A New Building for the IMB

On june 11th (2008) the contract for the construction of a new building for the Instituto de Microbiología Bioquímica (IMB) was granted to the firm Collosa S.A. The beguinning of the construction was approved and signed on august 12th . It is planned that the building will be finished within a 24 months period.

The IMB is a research institute dependent on the Spanish Scientific Research Council (Consejo Superior de Investigaciones Científicas, CSIC) and the University of Salamanca. This project has been possible thanks to the approval in the General National Budget for 2006 of 9.1 million euros, to be received by the CSIC through the Ministry of Education and Science. The other key factor has been the donation of a plot, next to the Miguel de Unamuno Campus, by City Council of Salamanca to the University.

The IMB was founded by Professor Julio R. Villanueva in the seventies as one of the first joint institutes between the Spanish University and the CSIC, and it was granted officialdom in 1985 with the signing of a specific agreement between the CSIC and the University of Salamanca. The IMB has always been located, both physically and functionally, at the Department of Microbiology and Genetics and thanks to the project now approved it will be able to have its own building, foreseen to start operating towards the end of 2009.

The project for the new Institute considers the construction of a four-floor building with an approximate total surface area of 6,500 square metres, housing 30 research laboratories. This will allow a significant increase in the number of teams currently working in the IMB and the development of new research lines.

The Institute will have all the equipment necessary for research projects in cellular and molecular biology, and it will have direct access to all the services and infrastructures

Most of the current research lines at the IMB use microorganisms as model systems for the study of morphogenesis, transduction, gene regulation, epigenetics and DNA replication. The main organisms used are the yeasts Saccharomyces cerevisiae and Schizosaccharomyces pombe, and to a minor extent Streptomyces, Candida and Aspergillus. Some groups use animal cells and mouse models for regulation and developmental studies.

The Strategic Plan for the next few years, recently approved by the CSIC after a positive assessment by an independent commission of the European Molecular Biology Organisation (EMBO), foresees the expansion of some of the current research lines and the development of new ones in the following areas:

- Microorganisms as model systems for the study of gene regulation.
- Bioinformatics and microbial Systems Biology.
- Microbial Biotechnology
- Genome stability and dynamics in yeasts and mammalian cells.
- Epigenetic regulation in yeasts and mammalian cells.

The new Institute intends to incorporate new scientific staff able to develop research projects in some of these fields. Applications are open to candidates within the following proffessional profiles:

- Researchers in the initial stages of their scientific careers (pre-doctoral and post-doctoral) who wish to join one of the existing or future teams.
- Postdoctoral researchers under non-permanent contract able to carry out independent research.
- More senior and established scientists who wish to move their own teams to the new Institute.

All applications will be considered and approval will be based on a favourable assessment by the Internal and External Scientific Committees of the Institute. Those interested may address their applications to the Director of the Institute (directorimb@usal.es) or contact team leaders at the IMB close to their own scientific interests for further information.