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## EMBL coordinates new Marie Curie Research Training Network “Chromatin Plasticity”

**Heidelberg, 22 January 2007** – The European Commission has awarded 3.7 Million Euro under the European Union Framework 6 Programme over the next four years to a new Marie Curie Research Training Network, coordinated by Dr. Andreas Ladurner at the European Molecular Biology Laboratory (EMBL).

The long molecules of DNA that carry our genetic information are wrapped up together with proteins into a dense complex called chromatin. The structure of chromatin is dynamic and varies according to different phases of a cell’s life, a phenomenon that is called chromatin plasticity. Chromatin structure plays a critical role in regulating our genes and research in this area has the potential to aid the understanding of biological processes and disease, including aging and cancer.

The “Chromatin Plasticity” Network brings together 13

academic and industrial research groups from 9 countries around the world to reveal novel mechanisms in the regulation of chromatin structure. Combining complementary approaches from disciplines as different as structural biology, mouse genetics, immunology, bioinformatics and drug design, the research partners are aiming to develop new approaches and tools to achieve a thorough understanding of chromatin plasticity, as well as to identify potential therapeutic targets for cancer and heart disease.

In this project, great emphasis is placed on training PhD students and postdoctoral researchers through collaborative exchanges, practical courses and visits within the network, contributing to the development of the next generation of European researchers.

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## **About EMBL**

The European Molecular Biology Laboratory is a basic research institute funded by public research monies from 19 member states (Austria, Belgium, Croatia, Denmark, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Iceland, Ireland, Israel, Italy, the Netherlands, Norway, Portugal, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland and the United Kingdom). Research at EMBL is conducted by approximately 80 independent groups covering the spectrum of molecular biology. The Laboratory has five units: the main Laboratory in Heidelberg, and Outstations in Hinxton (the European Bioinformatics Institute), Grenoble, Hamburg, and Monterotondo near Rome. The cornerstones of EMBL's mission are: to perform basic research in molecular biology; to train scientists, students and visitors at all levels; to offer vital services to scientists in the member states; to develop new instruments and methods in the life sciences and to actively engage in technology transfer activities. EMBL's International PhD Programme has a student body of about 170. The Laboratory also sponsors an active Science and Society programme. Visitors from the press and public are welcome.

## **About the Marie Curie Research Training Network "Chromatin Plasticity"**

The Marie Curie Research Training Network "Chromatin Plasticity" consists of: the European Molecular Biology Laboratory, the Hebrew University of Jerusalem, Israel, Bayer Healthcare, Germany, University of Lisbon, Portugal, the Medical University of Vienna, Austria, Sabanci University, Turkey, CNRS at the University of Marseille, France, European Bioinformatics Institute, UK, University of Copenhagen, Denmark, Santaris Pharma A/S (Santaris), Denmark, German Cancer Research Center, Germany, Institut de recherches cliniques de Montréal, Canada, and MRC Clinical Sciences Centre, UK. [www.chromatin-plasticity.org](http://www.chromatin-plasticity.org)

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