Neuroscience super center

New center for PhD training joins a stack of other institutes in Göttingen, Germany | By Jane Burgermeister

A new center for PhD research in neuroscience is to be created at the Max Planck Institute (MPI) for Biophysical Chemistry in Göttingen, Germany.

The European Commission has pledged €1.7 million to fund the center—called NEUREST (Neuroscience Early Stage Training)—which aims to train 10 to 15 PhD students when it is launched at the beginning of next year.

Erwin Neher, winner of the 1991 Nobel Prize in Physiology or Medicine and director of the Membrane Biophysics Department at the institute, told The Scientist he was delighted with the funding: "Our institutions will get fresh ideas. And the students will be able to benefit from an unusual breadth and quality of research that is being done at Göttingen."

He said students would benefit in particular from the complex web of interrelations that will bind the center with the other molecular biology and neuroscience research institutions in Göttingen.

Neher said that the new center would be energetically inclusive. "We aim to attract the best PhD students from Europe and the rest of the world,” he said.

The NEUREST center will be under the direction of Reinhard Jahn, head of the Department Of Neurobiology at the MPI for Biophysical Chemistry. Altogether 40 staff will be involved in the multidisciplinary research program, which will range from molecular biology to applied neurobiology.

Rüdiger Hesse, head of the Max Planck Society office in Brussels, said that NEUREST is to play a key role in the society’s vision of creating a truly world-class neuroscience center in Göttingen. The town already boasts a university, the MPI for Biophysical Chemistry, the MPI for Experimental Medicine, the European Neuroscience Institute, as well as the Primate Research Center.

“It is Göttingen’s aspiration to be among the best neuroscience centers in Europe, if not the world,” he said. He added that the European Commission's Marie Curie Scholarships for PhD students doing research at NEUREST would encourage greater mobility among young scientists as well as promote vital research on brain diseases.

"Research on the brain and brain diseases is especially important today
when Europe’s population is aging and the number of people with brain
diseases such as dementia, Alzheimer’s, and stroke is set to rise,” he
said.

Links for this article
Max Planck Institute for Biophysical Chemistry
http://www.mpibpc.gwdg.de

Max Planck Society
http://www.mpg.de

Study in Europe: EU Programmes for Non-European Students
http://www.study-in-europe.org/euprogrammes.htm

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