Press Release

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EMBO MEMBERSHIP FOR EMMANUELLE CHARPENTIER

EUROPEAN MOLECULAR BIOLOGY ORGANIZATION RECOGNIZES OUTSTANDING ACHIEVEMENTS OF EMMANUELLE CHARPENTIER RESEARCHER AT THE HZI

The CRISPR-Cas9 genome engineering system has significantly improved the genetic tool box in laboratories around the globe. Now, one of the key pioneers of this technology, Professor Emmanuelle Charpentier, has been elected as a new member of the European Molecular Biology Organization EMBO. With this step EMBO acknowledges Charpentier, head of the department "Regulation in Infection Biology" at the Helmholtz Centre for Infection Research, as one of the most renowned molecular biologists worldwide. Charpentier is already the second HZI researcher becoming a member with the first being the scientific director Dirk Heinz.

"I regard the EMBO membership as a very high distinction. EMBO is an inter-governmental organization of more than 1600 researchers in Europe and worldwide who excel in life science research and it is a great honour to be part of this community," says Charpentier, who has been working at the HZI since 2013 and who holds a professorship at the Hannover Medical School. She is also a guest professor at the Laboratory for Molecular Infection Medicine Sweden (MIMS) at Umeå University in Sweden.

With this election Charpentier has once again been recognized for her achievements in the fields of molecular and infection biology, with a special highlight on her recent findings on the bacterial adaptive immune system CRISPR-Cas9.

Along with Charpentier, 105 scientists became part of the organization this year. Each year the new members are elected by the existing member body of 1600 scientists. By participating in discussions and seminars the members help to shape the future of life science research worldwide. "EMBO has very early on understood the need to develop tools that would allow the promotion of science at the European and international level. I am very much looking forward to being an active member in the community and to contributing to the promotion of science and knowledge dissemination at the international level," says Charpentier. Of special significance to both the EMBO and Charpentier is supporting young researchers. "I am particularly interested in mentoring junior scientists at the beginning of their scientific careers".

Charpentier is considered one of the most innovative scientists in her field and has already been awarded prestigious prizes recognizing her work such as the Göran Gustafsson Prize of the Royal Swedish Academy of Sciences. Furthermore she holds an Alexander von Humboldt professorship, one of the highest scientific recognitions in Germany.

Scientists at the **Helmholtz Centre for Infection Research (HZI)** in Braunschweig, Germany, are engaged in the study of different mechanisms of infection and of the body's response to infection. Helping to improve the scientific community's understanding of a given bacterium's or virus' pathogenicity is key to developing effective new treatments and vaccines. http://www.helmholtz-hzi.de

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