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Fraunhofer IZI honors institute founder with symposium

This year's Fraunhofer Life Science Symposium was held on September 27, 2018 in honor of institute founder Professor Frank Emmrich. Professor Emmrich set up the Fraunhofer Institute for Cell Therapy and Immunology IZI in Leipzig back in 2005. In December 2017, after 13 years of success and strong growth, he handed over the reins to Professor Ulrike Köhl. 150 invited guests, companions, longstanding research partners, colleagues and members of staff came together with various speakers to look back at key milestones in the career of the renowned immunologist. President of the Fraunhofer-Gesellschaft Professor Reimund Neugebauer also expressed his thanks.



Professor Reimund Neugebauer, President of the Fraunhofer-Gesellschaft, gave a laudatory speech about the founder of the Fraunhofer IZI, Professor Frank Emmrich.

Photo © Fraunhofer IZI

“Professor Emmrich was a key factor in the success of those initial 13 years,” said Professor Reimund Neugebauer, President of the Fraunhofer-Gesellschaft, in praise of the man who set up Fraunhofer IZI. Professor Neugebauer acknowledged in particular the way in which Professor Emmrich managed the institute, an approach characterized by his own outstanding ideas. On behalf of the Fraunhofer-Gesellschaft, he thanked Professor Emmrich for the formative influence he has had on the regenerative medicine business unit at Fraunhofer as a

whole. Founded in Leipzig with 16 members of staff in 2005, Fraunhofer IZI now employs more than 550 people at various sites both in Germany and abroad.

The Dean of Studies at University Hospital Leipzig, Professor Jürgen Meixensberger, commented on how Professor Frank Emmrich had also helped drive forward the Faculty of Medicine at Leipzig University. “His ability to come up with ideas, approach the right networks and spark the interest of others was brilliant,” said Meixensberger in honor of Professor Emmrich’s lifetime achievements. He valued the medical professional not only as an excellent scientist but also as a skilled and determined scientific manager and networker.

Editor

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In his laudatory speech, Professor Walter Brehm, Dean of the Faculty of Veterinary Medicine at Leipzig University, spoke of Professor Emmrich's merits among other things when it came to setting up and funding the Translational Centre for Regenerative Medicine (TRM) at Leipzig University in 2006. Thanks to its clearly open and interdisciplinary nature, the center soon became an "incubator for ideas".

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Chairman of the Fraunhofer IZI Advisory Board Dr. Henrich Guntermann from the European Consortium of Technology Transfer S.A. summarized the way in which Professor Emmrich founded the institute as planting a seed, watching it grow and seeing it flourish. He praised Professor Emmrich as a visionary and pragmatist, and also shone the spotlight on the fantastic support provided by the Free State of Saxony and the City of Leipzig in founding Fraunhofer IZI.

Scientific speeches were held by longstanding fellow researchers and companions such as Professor Reinhard Voll (University Medical Center Freiburg), Professor Harald Burkhardt (University Hospital Frankfurt am Main) and Professor Raimund Kinne (Jena University Hospital), whose collaborative work with Professor Emmrich goes back as far as the 1980s. The researchers and medical professionals gave an overview of joint research projects that have contributed towards the basic knowledge we have in the field of immunology today, besides presenting further research activities in the field of inflammatory and autoimmune diseases, relating to rheumatoid arthritis and systemic lupus erythematosus, for instance.

Held annually, the Fraunhofer Life Science Symposium event has addressed various topics at Fraunhofer IZI since 2006. The next symposium is planned to take place in autumn 2019. Further information can be found at www.fs-leipzig.com.

Professor Frank Emmrich

Professor for Clinical Immunology Frank Emmrich, born in Niemegek near Bitterfeld in Saxony-Anhalt, first took on the role of assistant professor in the research department of the GDR's State Institute of Immunopreparations and Culture Media in Berlin-Weissensee. He later worked at Heidelberg's German Cancer Research Center (DKFZ) in the Institute for Immunology and Genetics before moving to the Max Planck Institute of Immunobiology in Freiburg, where he assumed the position of laboratory senior. From 1986 to 1994, Professor Emmrich headed up the clinical working group for rheumatology/immunology at the Max Planck Society in Erlangen. In 1994, he was offered the Chair of Clinical Immunology in Leipzig and took on the management of the Institute of Clinical Immunology at Leipzig University. He headed up the Translational Centre for Regenerative Medicine (TRM) in Leipzig from 2006 to 2015. In 2005, Frank Emmrich founded the Fraunhofer Institute for Cell Therapy and Immunology IZI in Leipzig, which he directed until the end of 2017. Besides this, he also took on a number of other roles, such as Deputy Chairman of the Fraunhofer Group for Life Sciences and, between 2008 and 2016, member of the German Ethics Council.

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The managing director of the institute, Professor Ulrike Köhl and institute founder Professor Frank Emmrich cut the cake for the festive event.

As a special eye-catcher it was designed in the form of the Leipzig institute building.

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Around 150 guests attended the Fraunhofer Life Science Symposium on 27 September 2018 at the Fraunhofer IZI.

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The Fraunhofer Institute for Cell Therapy and Immunology IZI investigates and develops solutions to specific problems at the interfaces of medicine, life sciences and engineering. One of the institute's main tasks is to conduct contract research for companies, hospitals, diagnostic laboratories and research institutes operating in the field of biotechnology, pharmaceuticals and medical engineering. The Fraunhofer IZI develops, optimizes and validates methods, materials and products for the business units Cell and Gene Therapy, Drugs, Diagnostics and Biosystems Technology. Its areas of competence lie in cell biology, immunology, drug biochemistry, biomarker, bioanalytics and bioproduction as well as process development and automation. In these areas, research specifically focusses on the indications oncology, neuropathology, autoimmune and inflammatory diseases as well as infectious diseases and regenerative medicine.

The **Fraunhofer-Gesellschaft** is the leading organization for applied research in Europe. Its research activities are conducted by 72 institutes and research units at locations throughout Germany. The Fraunhofer-Gesellschaft employs a staff of more than 25,000, who work with an annual research budget totaling 2.3 billion euros. Of this sum, almost 2 billion euros is generated through contract research. More than 70 percent of the Fraunhofer-Gesellschaft's contract research revenue is derived from contracts with industry and from publicly financed research projects. International collaborations with excellent research partners and innovative companies around the world ensure direct access to regions of the greatest importance to present and future scientific progress and economic development.