

Korea Biobank Project

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The Korea Biobank Project (KBP) was launched in 2008 by the Korean government to enhance biomedical research for realizing personalized medicine through establishment of a biobank network in Korea, namely Korea Biobank Network (KBN). Since then, the Korea Biobank Network has been established successfully. The Korea Biobank Network consists of one central population based biobank – National Biobank of Korea –, and 17 regional disease based biobanks in university hospitals as of 2013. The goal – collection of human biospecimens from more than 500,000 people and distribution of biospecimens to more than 500 research projects – of the first phase of KBP was achieved 1 year earlier. KBN collected biospecimens from more than 500,000 people and distributed biospecimens to more than 600 research projects until 2012.

Since the 1st phase of KBP was finished in 2012 and the 2nd phase of KBP was started in 2013. The main purpose of the 1st phase KBP has been to build infrastructures for biobanking and collection of biospecimens. However, the 2nd phase KBP is focused on the utilization of the collected biospecimens for various biomedical researches. The goal of supporting more than 1000 research projects was set for the 2nd phase of KBP by 2015. For strategies – to establish an One-Stop Distribution system, to secure and utilize high value bioresources, to advance a resource management system, and to establish R&D-biobanks virtuous cycle were identified in the master plan of the 2nd phase of KBP (2013–2015).

KBN is striving to provide researchers with high quality biospecimens with high value information such as clinical, epidemiological, and genetic information. Also, KBN has been seeking detailed and concrete implementation plans to fulfill these strategies and the goal successfully.

Key Words: Korea biobank network, Korea biobank project, Biobank