

## UKCMRI Press notice

### A new name for UKCMRI

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The UK Centre for Medical Research and Innovation (UKCMRI) is to be re-named The Francis Crick Institute in honour of one of the United Kingdom's greatest scientists.

The change of name will coincide with the formal start of construction of the institute when ground is broken in early July.

The Director and Chief Executive of UKCMRI, Paul Nurse said: "Francis Crick was a superb British scientist. He embodied the qualities of collaboration, creativity and tenacity we would like to instil within the culture of the institute to be named for him. Francis Crick led a revolution in biology and medicine, was noted for his intelligence, openness to new ideas, for switching disciplines from physics to biology, and his collaborations - not least with James Watson, Maurice Wilkins and later, Sydney Brenner."

Paul Nurse added: "Now that construction of the institute is beginning, we can adopt its permanent name. The site at St Pancras has been transformed over the past weeks in readiness for construction formally to begin."

The institute is founded by four of the world's leading medical research organisations: the Medical Research Council, Cancer Research UK, the Wellcome Trust and UCL (University College London). In April, Imperial College London and King's College London signalled their intention to join the partnership behind the institute. The building will be completed in 2015.

#### Notes to editors:

For more information, please contact John Davidson at UKCMRI on 020 7611 2087 or email [press@ukcmri.ac.uk](mailto:press@ukcmri.ac.uk).

#### Francis Crick:

- Francis Crick was born on 8 June, 1916 in Northampton, the son of a shoe factory owner.
- He studied at Northampton Grammar School and Mill Hill School, London and went on to study Physics at University College London.
- His PhD studies were interrupted by the outbreak of the Second World War during which he worked on magnetic and acoustic naval mines.
- In 1947, he took up a Medical Research Council studentship at the Strangeways Laboratory in Cambridge. In 1949, he moved to the Cavendish Laboratory. His unit (Unit for Research on the Molecular Structure of Biological Systems) was later to become the Laboratory of Molecular Biology.

- Together with James Watson (who joined the Cavendish Laboratory in 1951), Crick identified the structure of DNA in Cambridge in February 1953, based on the studies of the molecule by Maurice Wilkins, Rosalind Franklin and others at King's College London.
- He completed his PhD: X-Ray Diffraction: Polypeptides and Proteins in 1954.
- In 1962, Crick, Watson and Wilkins were jointly awarded the Nobel Prize "for their discoveries concerning the molecular structure of nucleic acids and its significance for information transfer in living material".
- After a brief spell in Brooklyn, Crick returned to Cambridge where he worked until 1977 contributing to the explanation of how genes provide the information for proteins responsible for a cell's structure and function.
- From 1977 Crick worked at the Salk Institute in San Diego where he studied the neurological basis of consciousness.
- Francis Crick died on 28 July 2004.

## **Building on research excellence**

The institute will initially build on the complementary skills and research interests of two of the founders' research institutes, the MRC National Institute for Medical Research (NIMR) and the Cancer Research UK London Research Institute (LRI), together with UCL scientists focusing on physics, computing, engineering, imaging and chemistry.

- NIMR is renowned for its research in a diverse range of fields, including developmental and stem cell biology, structural biology, neuroscience, immunology and infectious disease. Its 600 scientific staff are based in laboratories in north London at Mill Hill. NIMR's director is Jim Smith.
- LRI has an international reputation for basic cancer biology research, focusing on cell regulation and signalling, tumour and tissue biology, and genomic integrity. Directed by Richard Treisman, LRI has some 500 scientists working at laboratories at Lincoln's Inn Fields, central London and Clare Hall, Hertfordshire.

In addition to funding the cost of building the institute, the founders will provide ongoing research support. The Wellcome Trust will fund interdisciplinary research spanning biology, chemistry, physics, maths and engineering.

## **UKCMRI to The Francis Crick Institute**

UKCMRI will adopt the name The Francis Crick Institute in early July. Until then all UKCMRI email addresses as well as the UKCMRI website will remain unchanged.

With the new name will come a new brand which has been developed following consultation with staff from the founder institutes, and the wider scientific community. In July, all materials linked to the project will adopt the new name.

UKCMRI was founded by the Medical Research Council, Cancer Research UK, the Wellcome Trust, and UCL. Its vision is to create a world-leading centre for medical science and innovation in London. It will be based initially on the world-class research currently being carried out at Cancer Research UK's London

Research Institute at Lincoln's Inn Fields in central London, the MRC's National Institute for Medical Research (NIMR), and in UCL's research laboratories.

The institute's goal will be to understand the basic biology underlying human health, driving forward better treatment and prevention of the most significant diseases affecting people today. We will have research programmes relevant to cancer; circulatory conditions such as heart disease and stroke; infectious disease (including influenza, tuberculosis and malaria); disorders of the immune system; and neurodegeneration and regeneration.

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