

May 14, 2009

Material Transfer Agreements

Obtaining a specific Material Transfer Agreement (MTA) for each exchange of materials between academic and other non-profit institutions has become an increasingly onerous barrier to the free and open exchange of scientific information and materials. Seeking to affirm that collegiality, science, and sharing should take precedence over commercial considerations among researchers at such institutions, the universities identified below have adopted the following policy:

Subject to our obligations to existing research sponsors and licensees, we agree:

- 1) that a specific MTA is not required when our investigators and their research colleagues elsewhere are exchanging non-hazardous or non-human biological materials for in vitro research use; or
- 2) when thought to be necessary, that we will use the Uniform Biological Material Transfer Agreement (UBMTA) or the Simple Letter Agreement (SLA) recommended by the NIH, whenever possible.

Furthermore, we will encourage our investigators to support the above policy when entering into sponsored agreements that involve transfers of materials.

We agree that if materials are transferred without a specific MTA, the transfer will be presumed to be made under the terms stated in the UBMTA even though no written agreement has been signed. Recipients of biological materials are expected to obtain consent from the original provider before passing materials on to others and to acknowledge the source of the materials in resulting publications and presentations.

We encourage other academic and non-profit institutions to adopt this policy.

California Institute of Technology
Columbia University
Harvard University
Johns Hopkins University
Massachusetts Institute of Technology
Princeton University
Stanford University
University of Chicago
University of Pennsylvania
Washington University in St. Louis
Yale University