



Joint Press Release of the Dietmar Hopp Foundation and the German Cancer Research Center

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7.5 Million Euros for the Fight Against Cancer

The Dietmar Hopp Foundation will fund the Heidelberg Institute for Stem Cell Technology and Experimental Medicine (HI-STEM) at the German Cancer Research Center (DKFZ) for another five years.

Four years ago, in October 2008, the German Cancer Research Center (Deutsches Krebsforschungszentrum, DKFZ) and the Dietmar Hopp Foundation jointly founded the Heidelberg Institute for Stem Cell Technology and Experimental Medicine (HI-STEM). The aim of this public-private partnership is to promote the translation of results obtained in stem cell research into cancer medicine. The Dietmar Hopp Foundation, as a shareholder, contributed 7.5 million euros in total for an initial five year period to the non-profit HI-STEM institute. During his visit at DKFZ on October 23, 2012 Dietmar Hopp satisfied himself of the institute's successful work and prolonged his support by another five years. The total sum invested by the Dietmar Hopp Foundation into HI-STEM amounts to 15 million euros.

The mission of HI-STEM is to investigate cancer stem cells in detail, to develop innovative approaches for diagnosis and treatment and thus to increase the chances of survival of cancer patients. A special focus is on patients whose disease is in an advanced stage. "HI-STEM is one of my foundation's most interesting and most important projects," says Dietmar Hopp. "Our goal in the long term is to offer effective therapies to people who are in a hopeless situation."

Professor Otmar D. Wiestler, Chairman of the Management Board of the German Cancer Research Center, is pleased about the continued support from the Dietmar Hopp Foundation. "Stem cell research at HI-STEM with a strong focus on cancer is in excellent compliance with DKFZ and already inspires the work of many of our departments. The conference on 'Stem cells and cancer', which has just taken place with leading stem cell researchers from all over the world attending has shown that Heidelberg is among the international leaders in this area."

Professor Josef Puchta, Administrative-Commercial Director of DKFZ and a member of HI-STEM's Advisory Committee, praised the collaboration with the Dietmar Hopp Foundation and announced DKFZ's continued support for HI-STEM until 2018: "Stem cell research is an innovative and highly competitive field. It is of eminent importance to join forces of two strong partners such as DKFZ and the Dietmar Hopp Foundation. In addition, there are collaborations with neighboring university hospitals, institutes and pharmaceutical companies. I am convinced that the research results will soon be applied to the benefit of cancer patients." HI-STEM's laboratories and offices are located at the main building of DKFZ in the Neuenheimer Feld campus.

Since its foundation, HI-STEM has been led by Managing Director Professor Andreas Trumpp, a stem cell researcher who is also heading the Division of Stem Cells and Cancer at DKFZ. He is extremely pleased about the continued generous support: "HI-STEM has developed excellently in the past four years. We have grown enormously, we have been able to recruit five highly talented young research group leaders from top international research institutes for HI-STEM, we have published first exciting results and we have already been able to secure a patent in stem cell technology. The trust of Dietmar Hopp and his foundation in HI-STEM encourages us to continue on this path."

HI-STEM now has more than 50 employees working in six research groups. They are focusing on so called tumor stem cells, which are believed to be the origin of most tumors. Unlike the bulk of tumor cells, tumor stem cells reside in protected niches and divide only rarely. Therefore, they are less sensitive to conventional cancer treatments and are often responsible for the recurrence and metastasis of tumors after seemingly successful treatment. Trumpp and his co-workers have found out that dormant stem cells can be woken up by treatment with interferon-alpha and thus be made susceptible to subsequent chemotherapy. Using specific markers, the HI-STEM team has also been able to detect metastasis-inducing stem cells in the blood of breast cancer patients. The scientists are now trying to inhibit their activity. Recently, the scientists discovered that pancreatic cancer patients can be classified in several groups which differ considerably in terms of prognosis. Jointly with collaboration partners from Heidelberg University Hospitals and the National Center for Tumor Diseases (NCT) Heidelberg, the HI-STEM researchers will now explore how to use this knowledge for enhanced diagnosis and therapy.

A picture for this press release is available at:

<http://www.dkfz.de//de/presse/pressemitteilungen/2012/images/31.jpg>

Picture caption: The Dietmar Hopp Foundation and the German Cancer Research Center (DKFZ) will fund the Heidelberg Institute for Stem Cell Technology and Experimental Medicine (HI-STEM) for another five years. Dietmar Hopp (right) and DKFZ's Administrative-Commercial Director Josef Puchta (left) and HI-STEM's Managing Director Andreas Trumpp (center).

The Dietmar Hopp Foundation was founded in 1995 to promote the implementation of charitable projects. The endowment capital consists of SAP holdings donated by Dietmar Hopp from his personal assets to fund the Dietmar Hopp Foundation, now one of Europe's largest private foundations. Since its inception, the foundation has disbursed more than €300 million in support of projects in the areas of sports, medicine, social affairs and education. In order to achieve effective and sustained benefit in these four areas of support, the Dietmar Hopp Foundation additionally pursues its aims through individual funding activities. The foundation's charitable activities are concentrated in the Rhine-Neckar Metropolitan Region, to which Dietmar Hopp has close ties. The Dietmar Hopp Foundation is a member of the Association of German Foundations, the society "Zukunft Metropolregion Rhein-Neckar" (ZMRN e.V.) and "Sportregion Rhein-Neckar e.V."

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The German Cancer Research Center (Deutsches Krebsforschungszentrum, DKFZ) with its more than 2,500 employees is the largest biomedical research institute in Germany. At DKFZ, more than 1,000 scientists investigate how cancer develops, identify cancer risk factors and endeavor to find new strategies to prevent people from getting cancer. They develop novel approaches to make tumor diagnosis more precise and treatment of cancer patients more successful. Jointly with Heidelberg University Hospital, DKFZ has established the National Center for Tumor Diseases (NCT) Heidelberg where promising approaches from cancer research are translated into the clinic. 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 a member of the Helmholtz Association of National Research Centers. Ninety percent of its funding comes from the German Federal Ministry of Education and Research and the remaining ten percent from the State of Baden-Württemberg.

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