

Vijay Tiwari awarded prestigious grant to study how cancer cells transform to become invasive

October, 2012. *Dr Vijay Tiwari, a Group Leader at IMB, is one of only eleven Young Investigators to have been awarded a prestigious grant from the EpiGeneSys Network of Excellence this year. The €150,000 award incorporates Dr Tiwari into a European-wide network of leading epigenetics scientists and will support his research into how cells from solid tumours become invasive.*

A key feature in the progression of cancer is the transformation of benign solid tumours into malignant states that form metastases. Understanding how cells in a solid tumour acquire the ability to invade and colonise different parts of the body is key to developing new strategies to treat the disease. Dr Tiwari will take a multidisciplinary approach involving genomics, molecular, systems and computational biology to determine how epigenetic processes contribute to this transformation.

In particular, his group will study how signalling pathways acting on the chromatin influence the activity of genes and the transcriptional reprogramming that occurs in cells when they obtain the properties required to leave a solid tumour. To do this, Dr Tiwari's group will develop novel approaches to provide important insights into a crucial stage of cancer progression. The award will therefore further strengthen IMB's research at the interface between epigenetics and systems biology.

A further IMB Group Leader, Dr Holger Richly, has been elected as Associate Member of the EpiGeneSys Network. Membership of this select group of internationally renowned scientists will support Dr Richly in his research into molecular epigenetics and their involvement in the mechanisms underlying ageing and DNA repair. As members of the EpiGeneSys Network, the groups of Drs Tiwari and Richly will have full access to the Network's activities, including their training programme for students and postdocs.

Further details

Further information about Dr Tiwari's research can be found at www.imb-mainz.de/tiwari. The award is a Research Integrating Systems Biology and Epigenetics (RISE1) grant that makes Dr Tiwari a member of the European Commission-funded EpiGeneSys Network of Excellence. Further information about the EpiGeneSys network can be found at www.epigenesys.eu/. For more information about Dr Richly's research please go to www.imb-mainz.de/richly.

Institute for Molecular Biology gGmbH (IMB)

The Institute of Molecular Biology gGmbH (IMB) is a new centre of excellence in the life sciences which was established in March 2011. Research at IMB concentrates on three cutting-edge areas: epigenetics, developmental biology and DNA repair. The institute is a prime example of a successful collaboration between public authorities and a private foundation. The Boehringer Ingelheim Foundation has dedicated 100 million Euro for a period of 10 years to cover the operating costs for research at IMB, while the state of Rhineland-Palatinate provided approximately 50 million Euro for the construction of a state-of-the-art building. For more information about IMB please visit: 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. In addition to various awards for up-and-coming scientists at the University of Mainz, the foundation has endowed 100 million euros over a period of ten years to finance the scientific running of the Institute of Molecular Biology (IMB) at the University of Mainz.

Press contact for further information

Dr Ralf Dahm

Institute of Molecular Biology gGmbH (IMB)

Ackermannweg 4, D-55128 Mainz

Phone: +49-(0)6131-39-21455, Fax: +49-(0)6131-39-21421, Email: press@imb-mainz.de