



Home Office

Forensic DNA Expert Community



In association with



The
Forensic
Science
Society

Introduction

The Centre for Applied Science and Technology (CAST), part of Home Office Science, is establishing a Forensic DNA Expert Community to support its growing capability in DNA forensic science. The Community will be asked to undertake reviews of methods, results and reports as part of a research portfolio. Experts in genomic research and operational DNA forensic science from across government, industry and academia will be invited to become part of the Community.

Activities

The Community is being developed as part of wider technical peer review activities, to provide technical quality assurance to all aspects of forensic DNA research. As a member of the Community you will:

- provide a review service on planning, reporting and delivery of CAST's DNA forensic research;
- share knowledge and experience with other members to further develop the capability at CAST and elsewhere.

CAST's overall objective is to improve the rate and quality of DNA recovered from crimes scenes including topics such as DNA recovery from surfaces, DNA laboratory management, DNA sample management and contaminated DNA samples. These project areas will have a direct impact on the way law enforcement agencies manage DNA.

Operation

Policing requirements are collected by CAST from our stakeholders and prioritised according to those that will be of greatest benefit and support to Home Office objectives. The DNA team will then contact the most appropriate expert or experts through different forms of communication – generally phone call or email. In addition, face-to-face meetings may take place, particularly on more complex challenges. Commitment expected of members to the Community will be approximately two to three hours per calendar month. Commitment is dependent on workflow, knowledge required and complexity of the project.

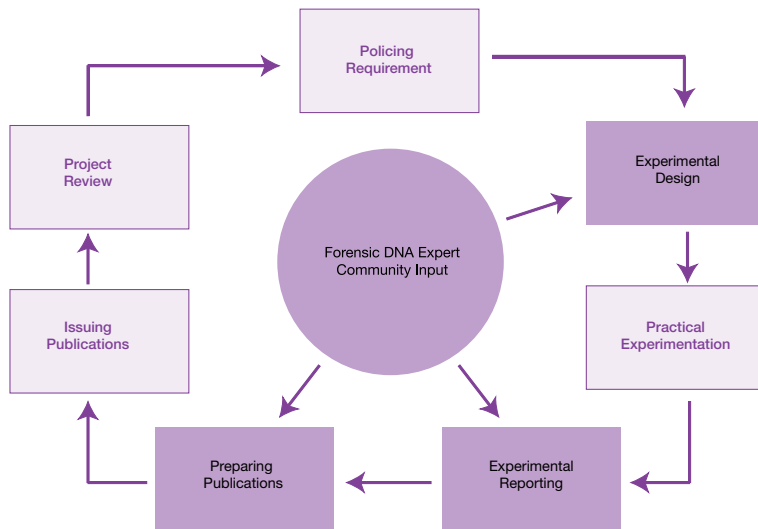


Figure 1: The Forensic DNA Expert Community input into delivery of CAST's DNA forensic research.

To ensure that CAST calls upon the correct experts for each research activity, a basic structure of knowledge categories and specific domain expertise has been devised to group members together. The three categories are:

1. Genomic Research including tools and techniques employed in a research context to further the understanding of DNA forensic science.
2. DNA at Crime Scenes including tools and techniques employed in retrieval and storage of genetic material from a scene of crime or other related context.
3. Forensic DNA analysis including existing and novel tools and techniques required to process genetic material into an interpretable format for forensic investigation and undertake a suitable interpretation.

Joining

If you would like to be part of this exciting opportunity please outline the following in an email to CAST.DNA@homeoffice.gsi.gov.uk: career history including formal links to other organisations, published papers (if applicable), and knowledge and interests in the arena of DNA forensics.

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