

15 June 2026

PARTICIPANT LETTER — ISAG 2026-2027 Forensic Genetics Comparison Test (Unofficial Round)

Dear Participant,

Thank you for your interest in the ISAG Forensic Genetics Comparison Test (CT). This letter sets out what to expect from the upcoming round, confirms its status, and — most importantly — asks you to begin preparing the import documentation your laboratory will need so that samples can reach you without delay.

1. Status of this round: unofficial (participation-only)

This round will run as an unofficial, participation-only test. It will not be officially ranked, and results will not be issued as a ranking. This status will be stated on the ISAG CT web page and in the application materials before the test opens, so there is no ambiguity for any participant.

The reason is straightforward. The forensic round uses a different format from the established CTs: rather than distributing a standard genotyping sample set for concordance, it assesses broader forensic competencies — species identification across multiple species, and methods of DNA extraction and analysis. Because this format does not follow all of the rules set for the existing CTs, ranking it under those rules this cycle would not be appropriate. Running participation-first lets us evaluate the format and build a defensible assessment methodology for future rounds.

The governing CT rules are available here: [ISAG Comparison Test Rules](#).

2. What this test measures — and what it does not

It is worth being clear about scope. The ISAG Comparison Test was never intended as a proficiency test. As set out in the CT documentation, it measures the technical ability of participating laboratories and their capacity to manage genotypes and resolve parentage questions. It must not be communicated or marketed as accreditation.

The forensic community's needs point toward something closer to a proficiency assessment. The Standing Committee will be developing documentation at the next workshop, for evaluation by the ISAG Executive Committee, to determine whether such an assessment can be approved as a supplement to the CT process or developed as a new programme. For now, this round proceeds as an unofficial CT, and participation should be understood in that light.

3. Action required now: import documentation

Please begin preparing your import documentation as soon as possible. Forensic material spans multiple species and varied sample and extraction types, which makes the customs and

import profile more complex than a standard single-species CT. Identifying your requirements early is the single most important step to avoid shipment delays.

- **Know your own country's requirements.** Each participant is responsible for understanding their country's import requirements and obtaining any necessary permits.
- **Flag permit timing on your application.** Some countries can only issue an import permit at the point samples are distributed. If this applies to you, please indicate it on your application form so we can coordinate timing.
- **Plan for multiple species and sample types.** Your permits and documentation may need to cover more than one species and several extraction/sample types. Confirm what your authority requires for each.
- **Check DNA integrity on receipt.** We recommend verifying sample integrity when shipments arrive; integrity documentation will accompany each shipment.

A forensic-specific shipping pack — covering shipper details (Orivet), departing airport, courier, and per-species / per-sample-type shipment contents — will accompany the announcement so you have full details at application time. The key shipping details are set out in Section 4 below.

4. Shipping details

Please use the information below to complete any import paperwork required by your country (Anexo I, II, III, IV, or equivalent). These documents must be completed with your own details as recipient, alongside the shipper details provided here. The Duty Lab will add the FedEx tracking number and signature; all other information is the recipient's responsibility.

Primary shipper details:

- **Shipper:** George Sofronidis, Chief Executive Officer
- **Shipper's company:** Orivet Genetic Pet Care
- **Shipper's address:** Suite 103/163-169 Inkerman St, St Kilda, Victoria, Australia
- **Shipper's email:** george@orivet.com
- **Courier:** FedEx
- **Departing airport:** Melbourne Airport (Tullamarine), Melbourne, Australia
- **Shipment contents:** 22 samples of various species, individually sealed in plastic bags. Species included span cat, dog, bird, alpaca, sheep, cattle, and human, as the forensic format covers all of these species.
- **Sample preparation:** Samples are prepared as purified DNA. The extraction protocol inactivates all possible pathogens; source material was collected from animals healthy at the time of sampling.

Secondary laboratory. To help participants access samples and to meet specific customs and import requirements across different jurisdictions, a secondary laboratory will assist with this round. Depending on your location and your country's requirements, your shipment or documentation may be coordinated through either Orivet or the secondary laboratory below:

- **Secondary lab contact:** Guillermo Giovambattista
- **Email:** guillermogiovambattista@gmail.com
- **Institution:** GEVET — Instituto de Genética Veterinaria “Ing. Fernando N. Dulout” (UNLP-CONICET La Plata), Facultad de Ciencias Veterinarias, UNLP, La Plata, Argentina

5. Critical notes to avoid delays

In previous comparison tests, the single most common reason samples were delayed or never received was incomplete or unanswered recipient contact details at customs. Please read the following carefully:

- **Provide a reachable contact.** Ensure the contact name, phone number, and email you list belong to someone who will be available and able to answer import questions from customs and FedEx promptly.
- **Complete and upload paperwork early.** Fill out and upload all documents required to accompany the shipment in good time, so nothing holds up dispatch.
- **Veterinary certification.** Because the certifying authority is not present during collection, extraction, and packaging, the shipment may not carry an official veterinarian certification stamp. Please confirm whether your authority requires one and let us know early.
- **Need a cover letter?** If your import process requires a letter included with the shipment, send us a draft in an editable format and we will reproduce it on Orivet letterhead.

6. Timeline

The test follows the standard CT timeline. Import requirements need to be identified at application time, which is why we are asking you to start now:

- **Announcement:** 14–16 months before the conference
- **Applications open:** 10–12 months before the conference
- **Sample distribution:** 6–9 months before the conference
- **Results submission:** no later than 6 weeks before the conference

7. Questions

If you have any questions about the format, the import process, or your application, please contact George Sofronidis at george@orivet.com. As the Duty Laboratory for this round, Orivet is glad to help you work through your jurisdiction’s requirements.

With thanks for your participation,

George Sofronidis

Chief Executive Officer, Orivet
Duty Laboratory, ISAG Forensic Genetics Comparison Test