

### IMB starts new International PhD Programme on “*Dynamics of Gene Regulation, Epigenetics and DNA Damage Response*” in Mainz

*Boehringer Ingelheim Foundation funds a new International PhD-Programme, in which 30 outstanding doctoral students from all over the world will work on innovative research projects / programme is coordinated by the Institute of Molecular Biology and includes additional groups at Johannes Gutenberg University Mainz, the University Medical Center Mainz and the Max Planck Institute for Polymer Research*

**Mainz, December 2011.** The Institute of Molecular Biology (IMB) can establish a new International PhD Programme in the Life Sciences with the support of the Boehringer Ingelheim Foundation. The programme will allow innovative research at the highest international level. In addition to the education of talented young scientists, this initiative improves the integration of institutions in Mainz that conduct research within the field of molecular biology. “The new initiative will help to create synergies between the participating groups. The programme will also increase the visibility and international attractiveness of life science research here in Mainz,” says Prof. Dr. Georg Krausch, President of Johannes Gutenberg University Mainz.

One of the programme's key features is the education of doctoral students. “We not only want to attract the best international talents to Mainz, but we also want to offer them opportunities that most institutions cannot offer,” states Prof. Dr. Christof Niehrs, Founding Director of IMB. Moreover, “we offer our young scientists opportunities to address cutting-edge scientific questions and to work with first-class resources while receiving advanced training.” The training programme comprises a broad range of lectures and practical courses and is tailored to the specific needs of PhD students. Besides training in up-to-date methods and knowledge, students will be trained in soft-skills such as project management, communication skills and grant writing to prepare them for a successful career after having finished their doctoral thesis.

The organisers of the programme hope this concept will lead to exciting research results and, when combined with very high educational standards, will create the next generation of leading scientists. “This programme will set new standards in modern molecular research. Our most sincere thanks go to the Boehringer Ingelheim Foundation. Their further commitment to IMB allows us to attract young and talented scientists to Mainz and also guarantees that our students receive the best possible education,” says Götz Scholz, Chancellor of Johannes Gutenberg University Mainz and Managing Director of IMB.

Research within the programme focuses on three cutting-edge areas: Dynamics of Gene Regulation, Epigenetics and DNA Damage Response. These emerging fields of modern biomedical research are of great significance for basic biological processes and are also linked to diseases such as cancer. For example, the dynamics of gene regulation and epigenetics play an essential role during embryonic development, the adaptation of organisms to its environment as well as during ageing, and are of high importance in many diseases. Moreover, the programme offers research projects on stem cell biology, which forms the basis for regenerative medicine. The third research focus centres on DNA Damage Response. DNA repair is a key mechanism that protects cells from damage and keeps us healthy. Defects in the DNA repair machinery cause a number of diseases, including cancer.

For more information and a full list of participating groups and projects please visit: [www.imb-mainz.de/PhD](http://www.imb-mainz.de/PhD).

### **Institute for Molecular Biology gGmbH (IMB)**

The Institute of Molecular Biology gGmbH (IMB) is a new research centre in the life sciences, which was established in March of this year. Research at IMB concentrates on three cutting-edge research areas: Developmental Biology, Epigenetics and DNA Damage Response. The research centre is a prime example of successful collaboration between public authorities and a private foundation: The Boehringer Ingelheim Foundation has dedicated 100 million Euros for a period of ten years to cover the scientific running of IMB, while the state of Rhineland-Palatinate provided 45.5 million Euros for the construction of a modern building to house IMB. For more information about IMB please visit: [www.imb-mainz.de](http://www.imb-mainz.de).

### **Boehringer Ingelheim Foundation**

The Boehringer Ingelheim Foundation is an independent, non-profit organisation committed to the promotion of the medical, biological, chemical and pharmaceutical sciences. It was established in 1977 by Hubertus Liebrecht, a member of the shareholder family of the company Boehringer Ingelheim. To mark the 125<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the company Boehringer Ingelheim in 2010, the foundation pledged itself to donate 100 million Euros for the scientific running of the IMB.

### **Press contact for further questions:**

Dr. Ralf Dahm

Institute of Molecular Biology gGmbH (IMB)

Ackermannweg 4, D-55128 Mainz

Phone: +49-(0)6131-39-21450, Fax: +49-(0)6131-39-21521, Email: [press@imb-mainz.de](mailto:press@imb-mainz.de)