

German-Israeli Doctoral Training Program: Scientific Excellence and Cultural Exchange

The German Cancer Research Center and the Israeli Weizmann Institute of Science will start a joint doctoral training program for young scientists called the “German-Israeli Helmholtz Research School in Cancer Biology”

In the future, twenty four young German and Israeli cancer researchers will be given the chance to participate in a doctoral training program offered jointly by the German Cancer Research Center (Deutsches Krebsforschungszentrum, DKFZ) in Heidelberg, Germany, and the Weizmann Institute of Science in Rehovot, Israel. Both institutes have been successfully investigating the causes of cancer for decades and are working to elucidate factors which promote the growth and spread of malignant tumors. The Weizmann Institute is known for its broad spectrum of natural sciences. The cutting-edge Israeli research center offers excellent training in mathematics, computer sciences, chemistry and physics – subjects that are of increasing importance for prospective cancer researchers. A special strength of DKFZ is the multitude of close collaborations with clinical research partners, which facilitates and accelerates the transfer of results from basic research to the clinic.

“Students of the German-Israeli Helmholtz Research School in Cancer Biology will benefit from the special strengths of both research institutes and will therefore receive excellent and comprehensive training. The students in the research school will also have a unique opportunity to develop collaborations with fellow researchers in Israel,” says Prof. Dr. Otmar D. Wiestler, Scientific Director of DKFZ. “This research school will therefore expand the close relations the DKFZ has with Israeli cancer researchers, going back to 1976.”

As part of their German-Israeli doctoral thesis, the young scientists will carry out research at the respective partner institute for a period of six to twelve months. They will be participants of the graduate programs of both centers: the Helmholtz International Graduate School for Cancer Research at DKFZ and the Feinberg Graduate School at the Weizmann Institute.

All research projects of students of the German-Israeli Helmholtz Research School in Cancer Biology will be determined jointly by scientists of DKFZ and the Weizmann Institute. Every doctoral student will have a German and an Israeli mentor and will be able to use resources and scientific infrastructure of both research centers.

The German-Israeli graduate program is made possible by funds of the Helmholtz Association, which will provide €1.8 million over the next six years for this purpose. The DKFZ and Weizmann Institute will also contribute substantially to the costs. These funds will be used for stipends, for covering the travel and living costs of the doctoral students and for financing annual meetings for students and mentors as well as a comprehensive program of accompanying courses.

The German Cancer Research Center (Deutsches Krebsforschungszentrum, DKFZ), employing over 2,500 staff members, is the largest biomedical research institute in Germany. More than 1,000 scientists are working to investigate the mechanisms of cancer development, identify cancer risk factors and develop new strategies for better cancer prevention, more precise diagnosis and effective treatment of cancer patients. In addition, the staff of the Cancer Information Service (KID) provides information about this widespread disease for patients, their families, and the general public. DKFZ is funded by the German Federal Ministry of Education and Research (90%) and the State of Baden-Wuerttemberg (10%) and is a member of the Helmholtz Association of National Research Centers.

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