



The Otto Meyerhof Centre in Heidelberg, the new home for the MMPU



Technician, Nicole Echner, working in one of the new labs

New home for Molecular Medicine Partnership Unit

Groups forming the Molecular Medicine Partnership Unit (MMPU) have begun to move into a new home at the Otto Meyerhof Centre, provided by Heidelberg University. The partnership, which brings together scientists from EMBL and the Medical Faculty of the University, comprises five internation-

al research teams jointly headed by experts from both institutions. The arrangement combines the complementary expertise of basic and clinical scientists to research the molecular mechanisms that underlie common diseases, under one roof. "The MMPU holds remarkable potential for making real

advances in treatments for diseases," says EMBL Associate Director Matthias Hentze, who co-heads the MMPU with Heidelberg University's Andreas Kulozik. "The new space holds both lab and patient care facilities, enabling truly integrated molecular medicine research."

Data down under

On 21 June, EMBL Australia launched a freely available service that allows Australian researchers to make the most of public bioinformatics resources. The new service is hosted by the University of Queensland, based in Brisbane.

Australia's molecular biology community can now benefit from access to a wide range of data resources, including some of EMBL-EBI's core databases, software frameworks and tools, such as similarity searches, multiple sequence alignment and applications for discovering protein function. EMBL Australia is also ensuring that Australian researchers can contact a team of bioinformaticians for assistance with data access and processing.

Australia became EMBL's first associate member state in 2008. Since then, EMBL Australia and EMBL-EBI have collaborated closely to integrate the fruits of Australian research with the vast stores of data in EMBL-EBI's public resources.

To learn more, visit:
www.emblaustralia.org

Independent thinking

EMBL has become a hot-bed for top research grants, and recently two more scientists have been awarded prestigious Starting Independent Researcher Grants by the European Research Council. EMBL Grenoble group leader Christiane Schaffitzel will lead research focused on 'NMD Complexes: Eukaryotic mRNA Quality Control'. Meanwhile, EMBL Monterotondo scientist Rocio Sotillo will carry out studies to 'Define the Impact of Chromosome Instability in Tumour Initiation, Maintenance and Relapse'. Christiane and Rocio follow closely in the footsteps of EMBL Heidelberg group leaders Marcus Heisler, Takashi Hiiragi and Francesca Peri, and EMBL Grenoble group leader Ramesh Pillai in receiving an ERC Starting Grant. EMBL Heidelberg's Peer Bork was awarded an ERC Advanced Investigators Grant in December. "I am greatly looking forward to lots of exciting and challenging work," says Christiane. "It's a tough selection process but it's fantastic to have been given the opportunity to follow up this important research," adds Rocio.