



GSF – Forschungszentrum
für Umwelt und Gesundheit
in der Helmholtz-Gemeinschaft



PRESS RELEASE

Top scientist from Harvard appointed new director of the GSF Institute for Biological and Medical Imaging

Neuherberg, 30 August. Prof. Dr. Vasilis Ntziachristos has been appointed as the new director of the Institute of Biological and Medical Imaging at the GSF – National Research Center for Environment and Health (Helmholtz Association of German Research Centres). Born in Greece, Ntziachristos carried out research for many years in the United States of America, most recently as an Assistant Professor at Harvard University, before recently accepting the position of Professor and Chair of Biological Imaging at the Technical University of Munich.

“With Vasilis Ntziachristos, we were able to get one of the top scientists in the field of imaging to Germany”, stresses the CEO and president of the GSF, Prof. Dr Günther Wess. Ntziachristos was listed in the 2004 Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT) TR100 list as one of the top innovators in the world and regularly serves in chairing positions or editorial posts for international scientific societies including the Optical Society of America (OSA) and the Institute for Electrical and Electronics Engineers (IEEE). “The institute’s programme fits seamlessly into the whole concept of GSF, namely the investigation of the foundations of future medicine and care”, added Wess. In this connection, the development of new individualised approaches in the field of diagnostics, therapeutics and molecular monitoring is especially noteworthy.

Within the scope of bio-medical discovery, imaging is increasingly becoming a key factor in quantitatively elucidating molecular signatures of disease in-vivo. In this way the gap between in-vitro research and clinical practice can be closed. The Institute of Biological and Medical Imaging (IBMI) will forge close links with the Munich University of Technology and the University Hospital and operate on both GSF and TUM campuses.

“Our purpose is the development and the dissemination of in-vivo imaging technologies to the field of the bio-sciences, extending from basic research and drug discovery right up to pre-clinical imaging and clinical translation”, according to Ntziachristos.

Modern approaches in imaging go beyond the anatomical and functional imaging of conventional radiology, and give rise to new ways of investigation and monitoring at the molecular level, using non-invasive ways of examination. In this way, modern bio-medical imaging offers new insights into biomedical research that were not available with traditional laboratory studies using histological approaches on biopsies. “The purpose is to fundamentally improve the visualization tools available for biological discovery, to establish methods for accelerated propagation of basic research findings to clinical utility and to enable more accurate and informative clinical imaging thus improving healthcare”, underlines Ntziachristos.

IBMI will further serve as the training centre for imaging technology and combine the subjects of physics, chemistry and engineering with the fields of biology, pharmacology and medicine to provide a unique environment for multi-disciplinary intra-departmental research.

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