

PRESS RELEASE

Mainz, 6 February 2009

Boehringer Ingelheim Foundation provides extensive support for cutting-edge research at the Johannes Gutenberg University Mainz

Foundation makes 100 million euros available for the foundation of an international *Excellence Center for Life Sciences* / Federal state government to finance the building

The Boehringer Ingelheim Foundation is strengthening cutting-edge research at the Johannes Gutenberg University Mainz by taking an unusual initiative: Over a period of 10 years, the foundation will provide a total of 100 million euros for the establishment and operation of an *Excellence Center for Life Sciences*. The state of Rhineland-Palatinate will thus receive one of the largest private donations invested in the research facility of a university to date. The state of Rhineland-Palatinate itself will be participating in the establishment of this center of excellence by sponsoring the construction of a new building, which will offer leading researchers excellent working conditions. The new institute to be established will meet international standards for cutting-edge research, explained Otto Boehringer, Chairman of the Board of the Boehringer Ingelheim Foundation, and Doris Ahnen, Minister of Education, Science, Youth and Culture in Rhineland-Palatinate.

"We are pleased that the state of Rhineland-Palatinate and the Johannes Gutenberg University regarded our idea of providing additional cutting-edge research at the University of Mainz in such a positive light and have immediately offered their support," explained Otto Boehringer. "In view of the intensified competition and the international rivalry to attract the 'best brains' in research, we should like to support both the state and the University of Mainz in strengthening their cutting-edge research and increasing their international visibility," Boehringer emphasized. "We, the Boehringer and the von Baumbach families, regard our recent involvement as active citizenship and as a service to society. We should like to make a long-term contribution. We want to strengthen and develop internationally visible cutting-edge research in Mainz and in the region as a whole, thus helping to provide solutions to scientific and medical problems and therewith improving the health of the population. This is also an example of how to turn social responsibility into a public-private partnership," said Boehringer.

The Minister-President of Rhineland-Palatinate, Kurt Beck, was very much pleased with the decision of the foundation: "I am extraordinarily proud and thankful that the Boehringer Ingelheim Foundation is sponsoring a scientific institution in Rhineland-Palatinate to such an extraordinary degree. This is a great step forward for our state of Rhineland-Palatinate and an opportunity to extend its image as a viable science and research location of international standing." According to Beck, such a private commitment is a sign of far-sightedness and a well-developed sense of responsibility for the common good. Basic scientific medical research is contributing a great deal towards ensuring the future and is helping to increase people's quality of life in the long term. "The close collaboration and the cooperative negotiations between the Boehringer Ingelheim Foundation, Minister Doris Ahnen, and Professor Georg Krausch, President of the Johannes Gutenberg University Mainz, have resulted in a major project with which the Foundation has demonstrated considerable confidence in us. We are more than grateful for this confidence, and we intend to live up to it," continued Minister-President Kurt Beck.

"An *Excellence Center for Life Sciences* at the Johannes Gutenberg University Mainz will become a milestone in our scientific landscape. The University of Mainz already counts among those German universities with large research capacities: The University has a total of eleven DFG Collaborative Research Centers, five of which are in the field of life sciences. This role will be underpinned in the long term by the generous support of the Boehringer Ingelheim Foundation, with which I am also highly gratified," said Doris Ahnen, Rhineland-Palatinate's Minister for Education, Science, Youth and Culture. "The life sciences have become the principal sciences of this century. It is therefore even more important that we should further extend this interdisciplinary area of research in Mainz at the highest level to be able to recruit the best scientists for this location and to further improve the position of top-level research at the Johannes Gutenberg University in the national and international comparison," continued Minister Ahnen.

For Dr Dr Andreas Barner, Spokesman of the Management of Boehringer Ingelheim, this new initiative represents an opportunity for Mainz as a scientific hub: The planned center of excellence will enable Mainz to further strengthen its profile as a scientific location and offer newly recruited scientists a highly attractive scientific environment. The successors of the company's founder Albert Boehringer by this initiative make a

further contribution towards research and allow for excellent and internationally-orientated fundamental research to settle and grow in Mainz.

"With the foundation of the *Excellence Center for Life Sciences*, Mainz as scientific hub will establish itself as an internationally significant scientific center for molecular medicine. The institute will bridge the gap between the active substance-orientated materials sciences on the one hand and medicine on the other, supplementing and reinforcing the existing know-how by promoting scientific synergies between these disciplines," explained the President of the Johannes Gutenberg University Mainz, Professor Georg Krausch. The center of excellence in Mainz will offers researchers and scientists particularly attractive job opportunities with a perspective extending over more than the ten years of the concept we have today.

Focuses, Financing, Organization, and University Links of the *Excellence Center for Life Sciences*

While the Boehringer Ingelheim Foundation will guarantee the overall operation of the center of excellence for a period of ten years by contributing a total of 100 million euros, the state of Rhineland-Palatinate will provide the approximately 30 million euros required for the construction of a state-of-the-art research building with the net internal area amounting to some 6000 square meters. The building will be constructed in two phases: The plans for the first phase assume that it will be ready for occupation by 1 January 2011. The center of excellence will most probably be set up by the Johannes Gutenberg University in the form of a legally independent non-profit-making company with limited liability (gGmbH) that will be administrated by the University. Both the University and the Foundation initially mean to appoint two or three internationally renowned researchers who will shape the development of the center and attract "excellent young researchers from all over the world to Mainz" - in the words of Otto Boehringer. Up to three scientific departments are planned, each with a director and up to six independent groups of young researchers. The top researchers are to be appointed as professors or associate professors of the University of Mainz, but will be exempted from teaching duties to concentrate on their work at the institute. Internationally accredited founding directors will be recruited in accordance with the so-called "Harnack principle". This will be used to identify top international researchers who themselves will subsequently specify the concrete scientific focus and subject of

their work. They will be provided with excellent working conditions and they will be given a free hand in the selection of their members of staff. The establishment of the *Excellence Center for Life Sciences* will result in the creation of about 100 new jobs, both in research and non-academic capacities.

Otto Boehringer (Chairman of the Board), Kurt Beck (Minister-President of Rhineland-Palatinate), Dr Dr Andreas Barner (Spokesman of the Management at Boehringer Ingelheim), Doris Ahnen (Minister for Education, Science, Youth and Culture in Rhineland-Palatinate) and Professor Georg Krausch (University President) are convinced that "the location of the center in Mainz could not be better thanks to the numerous academic links to the University's main fields of research and its medical faculties, institutes, and clinics." This sets the course for success, both for science and for the population of the state as a whole. After all, the life sciences are all about the fundamental question of how we can live better in the future."

Contact:

Dr Claudia Walther
Boehringer Ingelheim Foundation
Tel +49 6132 898515

Sabine Lucht
Press Relations Officer
Ministry for Education, Science,
Youth and Culture of
Rhineland-Palatinate
Tel +49 6131 16-2829

Petra Giegerich
Head of
Public Relations
Johannes Gutenberg
University Mainz
Tel +49 6131 39-20047