

PRESS RELEASE



EMBO pioneers pension plan for internationally mobile post-doctoral researchers

Attractive financial package encourages early start of individual pension schemes

HEIDELBERG, GERMANY, 6 August 2009 – The European Molecular Biology Organization (EMBO) announced today the introduction of a new private pension plan for EMBO Fellows. The plan offers a benefit package that optimally suits the needs of highly mobile scientists.

Post-doctoral researchers who are beneficiaries of an EMBO Long-Term Fellowship may begin enrolling in the pension plan from 1 January 2010.

“The international portability of the pension plan allows contributors to continue in the plan as they move from country to country,” said Jan Taplick, EMBO Deputy Director and manager of EMBO Fellowships. “We are pleased to now offer a solution to the long-time problem facing EMBO Fellows who wish to plan for financial security while they are actively mobile early in their research careers.”

Renowned for strict attention to scientific excellence, EMBO Fellowships have supported thousands of talented young researchers since they were first

introduced in the 1960s. More than 200 long-term fellowships are awarded annually, offering funding and support for two-year post-doctoral research terms.

This is the first time that a European science organization has established a pension plan for its fellows. MLP, a Heidelberg based independent financial services and wealth management consulting company, has developed the concept and will also administer the pension plan according to the needs of highly mobile scientists. Funds invested in the plan will be managed by Allianz, one of the highest-rated worldwide insurers operating in more than seventy countries.

“The pension plan is a unique concept that has been tailored to the requirements of EMBO Fellows,” said Harald Huhn, Managing Director of the Company Pension Scheme Division at MLP. “It allows them to make early pension provisions without having to make any concessions in terms of their mobility.”

Following completion of PhD studies, many young researchers

often take up post-doctoral research positions in laboratories outside their home countries. It’s not unusual for them to move two, or even three, times in the early years of their careers to benefit from exchange with experienced researchers in their chosen fields. Generally this has meant delaying planning for financial security later in life until they take up permanent positions.

A survey conducted by the EMBO Fellowship office revealed that less than ten per cent of fellows contributed to a pension scheme, while nearly all of them were insured against health risks and accidents. *The European Charter for Researchers*, released by the European Commission (EC) in 2005, called for “adequate and equitable social security provisions” as a basic entitlement for researchers.

A recent decision by the EC to co-fund EMBO Long-Term Fellowships commended the anticipated introduction of the private pension plan for awardees of the fellowships. The 4.3 million euro EC funding will allow EMBO to award 35 percent more long-term fellowships

annually – between 75 and 80 additional long-term fellowships. Co-funded EMBO Fellows will be selected during the next two evaluation rounds, making them eligible to participate in the new pension plan.

All new and second-year EMBO Fellows will have the opportunity to join the pension plan when it begins in January 2010. EMBC, the EMBO intergovernmental funding body, is contributing additional funding to support the international mobility of early-stage researchers. The EMBC support allows for incentive

contributions of 100 euro per month during a two-year fellowship for each EMBO Fellow enrolled in the plan. Participation in the pension plan is voluntary.

In addition to the monthly 100-euro incentive, participants in the pension plan benefit from:

- Attractive group conditions
- Flexible payment and repayment terms
- Worldwide validity of acquired benefits
- Possible continuation after the end of the fellowship

- Client friendliness: English speaking consultants

For more information on EMBO Fellowships and the new private pension plan, visit <http://www.embo.org/programmes/fellowships.html>.

Annual EMBO Long-Term Fellowships application deadlines: 15 August & 15 February.

Contact EMBO

Suzanne Beveridge
Head, Public Relations & Communications

Yvonne Kaul
Communications Officer

Phone + 49 (0) 6221 8891 108
communications@embo.org

Contact MLP

Jan Berg
Press Officer MLP AG

Phone +49 (0) 62 22-308-4595
Fax +49 (0) 62 22-308-1131

jan.berg@mlp.de

About EMBO

The European Molecular Biology Organization (EMBO) promotes excellence in molecular life sciences in Europe by recognizing and fostering talented scientists. Since 1964, leading scientists are elected annually to become EMBO Members based on proven excellence in research. Members number more than 1300 today. Forty-eight scientists from the EMBO membership have received the Nobel Prize.

Leading peer-reviewed journals – *The EMBO Journal*, *EMBO reports* and *Molecular Systems Biology* – span a broad spectrum of topics of molecular biology and reflect how science is shaping the world. A new journal, *EMBO Molecular Medicine*, publishes original research offering molecular insight into the cellular and systemic processes underlying human disease.

EMBO funding, training and networking activities impact thousands of scientists every year, promoting collaboration in all areas of molecular biology – within its 27 member states, in Europe and neighbouring countries, and worldwide.

For more information: www.embo.org