

Max Planck Institute in Florida Opened



Climax of the ceremony: The cutting of the tape marked the official inauguration of the new building.

The Max Planck Florida Institute for Neuroscience (MPFI) was inaugurated in an opening ceremony on December 6, 2012. This is the first Max Planck Institute in the US. Among those present at the ceremony were Jeff Atwater, Chief Financial Officer of the State of Florida, Cornelia Quennet-Thielen, Secretary of State at the German Federal Ministry of Education and Research, and former Governor of Florida Jeb Bush. Max Planck Society President Peter Gruss emphasized the benefits of this location: “Here in Jupiter, with the Scripps Research Institute and Florida Atlantic University already close by, our scientists have several outstanding partners to

work with. Our institute now joins these institutions in forming a high-powered neuroscience research cluster with far-reaching effects.” Gruss also stressed that this venture will raise the profile of German scientific excellence in the US, which leads the world in research. Secretary of State Cornelia Quennet-Thielen pointed out that, in the process of internationalization, working together with the best the world can offer is a matter of particular importance. The State of Florida contributed 186 million dollars to fund the development of the institute, which is expected to employ a staff of 135 by 2015.

Photo: Tracey Benson Photography

Foundation Provides Funds for Junior Researchers

The Behrens Weise Foundation is supporting the work of five Max Planck Junior Research Group Leaders in the amount of 150,000 euros each. The projects, headed by Tatjana Tchumatchenko (MPI for Brain Research), Gergana Dobreva (MPI for Heart and Lung Research), Stefan Rauser (MPI of Molecular Physiology), Sara Wickström (MPI for the Biology of Aging) and Ronald Kühnlein (MPI for Biophysical Chemistry),

were selected by the 15 members of the jury – all of them Max Planck Directors – as particularly worthy of support. Following an initial evaluation, a total of ten Research Group Leaders were invited to take part in the application process. The Foundation derives its funds from the estate of the late Anna Weise, who died in 1984. In 1938, she was appointed as sole heir to Hans Wilhelm Behrens, the owner of the Mitteldeutsche

Kohlehandelsgesellschaft in Gera, following the death of his wife, and it was she who ensured that the company and its assets survived the war. As a Supporting Member of the Kaiser Wilhelm Society and later the Max Planck Society, she decided – having no children of her own – to assign her estate to a foundation dedicated to supporting Max Planck Society projects in the fields of biology, medicine and genetics.

A New Look at Science

Max Planck images on tour in Russia

No question about it, images from the world of science are eye-catchers. Employees at the Goethe Institute in Moscow thought so, too. While searching for an attractive scientific exhibit, they came across the Max Planck exhibition (www.mpg.de/images_sience). However, it soon became clear that it would be difficult and expensive to import the large-format images into Russia. The answer was to create a special “Russian edition.” A total of 40 images were selected, reproduced locally and displayed with great success in March/April 2012 on the premises of the Goethe Institute in Moscow – formerly the East German embassy. The strong response from the public prompted the Goethe Institute to present the exhibition elsewhere in Russia. And so, in a joint venture between the Goethe Institute and the Max Planck Society, from 2012 to 2014, the pictures are being displayed in at least eleven other venues including the Volga district, in



The second stop on the “Images of Science” tour in Russia was in St. Petersburg. The MPS exhibition in September 2012 in the Russian National Library attracted more than 10,000 visitors.

Siberia, on the Don River and in southern Russia. The tour is expected to end in fall 2014 in Vladivostok at the Sea of

Japan. The tour is financed through the German Year program in Russia, which made this event possible.

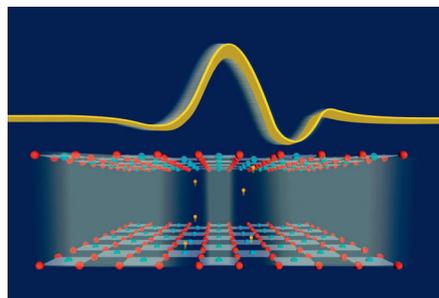
Max Planck Society Founds New Institute in Hamburg

Hanseatic city becomes an international center of structural research

At its meeting on November 26, 2012, the Senate of the Max Planck Society approved the establishment of the Max Planck Institute for the Structure and Dynamics of Matter in Hamburg. The new MPI is a product of the highly successful MPS Research Group for Structural Dynamics at the University of Hamburg. “I am delighted that the in-

ternationally respected and productive cooperation between the German Electron Synchrotron (DESY), the University of Hamburg and the Max Planck Society is being further intensified,” said President Peter Gruss. The Hamburg Senate is keen to see the city become an international center for structural research and increase the international visibility of the research campus in Hamburg-Bahrenfeld. The new Max Planck Institute is expected, in the future, to encompass five departments. The city of Hamburg will be contributing 37 million euros in special funding for a new building. Hamburg was the

only possible location for the new institute. For one thing, for years now, the CFEL research platform has provided a focus for intensive cooperation with the University of Hamburg and DESY in the field of photonics and the analysis of structures. For another, the institute’s particular mission requires access to high-powered radiation sources that, in Germany, can currently be found only in Hamburg in the form of the Free Electron Laser FLASH and the European XFEL, the synchrotron radiation source PETRA-III and the relativistic electron cannon REGAE developed and built by the group led by Dwayne Miller.



The Max Planck Research Group for Structural Dynamics at the University of Hamburg has created a switch to control extremely short and strong terahertz pulses (yellow) in order to turn high-temperature superconductors on and off within a trillionth of a second.

Success in the GO-Bio Competition



Stefan Luther (center) of the Max Planck Institute for Dynamics and Self-Organization receives GO-Bio funding to develop a new generation of defibrillators. With him are colleagues Eberhard Bodenschatz (right) and Ulrich Parlitz.

The GO-Bio Competition was initiated by the German Federal Ministry of Education and Research (BMBF) in response to the difficulties faced by potential entrepreneurs in raising risk capital. The program is explicitly tailored to the costly and protracted development processes in the life sciences field. The BMBF is prepared to finance selected researchers over a maximum period of six years to enable them to turn a scientific idea into a marketable product and, in the long term, found a new business. Funding is made available in two phases, with a decision made on the second phase following an interim evaluation after three years. At the end of the fifth round of the GO-Bio Competition, a total of five teams were awarded start-up funds of around ten million euros. One of the winners was Stefan Luther from the Max Planck Institute for Dynamics and Self-Organization in Göttingen. Based on his research results (see <http://www.mpg.de/4365331/>), he is aiming to develop a new type of implantable cardioverter-defibrillator with substantially lower pulse energy. For many patients with implanted cardioverter-defibrillators, the new technology could mean less pain, while at the same time increasing the success rate of the treatment, extending battery life and reducing the need for surgical replacement.

Photo: BMBF – Florian Dahmke

On the Net



Big Shot

The international jury of World Press Photo Contest selected a picture by Christian Ziegler, Board of Trustee Member at the Max Planck Institute for Ornithology, as the World Press Photo of the Year 2012 in the category Nature. Ziegler is a photojournalist specializing in natural history and science-related topics. His awarded picture shows an endangered Southern Cassowary feeding on the fruit of the Blue Quandang tree. Cassowaries are a keystone species in northern Australian rainforests because of their ability to carry so many big seeds across such long distances. Ziegler is a regular contributor to NATIONAL GEOGRAPHIC magazine and has been widely published in other magazines such as GEO, SMITHSONIAN, and BBC WILDLIFE. A tropical ecologist by training, he has worked in tropical rainforests on four continents. View the entire collection of winning images:

www.worldpressphoto.org/awards/2013/nature/christian-ziegler

Science Fiction Scene

Temperatures in the plasma chamber at ASDEX Upgrade in Garching can exceed 100 million degrees. A virtual tour takes visitors right to the heart of the fusion research plant, which is designed to explore the conditions needed for a power plant in which atomic nuclei release energy as they fuse together, mimicking the Sun itself. Anyone with a PC, tablet or smart phone can now take a look into every corner, while in brief videos, the scientists explain their strange workplace. The panoramic views were recorded by Munich photographer Volker Steger. He was awarded the German Science Photography Prize 2012 in the Individual Photo category for his spherical panorama projection. The jury praised the “mysterious impression of a science fiction scene.”

www.ipp.mpg.de/panorama

Where Scientists Work

The “On Location” series that appears in every issue of MAXPLANCKRESEARCH is now also available as a photo gallery on the Internet. From the Amazon rainforest to the labyrinth of a vast computer center to the radio telescope in Effelsberg – the photos and accompanying description vividly illustrate the differences in how scientists work and how varied their research is.

www.mpg.de/6346172/on_location