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PRESS RELEASE

20 February 2009

NRF TO SUPPORT THE SET UP OF A NEW RESEARCH CENTRE IN MECHANOBIOLOGY AND A MAJOR RESEARCH COLLABORATION PROGRAMME WITH TOP ISRAELI UNIVERSITIES

- *Fourth Research Centre of Excellence (RCE) in Mechanobiology to be established at NUS*
- *Major research collaboration with top Israeli universities to start with 2 projects involving the Technion-Israel Institute of Technology and Weizmann Institute of Science*

1 The National Research Foundation (NRF) announced today the funding support for a 4th Research Centre of Excellence in NUS with the Ministry of Education (MOE) and a long term research co-operation programme with Israel's top universities.

2 Dr Tony Tan, Chairman of NRF said: "We are on the right track to build up Singapore's capability for cutting-edge research and development and establishing Singapore as a vibrant centre for R&D. Today's announcement reflects our continued commitment to invest in research capabilities that will keep our economy competitive in the long term. I look forward to seeing more research breakthroughs as well as innovative technologies that will make Singapore a hotbed for innovation and enterprise."

Moving Singapore to the Forefront of Mechanobiology Research

3 A Research Centre of Excellence in Mechanobiology¹ will be set up at the National University of Singapore (NUS) with funding from NRF and MOE.

4 Recognising the importance of the mechanisms of cell and tissue mechanics in the development of therapies, the NRF and the MOE have committed S\$150 million over 10 years to support the Mechanobiology Research Centre of Excellence (RCE). The study of cell and tissue functions at the most basic level would unlock vital information pertaining to the behaviour of cells when subjected to various dynamic forces in nature, and thus influence the development of specific drugs and

¹ Mechanobiology is the study of the interrelationship of force and biology. It merges the older science of mechanics with the newer and emerging disciplines of molecular biology and genetics.

highly accurate treatment of diseases such as cardiovascular disease, cancer, osteoporosis and other ailments due to ageing.

5 The Mechanobiology RCE is the fourth RCE funded by NRF and MOE. Three other RCEs had been approved previously. They are the Centre for Quantum Technologies (CQT), the Cancer Science Institute of Singapore (CSIS), both at NUS and the Earth Observatory of Singapore (EOS) at the NTU. These RCEs are established to build peaks of excellence in research in specific fields in the local universities. The Mechanobiology Centre will be led by Professor Michael Sheetz, the William R Kenan Jr. Professor from Columbia University with Co-Director Professor Paul Matsudaira, Head of the Department of Biological Sciences at NUS (see **ANNEX A** for more details).

6 NUS President Professor Tan Chorh Chuan said, “We are excited that NUS’ proposal for an RCE in Mechanobiology has won the endorsement of the distinguished panel of scientific advisors appointed by the NRF and MOE. We are privileged to have two truly outstanding scientists, Prof Michael Sheetz from Columbia University, and Prof Paul Matsudaira, who has joined NUS from MIT, to lead this RCE. Leveraging on our existing strengths in Biology, Bioengineering, Nanotechnology and Computational Biology, the Mechanobiology RCE will assemble a world-class team of international and local faculty to conduct high quality research. We look forward to breakthroughs that will have a significant impact on new drug discovery and therapeutics.”

7 “The competitive advantage of this Centre lies in its unique approach in characterizing biomechanics at the molecule-to-cell-to-tissue levels through integrated inter-disciplinary teams. The research synergies with NUS, NUH, NTU, the Temasek Life Sciences Lab (TLL), the Singapore-MIT Alliance Research Technology (SMART) Centre and A*Star research institutes will enable Singapore to become one of the leaders in this field,” said Professor Sheetz.

Co-operation in Research and Innovation with Top Israeli Universities

8 NRF will also start up a long term research collaboration programme between Singapore’s research organizations and the top Israeli universities. The first two projects under this programme involve the Technion-Israel Institute of Technology (Technion) and the Weizmann Institute of Science (WIS). Local partners are the NUS, Nanyang Technological University (NTU) and TLL.

9 These two projects involve scientists from the two top Israeli universities carrying out research in Singapore in collaboration with the local research community.

The two projects are:

- a) “Regenerative Medicine Initiative in Cardiac Restoration Therapy” between Technion, NTU and NUS
- b) “Molecular Mechanisms of Morphogenesis” between WIS, TLL and NUS

10 “Israeli universities are known for their excellence in scientific research as well as their indefatigable entrepreneurial spirit. The researchers from Technion and WIS

would certainly add to Singapore's research vigour and vibrancy, making it truly a hub for world class research and innovation." said Dr Francis Yeoh, Chief Executive Officer of NRF.

11 "At the Technion, we see strategic value in this collaborative research, which may lead to breakthroughs in understanding and developing cardiac restoration therapy," said Dr Dror Seliktar, Programme Coordinator of the Technion project and Senior Lecturer, Faculty of Biomedical Engineering of Technion-Israel Institute of Technology.

12 "We look forward to collaborating with a strong team of researchers from TLL and NUS. The team hopes to develop innovative approaches in the discovery of morphogenetic processes shared by diverse organisms and biological system, which will be instrumental to the development of novel therapies for a wide variety of diseases," added Professor Benny Geiger, Programme Coordinator of the Weizmann project and Dean of the Faculty of Biology of Weizmann Institute of Science.

(See **ANNEX B** for more details)

The National Research Foundation (NRF)

The National Research Foundation (NRF), set up on 1 January 2006, is a department under the Prime Minister's Office.

The NRF sets the national direction for research and development (R&D) by developing policies, plans and strategies for research, innovation and enterprise, funds strategic initiatives, builds up R&D capabilities and capacities through nurturing our own and attracting foreign talent, and coordinates the research agenda of different agencies to transform Singapore into a knowledge-intensive, innovative and entrepreneurial economy. It provides secretariat support to the Research, Innovation and Enterprise Council (RIEC), chaired by the Prime Minister. A five-year budget of S\$5 billion has been allocated to the NRF in 2006 to achieve this mission.

The NRF aims to:

- Transform Singapore into a vibrant R&D hub that contributes towards a knowledge-intensive, innovative and entrepreneurial economy; and
- Make Singapore a talent magnet for scientific and innovation excellence.

For more information, please visit www.nrf.gov.sg.

For media queries, please contact:

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Fact Sheet on the Mechanobiology Centre of Excellence

The Research Centre of Excellence in Mechanobiology aims to develop a new paradigm for studying diseases by focusing on the mechanisms of cell and tissue mechanics. Physical factors, force and geometry play critical roles in defining tissue function, malfunction, morphology and regeneration. Researchers at the RCE endeavour to develop powerful quantitative physical and biochemical models to define dynamic cellular functions, experimental reagents and tools for studying diseases of cells and tissues.

Some possible applications in biomedical science and translational medicine include ligament and cartilage repair, new strategies for fighting drug resistant bacteria, liver tissue regeneration, novel breast cancer therapies and aging.

The RCE will attract, support and retain world-class sciences to conduct high quality and high impact research in Singapore, and enhance postgraduate research training and education in local universities.

Background

Established with a total funding of S\$150 million over 10 years from NRF and MOE, the Centre will be structured in three integrated interdisciplinary teams, namely:

- Cellular Mechanics: Researchers will work towards defining protein modules that are involved in movement of single cells and cells in tissues.
- Molecular Mechanics: Researchers will study the ability of cells to sense and transduce physical signals inside and how cells regulate their dynamic processes there.
- Tissue Mechanics: Researchers will examine the mechanical control of specific movement of tissues to produce an emergent property such as a coordinated bending of a tissue.

It will establish a common international standard for researchers in this field through a web-based Manual for Biological Functions. This will help reveal underlying mechanisms that maintain normal physiology versus those that lead to disease manifestations.

Centre Director

The Centre will be led by Director-designate Professor Michael Sheetz, a distinguished professor from the Department of Biological Sciences at Columbia University. Professor Paul Matsudaira, the Head of the Department of Biological Sciences at NUS is the co-Director-designate.

Curriculum Vitae



Prof Michael Sheetz

The William R Kenan Jr. Professor, Columbia University

Education:

1968 B.A., Albion College
1972 Ph.D., California Institute of Technology

Major academic appointments:

2000- William R. Kenan, Jr. Professor of Cell Biology, Chair (04-07),
Department of Biological Sciences, Columbia University, New
York, NY.
1990-2000 Professor and Chairman, Department of Cell Biology, Duke
University Medical School, Durham, North Carolina
1985-1990 Professor, Department of Cell Biology and Physiology,
Washington University School of Medicine, St. Louis, Missouri
1980-1985 Associate Professor, Department of Physiology, University of
Connecticut Health Center, Farmington, Connecticut
1974-1979 Assistant Professor, Department of Physiology, University of
Connecticut Health Center, Farmington, Connecticut
1972-1974 Postdoctoral Research Fellow, University of California, San
Diego



Prof Paul Matsudaira

*Professor and Head, Department of Biological Sciences,
Faculty of Science, NUS*

Education:

- 1975 B.A., B.S. degrees in Chemistry and Biology, University of Washington, Seattle
- 1981 Ph.D. in Biology from Dartmouth College, Hanover, New Hampshire

Major academic appointments:

- 1985-1989 Associate Member, Whitehead Institute for Biomedical Research and Assistant Professor of Biology, Dept of Biology, MIT
- 1989-1992 Associate Professor of Biology, Dept of Biology, MIT
- 1992- 2008 Member, Whitehead Institute for Biomedical Research
- 1995- 2000 Director, Program in Molecular Engineering, MIT
- 1998- 2008 Professor of Biology, & Professor of Bioengineering, MIT.
- 1999-2001 Associate Chair of the Faculty, MIT
- 2001-present Director, Whitehead Institute /MIT Center for Biolmaging
- 2005-present Co-Director, Singapore-MIT Alliance 2 (SMA2) CSB Program
- 2005-2007 Director, Computational and Systems Biology Initiative (CSBi)
- 2009 Professor of Biological Sciences and Head (Designate) Department of Biological Sciences, NUS

Fact Sheet on the Regenerative Medicine Initiative in Cardiac Restoration Therapy Research Programme

The Regenerative Medicine Initiative in Cardiac Restoration Therapy research programme from Technion, NTU and NUS addresses the clinical need for cardiac restoration therapy using a tissue-engineering based approach.

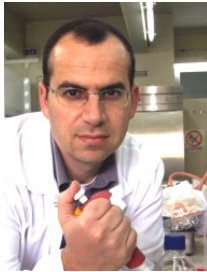
Cardiac tissue engineering is a treatment strategy which aims to improve the function of damaged myocardium by promoting the formation of a new contractile cardiac tissue. In the US alone, nearly 2,400 Americans die of cardiovascular diseases (CVD) each day. CVD claims approximately as many lives each year as cancer and diabetes mellitus combined. In Singapore, 3,394 people died of Ischaemic Heart Disease in 2007². Ischaemic heart disease, or myocardial ischaemia, is a disease characterized by reduced blood supply to the heart muscle, usually due to coronary artery. Although there have been significant improvements in cardiac medicine, the optimal solution for the failing heart remains heart transplantation. Unfortunately, there is a continuous shortage of donor tissue.

The purpose of cardiac restoration therapy is to replace the fibrotic scar tissue with a functional myocardial tissue. Potential solutions would have many therapeutic applications. With its world class healthcare system, Singapore is well positioned to be a world leader in the field of cardiac restoration therapy.

² Statistics from the Ministry of Health (Singapore) website

Curriculum Vitae of the Principal Investigators and Co-Principal Investigators

Technion Team Members



Dr Dror Seliktar

*Senior Lecturer, Faculty of Biomedical Engineering, Technion
Technion Programme Coordinator

Dr Seliktar's primary area of interest is in the field of tissue engineering and regenerative medicine with an emphasis on biomaterials. In addition to receiving numerous awards for his professional accomplishments, he has written more than thirty-five research publications and has seven patent applications either granted or pending. Dr Seliktar's applied research has been licensed to a start-up company called Regentis Biomaterials Ltd. (Haifa Israel, 15 FTE), of which he is a founder. Dr Seliktar currently serves as chief scientific officer to the company, and is responsible for overseeing the technology transfer into human clinical trials for orthopaedic indications.



Prof Marcelle Machluf

Associate Professor, Faculty of Biotechnology and Food Engineering, Technion

Prof Marcelle Machluf's primary area of interest is in the field of tissue engineering and drug delivery, with a special focus on decellularized ECM scaffolds for cardiac tissue engineering and cDNA delivery for cancer therapeutics. She has received numerous awards for her professional accomplishments, written more than thirty-five research publications and has several patent applications either granted or pending.



Prof Eyal Zussman

Associate Professor, Faculty of Mechanical Engineering, Technion

Prof Eyal Zussman's primary area of interest is in the field of nanostructure fabrication with a special focus on nanofibers for biomedical use. He has received numerous awards for his professional accomplishments, written more than eighty research publications and has several patent applications either granted or pending.

NTU Team Members



Prof Freddy Boey

Professor and Chair, Department of Material Science and Engineering, NTU

Professor Freddy Boey's primary area of interest is in the field drug eluting biodegradable implants and biopolymer devices, nano particles for biological and toxic diagnostics and for cell regeneration. He has received numerous awards, published over 280 research articles and has licensed 13 of his patents to industry and start ups in US, UK and Singapore. His patented work on a fully biodegradable multilayered stent which is self expanding at body temperature, and can elute more than one drug simultaneously, has received US\$10m investment from a Silicon Valley VC. He has started up 3 funded companies in biomedical devices.



Prof Subbu Venkatraman

*Professor and Vice-Chair
Department of Material Science and Engineering, NTU*

Professor Subbu Venkatraman's primary area of interest is in the field of polymeric biomaterials for applications in drug/gene delivery, cellular interactions, biomedical implants and therapeutic devices. He also has expertise with GMP manufacturing, animal trials and aspects of regulatory requirements. He holds several patents related to biomaterials, and has over 60 publications in the field, ranging from drug delivery to drug-eluting stents. He is considered to be a leading researcher in the field of biodegradable implants and controlled release.

NUS Team Members



Prof Seeram Ramakrishna

*Professor and NUS Vice-President (Research Strategy),
Department of Mechanical Engineering, Faculty of Engineering,
NUS*

Professor Seeram Ramakrishna's primary area of interest is in the development of electrospun nanofiber scaffolds for regeneration of tissues and handling of stem cells. He is among the top one hundred highly cited materials scientists in the world. He is a Fellow of all the major professional engineering societies in Singapore, UK and USA and the recipient of ASEAN Engineering Achievement Award. His know-how on electrospinning process was taken up by the MECC Corporation, Japan, and his innovations on aesthetic orthodontic archwires and brackets were licensed by Biomers International. He is also a scientific advisor to companies such as Stemlife, Nanocomposites, and Biomers International.



Prof Phan Toan Thang

*Associate Professor, Department of Surgery, Yong Loo Lin School
of Medicine, NUS*

Prof Phan Toan Thang's primary area of interest is in the field of wound healing and stem cell research. His was the first group in the world to explore the role of epithelial-mesenchymal interactions in keloid pathogenesis, and is recognized today as one of the world leading groups in keloid and scar biology research. Under his direction, the output from the Wound Healing and Stem Cell Research Group has been prodigious with numerous publications in key biomedical journals and presentations in international scientific conferences. Prof Phan is author of more than 50 publications in international peer-reviewed journals and has nine filed and pending patents. His recent innovative research work is the discovery of a novel source of stem cells from the umbilical cord lining membrane with translational potential for regenerative medicine, tissue engineering and cell-based therapy.

Fact Sheet on the Molecular Mechanisms of Morphogenesis Research Programme

The Molecular Mechanisms of Morphogenesis research programme from Weizmann Institute of Science (WIS), Temasek Life Sciences Laboratory (TLL) and NUS aims to establish global leadership in understanding the basic principles of complex morphogenetic processes shared by diverse organisms.

Morphogenesis is one of the major outstanding problems in the biological sciences. It concerns the fundamental question of how biological form and structure are generated. Morphogenesis encompasses a broad scope of biological processes shared by diverse organisms and biological systems, including plants, yeast, fruit flies, mouse and human. Understanding the underlying morphogenetic mechanisms, at the molecular level will provide unique opportunities for the establishment of rich genomic and proteomic databases, instrumental for the discovery of novel therapies for a wide variety of diseases.

As morphogenesis concerns adult as well as embryonic tissues, and includes an understanding of the maintenance, degeneration, and regeneration of tissues and organs as well as their formation, morphogenesis is bringing to market a blockbuster innovation that, by resolving tissue shortage and graft rejection issues, could revolutionize the cell therapy and tissue engineering industries.

Curriculum Vitae of the Principal Investigators and Co-Principal Investigators

WIS Team Members



Prof Benjamin Geiger

*The Erwin Neter Professor in Cell and Tumor Biology
Department of Molecular Cell Biology, WIS*

**WIS Programme Coordinator*

Education:

1968-1971	B.Sc. in Microbiology, Tel Aviv University
1971-1972	M.Sc. in Immunology, Hebrew University of Jerusalem
1972-1977	Ph.D. in Chemical Immunology, WIS

Major academic appointments:

1977-1979	Postdoctoral Fellow, University of California at San Diego
1979	Postgraduate Research Associate, University of California at San Diego
1979-1980	Postdoctoral Fellow, Department of Chemical Immunology, WIS
1980-1982	Senior Scientist, Department of Chemical Immunology, WIS
1983	Associate Professor, Department of Chemical Immunology, WIS
1987-1988	Visiting Scientist, Massachusetts Institute of Technology
1988	Professor, Department of Chemical Immunology, WIS
1989-1995	Dean, Feinberg Graduate School, WIS
1994-1999	Visiting Scientist, National Institutes of Health
1995-2003	Head, Department of Molecular Cell Biology, WIS
2003-present	Dean, Faculty of Biology, WIS



Prof Ben-Zion Shilo

Department of Molecular Genetics, WIS

Education and major academic appointments:

1972-1975	B.Sc. in Biology at the Hebrew University, Jerusalem.
1975-1978	Ph.D. in Genetics at the Hebrew University, Jerusalem
1977-1978	Dana-Farber Cancer Institute, Harvard Medical School
1979-1981	Post-doctoral fellowship with Prof. R. Weinberg at MIT
1981-1987	Senior Scientist at the Department of Virology, WIS
1987-1994	Associate Professor (with tenure) at WIS
1993-2001	Head of Department of Molecular Genetics.
1994-present	Full professor
2004-present	Dean, Faculty of Biochemistry



Prof Avraham Albert Levy

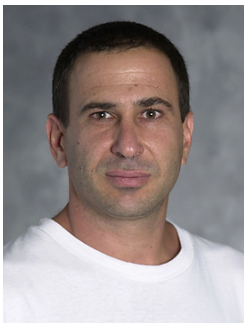
Department of Plant Sciences, WIS

Education:

1977-1980	B.Sc., The Hebrew University of Jerusalem, Rehovot, Israel
1980-1982	M.Sc., The Hebrew University of Jerusalem, Rehovot, Israel
1983-1987	Ph.D., Department of Plant Genetics, WIS
1987-1990	Postdoctoral fellow, Stanford University, Stanford, USA
1991	Postdoctoral fellow, Biologie Cellulaire, INRA, Versailles, France

Major academic appointments:

1992-1997	Senior scientist, Department of Plant Sciences, WIS
1998-2006	Associate Professor, Department of Plant Sciences WIS
2006-Present	Professor (Full), Department of Plant Sciences WIS



Prof Yuval Eshed

Department of Plant Sciences, WIS

Education:

1991 - 1996	Hebrew University of Jerusalem, Faculty of Agriculture, Ph.D. Genetics
1996 -2001	UC Davis, Department of Plant Biology, Postdoctoral fellow

Major academic appointments:

2001 – present	Senior scientist, Department of Plant Sciences, WIS
2003	Evaluation panel Israeli Science Foundation, Botany
2005-2007	Evaluation panel Ministry of Agriculture, Biotechnology
2007	BARD, Molecular biology



Prof Jeffrey Gerst

Department of Molecular Genetics, WIS

Education:

1981 -83 M.Sc. Hebrew University of Jerusalem, Israel
1983 -88 Ph. D. in Biology; WIS
1988 -91 Post-doctoral Fellow; Cold Spring Harbor Laboratory

Major academic appointments:

1980 -81 Research Assistant; Israel Oceanographic and Limnological
Research Mariculture Unit, Eilat
1991 – 94 Assistant Professor, Department of Cell Biology and Anatomy,
Mount Sinai School of Medicine, New York, N.Y., USA
1994 –99 Senior Scientist, Department of Molecular Genetics, WIS
2000-present Associate Professor, Department of Molecular Genetics, WIS



Prof Elior Peles

Department of Molecular Cell Biology, WIS

Education:

1986-1988 M.Sc. The Hebrew University, Jerusalem, Israel.
1989-1993 Ph.D. WIS, Israel. Biochemistry
1993-1997 Postdoctoral training. Sugen Inc. CA.

Major academic appointments:

1993-1997 Group Leader, Sugen Inc., CA
1997-2003 Senior Scientist, Department of Molecular Cell Biology, WIS
2003-present Associate Professor, Department of Molecular Cell Biology, WIS
2005-2006 Visiting Professor, Montreal Neurological Institute, Montreal QC

TLL Team Members



Dr Stephen M Cohen

Executive Director (CEO), TLL

Education:

1974-1977 University of Toronto, Toronto, Canada
1977-1978 University of Ottawa Medical School, Ottawa, Canada.
1978-1983 Princeton University, Princeton, USA. M.A. 1980; Ph.D. 1983

Major academic appointments:

1983-1986 Postdoctoral Fellow, Dept. of Biology, MIT
1986-1989 Postdoctoral Fellow, Max-Planck-Institut für Entwicklungsbiologie. Tübingen
1989-1993 Assistant Professor, Department of Cell Biology, Baylor College of Medicine, Houston TX, USA
1990-1993 Assistant Investigator, Howard Hughes Medical Institute
1993-2007 Group Leader, European Molecular Biology Laboratory
1995-2007 Senior Scientist, European Molecular Biology Laboratory
1996-2007 Head, Developmental Biology Unit, EMBL
2007- Executive Director (CEO), TLL; Adjunct Professor, Dept of Biological Sciences, NUS



Dr Pernille Rørth

Associate Professor, TLL

Education:

1990 Cand. Scient in Biology, University of Copenhagen, Denmark
1993 PhD in Molecular Biology, University of Copenhagen, Denmark.

Major academic appointments:

1990-1993 PhD student, University of Copenhagen, Denmark
1994-1998 Staff Associate, Carnegie Institution of Washington, Dept of Embryology, Baltimore, USA
1998-2007 Group Leader, Developmental Biology Program, EMBL, Heidelberg Germany
From 1 Apr 08 Temasek Senior Investigator, TLL



Dr José R. Dinneny

Principal Investigator, TLL
Assistant Professor, Department of Biological Sciences, Faculty of Science, NUS
NRF Research Fellow (1st group)

Education:

1996-2000 B.Sc., University of California, Berkeley, USA
2000-2005 Ph.D., University of California, San Diego, USA

Major academic appointments:

2005-2008 Postdoctoral Fellow, Dept of Biology, Duke University
2008- Principal Investigator, TLL
2008- Assistant Professor, Dept of Biological Sciences, NUS



Dr Frederic Berger

Senior Principal Investigator, TLL

Education and major academic appointments:

1987 Student at the Ecole Normale Supérieure
1990 Laureate of the Agrégation des Sciences de la Vie et de la Terre
1991 – 1994 Diploma and PhD Ecole Normale Supérieure
1995 – 1996 Visiting scientist at the John Innes Centre, Norwich, U.K.
1997 – 2004 Independent researcher at INRA/CNRS UNIT RDP, Lyon, France
Since 2004 Senior PI at TLL and adjunct Associate Professor at NUS



Prof Mohan K. Balasubramanian

Deputy Director, TLL

Education:

1988 M.Sc; Biotechnology M.S. University of Baroda, India
1992 Ph.D; Department of Microbiology, University of Saskatchewan,
Canada

Major academic appointments:

Jan 07-Present Professor, Dept of Biological Sciences, NUS and adjunct
Professor Duke University-NUS Graduate Medical School
Apr 08-Present Temasek Senior Investigator and Deputy Director, TLL



Dr Snezhana Oliferenko

Principal Investigator, TLL

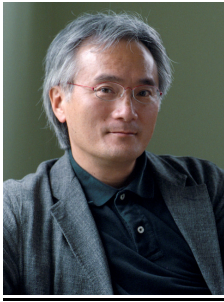
Education:

1994 Diploma in Biochemistry (MSc Degree), Department of Virology,
Faculty of Biology, Lomonosov Moscow State University,
Moscow, Russia
1999 PhD in Cell Biology and Biochemistry, Institute of Molecular
Pathology (IMP) and University of Vienna, Austria.

Major academic appointments:

1996-1999 PhD student, Institute of Molecular Pathology (IMP), Vienna
2000-2002 Research Fellow, Institute of Molecular Agrobiolgy, Singapore
2002-2004 Young Investigator, TLL
May 05 -present Principal Investigator, TLL

NUS Team Members



Prof Paul Matsudaira

Professor and Head, Department of Biological Sciences,

Note: Please refer to Page 5 of this document for Prof Paul Matsudaira's CV.



Prof Liang Fengyi

Associate Professor, Department of Anatomy, Yong Loo Lin School of Medicine, NUS

Education:

1978-1983 BMed. Henan University of Medical Science, Henan, China
1985-1988 MMed. Academy of Medical Sciences & Peking Union Medical College, Beijing, China
1989-1993 PhD. Institute of Physiology, University of Fribourg, Switzerland

Major academic appointments:

1993-1996 Postdoctoral fellow, Department of Anatomy & Neurobiology, University of California, Irvine, USA
1996-2001 Staff scientist, Brain Science Institute, Institute of Physical & Chemical Research (RIKEN), Japan
2001- Assistant Professor (2001-present), Department of Anatomy, Yong Loo Lin School of Medicine, NUS

Fact Sheet on Technion – Israel Institute Of Technology

Technion's vision is to be a science and technology research university, among the world's top ten, dedicated to the creation of knowledge and the development of human capital and leadership, for the advancement of the State of Israel and all humanity.

As Israel's biggest scientific-technological university (with 550 faculty members, 9,000 undergraduates and 3,200 post-graduate students) and one of the largest centers of applied research in the world, it has an enviable track record of excellent research and technology development. On a yearly basis, Technion files 100 new invention disclosures and 90 patents and commercialises about 14 patents. Over 40 new companies had been formed out of Technion.

Research agreements with academic institutions around the world include Johns Hopkins University, l'Ecole Polytechnique, Cambridge University, National University of Singapore, the Universities of Melbourne and Sydney, the Technological Universities of Berlin and Aachen, Tsinghua University, Xidian University and the Tokyo Institute of Technology.

For more information on Technion, please visit www.technion.ac.il

Fact Sheet on Weizmann Institute Of Science

The Weizmann Institute of Science in Rehovot, Israel, has 250 faculty members and 1850 students and researchers, and a world wide reputation for excellent research in the natural sciences. Ranked within the top 5 worldwide, in terms of revenue from IP commercialization, over 1500 patent families have been filed since 1971 (the largest portfolio of patents in Israel), with the combined sales of products developed from Weizmann IP in 2006 exceeding US\$3.34 billion. Over 40 new companies (22 in the last 6 years) had been established around Weizmann's technologies.

The Institute comprises of faculties in natural sciences (Physics, Mathematics, Chemistry, Biochemistry, and Biology). There are about 250 research groups, nearly half of which are in the life sciences. The Weizmann Institute has a graduate school with a long tradition of cross-faculty, multi-disciplinary research activities and interdisciplinary student programs. These activities are also formalized by research centers.

Inter-laboratory collaborations are common, and highly encouraged. Special attention is devoted to biomedical research, which is supported by several research centers that fund collaborations between Institute scientists and colleagues in various Israeli medical schools and hospitals.

For more information on Weizmann, please visit www.weizmann.ac.il