

Press Release
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Career jump for Professor Kim Nasmyth

Prof. Kim Nasmyth, Director of the IMP Vienna, Boehringer Ingelheim's Basic Research Institute, to take up prestigious Oxford Chair.

The Research Institute of Molecular Pathology (IMP) which belongs to the international pharmaceutical company **Boehringer Ingelheim** has already served as starting point or stepping stone for several internationally outstanding scientific careers. Now a call from one of the best Universities in Europe has reached **IMP Director Kim Nasmyth**. In January 2006 he will take over the **Whitley Chair of Biochemistry at the University of Oxford** from **Edwin Southern**. One year later he will follow Raymond Dwek as Head of the Department of Biochemistry. He will then lead one of the largest departments of Biochemistry in the western world with approximately 850 employees and students.

The Whitley Chair has an excellent reputation: founded in 1920, the position has been held by a succession of outstanding scientists, including Nobel laureates Hans Krebs and Rodney Porter. **“The appointment certainly honours me personally but is also proof of the IMP's excellent reputation in the scientific world”** says Nasmyth.



Prof. Kim Nasmyth
Director of the Research Institute of Molecular Pathology (IMP) (Foto: IMP).

Dr. Dr. Andreas Barner – vice Chairman of the Board of Directors of Boehringer Ingelheim and responsible for the corporate divisions Pharma Research, Development and Medicine, sees Prof. Nasmyth's appointment as confirmation of the internationally-recognised outstanding research performed at the IMP: "The Research Institute of Molecular Pathology is a major contribution from Boehringer Ingelheim to basic research at the highest level and has achieved world renown with outstanding scientists working there under Prof. Nasmyth's leadership. His appointment in Oxford is impressive proof of this."

Prof. Nasmyth's successor will have to fulfil the highest expectations. Boehringer Ingelheim has already engaged an international scientific committee chaired by **Piet Borst** from The Netherlands (The Netherlands Cancer Institute/Honorary Chair in Clinical Biochemistry at the University of Amsterdam) to identify a suitable candidate.

The Research Institute of Molecular Pathology (IMP) in Vienna which was founded in 1985 as a joint venture between **Boehringer Ingelheim** and the US Company **Genentech, Inc.** (San Francisco) has been a 100 % subsidiary of Boehringer Ingelheim since 1993. The IMP carries out basic research, particularly in areas related to cancer, the results of which may lead to novel pharmaceuticals.

The British Molecular Geneticist **Kim Nasmyth** came to Vienna in 1987, recruited by **Max Birnstiel** to the newly-founded IMP. At first he worked as Senior Scientist at Boehringer's basic research centre, in 1997 he took over the Directorship. Prof. Nasmyth managed to improve the excellent scientific reputation and international standing of the IMP without neglecting his own scientific research field Yeast Genetics. His success was accompanied by several distinctions. In 1989 Prof. Nasmyth was elected Member of the prestigious Royal Society; thereafter he was elected to the Austrian Academy of Sciences and the American Academy of Arts and Sciences.

The work of other principal investigators at the IMP was also recognized by prestigious awards. The Wittgenstein Prize, Austria's most highly endowed award for research, was awarded to Kim Nasmyth, to the IMP's Deputy Director Erwin Wagner and to IMP Senior Scientist Meinrad Busslinger within the space of a few years. The number of IMP publications in high-ranking international scientific journals now averages at 80-90 per year. A total of 83 patent applications further testify the innovative strength of the scientists working there.

The IMP presently employs 190 scientists from 28 nations. The 12 research groups all work on various aspects of the molecular mechanisms of disease and cell and developmental biology. The IMP groups, through their international collaborations, are part of a world-wide scientific network. Since quite recently several large-scale national and international research projects are being coordinated at the IMP. Two of the four EU 6th Framework Programme projects being coordinated in Austria are based at the IMP and a large project funded by the Austrian Genome Research Programme (GEN-AU) is also being run at the IMP.

A recent addition to the increasing interweavement of the IMP with outside institutions is the cooperation with the Austrian Academy of Sciences IMBA institute.

Boehringer Ingelheim has a strong interest in Austria and is represented by Boehringer Ingelheim Austria, Boehringer Ingelheim Pharma as well as the IMP. The core business areas of Boehringer Ingelheim Austria are responsibility for Pharmaceuticals activities in Austria, Research and Development, Biopharmaceutical Development and Production as well as Animal Health. Boehringer Ingelheim's activities in Eastern Europe are also coordinated in Vienna. Boehringer Ingelheim presently employs over 1000 people at its Vienna sites.

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