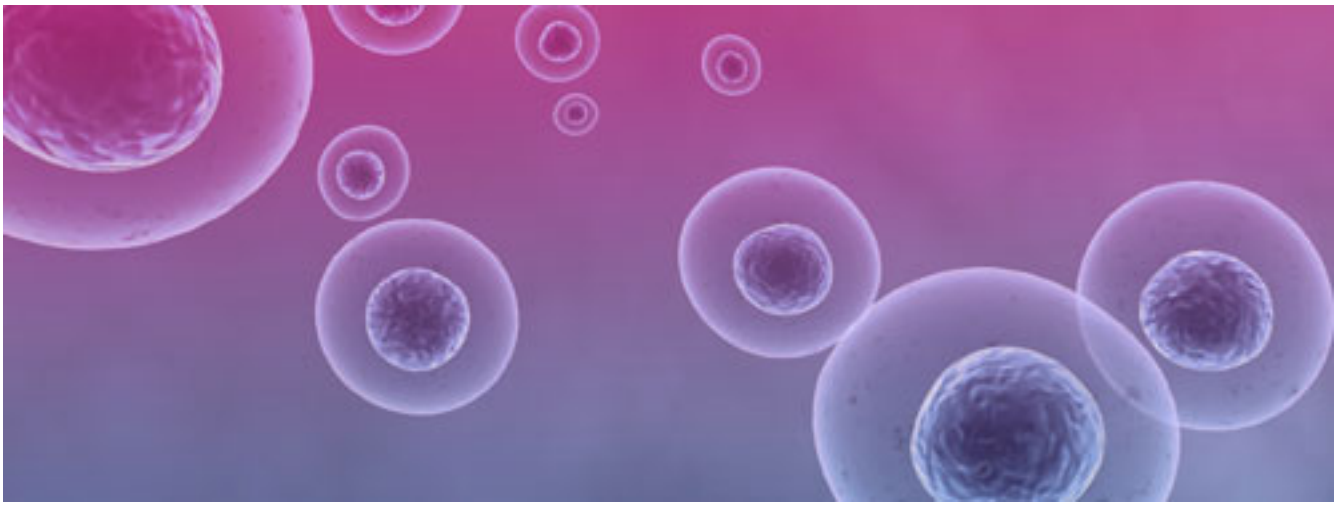
Cell Biology and Genetics



The PAS Workshop on Cell Biology and Genetics will bring together a group of scientists from the Pontifical Academy and the Academia de Ciencias de América Latina (ACAL). The main goal will be to report on recent discoveries in Cell Biology. It will also include discussion on how to overcome the main challenges for scientific research in Latin America. Latin America is a vast continent that has experienced significant improvements in scientific capabilities in the past decades. There have also been setbacks and structural challenges. Science is a driving force for development with many social benefits, and scientific advances in many areas are making a great impact worldwide. Among them is cell biology which will be the focus of this workshop. Scientific sessions will bring together experts in the fields of membrane biology, genetics, cell signaling, neurobiology and biomedical applications of cell biology.

Science has important consequences for education, food production, biomedicine, and promotes social progress. Latin America has a highly educated, cultured population and a long history of important contributions to biological research. This includes two science Nobel prizes (awarded to PAS members Bernardo Houssay and Luis Leloir) for research carried out in the region. There are excellent groups in the area of cell biology which are having important impact as medicine becomes increasingly molecular. The workshop will include several young cell biologists recently elected to ACAL.

The closing session of the workshop will be dedicated to a general discussion aimed at increasing international cooperation through the vast subcontinent. This will include the preparation of a final statement with recommendations for the future of science in this important region. Discussion

topics will include intracontinental scientific collaborations which have much room for improvement due to the current emphasis on vertical relations with the Northern hemisphere rather than horizontal among neighbors. Other topics will include key ingredients such as mutual cooperation, student and researcher exchanges, and common efforts for the establishment of infrastructure. The results of these discussions will be shared with governments, academies of sciences and scientific societies in Latin America. ACAL was founded during a special meeting called by PAS President Carlos Chagas in 1982, and this encounter between PAS and ACAL will examine progress 35 years later, and look ahead towards sustained development in biomedicine. The PAS, with its universal perspective, hopes to give impulse to many more decades of building bridges in Latin American science.

Professor Edward De Robertis

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