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Press Release



Combined know-how in the fight against pathogens

27 June: "German Centre for Infection Research" is founded in Braunschweig / Press conference at 3.30 pm

32 leading research institutions from all over Germany combine their expertise: In future they want to team up to fight infections in the "German Centre for Infection Research" (DZIF). The registered association DZIF e.V. will be undertaking joint projects to obtain more detailed knowledge on pathogens that can be used to fight them and finally translate these findings into clinical applications. Representatives of the participating universities, hospitals and research centres will assemble on 27 June at the Helmholtz Centre for Infection Research (HZI) in Braunschweig to found the DZIF and elect its management board. The joint DZIF office will also be located at the HZI.

"Infectious diseases are one of the main causes of death worldwide," says Prof. Martin Krönke, Cologne, the current DZIF spokesperson. Time and again, new, unknown pathogens emerge, and since many bacteria have become resistant to our conventional antibiotics, the problem has become even more severe in recent years."

This is where the researchers involved in the DZIF want to specifically take countermeasures: Their aim is to use the combined know-how of the outstanding minds and a network of modern laboratory and analytical techniques to find approaches for new therapies, drugs, vaccines and vaccination methods. They will focus on so-called translation, the improved flow of findings and innovation from basic research into clinical application.

After it has been founded, the DZIF will start work on its mission almost immediately. The first projects have already begun: For example, translational research projects to develop novel treatment strategies against the long-term consequences of HIV infection will be relying on the expertise of the DZIF partner locations. "Basic research and clinical application work hand in hand here," says Prof. Hans-Georg Kräusslich, local coordinator of the DZIF in Heidelberg and Coordinator for the HIV research area. The DZIF places great emphasis not only on translational research but also on training. "The mission of the newly established DZIF Academy is to inspire young scientists and doctors for infection research and to provide them with the best possible tools for their career," says Prof. Ulrike Protzer from Munich, DZIF Academy coordinator.

The German Centres for Health Research

The DZIF is one component of the "German Centres for Health Research" concept with which the German Federal Ministry for Education and Research (BMBF) wants to push ahead in the fight against the most important endemic diseases. In addition to the DZIF, research collaborations for cardiovascular diseases, lung diseases and cancer have been established on the basis of expert recommendations. A German Centre for Diabetes Research and a German Centre for Neurodegenerative Diseases were founded back in 2009. At the end of 2010, an international, independent panel of experts selected the highest performing institutions from a large number of applicants for the DZIF. "We are delighted that we can accommodate the DZIF here and support it with our infrastructure," says Prof.

Dirk Heinz, Scientific Director of the HZI in Braunschweig. The HZI's scientific contribution will focus on drugs research in addition to its work on infection biology issues, explains Heinz.

Press conference at the Founding Meeting

There will be an opportunity to talk with leading representatives of the DZIF including the newly elected Board after the Founding Meeting on Thursday, 27 June, at 3.30 pm. We would like to ask all media representatives to register in advance with the HZI Press Office (+49(0)531-6181-1401, presse@helmholtz-hzi.de).

Partner locations of the German Centre for Infection Research (DZIF)

Bonn-Cologne

Rheinische Friedrich-Wilhelms-Universität Bonn
Universitätsklinikum Bonn
Universität zu Köln
Universitätsklinikum Köln

Gießen-Marburg-Langen

Justus-Liebig-Universität Gießen
Phillips-Universität Marburg
Paul-Ehrlich Institut, Langen
Technische Hochschule Mittelhessen

Hamburg-Lübeck-Borstel

Universität Hamburg
Universitätsklinikum Hamburg-Eppendorf
Bernhard-Nocht-Institut für Tropenmedizin (Leibniz Gemeinschaft)
Heinrich-Pette-Institut, Leibniz-Institut für Experimentelle Virologie
Universität Lübeck
Forschungszentrum Borstel, Leibniz-Zentrum für Medizin und Biowissenschaften

Hanover-Braunschweig

Medizinische Hochschule Hannover
Helmholtz-Zentrum für Infektionsforschung
Twincore - Zentrum für Experimentelle und Klinische Infektionsforschung
Stiftung Tierärztliche Hochschule Hannover
Leibniz-Institut DSMZ - Deutsche Sammlung von Mikroorganismen und Zellkulturen
Technische Universität Braunschweig

Heidelberg

Ruprecht-Karls-Universität Heidelberg
Universitätsklinikum Heidelberg
Deutsches Krebsforschungszentrum

Munich

Ludwig-Maximilians-Universität München
Klinikum der Universität München
Technische Universität München
Klinikum rechts der Isar der Technischen Universität München
Helmholtz Zentrum München - Deutsches Forschungszentrum für Gesundheit und Umwelt
Institut für Mikrobiologie der Bundeswehr

Tübingen

Eberhard Karls Universität Tübingen
Universitätsklinikum Tübingen
Max-Planck-Institut für Entwicklungsbiologie

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The Helmholtz Centre for Infection Research (HZI):

The Helmholtz Centre for Infection Research contributes to the achievement of the goals of the Helmholtz Association of German Research Centres and to the successful implementation of the research strategy of the German Federal Government. The goal is to meet the challenges in infection research and make a contribution to public health with new strategies for the prevention and therapy of infectious diseases.

www.helmholtz-hzi.de