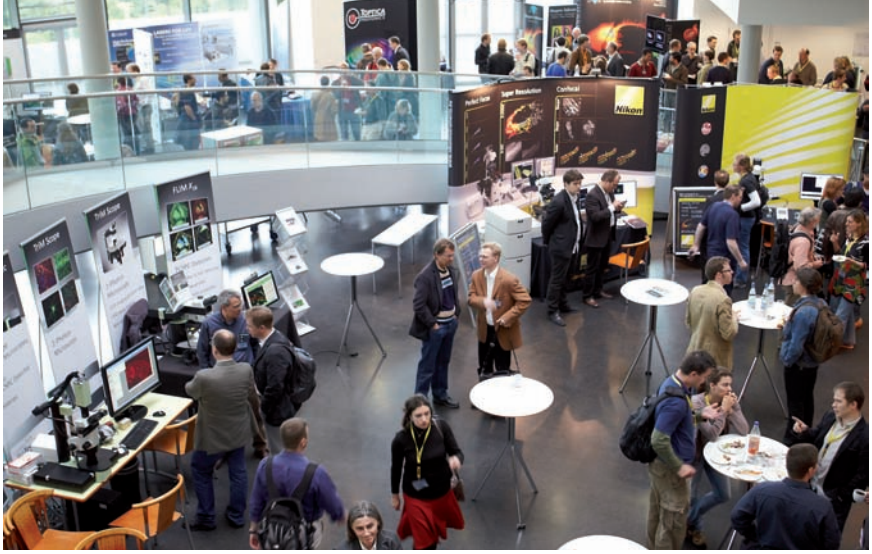

Photo: Marietta Schupp

Ten years of the ELMI

The ATC welcomed over 300 participants to the 10th International ELMI Meeting on 18-21 May, which also attracted a record number of 27 companies attending with exhibition booths or workshop sessions.

The EMBO Workshop on 'Advanced Light Microscopy Techniques and their Applications' at EMBL Heidelberg was also in celebration of the tenth anniversary of the European Light Microscopy Initiative (ELMI), which was founded at EMBL by Rainer Pepperkok, Tommy Nilsson and Christian Boulin. "The ELMI was set up to promote the recognition of light microscopy as a fundamental tool in life sciences research, and to help a wider community benefit from its techniques and new developments by providing access through facilities such as the Advanced Light Microscopy Facility," says Rainer. "It has also strengthened the channels of communication between researchers and industry."

Several major industry partners have been on board since the beginning, and the meeting demonstrated the strong links between European scientists working in light microscopy and the manufacturers of equipment. Alongside the lecture programme, representatives from ten of the 27 participating companies ran hands-on workshops in the use of their microscopes.

The ELMI now has countless members in 32 countries, and the future of the initiative includes a strong involvement in one of the big European research infrastructure projects, Euro-BioImaging, led by Jan Ellenberg, which aims to create a pan-European imaging infrastructure for scientists. "The members of ELMI are really keen to share their knowledge and expertise," says Rainer. "Our involvement in Euro-BioImaging will really allow us to develop a distributed system of access to cutting-edge imaging equipment, training and services."

If you'd like more information about the ELMI or are interested in joining, visit the website at www.embl.org/elmi.

Feet of strength

Four group leaders from the Molecular Medicine Partnership Unit (MMPU) between EMBL and the University of Heidelberg were just some of the EMBL-related runners who took part in 25 April's Heidelberg Half-Marathon, a 21.1km race over the city's grueling hills and dales.

Andreas Kulozik, Marcus Mall, Matthias Hentze and Heiko Runz (l-r, below) took the opportunity to have the MMPU logo emblazoned on their running shirts, and their friends and family proudly waved 'MMPU 4U Supporters Club' banners to cheer them on.

Well done to all the EMBL and EMBL-related runners, who included Victoria McParland, Matthias Helmling, Damien Devos and Michael Hansen, among many others too numerous to name here. Three weeks later many of the participants – and several new ones – were back on the road for the Mannheim full marathon on 15 May.

Photo: Britta Schläger

Arts at EMBL day

Photo: Hugo Neves

Science and Society's Arts at EMBL day on 30 April included a fascinating talk by Martin Kemp on structural intuitions in art and science and a panel discussion. The centrepiece of the event was the exhibition of scientific images and videos from EMBL researchers, which were on display on large panels in the ATC.

Stepping up How the EBI is meeting data storage demands

EMBL-EBI is leasing two new state-of-the-art data centres in London to cope with this year's projected accumulation of 12 petabytes (PB) of stored data.

The main centre on the Hinxton campus is functioning at its maximum capacity of 5 PB. With data levels expected to soar to the equivalent of 4 million human genomes – more than double the amount stored in 2009 – the storage capacity clearly needs to be stepped up.

With the help of £10m in funding from the UK Research Councils, the EBI Systems and Networking team has designed and overseen the establishment of the hardware and logical infrastructure hosted at the new centres. For the research community, the primary benefit will be improved access to the flood of biological information. Data requests will be shared between the two centres and each will be fully independent, which means that either will be capable of running all of EBI's core services. If the worst happens – the loss of an entire data centre – the remaining facility can deal with all requests, ensuring only minimal disruption for users.

The new facilities will be part of the central hub for the emerging pan-European life science research infrastructure for Biological Information (ELIXIR).