

**Cancer Research and Cancer Medicine at Top Level:  
German Research Minister Schavan and Baden-Wuerttemberg's Prime Minister  
Mappus have inaugurated DKFZ's renovated main building and visited NCT's new  
building**

"Those who want cancer research and cancer medicine at the highest level have to create excellent conditions. The Federal government and the State of Baden-Wuerttemberg intend to create attractive working conditions in Heidelberg for cancer researchers from across the globe. This is how we will succeed in the international competition for the best brains," said Germany's Research Minister, Professor Dr. Annette Schavan, during a ceremony on Wednesday, October 20, 2010. Jointly with Baden-Wuerttemberg's Prime Minister, Stefan Mappus, Schavan officially handed over the newly renovated main building of the German Cancer Research Center (DKFZ), to the hosts, Professor Dr. Otmar D. Wiestler, Scientific Director and Chairman of the Management Board of DKFZ, and Dr. Josef Puchta, Administrative-commercial Director of DKFZ. "The German Cancer Research Center is a beacon in Baden-Wuerttemberg's outstanding research landscape," said Mappus. "Every euro is well invested here!"

Renovation of DKFZ's main building was funded by the German Ministry of Education and Research with about € 70 million and another € 7 million provided by the Ministry of Science, Research and the Arts of the State of Baden-Wuerttemberg. Money well invested, as research minister and prime minister are convinced. "The German Cancer Research Center is an excellent example showing the competitiveness of scientists from Germany in international research. This high level must be maintained and further developed," Annette Schavan continued. Stefan Mappus confirmed: "Framework conditions in Heidelberg are excellent. Heidelberg University Hospitals, the University and several other non-university research institutes such as the European Molecular Biology Laboratory (EMBL) are powerful partners at DKFZ's disposal."

Professor Otmar D. Wiestler stated: "To compete for the world's best brains we have to offer attractive working conditions for cancer researchers from all over the world." Dr. Josef Puchta added: "Modern equipment and appealing premises are basic prerequisites for achieving this goal." After more than three decades of intensive use for science, DKFZ's eight-storey building urgently needed renovation. Its technical infrastructure no longer met the needs of a modern research institute.

Renovation had to be carried out while work at DKFZ continued. First the core of the east part of the high-rise building with a length of 130 meters was completely removed and remodeled, while laboratory work continued in the other half. The construction work was accompanied by a lot of noise, dust and inconvenience due to unavoidable closures. Part of the scientific staff were relocated to other DKFZ buildings and specially rented premises on the campus of Neuenheimer Feld. Two years later, in July 2008, the first employees were able to move from the old west wing into the new, bright and modern offices and laboratories of the east wing.

Renovation of the west wing also took about two years. In September, the temporarily "evacuated" staff members started moving in and since early October, work in the whole main building has been back to almost normal.

Staff members are particularly pleased about the new high-quality technical equipment and bright and spacious laboratories with directly adjacent desks. Each floor has been provided

with an appealing communication zone with a library, seminar room and tea kitchen. DKFZ now has one of the most modern biomedical research buildings.

The second building project which the two ministers visited on that day was the new building of the National Center for Tumor Diseases (NCT) Heidelberg. The impressive building, which has received generous co-funding by German Cancer Aid (Deutsche Krebshilfe), unites cancer researchers, oncology physicians and patients under one roof. The goal of this joint project of DKFZ and Heidelberg University Hospitals is the best possible care of cancer patients as well as innovative translational cancer research at the highest level. Here, results from cancer research find their way to the patients as swiftly as possible and data from clinical practice are promptly analyzed in the lab and utilized for the best possible treatment of patients. Schavan explicitly commended this close collaboration of university medicine and non-university science: "DKFZ has adopted a pioneering role by founding NCT back in 2004. At NCT, research results take a direct road into clinical practice and this makes it possible to provide the best possible treatment for patients." The Prime Minister of Baden-Wuerttemberg Stefan Mappus was equally impressed: "The interplay of scientific and clinical competence at the National Center for Tumor Diseases is unique and creates a new quality of patient care."

Professor Dr. Rüdiger Siewert, Chief Medical Director of Heidelberg University Hospitals, is just as pleased about the collaboration with DKFZ in the new building of NCT: "Heidelberg University Hospitals are proud of this unique alliance with DKFZ. With NCT, we have created an internationally competitive Comprehensive Cancer Center which offers interdisciplinary cancer care at the highest level for our patients and provides the best conditions for introducing innovative cancer therapies." Siewert congratulated DKFZ on its "new" main building.

DKFZ's Scientific Director, Professor Otmar D. Wiestler, strongly believes in the concept of Comprehensive Cancer Centers based on the U.S. model. "Only if research and medicine collaborate closely will we continue making progress in our fight against cancer." The concept of interlocking research and clinical practice, which has been implemented at NCT, will shortly be expanded by DKFZ to six other sites in Germany within the National Consortium for Translational Cancer Research. For this purpose, the Federal Ministry of Education and Research will provide € 40 million annually over the next five years (or: a total sum of € 200 million). The six clinical partners of DKFZ will be announced at the beginning of November. They will be selected by an international expert committee in an evaluation process from almost 20 applicants.

The German Cancer Research Center (Deutsches Krebsforschungszentrum, DKFZ) is the largest biomedical research institute in Germany and is a member of the Helmholtz Association of National Research Centers. More than 2,200 staff members, including 1,000 scientists, are investigating the mechanisms of cancer and are working to identify cancer risk factors. They provide the foundations for developing novel approaches in the prevention, diagnosis, and treatment of cancer. In addition, the staff of the Cancer Information Service (KID) offers information about the widespread disease of cancer for patients, their families, and the general public. The Center is funded by the German Federal Ministry of Education and Research (90%) and the State of Baden-Württemberg (10%).

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